



## Luxembourg Declaration

300 representatives from politics, business, management, and civil society from 23 countries participated on invitation of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in the 3rd International Conference on Men and Equal Opportunities held in Luxembourg on 17 and 18 October 2016, entitled “Who cares? Who shares?”.

The conference has clearly demonstrated that today, men do provide care in many ways: as fathers, partners and sons, as friends, colleagues and neighbours, as volunteers in clubs and associations, as co-worker, superiors, and specialists in care professions. This commitment deserves to be seen and appreciated in its scope and diversity.

The conference has shown just as clearly that in all European countries, even under a broad definition of care, men provide much less unpaid work than women. As fathers, men still tend to provide *for* their families far more than they provide care *in* their families. This reality clashes with the equal opportunities policy objective to spread paid and unpaid work fairly, i.e. equally, between genders.

The 300 participants of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Men and Equal Opportunities see these inequalities as resulting from a complex interplay between cultural norms, individual inclinations, power structures, social practices, business requirements, and the political environment. In this situation, they urge political decision-makers at all European policy levels to

1. recognise, that the principle of equal opportunities as stipulated in a binding manner in provision 3 of article 3, para. 2 of the Lisbon Treaty<sup>1</sup> signifies and calls for a fair, i.e. equal spread of all paid and unpaid work between genders;
2. recognise, that to this date, promoting male contributions to care has been an underestimated and poorly used resource for solving a great number of pressing challenges in society and on the labour market;

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<sup>1</sup> The European Union “shall combat social exclusion and discrimination, and shall promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men, solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child”.

<sup>2</sup> see Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines for the economic and employment policies of the Member States, Guideline 7: Increasing labour market participation and reducing structural unemployment.  
<http://ec.europa.eu/eu2020/pdf/Brochure%20Integrated%20Guidelines.pdf>

3. recognise, that there is no free choice as long as the settings in politics and the economy are geared towards traditional models of distributing family work and to take action to bring about freedom of choice – that is to say a free choice between equivalent alternatives;
4. recognise, that equal opportunities for women and men – especially equal pay and the 75% employment rate amongst men and women as demanded in the Europe 2020 integrated Guidelines for the economic and employment policies of the Member States<sup>2</sup> – cannot be achieved without a stronger involvement of men in unpaid (care) work;
5. to take account of these challenges, both individually and in transverse terms, in their policies and strategies, especially in the labour market, economic, and fiscal policies as well as in the social, family, education, and gender equality policies;
6. to not limit their equal opportunity policies to promoting the participation of women in the labour market but to actively use all available leverage (see appendix) – especially promoting male care activities – and in doing so take account of the diversity within gender categories;
7. to also actively include boys, men, and fathers as agents of change in policy-making and in the implementation of these policies and to hereby equally expect and strengthen their willingness to establish fair gender relations;
8. to actively promote men taking over unpaid (care) work and to provide coherent partial strategies and resources to this end.

To promote caring masculinities the participants of the Conference recommend the following actions:

**Priority actions for promoting committed fatherhood are:**

- setting up a legal framework enabling children, after the separation and divorce of their parents, to keep both parents in their everyday lives, unless the best interests of the child are at risk.
- to establish a legal framework as a self-evident infrastructural standard comprising:
  - a. legally enshrined and compensated *Paternity Leaves* (i.e. time dedicated to fathers before and after the birth of a child);
  - b. legally enshrined and compensated *Parental Leaves* (with periods of time for fathers during a child's first year with fathers being solely responsible for childcare, putting them in a position to acquire skills in care and education);
  - c. affordable, good-quality care services to provide early training and education.
- to consistently demand active inclusion of fathers in service mandates to childcare, training, education, and care facilities (such as counselling for mothers and fathers, family planning centres etc.).

**Priority actions for promoting male self-care are:**

- to provide the legal bases in the field of the health care system to promote gender-sensitive care institutions (health centres for men, for example) and prevention programmes.
  - to strengthen gender and communication skills in education and further training of qualified health specialists.
  - to set forth binding gender-sensitive concepts for sex education and self-care in curricula.
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**Priority actions for promoting men in care jobs are:**

- target group oriented motivation of boys to opt for a gender-neutral profession (Boys' Day, f. ex.), engage in public relations to improve the image of care jobs and to promote gender-sensitive career guidance, pedagogy, and team work (institutional organisational development).
- to handle the issue of the general suspicion against men in care work in a transparent manner by establishing professional concepts to protect those in care from sexual violence.
- to stipulate binding mandates to the operators of career guidance centres and care institutions to enshrine mixed-gender teams as standard.

**Priority actions for promoting male volunteer work are:**

- to create flexible working-time models tailored towards people who will be retiring soon.
- to strengthen the dialogue of social partners on working time and flexibility.
- to support trainings and projects specifically for boys and men both for them to acquire skills in care work and to allow for easier inclusion of boys and men.

