

Promoting care for elderly and disabled dependents: Overview of policy and practice at European and National levels

Main aims of the module:

- To overview the issues faced by carers in reconciling their commitments for work and responsibilities as a carer;
- to create awareness about local, national and European policies and support schemes that might support people responsible for the care of elderly disabled;
- To learn from other experiences of good practices in the care and provision of services for elderly and disabled dependents.



<http://drpinna.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Hands-elderly-couple-relationships-580x386.jpg>

The importance of promoting care for elderly and disabled dependents in all European countries

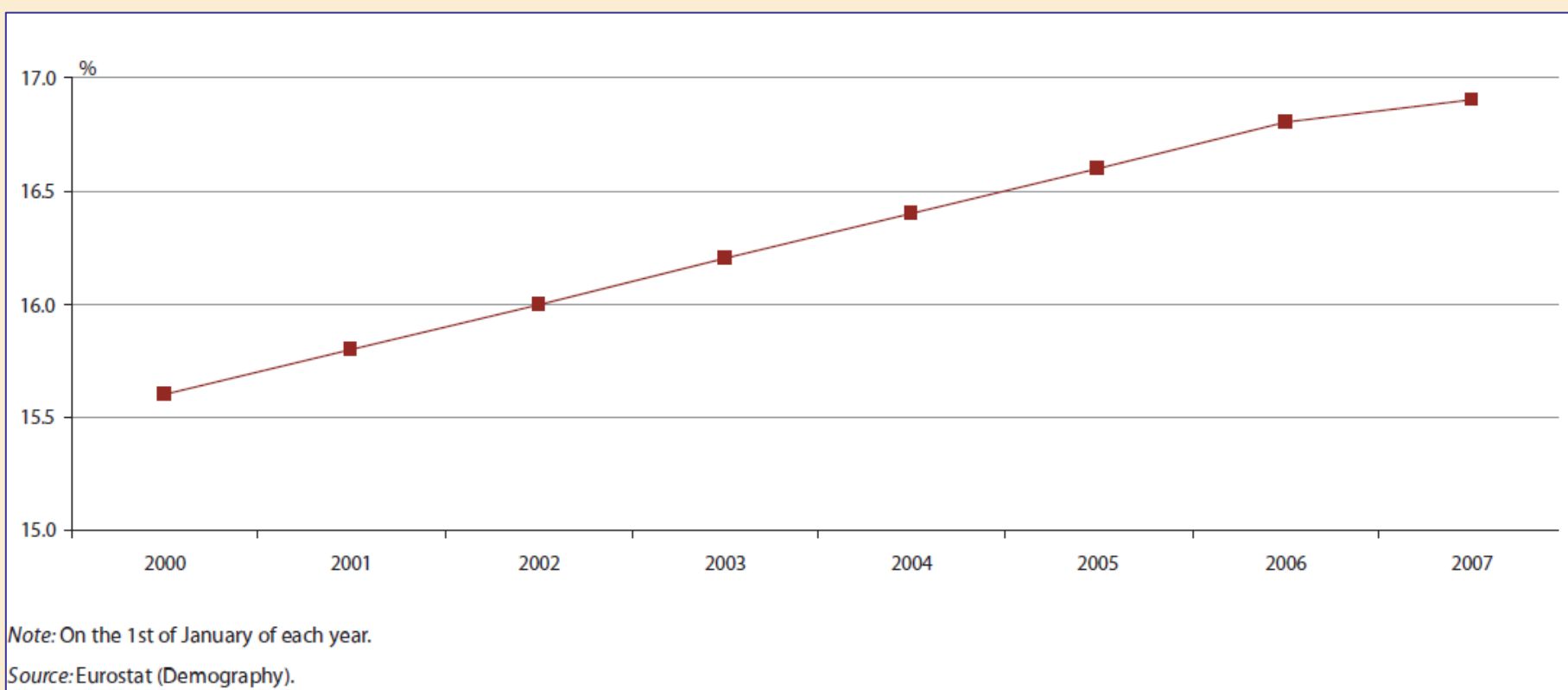
- Europe's population is ageing and Europeans are living longer.
- The balance between the generations is changing. The numbers of middle-aged and elderly people are growing in relation to the young.
- The increase of elderly and disabled people has led to a growing need of care.



