

# Thematic Update: Theme F: (Work Life Balance)

## Adaptability

ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited

**Equal** Support Unit  
Priestley House  
12-26 Albert Street  
Birmingham B4 7UD  
United Kingdom

Helpline: +44 (0)121 616 3660  
Fax: +44 (0)121 616 3662

Web: [www.equal.ecotec.co.uk](http://www.equal.ecotec.co.uk)



## Contents

<b>1.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	RECAP.....	1
1.2	THEMATIC NETWORKING GROUP.....	1
<b>2.0</b>	<b>EUROPEAN POLICY CONTEXT .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>UK GOVERNMENT POLICY CONTEXT .....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1	POLICY CONTEXT IN WALES .....	12
3.2	POLICY CONTEXT IN SCOTLAND .....	12
<b>4.0</b>	<b>OTHER UK ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EQUAL DP'S? .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>USEFUL WEBSITES .....</b>	<b>21</b>

## **1.0 Introduction**

This paper gives an overview of policy developments in relation to theme F of **Equal** which have occurred since the publication of the initial Community Initiative Policy (CIP) Guidance in May 2001. It sets out recent developments at European, national and regional levels, highlighting matters of relevance to the issue of the work-life balance. The paper highlights developments in relation to what sources of information are available and points out some case study examples about the implementation of work-life balance measures.

### **1.1 Recap**

The strategic objective of theme F is *'to promote inclusive working practices and adaptability including: work/life balance, use of ICT'*. The rationale for the theme stems from the government's campaign to increase the awareness and take-up of employment policies and practices that benefit businesses and help employees enjoy a better balance between work and the other demands on their lives.

### **1.2 Thematic Networking Group**

The Thematic Networking Group (TNG) for theme F has a key role in ensuring activities are relevant to the changing policy context relevant to the work-life balance issue. Members are drawn from the following bodies.

- National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)
- Work-Life Balance Team: DTI (Department for Trade and Industry)
- Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
- East Midlands Development Agency
- Welsh Assembly Government
- Scottish Executive
- Trades Union Congress (TUC)

## **2.0 European Policy Context**

The general framework for family-friendly policies at European level was outlined in the European Commission's *Work Programme for 2000 and the strategic objectives 2000-2005*<sup>1</sup>. One of the central priorities in the document was to reform the European Social Model and to bring about more and better employment. The Lisbon Special European Council in March 2000 agreed a vision among member states to create a dynamic job-creating Europe that delivers on both economic and social objectives. The Lisbon Council committed the EU to two targets: raising the employment rate from 61% to 70% by 2010 and to increase the female employment rate from 51% to more than 60% by the same date.

The European Employment Guidelines of 2003<sup>2</sup>, subtitled "a European strategy for full employment and better jobs for all", includes a number of references to work life balance, notably:

- Address change and promote adaptability and mobility in the labour market: "...undertake appropriate measures to promote...a better balance between work and private life and between flexibility and security".
- Gender equality: particular attention will be given to reconciling work and private life, notably through the provision of care services for children and other dependants, encouraging the sharing of family and professional responsibilities and facilitating return to work after a period of absence."

The European Council of 2004 underlined the urgency for progress towards achieving the Employment Strategy objectives. The Council decided that a mid term review of Lisbon would be presented to spring summit of 2005. EU progress towards the Lisbon Strategy 2010 target of a 70% overall employment rate has come to a standstill and it has become clear that the EU will also miss its interim target for 2005 of 67%. With this in mind, the Council set up an 'Employment Task Force' led by Wim Kok, which reported in 2004 and concluded that little progress had been made over the first 5 years and recommended a refocus on growth and employment and agreed a new set of sharper, country-specific Recommendations for 2004 which build upon the recommendations of the Task Force. The guidelines for 2004 asked Member states to focus on pursuing "make work pay policies through both financial and non-financial incentives, including individual taxation, quality in work in all its dimensions, childcare and care facilities and other measures to reconcile work and family life."<sup>3</sup> Building men's and women's ability to remain and progress in work was another key focus for 2004-5.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/employment\\_social/agenda2000/objectives\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/employment_social/agenda2000/objectives_en.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Council Decision of 22 July 2003 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States (COM 2003/578/EC) and available at: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/employment\\_strategy/prop\\_2003/adopted\\_guidelines\\_2003\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/prop_2003/adopted_guidelines_2003_en.htm)

<sup>3</sup> COM (2004) 239 Communication from the Commission: Strengthening the implementation of the EES, Brussels 7.4.2004 page 10, available at: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/employment\\_strategy/prop\\_2004/com\\_2004\\_0239\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/prop_2004/com_2004_0239_en.pdf)

The European Council of March 2005 highlighted the focus on growth and employment, simplification and national ownership of national action plans to relaunch the Lisbon reform agenda. The Spring European Council of March 2005 put jobs and growth on top of Europe's political priorities. The annual progress report on growth and jobs of January 2006 "*Time to Move Up A Gear*" *The European Commission's 2006 Annual Progress Report on Growth and Jobs* urges member states to achieve a better work-life balance for families and make it attractive for older workers to remain employed. One of the priority actions the Commission has identified is responding to globalisation and ageing; more people are needed to work and for longer. Member states are urged to take create greater opportunities to for workers to combine work and family life. It is also recommended that open and responsive labour markets should be combined with policies to help workers remain employed and to progress in work. The Commission also recommends that the availability of quality childcare should be increased in line with Member States' own national targets and that policies aimed at enhancing gender equality and family friendly policies should be implemented.

The Commission has undertaken a consultation with social partners on better ways to reconcile family and professional life on the Working Time Directive. The consultation points to the necessity to revise the Directive. However, it is noted that the Directive may not be the right instrument for dealing with the question of compatibility between work and family life, even though the Directive can encourage this objective. ETUC has criticized the Commission for watering down the directive against the interest and safety and work-life balance of male and female workers.

The UK has been one of the vocal member states refusing to accept the Commission's proposals for a Working Time Directive where the opt-out clause for working more than 48 hours a week should end by 2012. A group of member states led by the UK maintained that the opt-out is important for competitiveness and job creation at the Employment Council in Luxembourg on 2 June 2005.

