



Press release November the 27th 2020 :

## Care Work is Real Work !

### The campaign to prepare the second women's strike\* in Luxembourg is launched!

*On Friday November the 27th 2020, the JIF<sup>i</sup> platform launches the campaign for the second women's strike\* in Luxembourg. This feminist strike will take place on March the 8th 2021, the international day of struggle for women's rights<sup>ii</sup>.*

*From November the 27th 2020 onwards, you can expect regular newsletters (registration via [www.fraestreik.lu](http://www.fraestreik.lu)), open meetings in the four corners of the country (in person or online) and thematic events to prepare the strike and highlight our demands.*

*The JIF platform will not stray from its main focus in 2021. We insist: Care work<sup>iii</sup> is real work.*

**In March 2020, the first women's strike\* in Luxembourg organised by the JIF platform saw 2000 people take to the streets and reached thousands on social media. Committed and mobilised for more money, more time and more respect for care work, these solidarity strikers called on the government to act.** Shortly afterwards, a pandemic broke out, that up to this day keeps the whole world on its toes. Ironically, paid and unpaid care work suddenly finds itself in the spotlight, helping to keep the economy afloat and saving countless lives. Luxembourg experienced its first public health state of emergency and during the lockdown, carers were applauded, cashiers were thanked. A whole range of jobs were seen as indispensable, including cleaning workers, because they are done by people working for the well-being of others by providing services that the population can hardly do without.

What the current period has revealed above all else is the essence and the very meaningfulness of care work, of taking care of others. It did not take long for studies and statistics to surface in our neighbouring countries and drive the point home that women\* were running the shop both in the labour market and at home.

To be honest, this doesn't come as a surprise... One might have expected the government to finally realise the need for urgent action to raise the profile of care work. More than ever, the **22 demands of the JIF platform for better recognition and equal sharing of care work deserve to be taken seriously by the government.**

Many households have become poorer since the economy has slowed down. The most vulnerable to the health risks and economic downturn caused by the pandemic are women in general, domestic workers, single-parent families, the undocumented, women with an immigration background, and the homeless. Unemployment has been on the rise, hitting women\* especially hard. A significant increase in the SSM should therefore not be delayed any longer.

The 60-hour week with up to 12 hours of work per day has again become the norm for several categories of staff, particularly in the health sector. With remote working and the closure of schools, new tensions have arisen between couples in the negotiation of domestic work and child education. New workloads had to be taken on, particularly by the majority of



women who were on call during confinement. In response to the economic and ecological crises and for an egalitarian sharing of care work, a reduction of working hours is necessary. Let us not lose sight of this!

This health crisis has changed the way most people view care work. Especially in the professional field, the importance of training and hiring more staff in care and health occupations in the future, has been repeatedly stressed by the unions in the sector and recognised by the government. So far, actions have not followed their words. **For JIF's 2021 edition, the question of the future of our care and health system will be strongly linked to the issue of recognition and valorisation of paid and unpaid care work.**

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<sup>i</sup> The women's strike\* is a **JIF Platform's** initiative.

Members: Asti, Centre LGBTIQ+ cicada, CID | Fraen an Gender, Conseil National des Femmes du Luxembourg, CSF, déi gréng, déi jonk gréng, déi Lénk, Femmes en détresse, Femmes socialistes, Finkapé, Laika, OGBL equality, Planning Familial, Time for Equality and committed private individuals.

<sup>ii</sup> **Women\*** - Any person who is socially identified as a woman independently of his or her chosen sex or gender.

<sup>iii</sup> **Care work** - Any work that involves taking care of someone else in different ways (cleaning, cooking, taking care of children and dependants). This work can be either paid (e.g. cleaner, domestic worker) or unpaid (cleaning the house). It can be subject to official certification and diplomas (e.g. carers, educators, social workers, etc.) or not (e.g. being a parent or carer).