http://www.welt.de/multimedia/archive/01279/Pflege_DW_Wirtscha_1279872p.jpg

Statistical information:

EU-27 population aged 65 and over, 2000-2007 as a proportion of the total population



http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-78-09-908/EN/KS-78-09-908-EN.PDF, page 74

Problems related to reconciliation of work and responsibilities for care

- Being confronted with care obligations carers often have to leave their workplace because of lack of assistance and support from employers. This may lead to severe financial problems and in many cases a return to the workplace is not possible.
- As family members usually work, the question of reconciliation of work and care becomes urgent. It is increasingly important that organisations should offer assistance for employees who have to take on caring responsibilities.



http://www.lebenshilfe.de/wGesundheitstagung/img/emotion/alter_herr_betreuerin_klein.jpg



Family care of the elderly

- To date there are relatively few studies that focus on the development of activities that provide support and assistance to carers
- So far those studies have focused on the situation of those who have provided most of the care to dependent older people – their families, especially spouses, partners and daughters.
- **Recently the emphasis is on policy development and initiatives to assist family carers in order to identify what can be done to improve the quality of life for carers as well as the cared-for.**

Assistance and support from businesses

- Allowing and supporting emergency leave and short-term leave (a few days to a week) at short notice
- Enabling carers to take long-term leave with the option to stay in contact and return to work. This could include some financial support e.g. by 'topping up' benefit payments while on leave
- Allowing part-time work (reduction of hours) with an option to return to full-time work.
- Allowing flexible work-time arrangements for full-time as well as part-time workers [staggered hours, compressed working week, swapping shifts]
- Allowing home-based working (tele-working)



<http://www.netzeitung.de/articleimages//12/12090164312490338340.jpg>



Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

FACILITATING FAMILY LEARNING ON WORK & LIFE BALANCE

Project No: 502889-LLP-1-2009-1-LT-GRUNDTVIG-GMP

Other support could include

- Information and counselling for caregivers
- Establishing a carers network supported by the company's intranet
- Establishing an employee initiated support group resourced by the company
- Enabling employees to take up training courses focused on their role as carers



<http://www.st-vincenz.de/einrichtungen/pics/pflegeschule.jpg>

REMEMBER

While analysing the presented cases studies,
try to reflect these questions:

What is your family situation?

What is the situation in your company?

What kind of agreement do you work with?



Flexible working hours for taking care of disabled daughter

- Chris Wardle has worked for a third sector disability organisation for the last seven years.
- The organisation has a strong unwritten ethos of good family, life and work balances.
- Chris is disabled herself and often uses either sticks or a wheel chair.
- Due to prolonged illness was off sick from work for 3 months.
- The employer allowed Chris to come back to work on a staged process, which allowed Chris to continue working full time

Flexible working hours for taking care of disabled daughter

- Chris has a daughter with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Chris's daughter at times can display erratic and uncontrolled behaviour.
- On a number of occasions Chris would have to leave work to support her daughter at short notice after a phone call.
- The employer at the shortest amount of notice allow Chris to leave work to look after her daughter.
- On a couple of occasions Chris has taken leave to support her daughter during pregnancy.



MODULE 4: Practical Exercise



Case study: Flexible working hours for taking care of disabled daughter

Aim:	to create awareness of trainees about the companies practices related reconciliation of work and responsibilities for care reconciliation
Task:	to reflect the questions provided below.
Duration:	20 min

Questions:

- How do you think operating flexible working arrangements allows an employee more time caring for a family member?
- Would it be possible to have similar arrangements as described in the case study?