The European Employment Guidelines of July 2005 highlight the importance improving adaptability of workers and enterprises and of equal opportunities and combating discrimination:

- Gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender equality should be ensured in all action taken, specifically in the situation of young people and to promoting access to employment throughout working life.
- Promote a lifecycle approach to work through: resolute action to increase female participation and reduce gender gaps in employment, unemployment and pay, better **reconciliation of work and private life** and the provision of accessible and affordable childcare facilities and care for other dependants,

Proposals for employment guidelines for 2006 are currently being developed, but have not been published yet.

The process of co-ordination national employment policies at EU level was revised in 2005 to improve coordination between Member States and the European institutions on the one hand and, on the other hand, to better coordinate employment policies with macroeconomic and microeconomic policies of the EU. This new European Employment Strategy covers a three year period, from 2005 to 2008.<sup>4</sup>

A number of reports in light of Lisbon have drawn attention to the policy priorities and measures being implemented in Member States. In the UK, improving the quality and affordability of childcare, improving the status of the childcare profession and increasing the number of trained people available will be key goals for the government because “the presence of children in the household reduces the participation of women in employment”<sup>5</sup>. Therefore in the UK, the impact of parenthood on employment is especially high. Promoting adaptability at work, through flexible working hours for example, and promoting childcare in various formats, is also a focus of the 2004 Joint Employment Report. The Commission's assessment of the UK National Reform Programme of 2005 does not address any specific recommendations for the UK in terms of work life balance, however it does request further attention to efforts to improve employment prospects for the most disadvantaged.

The European Commission's Social Policy Agenda<sup>6</sup>, published in June 2000, is part of an integrated approach to achieving economic and social renewal, as outlined in the Lisbon Strategy. It seeks to ensure a positive interaction between the EU's economic, employment and social policy goals and is designed to act as a benchmark when annual employment reports are published by Member States. It states that “quality of work includes better jobs and more balanced ways of combining working life with personal life”. A communication from the Commission and entitled *Employment and social policies: a framework for investing in quality*<sup>7</sup>, takes this aim forward, together with some aims of the Lisbon strategy as reinforced by the goals expressed at the subsequent Nice and Stockholm summits. It therefore provides a broad framework for addressing quality within the context of the Social Policy Agenda, focussing on the goal of promoting quality in work.

Quality is central to the modernisation of the European Social Model. The communication highlights some indicators to measure the performance of Member States on work-life balance issues. It further states that the main instruments to deliver on work-life balance are the social partners, the European Employment Strategy (launched 1997 and updated by the

---

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/employment\\_strategy/index\\_en.htm#ees](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/index_en.htm#ees)

<sup>5</sup> COM (2000) 551 Final of 6/9/2000. *Joint Employment Report 2000* European Commission. Joint Employment reports 1998-2004 available at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/employment\\_strategy/employ\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/employ_en.htm)

<sup>6</sup> COM (2000) 379 Final of 28/6/2000 Social Policy Agenda available at: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/general/com00-379/com379\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/general/com00-379/com379_en.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> COM (2001) 313 Final of 20/6/2001. *Employment and social policies: a framework for investing in quality* Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

2003 Guidelines for Member States) and legislation. Possible indicators could be the proportion of workers with flexible working arrangements, the opportunities for maternity and parental leave and their take-up rates and the scale of child-care facilities for pre-school and primary school aged children. The 2003 update of the Social Policy Agenda states that agenda is generally on track, but more needs to be done to achieve quality in social policies. The relaunched Social Agenda 2005-2010 has two key priorities: employment and fighting poverty and promoting equal opportunities. These key priorities support two of the Commission's strategic goals for the next five years: prosperity and solidarity.<sup>8</sup>

The UK model of social partnership is based on diverse and informal arrangements that allow employers and employees to reach agreements that best suit their circumstances. The government has consulted social partners to gauge the level of effectiveness of mechanisms to enforce the Working Time Regulations that were issued in March 2000.

The UK National Reform programme of October 2005 outlines how the European Employment Guidelines are being addressed and taken forward in the UK. The main strategies to improve employment opportunities for parents are improving the supply of affordable childcare. The network of Sure Start Children's centres will be extended to 2,500 across the country by 2008, rising to 3,500, one for every community, by 2010. A statutory duty will also be put on Local Authorities to secure sufficient childcare provision for their community; and to offer access to childcare for children aged 3-14, from 8am to 6pm on each weekday throughout the year by 2010.<sup>9</sup>

The European Commission has established the European Work Organisation Network (EWON)<sup>10</sup> in order to foster competitiveness, employment and quality of working life. EWON aims to promote and disseminate new forms of work organisation across the EU. It highlights a number of studies and surveys which confirm that enterprises adopting new forms of work, experience positive and long-lasting results in their performance, both in terms of costs and quality.



---

<sup>8</sup> *The new Social Agenda: an essential pillar of the new growth and jobs strategy, 2005*

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/152&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

<sup>9</sup> *Lisbon Strategy for Jobs and Growth: UK National Reform Programme 2005* [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/E60/3D/lisbon\\_jobs131005.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/E60/3D/lisbon_jobs131005.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> European Work Organisation Network (EWON) web: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/social/workorg/ewon/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social/workorg/ewon/index_en.htm)

### 3.0 UK Government Policy Context

In March 2000, the government launched the **Work-life Balance Campaign**<sup>11</sup> to encourage employers to introduce flexible working practices which enable their employees to achieve a better balance between work and the rest of their lives. There are three elements to the campaign:

- Establishment of **Employers for Work-Life Balance**, an independent alliance of leading Work-Life balance employers committed to working in partnership with government to promote good practice in the business community. Case studies of employers who promote the work-life balance are available on the Employers for Work-Life balance website.<sup>12</sup>
- The Challenge Fund: ran for three years from 2000, to help employers explore how work-life balance policies can help them deliver goods and services more efficiently and flexibly. The Fund closed to new applicants at the end of July 2003. The fund provided free consultancy advice to forward looking organisations that want to introduce innovative working arrangements that benefit their business, employees and customers. 448 companies took up this service during the period.
- Publication, in 2000, of *Changing Patterns in a Changing World*, a Department for Education & Employment (now Department for Education & Skills) discussion document which includes a six-point checklist of the principles of the work-life balance.<sup>13</sup>
- Publication of *'Flexible Working The Business Case'* a document providing 50 case studies of SME's and larger businesses offering flexible work life balance strategies.<sup>14</sup>

The DTI published *The Essential Guide to Work-Life Balance*<sup>15</sup> in September 2001. It is aimed at individuals and gives guidance on how to apply for flexible work and on negotiating a change to an existing working pattern. Case studies of individuals working flexibly are included. Another DTI publication is *The Business Case*<sup>16</sup> which is a guide explaining why work-life balance is a business issue and how businesses can use work-life balance approaches to their advantage.

