



Manifesto for European Elections 2024:

BUILDING A CARING EUROPE

Europe's 100 million family carers provide over 80 per cent of the care provided to adults and children who, due to illness, disability or a mental health difficulty, rely on their support. The economic value of this unpaid care accounts for 2.4% of EU GDP. Ireland's 500,000 family carers alone save the State some €20 billion each year – almost equivalent to the total HSE budget. Despite the enormity of their contribution, family carers across Europe continue to experience adverse effects on their health, social inclusion, financial stability, educational opportunities and employment prospects due to a lack of adequate support.

The European elections on June 7th provide an opportunity for candidates to pledge their commitment to building a more caring Europe that values, respects and supports family carers and promotes the rights and values enshrined in Article 2 of the EU Treaty - respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality and the wellbeing of its people. Family Carers Ireland calls on candidates to pledge that if elected to the European Parliament, they will act as a champion for family carers and will:

1 SUPPORT THE TRANSPOSITION & IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EU CARE STRATEGY

In 2022, the European Commission published the [EU Care Strategy](#) to ensure quality, affordable and accessible care services across the EU and to improve the situation of both family carers and those receiving care. The EU Care Strategy explicitly recognises that:

- Investing in the care sector will help ensure that caregiving is a choice rather than a necessity and that caring has a high societal and economic value.
- Carers should be provided with work-life balance support allowing them to combine their caregiving role with their careers.
- Carers should have access to adequate supports including counselling, training, respite and financial payments.

The EU Care Strategy must now be transposed into national legislation, with appropriate monitoring and assessment procedures – both at EU and member state level – and with the involvement of relevant organisations on the ground. As an active MEP, you can support the national transposition and implementation of the EU Care Strategy, ensuring that its commitments address the needs of family carers in Ireland. Furthermore, you can ensure that other EU policy initiatives take account and address the needs of family carers, e.g. EU4Health, Healthier Together, the Structural Funds, EU research priorities and the European Semester.

2 PROVIDE A VOICE FOR CARERS IN EUROPE BY JOINING THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONS FOR INFORMAL CARERS GROUP

The European Champions for Informal Carers Group is an active, dynamic and forward-looking group of MEPs from across member states who support the creation of a more carer-friendly Europe.

The group's work is focused on delivering concrete policy actions – analysing EU policies for their impact on carers, putting forward amendments to Commission proposals, tabling written questions and hosting hearings on family carers and their interests.

We urge that if elected, you will join this group and actively promote legislative and policy measures that advance the rights of family carers.