

Work-life balance in the ICT sector

EU policies on work-life balance

In 2017 the EU adopted the Pillar of Social Rights to help deliver more effective rights for citizens. It builds on 20 key principles, many of which are relevant to gender equality and work-life balance in employment. One of the goals of the European Pillar for Social Rights is the New Start initiative, which aims to address the work–life balance challenges faced by working parents and carers.

A number of the key principles of the EU Pillar of Social Rights have a direct relevance to work–life balance measures and the employment of women.

Gender equality

Equality of treatment and opportunity between women and men must be fostered in all areas of the labour market. This includes participation in the labour market, terms and conditions of employment, and career progression. Women and men have the right to equal pay for work of equal value. (EIGE’s Glossary definition of ‘gender equality’ here.)

Equal opportunities

Everyone has the right to equal treatment and opportunities in terms of employment, social protection, education, and access to goods and services, regardless of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Equal opportunities for under-represented groups must be fostered. (EIGE’s Glossary definition of equal opportunities here.)

Work–life balance

Parents and people with caring responsibilities have the right to suitable leave, flexible working arrangements and access to care services. Women and men shall have equal access to special leaves of absence in order to fulfil their care responsibilities and be encouraged to use them in a balanced way. (EIGE’s Glossary definition of work-life balance here.)

Childcare and support for children

Children have the right to affordable early childhood education and good quality care. Children have the right to protection from poverty. There should be special measures to help children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Long-term care

Everyone has the right to affordable and good quality long-term care, in particular home-care and community-based services.