A combined DfEE (Department for Education & Employment) and Women's Unit guide titled *Creating a Work-Life Balance*,<sup>17</sup> offers advice to employers on how to set up policies and working practices, which enable their employees to achieve a better Work-Life balance.

---

<sup>11</sup> <http://164.36.164.20/work-lifebalance>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.employersforwork-lifebalance.org.uk>

<sup>13</sup> *Changing Patterns in a Changing World* is available at: <http://www.dti.gov.uk/work-lifebalance/docs/a4.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Available at: [http://164.36.164.20/work-lifebalance/pdfs/pdf\\_wlb1\\_4\\_03.pdf](http://164.36.164.20/work-lifebalance/pdfs/pdf_wlb1_4_03.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> *The Essential Guide to Work-Life Balance* (September 2001) can be ordered from DTI Publications. Telephone 0870 1502 500 or visit [www.dti.gov.uk/work-lifebalance](http://www.dti.gov.uk/work-lifebalance)

<sup>16</sup> *The Business Case* (September 2001) can be ordered from DTI Publications. Telephone 0870 1502 500

<sup>17</sup> *Creating a Work-Life Balance – a good practice guide for employers* (September 2000) is available from DfEE Publications. Telephone 0845 60 222 60 quote: WLBGPGE1

The Employment Action Plans, now called national Reform programmes take forwards the member states' plans at a national level. The UK Employment Action plan 2004<sup>18</sup> identified a strategic partnership project on long working hours set up to promote best practice in the workforce and identify organisations that have changed their working practices to combat a long-hours culture. The project ran until July 2005, by the Equal Opportunities Commission plus other relevant partners. As the project is now finished, case studies have been written about how to manage change and practical ways of reducing long hours, available on the DTI website.<sup>19</sup> The government also launched a consultation paper on long hours working, looking at preserving choice for employees while protecting those who do not wish to work long hours. The 12 week consultation ended in September 2004 and outlined that employers' organisations were strongly opposed to the loss of the opt out. Conversely the trade unions were in favour of phasing out the opt out. A minority of responses highlighted the importance individual choice.

The Partnership Fund<sup>20</sup> supported organisations that are committed to working in partnership with employees to solve business issues and to develop better employment relations within the workplace. The fund has now been closed. In total, the DTI funded 249 workplace projects, over 20 strategic projects and committed over £12.5 million under the Fund up to 31st March 2004. Strategic Partnership projects, which formed part of the original fund, continue to be delivered and reach beyond single workplace projects to address sectoral and regional issues. Currently 20 projects are funded. The six priority areas that the projects span are information & consultation, work organisation / working time, learning & skills, public sector reform, health and safety, equality and diversity.

The most comprehensive study of work-life practices in Great Britain is *Work-Life Balance 2000*.<sup>21</sup> The survey covered 7500 employees, 2500 workplaces and 250 company headquarters. Some of its key findings included:

- Employers and employees agreed that while organisational goals have priority, employers have a responsibility to help people balance work and other aspects of their lives.
  - Those most likely to work long hours were men in couple households with dependent children. 14% worked 60 or more hours a week.
  - In many cases staff working in excess of their normal hours were not compensated in any way.
  - The main advantage of work-life balance reported by employees was having happier staff.
  - The main disadvantage was shortage of staff.
- 

<sup>18</sup> Available to download from

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/employment\\_strategy/04\\_national\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/04_national_en.htm)

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/work\\_time\\_regs/LONGWORKINGHOURS.pdf](http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/work_time_regs/LONGWORKINGHOURS.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> The Partnership Fund (DTI) <http://www.dti.gov.uk/partnershipfund> Tel: 0207 215 6252 E-mail:

<http://www.dti.gov.uk/partnershipfund>

<sup>21</sup> *Work-Life Balance 2000: Baseline study of work-life balance practices in Great Britain* (June 2001) DfES Publications. Telephone 0845 60 222 60 quote: WLBSUMBS1

---

- In 62% of workplaces at least some staff were allowed to vary their usual hours.

A second, follow-up Survey was completed in November 2003,<sup>22</sup> and the results of the employers' element show strong support for work life balance and an increase in provision. The main aims of the 2002 study are in part to monitor what has changed since the previous study was conducted, and also provide a baseline for future evaluation in terms of the provisions brought in under the Employment Act 2002, specifically the duty on employers to give serious consideration to requests from parents of young children to work flexibly. The study is based on an employer and an employee survey.<sup>23</sup>

Changes to the Employment Bill introduced in April 2003, include the right to two weeks paid paternity leave around the time of a child's birth or of a child newly-placed for adoption and an increase in paid maternity leave to 26 weeks. These changes were initially proposed by the government in "Work and Parents: Competitiveness and Choice."<sup>24</sup> An independent Work and Parents Taskforce which finished their deliberations in November 2001, looked at how to meet parents' desire for more flexible work patterns in a way that is compatible with business efficiency. The taskforce listed its recommendations in the report *About Time: Flexible Working*<sup>25</sup> which the government accepted in principle.

