

Concept Note

Virtual side-event at the 54th session of the Commission on Population and Development

“Towards full occupational freedom of women. Legal and social aspects of domestic care and work”

Link for the online meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88024137527>

April 19th, 8.15 - 9.45 am (New York Time)

Organizer: The Ordo Iuris Institute for Legal Culture

Co-hosted by:

Family Watch International

Women of the World Platform

1. Introduction:

Unpaid domestic care and work, most often performed by women, is an extremely important contribution to the development of society. As shown by the calculations of numerous experts, this work generates three times more profit for the global economy than the technology industry (according to the 2019 Oxfam Report, women's unpaid work generates \$ 10.8 trillion annually for the global economy).

A significant part of women (sometimes also men) at some stage of their lives, undertake unpaid domestic work, in particular in the field of care, raising and education of their children, and taking care of the household. Very often it is the result of their own decision – especially mothers of young children often declare their willingness to partially or completely stop their professional work for childcare.

Despite this, unpaid domestic work is still ignored by the legal and economic systems of many countries. As a result, those undertaking it have to deal with numerous problems, such as economic difficulties and insufficient state support. This also influence negative stereotypes towards people performing unpaid domestic work, resulting in discrimination and social exclusion. Thus, it is difficult for people considering taking such a path to make a free and informed decision in this regard.

Ignoring unpaid domestic work implicates the presence of negative stereotypes. Counteracting stereotypes is especially needed because many employers still faultyly perceive persons (especially women) who temporarily quit their jobs as professionally inactive, and thus non-developing and sometimes even generally incompetent. This is a harmful and untrue approach, because combining house work and raising children is a period of time that allows developing of competences in many areas and the acquisition of high organizational skills. It is also an exemplification of the false view according to which the value of a person should be viewed only through the prism of financial profits from his/her professional activity, and domestic care and work in that perspective does not bring benefits, or even brings a burden on the system. For this reason, a group of persons (especially women) temporarily or permanently choosing this form of professional activity becomes “invisible” to state institutions and stigmatized by society, although

the United Nations estimates that unpaid work performed by women at home increases GDP by an average of 40%.

Domestic care and work meets all the conditions of professional activity, apart from remuneration only, so, according to the opinion expressed in General Recommendation No. 17 CEDAW, it should be included in GDP – in order to enable realistic assessment of the factors influencing economic wealth and growth. Recognizing the importance of unpaid domestic work is particularly important in the context of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, including, in particular, actions for equality between women and men and the fight against poverty.

2. The aim of the event:

The aim of the event is to start a discussion, the result of which would be to define what actions should be taken to develop an international and national policy oriented towards systemic recognition and support of persons (especially women) performing unpaid work, in order to combat discrimination and poverty, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

As it has already been mentioned, failure to perceive the value of unpaid domestic work results in legal and social discrimination against people who undertake it. It also indicates that many states ignore the perspective and aspirations of many women (parents) in their social policy. It is a paradox that in many countries, care and educational work can only count on state funding when it is performed in a special institution, and not when it is performed by a parent.

In connection with the above, the speakers will share their knowledge and experience in the field of activities for the official recognition of unpaid domestic work (provided primarily by women).

In particular, the event aims at addressing the following issues:

1. Social and economic consequences of the lack of systemic recognition of the value of domestic care and work.
2. An attempt to assess the importance of domestic care and work for the development of other branches of the economy, as well as the costs of giving up domestic care and work, including the costs of lost opportunities.
3. Review of various models of social policy oriented towards supporting women. Discussion on the need for pluralism of forms of support (tax breaks, cash and in-kind benefits, inclusion of the period of domestic work in the retirement basis etc.).
4. Proposals of international solutions supporting the full freedom of choosing the path of occupational and personal development by women.

3. Panelists:

- prof. Michał Michalski – Ph.D. hab. prof. of Adam Mickiewicz University, researcher in cultural studies, economics, ethics and family studies. Associate Professor at the Business Ethics Department of the Institute of Cultural Studies of the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland. President of the Institute for Family and Society Studies Foundation, member of Family Council at the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy and of the Family Council at the voivodeship of Wielkopolska Region. Member of Polish Association of Business Ethics EBEN Poland, Polish Economic Society, Polish Cultural Studies Society

and Fellow of the European SPES Institute. In 2003 he defended his doctoral thesis titled "The Cultural Dimension of Human Work" (published in 2005). In 2014 he published a habilitation monograph titled "The Importance of the Family for the Intergenerational Transmission of Economic Culture". Research interests: economic culture and ethics, family and economy, social policy, welfare state, human work.

- prof. Angela Gandra – Secretary for the Family at the Ministry of Family and Human Rights in Brazil. Lawyer and attorney. Professor at Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie.
- prof. Scott Yenor – Ph.D., Professor of Political Science at Boise State University and a Washington Fellow at the Claremont Institute's Center for the American Way of Life, father of five children. He is the author of "David Hume's Humanity", "The Recovery of Family Life: Exposing the Limits of Modern Ideologies", and "Family Politics: The Idea of Marriage in Modern Political Thought".
- prof. Piotr Szukalski – sociologist, habilitated doctor, professor at the University of Lodz. His research interests are issues from the intersection of demography, social gerontology and social policy, and the subject of his research are primarily: the course of the aging process of the Polish population, taking into account the dual nature of the process and its consequences, transformation of the Polish family model and intergenerational relations at both the micro and macro level.
- Leonor Tamayo – philologist, mother of 10 children, President of the Spanish NGO Professional for the Ethics, General Coordinator of Women of the World Platform. Author of the book "My story and eleven more".
- Dorota Bojemska – Chairwoman of the Family Council at the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy of Poland, activist for the defense of the family, mother of eight children, member of the Program Council of the Association of Large Families 3+
- dr Balázs Molnár - lawyer, diplomat, married and a father of three children. He is Vice President for Strategy and Coordination of the Mária Kopp Institute for Demography and Families since November 2018. Prior his current position he was Deputy State Secretary for European Union Affairs at the Prime Minister's Office, social attaché at the Permanent representation of Hungary to the EU in Brussels, presidency diplomat at the Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN in Vienna and held several positions in the predecessors of the Ministry for Human Capacities.
- Imre Balashazy – DSc, physicist, founder and currently vice-president of the Family Science Alliance in Hungary, founder and first president of the Science for the Family Association, secretary of the European Family Science Society, founder and chairman of the editorial board of the European Family Sciences Journal, head of the Family and Demography Working Group in the Batthyány Society of Professors.
- Karolina Pawłowska – Director of the Center of International Law of Ordo Iuris Institute. Ph.D. student at the Department of Sociology of Law at the Faculty of Law and Administration at the University of Warsaw. Author of numerous scientific articles on the history of political and legal doctrines, sociology of law, demography and international law. A graduate of an academic internship at the Institute of World Politics in Washington, D.C.