



# BUILDING EFFECTIVE POLICIES TO SUPPORT SINGLE PARENTHOOD

TUESDAY 4TH OCTOBER | 9.00 -16.00 | PRAGUE, CZECHIA



WOMEN FOR WOMEN



## **Building effective policies to support single parenthood**

9.00-16.00 CET, Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022  
Grand Majestic Plaza Hotel, Prague, Czechia

The COVID-19 has damaged our societies and economies, and the war in Ukraine is adding further pressure (expanding the number of single parent families in Europe). The situation has also put centre stage the role of families as safety nets while magnifying the shortcomings of our systems which have been ignored for too long. This situation is unacceptable and now is the time to build back better using national and EU policy and legislative tools to achieve greater wellbeing of children and their families, access to high quality, inclusive and community-based services. **Co-hosted by COFACE and Women 4 Women Czech Republic, this European expert meeting will explore the effectiveness of family policies to address the realities of single parent families.**

Single parenthood, like any family, is not a homogenous block and covers different realities: headed by mothers, fathers, and even by a grandparent raising their grandchildren, having one child or being a large family, being from a migrant background, having a child or parent with disabilities. According to a recently commissioned European Parliament study, single parenthood is becoming more common in the EU, and the majority of single parent households are headed by women. For some people, single parenthood is a choice. But for many it is not, and linked to a series of life events they have not chosen. Children in single parent families do not necessarily have any more needs than children in other types of families, but their vulnerabilities will increase due to heightened risk of poverty and exclusion of their parent. Compared to couples with children, single parents do have higher rates of living in a household with low work intensity, at-risk-of-poverty (AROP), or material deprivation. More [here](#). The share of single parents among all households with children varies considerably from one country to another in the European Union, from more than 20% in Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and France to less than 9% in countries like Croatia, Romania, Finland, Greece, Slovakia, Malta, Poland, Spain, Slovenia. More [here](#).

**Each policy should aim for universal results by triggering a two-track way of thinking from the beginning (i.e. mixing universal measures for all families and targeted measures for families in vulnerable situations).** This cannot be treated in parallel or one after the other, this universal particularism needs to be integrated in the thinking from the outset. This will allow for policies that aim to prevent and redress the situation, mobilising all levels of governance in an integrated way. In order to do that, the policy-making should be more inclusive and allow concerned families and their representative organizations to participate to their shaping, monitoring and evaluation.

The European expert meeting objectives are the following:

- Explore the reality of single parents across different EU countries, using a multi-generation lens;
- Discuss existing challenges and solutions in policy and practice;
- Review family policies to integrate and respond to diverse needs of families of today, in light of developments under the EU Child Guarantee action plans;
- Boost the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, namely principles 2 (gender equality), 3 (equal opportunities), 9 (work-life balance) and access to childcare and support to children (11)

Working languages: English and Czech

## PROGRAMME

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Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022 9.00-16.00

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8.30-9.00      **Registrations/coffee**

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9.00-9.30      **Welcome and round of introductions**

Ivana Tykač, Co-founder and Director of Women 4 Women, Czechia  
Annemie Drieskens, President of COFACE Families Europe

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9.30-11.00    **Setting the scene**

This opening session will have **keynote speeches** to set the context for the discussions, describing trends in the situation of single parents in the Czechia and in Europe. The keynotes will also reflect on the heightened poverty risk of single parents, as well as the need for strong policies which are developed with family diversity at the core and matching their specific support needs in terms of early childhood education and care, and long-term care.

*Supporting single parents and their children under the EU Child Guarantee: objectives, plans, partnerships.*

Martina Štěpánková Štýbrová - Director of Department of Family Policy and Protection of Children's Rights, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Czechia.

*Beyond family policy: The effectiveness of policies to address the realities of single parents in the European Union*

Rense Nieuwenhuis, Associate Professor in Sociology, Swedish Institute for Social Research (SOFI), Stockholm University

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11.00-11.30    Stretching break

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11.30-12.15    **Study session 1: Mental health and work-life balance**

Anna Nagy, Director of Single Parents Foundation, Hungary  
Mary O'Halloran, Board Member, Irish Countrywomen's Association, Ireland

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12.15-13.00    **Study session 2: Policies which reach out to single parent realities**

Rasa Zemaite, Coordinator, National Assembly of Active Mothers, Lithuania  
Daniel Alvarez, Project Manager, Isadora Duncan Single-Parent Foundation, Spain

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13.00-14.00    Lunch break

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14.00-14.45 **Study session 3: Separation, mediation and blended families**

Evelyn Martin, Honorary Chairperson, ÖPA, Austria  
Christophe Cocu, Director, Ligue des Familles, Belgium

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14.45-15.30 **Study session 4: Housing solutions for social and economic integration**

Kamila Šaffková, Family counsellor and mediator, Women 4 Women,  
Czechia  
Nina Ould Ami, President of the Fédération Syndical des Familles Monoparentales,  
France

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15.30-15.45 Stretching break

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15.45-16.00 **Conclusions and next steps: comprehensive solutions for intersecting vulnerabilities of single parents**

Camille Roux, Policy and Advocacy officer, COFACE Families Europe

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16.00-19.00 Time out

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19.00-21.00 Dinner

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