The new laws introduced on 6 April 2003<sup>26</sup> provide parents with more opportunities than ever before to balance their work and childcare responsibilities to the benefit of employers, employees and their children. The main areas covered are:

- **Maternity Leave and Pay:** ordinary maternity leave (usually paid) was increased to 26 weeks and additional maternity leave (usually unpaid) also increased to 26 weeks. The Department for Work and Pensions is making changes to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) and Maternity Allowance (MA). The most important of these are increases the length of time covered by SMP or MA and increases in the amount paid.
- **Flexible Working:** Eligible employees, who are parents of children aged under six, or of disabled children aged under 18, now have the right to apply to work flexibly. Their employers have a duty to consider such requests seriously.
- **Paternity Leave and Pay:** Eligible employees can now take up to two weeks' paid leave to care for their new baby and support the mother.
- **Parental Leave:** Employees – both mothers and fathers – who have completed one year's service with their employers, are entitled to 13 weeks' (unpaid) parental leave to care for their child. This can usually be taken up to five years from the date of birth. Parents of disabled children are entitled to 18 weeks' parental leave up to the child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, providing they have the qualifying length of service.

---

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/emar/errs22MainReport.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> The employee survey is available at: <http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/emar/errs27.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Available at: [http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/g\\_paper/summary.htm](http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/g_paper/summary.htm)

<sup>25</sup> *About Time: Flexible Working* (November 2001) available to download from: [www.dti.gov.uk/er/workingparents.htm](http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/workingparents.htm)

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.dti.gov.uk/er/workingparents.htm>

- **Adoption Leave and Pay:** parental leave in cases of adoption can be taken up to five years from the date of placement (or the child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, if that is sooner).
- **Time off for Dependants:** All employees are also entitled to take a reasonable amount of (unpaid) time off work to deal with an emergency or unexpected situation involving a dependant.

Further changes are being introduced through the Work and Families Bill, which is outlined overleaf.

In January 2003, the Treasury and the DTI published a document '*Balancing Work and Family Life: Enhancing choice and support for parents*<sup>27</sup> which outlined the government's strategy to help parents achieve work-life balance, including proposals that go beyond the new rights introduced in April 2003. The range of measures considered includes:

- the case for counting unpaid maternity leave as being in work for the purpose of tax credits, to enable families to continue to receive support during this period.
- allowing parents to use their full parental leave as one block at the end of maternity, paternity or adoption leave.
- whether to allow fathers time off to attend antenatal care.
- whether to extend the period of paid paternity leave and/or introduce unpaid paternity leave.
- the case for extending paid paternity leave in cases of multiple births and disabled children.

A summary of responses to the document is available on-line.<sup>28</sup>

Another key plank in the work-life balance agenda is the National Childcare Strategy (NCS)<sup>29</sup>, launched in May 1998, with the publication of a Green Paper, 'Meeting the Childcare Challenge'. The aim is to have a range of good quality, affordable childcare for children aged 0-14, and up to age 16 for children with special needs, in every neighbourhood, including out of school childcare for a million children across UK, by 2003. The Strategy is founded on a commitment to promoting the well-being of children, offering equal opportunities for parents, especially women, and to supporting parents in balancing work and family life.

The NCS has delivered a major expansion in childcare provision with substantial numbers of new places in the public, private and voluntary sectors and with a wide variety of types of childcare provider - notably, day nurseries, playgroups, out of school clubs and childminding. Since 1997, more than 553,000 new childcare places have been created across the country, benefiting over 1,007,000 children. The main funder of out-of-school childcare is currently the New Opportunities Fund (Lottery) Out of School Hours Programme. This ran from 1999

---

<sup>27</sup> "Balancing Work and Family Life: Enhancing choice and support for parents" is available to download at [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/topics/topics\\_family/topics\\_family\\_worklifebal.cfm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/topics/topics_family/topics_family_worklifebal.cfm)

<sup>28</sup> Available at: [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/288/45/balancing\\_work\\_life\\_summary\\_230104.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/288/45/balancing_work_life_summary_230104.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> <http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page1430.asp>

to 2003 and since 1999, has created over 288,000 new childcare places. A number of key programmes, including the Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative, have been targeted at extending provision in the most disadvantaged areas of the country where suitable childcare can be scarcer.

In addition, from April 2005 the Government has been piloting the New Deal Plus for lone parents.<sup>31</sup> This is a package of support bringing together a coherent set of measures based on core provision available nationally through the New Deal for Lone Parents programme, and existing pilots.<sup>32</sup> The pilots give advisers the tools they need to make a clearer, stronger and more comprehensive offer of help and support to lone parents than ever before.<sup>30</sup>

The Government has invested heavily in training, developing and increasing the size of the childcare workforce (which grew by 21% to 275,000 between 1998 and 2001); introduced National Standards (highlighting a series of minimum quality levels for Under 8s childcare); strengthened the regulation and inspection of providers; and improved information about what is available. Parents have also been given help with the cost of childcare through the Working Families Tax Credit. The growth in childcare has been complemented by a major expansion in free early education for all 4 year olds and an increasing number of 3 year olds.

In December 2004 the Government launched *Choice for parents, the best start for children: a ten year strategy for childcare*<sup>31</sup>. This strategy sets out the Government's long-term vision to ensure that every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life.

- **Choice and flexibility:** parents to have greater choice about balancing work and family life
- **Availability:** for all families with children aged up to 14 who need it, an affordable, flexible, high quality childcare place that meets their circumstances
- **Quality:** high quality provision with a highly skilled childcare and early years workforce, among the best in the world
- **Affordability:** families to be able to afford flexible, high quality childcare that is appropriate for their needs

The Government undertook a range of detailed consultations on particular issues featured in the Strategy, including the workforce, proposals for legislation and single quality framework in 2005. Following the consultation the Government is:

- Extending maternity and adoption pay from six to nine months from April 2007
- Extending the right to request flexible working to carers of adults from April 2007

---

<sup>30</sup> *Lisbon Strategy for Jobs and Growth: UK National Reform Programme 2005* [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/E60/3D/lisbon\\_jobs131005.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/E60/3D/lisbon_jobs131005.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> Available at: [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pre\\_budget\\_report/prebud\\_pbr04/assoc\\_docs/prebud\\_pbr04\\_adchildcare.cfm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pre_budget_report/prebud_pbr04/assoc_docs/prebud_pbr04_adchildcare.cfm)

- Giving fathers the right up to 26 weeks Additional Paternity Leave, some of which could be paid if mother returns to work (further consultation in Feb 2006)
- Introducing measures to help employers manage administration of leave and pay from April 2007

The Work and Families Bill will deliver commitments outlined in the Ten Year Childcare Strategy and set out in the Government Response to the consultation *Work and Families: Choice and Flexibility*. The Work and Families Bill was introduced into the House of Commons on 18 October 2005. It has proceeded through the House of Commons and was introduced into the House of Lords on 19 January 2006. Draft regulations have been published to deliver the commitments on extending the right to request flexible working to carers of adults as well as bringing in the maternity and adoption leave measures announced in the Government response to the Consultation. The consultation is ongoing and will close on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2006.

