

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON CARE

- as voted in the Steering Group of the European Social Platform, December 2011

Our starting point is that care is a human right: the right to care and to be cared for is a fundamental part of our lives as everyone is a care giver or care receiver at some point and potentially at multiple stages throughout life.

Care also benefits our societies in various ways. It promotes social solidarity, and social cohesion and inclusion which generate well being for all. Well being in its turn enhances mental and physical health, quality of life, productivity and the sustainability of our societies. The more people are supported, the better they are enabled to provide support and care for others. A society with better health, work and education conditions will allow more resources for the people who need additional care services

I. FOR CARE PRACTICES AND POLICIES THAT RESPECT THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF CARE USERS, PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL

- Ensure that the fundamental rights of care users, including privacy and confidentiality, are respected as recognised in International and European human rights instruments
- Guarantee equality between care users, and the empowerment, independence and participation of these users and their families³. Facilitate the choice of care options for them
- Guarantee universal access to affordable high quality care services for all.

II. FOR INFORMAL CARE GIVERS TO HAVE AN ADEQUATE BALANCE BETWEEN CARE, WORK AND PRIVATE LIFE

Reconciliation policies require a comprehensive approach, based on the five fundamental rights protected by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union: the right to equality between men and women (art. 23), the right to private and family life (art. 7), the right to fair and just working conditions (art. 31), the right to quality public services (art. 36) and the right to a high level of social protection (art. 34).

Ensure that reconciliation policies:

- Guarantee that responsibility for care is based on equality for all, and that informal care¹⁸ work is shared between men and women and generations
- Ensure the respect of fundamental rights of caregivers
- Recognise and support informal and family care¹⁹
- Recognise and support the role that volunteers bring to formal and informal care.

III. FOR QUALITY CARE SERVICES

Ensure:

- The quality, accessibility, affordability and availability of care services for all across Europe
- The organisation, funding and delivery of care services, whatever the provider (public or private), and particularly in times of economic crisis
- The involvement of users and all relevant stakeholders in the design, delivery and evaluation of care policies and services
- That such services are based on a coordinated approach across multiple policy areas
- That making profit is not the driving force of service provision.

IV. FOR DECENT WORKING CONDITIONS AND QUALITY EMPLOYMENT IN CARE

Ensure that care policies:

- Promote decent working conditions and quality employment for care workers
- Develop high quality vocational training pathways for care workers
- Promote equal treatment at work to ensure fundamental rights, non-discrimination and gender equality. This includes regularising the status of migrant care workers and the eradication of forced labour.