**Priority actions for promoting men providing nursing care for relatives are:**

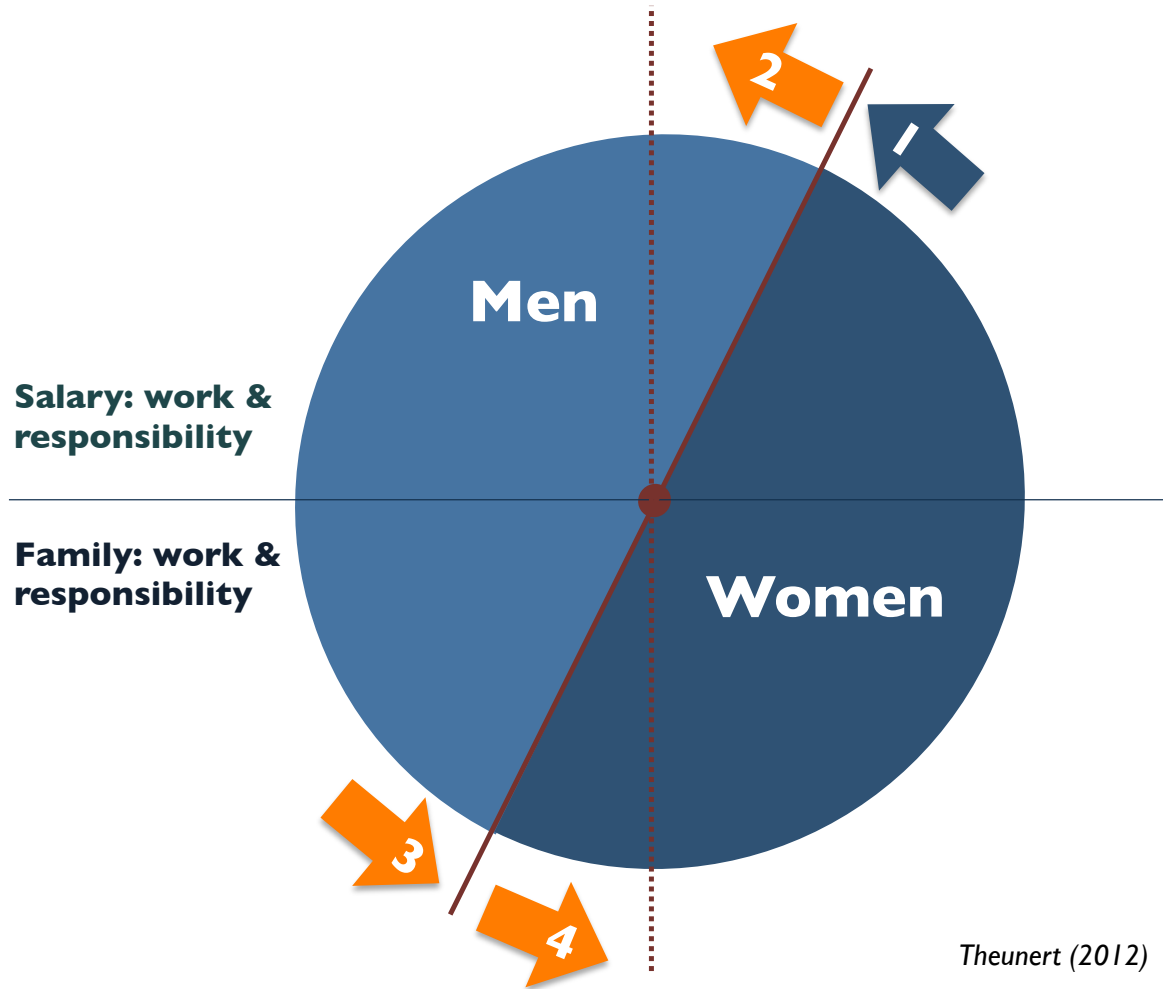
- to do research into conducive factors for men to contribute more to nursing care by using a term describing care which comprises male contributions and makes them visible.
- to take action in the area of education, training, and further training of specialists in the health and social system to increase gender skills of care workers.
- to promote gender sensitive support services (in groups, for example).
- to enshrine an appropriate legal framework with rules on social partners and labour law, especially stipulating wage-replacement benefits for providing nursing care for relatives (in line with parental leave) and working-time models taking into account the needs of those providing nursing care to relatives.

**Priority actions for promoting contributions by men to housework are:**

- to create the statistical basics and measures in public relations and education policy with a view to communicate the scope and actual significance of housework in a realistic manner.
- to use campaigns and information activities to counteract stereotypical role models regarding housework in teaching materials, commercials, advertising, and the media.
- to set up projects to strengthen a couple's negotiating skills (in the context of distributing domestic tasks).

Luxembourg, 18th of october 2016

Appendix



Theunert (2012)