Following the consultations a new Childcare Bill was also introduced to Parliament on November 8<sup>th</sup> 2005. The Bill includes new and extended statutory duties for local authorities to provide sufficient and quality childcare for all working families in their areas from 2008 and also introduces a new legal framework underpinning a new single quality, inspection and regulation framework for early education and care. Families' views also to be heard in the planning and delivery of services. It also confirms the vital role of local authorities as strategic leaders, working in partnership across all sectors to shape the future provision of childcare and delivery of early childhood services, raising the quality of provision and improving outcomes for all children.<sup>32</sup>

Despite these developments, the Daycare Trust reports that the cost of childcare has risen rapidly in the last five years; the cost of a typical full-time nursery place in England has increased by 27 per cent, outstripping inflation by nearly 20 per cent.<sup>33</sup> The highest costs were found in the London and the South east. Their survey reports that two-thirds of parents surveyed reported a lack of affordable, quality childcare in their area in their area. Although help with childcare costs is available through the child tax credit system introduced in 2005, parents in the UK still pay 75 per cent of the costs of childcare against European counterparts at 30 per cent.

Commenting on the new Childcare Bill, the Daycare Trust highlights that although the will place a new duty on local authorities to provide sufficient childcare for all working families in their areas, the Bill does not address affordable childcare, a significant factor in allowing parents to work.

---

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.surestart.gov.uk/aboutsurestart/about/strategy/>

<sup>33</sup> Daycare Trust News Release '27% increase in childcare costs in five years'.  
[www.daycaretrust.org.uk](http://www.daycaretrust.org.uk)

### **3.1 Policy Context in Wales**

In Wales, the Welsh Assembly Government is responsible for managing the Work-life Balance Initiative, which was launched in Wales in March 2000. Together with Chwarae Teg,<sup>34</sup> the Assembly Government has used the DfEs discussion document *Changing Patterns in a Changing World* to promote the business case for work-life balance and to invite comments on how to best put it into practice. Chwarae Teg is an independent organisation backed by a partnership of public, private and voluntary organisations. It helps to promote the work-life balance by supporting and developing childcare projects and partnerships; providing a technology-based, Wales Childcare Information Service; raising the profile of women in a caring world and promoting family friendly working practices with employers. In addition, the Challenge Fund provides support for small businesses to undertake projects concerning work-life balance. This is complemented by the pamphlet *Work-Life Balance: A better way of working and living – a guide for employers in Wales*. In March 2004, 11 new projects in the SME and Voluntary Sector in Wales received nearly £100k in the latest round of the Work life Balance Challenge Fund.

Childcare is a particularly burning issue in Wales; a report "A Childcare Revolution in Wales" published by the Bevan Foundation found that there are only enough places for one in seven children in Wales under the age of eight, the figure as low as one in twenty in deprived areas.<sup>35</sup>

### **3.2 Policy Context in Scotland**

The Scottish Executive has supported the measures introduced at UK level to address the work-life balance. Fair Play Scotland's work-life balance publication "Take the Time" was launched in February 2003 by Anne McGuire MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Scotland. "Take the Time" is a guide to work-life balance aimed specifically at Scottish employers and Human Resources teams. It provides practical, step-by-step guidance to developing and implementing a work-life strategy and includes a number of case studies, showing how organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors in Scotland have made work life balance work for them. Fair Play<sup>36</sup> exists to increase opportunities for women to participate in the labour market in a competitive and socially inclusive economy by promoting best practice in equal opportunities. Both the Challenge Fund and Partnership Fund are also applicable in Scotland.

Central to helping address the work-life balance in Scotland, has been the emphasis on childcare. In May 1998, the government published "Meeting the Childcare Challenge: A

---

<sup>34</sup> Chwarae Teg (Fair Play) URL: <http://www.chwaraeteg.com/>

<sup>35</sup> *A Childcare Revolution in Wales*, Bevan Foundation, 2005  
<http://www.eoc.org.uk/Default.aspx?page=15527&lang=en>

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.fairplayscotland.com>

Childcare Strategy for Scotland."<sup>37</sup> This recognised that good quality childcare has benefits for children by promoting their development and learning, and benefits for parents, by enabling them to work. Although there was already a diverse range of childcare provision in Scotland, action was needed to fill gaps in the formal childcare sector which enables parents to take up employment or training. The overall aim of the Childcare Strategy was therefore to make high quality, accessible and affordable childcare available in every neighbourhood.

A survey was commissioned by the Scottish Executive to investigate parents demand for childcare, comparing childcare use to the previous survey undertaken in 2000 and looking more in detail at needs of different population groups. The survey, published in 2004, highlights that it is particularly important for policy makers to decide on the balance between formal and informal childcare provision given parental preferences and economic implications. A number of barriers to childcare provision need to be tackled, including lack of information for parents, inflexible working arrangements, inadequate transport provision to nearest childcare facilities and affordability.<sup>38</sup>

Thirty-two Childcare Partnerships - one in each local authority in Scotland - have now been established to assess local childcare needs and fill gaps at local level. These bring together the interests, knowledge, expertise, ideas and resources of the public, private and voluntary sectors, parents and the community. They identify local need, develop plans and generate proposals for the development of services. The New Opportunities Fund will put in over £25 million to support out of school care<sup>39</sup>.

The document "*A partnership for a better Scotland*" laid out the Scottish Executive's plans for the 2003-2007 parliamentary session<sup>40</sup>. The commitments relevant to pre-school education and childcare are:

- Creation of opportunities for our children and young people at all ages to grow and develop through the provision of more flexible and more available childcare.
- Nursery school provision for three and four year olds and the creation of flexible childcare provision accessible to all, expanding facilities, in the public, private and voluntary sectors and through co-operative arrangements.
- Maintenance of free nursery places for every three and four year old in Scotland, helping to give every child the best possible start in their primary school.
- Support for breakfast clubs.

---

<sup>37</sup> Available at: <http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm39/3958/3958.htm>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/padcs.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Ministers emphasise flexible working benefits to business and family life. Press Release Scottish Executive 19/5/2000. [www.scotland.gov.uk/news/2000/05/sess148.asp](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/news/2000/05/sess148.asp) and see Childcare Partnerships website: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/about/ED/EEC/00015135/page281701866.aspx>

<sup>40</sup> See <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/government/pfbs-00.asp>

- Provision of childcare support in areas of high unemployment in order to help those in work, training or education.

#### **4.0 Other UK Organisations involved in the Work-Life Balance**

A whole host of organisations have taken on the work-life balance agenda.

The **TUC** has a website entitled *Changing Times*, which is devoted to work-life balance<sup>41</sup>. This includes a case study guide on the work-life balance and a subscription news service, resources and case studies related to work-life balance. Using the experience of the Employers' Organisation for Local Government and Bristol City Council through its *Time of Our Lives* project, the TUC also provides a guide aimed "at union representatives and managers who wish to work in partnership to develop and implement strategies for work-life balance which enhance productivity, efficiency and service delivery – and improve job security and satisfaction". The TUC launched the "Changing Times" partnership process<sup>42</sup> in 2001 as an innovative way to help unions and managers at plant level to organise work in a way that gives employees more choice over the pattern of their working hours whilst improving organisational efficiency.

The TUC was also involved in a pilot called 'Our Time' which was initiated by the Inland Revenue and civil service unions to give staff more options about when and how they work their hours, including compressed hours and time-banking. The pilot is now featured on the website as a template for the Inland Revenue and other government departments.

The TUC has recently been campaigning against 'Britain's long hours culture'. The TUC organised a 'Work Your Proper Hours Day' on 24<sup>th</sup> February, urging staff to work their contractual hours only and take a full lunch break. The TUC estimates that nearly five million employees worked on average an extra day a week in unpaid overtime in 2005.

**UNISON** also devotes a section of its website to work life balance<sup>43</sup>. Their pamphlet, *Work life Balance* March 2004, sets out UNISON's policies and guidance in the work-life field<sup>44</sup>.

**ACAS** is also heavily involved in Work Life Balance issues.<sup>45</sup> Most of their work involves helping companies through workplace projects and training, mainly aimed at improving workplace relations, processes and employment practices. ACAS runs 'Working Parent seminars', aimed at giving SMEs updates on the latest thinking and legislation for working parents and how best to introduce it. ACAS also conducts and commissions research into a wide range of employment relations issues.

---

<sup>41</sup> [www.tuc.org.uk/changingtimes](http://www.tuc.org.uk/changingtimes)

<sup>42</sup> See <http://www.tuc.org.uk/changingtimes/tucprocess.htm>

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.unison.org.uk/worklifebalance/index.asp>

<sup>44</sup> See <http://www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/13142.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> See <http://www.acas.org.uk>

The CBI<sup>46</sup> position is that employees should be able to balance as far as possible non-work commitments with their responsibilities to their employer. Companies frequently find such enhanced flexibility boosts employees' productivity and loyalty as well as the company's reputation. However, the scope for such flexibility varies greatly from one business to another and regulation is a barrier to the achievement of mutually advantageous outcomes.

The pay gap is a serious issue which the CBI believes must be tackled. The priority should be to remove the structural barriers which limit women's choices in employment, i.e. by tackling occupational segregation and encouraging women into higher paying sectors, improving childcare provisions and promoting flexible working amongst higher skilled, higher paid jobs.

The CBI has emphasised that further progress on the work-life balance will be achieved most effectively by the spread of best practice rather than by regulation and have suggested that any new legislation should be broadly in line with existing best practice. The CBI was also at the forefront of a campaign called 'Fit for the Future' which was a national best practice campaign, encouraging the sharing of knowledge between businesses of all kinds and sectors to improve their performance. The 'Fit For the Future' campaign is now part of the DTI's *Achieving best practice in your business* solution<sup>47</sup>.

The CBI's 'Work Organisation Project' draws on examples from company case studies as it highlights the opportunities available to UK employers. The project receives funding from Objective 3 via the UK Work Organisation Network. In April 2000, the CBI also launched HEADSTART as a benchmarking and evaluation tool for companies to enhance their performance by reviewing their people management policies and practice by facilitating discussions with a cross-section of employees. The tool is organised around the themes of work organisation, leadership and culture, employee development and employee involvement.

Recent policy initiatives, like the Work and Families Bill are not supported by the CBI. The main problem with the Bill for the CBI is that it stands to extend paid maternity leave to nine months and the right to request flexible working to carers and as well as a new right to additional paternity leave. The CBI argues that there should be more help employers such as the option to return the administration of statutory maternity pay to government.

The **Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)**<sup>48</sup>, worked closely with the DTI on the Work and Parents Review and responded to the Green Paper 'Work and Parents: Competitiveness and Choice' as well as being involved on the subsequent consultations on maternity, paternity, adoption and parental leave. The EOC can provide information, advice and publications of interest.

The EOC's priorities on work-life balance are to:

---

<sup>46</sup> Confederation of British Industry web: [www.cbi.org.uk](http://www.cbi.org.uk) CBI, Centre Point, 103 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DU, Enquiries: 020 7395 8247

<sup>47</sup> See <http://www.dti.gov.uk/bestpractice/>

<sup>48</sup> Equal Opportunities Commission Tel: 0845 6015901 [www.eoc.org.uk](http://www.eoc.org.uk)

---

- seek a comprehensive framework of rights to leave and flexible hours for both mothers and fathers.
- promote the business benefits of work-life balance and encourage improved policies and practices for working parents.
- to promote culture change so that employees who need time off or shorter hours do not face discrimination at work.

The EOC welcomed the introduction of new family-friendly legislation from April 2003. They have formed the Parent's and Carer's Coalition in 2004.<sup>49</sup> Member organisations represent parents, carers and paid care workers as well as older and disabled people and include Age Concern, Child Poverty Action Group, the TUC and Relate. The Coalition wants to see more access to flexible working and support for carers and parents. The EOC's an investigation into flexible and part time working '*Britain's Hidden Brain Drain*'<sup>50</sup> found that 4 out of 5 of Britain's 7 million part-time workers are working in jobs that do not use their potential Over three and a million of those use higher qualifications or skills and had more dsupervision/management of staff in previous jobs. Women part-time workers also earn 40% less per hour than men working full time. The EOC calls on the Government to extend the right to request flexible working to all. Following from the publication of the report the EOC will work with Government, employers and trade unions in a new investigation examining imaginative and practical ways in which to transform workplaces to meet new demands.

The EOC has recently launched a new investigation into the transformation of work. The project will build on the findings from the EOC's recent investigations into occupational segregation and flexible working. The study will look closely at lifecycle choices and routes into work, and examine the key trends predicted in the next 20 years of Britain's changing workforce. The investigation will look at what employers think will best deliver for them in the 21st century and how key groups of individuals are accessing opportunities into work as well as the constraints in and outside the workplace. In the final stage new models of work will be created, drawing on our investigation findings and on the experience of the business leaders and other key stakeholders. An online survey will be published for employers in early 2006.

**Equality Direct**<sup>51</sup> is a telephone advice line which is designed to give business managers access to a wide range of joined-up advice on a wide range of equality issues. It is available throughout England and advisers provide practical advice on specific questions to help make decisions which are right for companies. The Equality Direct website provides general guidance on some of the main equalities topics.

---

<sup>49</sup> See [http://www.eoc.org.uk/cseng/policyandcampaigns/caring\\_parenting.asp](http://www.eoc.org.uk/cseng/policyandcampaigns/caring_parenting.asp)

<sup>50</sup> See [http://www.eoc.org.uk/cseng/policyandcampaigns/flexible\\_working\\_gfi\\_webpage.asp](http://www.eoc.org.uk/cseng/policyandcampaigns/flexible_working_gfi_webpage.asp)

<sup>51</sup> Equality Direct: [www.equalitydirect.org.uk](http://www.equalitydirect.org.uk) Tel: 0845 600 3444

**The Joseph Rowntree Foundation**<sup>52</sup> undertakes research and development programmes which seek to better understand the causes of social difficulties and explore ways of better overcoming them. The Foundation does not carry out the research in-house but works in partnership with a large variety of academic and other institutions to achieve its aims. The Foundation places great emphasis on disseminating the findings of its work and engaging with policy-makers and practitioners to develop better policies and practices. A range of recent studies have explored flexible working and family-friendly employment policies<sup>53</sup>.

**Working Families**<sup>54</sup>, a national charity, offers expertise and practical advice about new flexible ways of working. The helpline provides advice to individuals and organisations free of charge. The aim is to change the culture in the workplace to give real freedom of choice to people who cannot or do not wish to work traditional patterns. The website also contains a series of discussion forums discussing various relevant topics.

**Maternity Alliance**<sup>55</sup> is a national charity working to end inequality and promote the wellbeing of pregnant women, new parents and their babies. The Maternity Alliance provides information and advice and runs conferences on all aspects of maternity benefits and employment rights.

**Daycare Trust**<sup>56</sup> is a national childcare charity. It promotes quality, affordable childcare for all and advice for parents/carers, providers, employers, trade unions and policy makers on childcare issues.

**The Work Foundation**<sup>57</sup> is a part research, part business consultancy and part advocacy organisation. The organisation assesses UK workplaces and identifies emerging trends. Its work aims to influence public debate about the future of work through lobbying, events, media contact and dialogue with decision-makers.

**WLBC Ltd**<sup>58</sup> (Work Life Balance Consultancy) promotes work-life balance policies and practices to employers of all types and sizes, through the use of a national *Work-Life Balance Standard*. This can then lead to an accreditation to compliment Investors in People. WLBC Ltd works across the UK with its network of licensees who are responsible for delivering the standard to their clients. *The Work-Life Balance Standard* was developed in conjunction with the government, employers and employer organisations in response to demographic, social and technological changes which affect how, when and where we work.

**The Work Life Balance Centre**<sup>59</sup> aims to become a virtual gateway to web sites and other important information about the work life balance. The Centre has just undertaken a

---

<sup>52</sup> Joseph Rowntree Foundation, The Homestead, 40 Water End, York, YO30 6YP Tel: 01904 629 241 URL: [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk)

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialpolicy/n33.asp>

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk>

<sup>55</sup> Maternity Alliance, 45 Beech Street, London EC2P 2LX [www.maternityalliance.org.uk](http://www.maternityalliance.org.uk)

<sup>56</sup> Daycare Trust, 21 St George's Road, London, SE1 6ES [www.daycaretrust.org.uk](http://www.daycaretrust.org.uk)

<sup>57</sup> The Work Foundation, Peter Runge House, 3 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5DG  
Tel: 0870 165 6700. [www.theworkfoundation.com](http://www.theworkfoundation.com)

<sup>58</sup> WLBC Ltd. Tel:01460 777 13 e-mail: [info@wlbc.ltd.uk](mailto:info@wlbc.ltd.uk) web: [www.wlbc.ltd.uk](http://www.wlbc.ltd.uk)

<sup>59</sup> Work Life Balance Centre, 5 Nethercoe, Newton Burgoland, Leicestershire, LE67 2ST

research study with Keele University<sup>60</sup> the results of which will be available in spring 2005. A monthly newsletter called 'Balancing Act' is published online.

**Opportunity Now**<sup>61</sup> is a business-led campaign that works with employers to realise the economic potential and business benefits that women at all levels contribute to the workforce. By inspiring employers to challenge complacency and tackle barriers to women's progress, they encourage an inclusive culture in the workplace.

Since the launch of Opportunity Now in 1991 the number of participating employers has risen from 61 to 360 members among a wide range of organisations in the public, private and education sectors, establishing us a driving force for change. Members include British Airways, BUPA, Ernst & Young, GlaxoSmithKline and HSBC Bank plc. The organisation aims to signpost the latest information for companies, including expectations of stakeholders, the perceived impact of responsible business practices on both business and society, and in-depth analysis of the challenges for business, they also conduct an annual research programme called 'FastForward' which identifies and investigates current issues..

---

Tel: (+44) 01530 273056 [www.worklifebalancecentre.org](http://www.worklifebalancecentre.org)

<sup>60</sup> See <http://www.24-7survey.co.uk/>

<sup>61</sup> Opportunity Now, 137 Shepherdess Walk, London N1 7RQ Tel: 0870 600 2482 [www.opportunitynow.org.uk](http://www.opportunitynow.org.uk)

---

## **5.0 What does this mean for Equal DP's?**

At European level, the modernisation of Social Policy with its emphasis on quality has shown that the aim of achieving more and better employment requires the commitment of all social partners. At UK level, the government has begun to work in partnership with the business community to spread the benefits of work-life balance practices to employers. The message has been that work-life balance is good for both employees and employers because flexible working can reduce absenteeism, staff turnover, increase motivation, staff loyalty and productivity and at the same time generate substantial savings on staff costs. There are now examples of employers who are addressing the issue such as those involved with the independent Employers for Work-Life Balance alliance.

The challenge for **Equal** DP's is to promote flexible working practices and to test new, innovative approaches to the work-life balance. EQUAL DP's can play a key role in helping to improve the understanding of flexible working and although flexible working has been practised in some organisations before, a government backed campaign was only launched in March 2000. Therefore the potential exists for DP's to comprehensively evaluate their projects and to mainstream their outcomes to policy-makers. Indeed the DTI's work-life balance team encourages those with good practice in the field to contact them.

---

## 6.0 Useful websites

- Age Concern Scotland - <http://www.ageconcernscotland.org.uk/>
- Cabinet Office Diversity - <http://www.diversity-whatworks.gov.uk/>
- Capability Scotland - <http://www.capability-scotland.org.uk/>
- Confederation of British Industry - [www.cbi.org.uk](http://www.cbi.org.uk)
- Children in Scotland - <http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk/>
- Childcare Link (Sure Start) - <http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk/index.asp>
- Chwarae Teg: Work life balance in Wales - <http://www.chwaraeteg.com/>
- Daycare Trust - [www.daycaretrust.org.uk](http://www.daycaretrust.org.uk)
- Department for Trade and Industry - [www.dti.gov.uk](http://www.dti.gov.uk)
- Design for Well-being - <http://www.relax-well.co.uk/index.html>
- Disability Rights Commission – [www.drc-gb.org](http://www.drc-gb.org)
- Disability Unit – [www.disability.gov.uk](http://www.disability.gov.uk)
- Employers for Work-Life Balance - [www.employersforwork-lifebalance.org.uk](http://www.employersforwork-lifebalance.org.uk)
- Equal Opportunities Commission - [www.eoc.org.uk](http://www.eoc.org.uk)
- Equality Direct - [www.equalitydirect.org.uk](http://www.equalitydirect.org.uk)
- European Commission DG Employment & Social Affairs - [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/index\\_en.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/index_en.htm)
- European Work Organisation Network (EWON) - [http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/soc-dial/workorg/ewon/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/workorg/ewon/index_en.htm)
- Guardian Work life balance pages - <http://money.guardian.co.uk/worklifebalance>
- Homeworking.com - [www.homeworking.com](http://www.homeworking.com)
- Investors in people <http://www.iipuk.co.uk> and IIP work life balance model - <http://www.iipuk.co.uk/IIP/Internet/Models/Hidden/WorkLifeBalance/default.htm>
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation - [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk)
- Leeds University Future of Work - <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/esrcfutureofwork/>
- Maternity Alliance - [www.maternityalliance.org.uk](http://www.maternityalliance.org.uk)
- Men in Childcare, Scotland - <http://www.meninchildcare.com/>
- Millstones and Milestones - <http://www.millstonesandmilestones.com/>
- New Ways to Work - <http://www.new-ways.co.uk/>
- Nursery World - <http://www.nursery-world.com/>
- Opportunity Now - [www.opportunitynow.org.uk](http://www.opportunitynow.org.uk)
- One parent families, Scotland <http://www.opfs.org.uk>
- Partnership Fund DTI - <http://www.dti.gov.uk/partnershipfund/>
- Parent Zone Scotland - <http://www.parentzonescotland.gov.uk/>
- PCS Union (work life balance pages) <http://www.pcs.org.uk/>
- Scottish Executive - [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)
- Scottish Out of School Care Network - <http://www.soscn.org/>
- The Work Foundation - [www.theworkfoundation.com](http://www.theworkfoundation.com)
- Trades Union Congress - [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)
- Unison - <http://www.unison.org.uk/>
- Unison Scotland - <http://www.unison-scotland.org.uk/>

- Welsh Assembly Government- [www.wales.gov.uk](http://www.wales.gov.uk)
- WLBC Ltd - [www.wlbc.ltd.uk](http://www.wlbc.ltd.uk)
- Women in Science and Technology - <http://www.setwomenresource.org.uk/>
- Women Returnees Support Network - <http://www.women-returners.co.uk/>
- Work Foundation - <http://www.theworkfoundation.com/>
- Work Life Research - <http://www.workliferesearch.org/>
- Worksmart - <http://www.worksmart.org.uk/>
- Working Families – [www.workingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk)
- Working Balance - <http://www.workingbalance.co.uk/>
- Work Life Balance in Ireland - <http://www.wlbn.net>
- Work Life Balance DTI site - <http://www.dti.gov.uk/work-lifebalance/>
- Work Life Balance Centre - [www.worklifebalancecentre.org](http://www.worklifebalancecentre.org)
- Work Life Balance for Women - <http://www.ivillage.co.uk/workcareer/worklife>
- Work Life Balance Trust - <http://www.w-lb.org.uk/>
- Work-Life Research Centre - [www.workliferesearch.org](http://www.workliferesearch.org)