



**Global
Alliance
for Care**

Care in Focus

Global Alliance for Care
Statistics Sheet



October 2025

What is care?

Care work consists of all tasks carried out to ensure the day-to-day well-being of persons from various perspectives: physical, economic, and emotional.

This work includes two types of activities: **direct, personal and relational care activities** such as feeding a baby or nursing an ill person; and **indirect care activities**, such as cooking and cleaning.

Around the world, care is primarily provided by women and girls. This disproportionate responsibility for care work negatively affects them, as it creates time poverty. This limits their personal development and well-being, as it impedes their participation in the labor market, educational attainment, and their opportunities for self-care and recreation, among others.



An illustration of a diverse group of healthcare professionals standing around a large, stylized globe. The globe is orange and white, showing the continents. The professionals are depicted in various colors and styles, representing different ethnicities and genders. They are holding medical equipment like stethoscopes, a clipboard, and a syringe, symbolizing global healthcare collaboration.

- Every day, **16.4 billion hours** are dedicated to unpaid care work, which is comparable to **2 billion people** working 8-hour shifts without receiving any compensation ([ILO, 2018](#)).
- Globally, women perform **76.2% of all unpaid care work**, spending on average **3.2 times more time** on these tasks than men ([ILO, 2018](#)).
- The estimated economic value of this unpaid work is about **9% of global GDP**, or roughly **US\$11 trillion** ([ILO, 2018](#)).
- In 2023, an estimated **708 million women** were outside paid employment due to care responsibilities, compared with **40 million men**. This represents **45% of all women** who are inactive worldwide ([ILO, 2024a](#)).
- Globally, paid care work employs **381 million people, 65% of whom are women**. Whereas paid care work makes up **6.6% of global male employment**, it constitutes **19.3% of global female employment** ([ILO, 2018](#)).
- **80% of the world's 75.6 million** domestic workers are in informal employment. Of these, **76.2% are women**, most of whom lack access to basic labor and social protections ([ILO, 2021](#)).
- In OECD countries, **87% of the long-term care workforce are women** ([OECD, 2024](#)).
- By 2030, more than **2.3 billion people are expected to require care due to population aging** ([ILO, 2018](#)).
- The gender gap in retirement savings is about 26% to the detriment of women, reflecting career interruptions linked to care responsibilities ([WEF, 2025](#)).
- In low-income countries, rural women spend up to **14 hours per day** on unpaid care work ([L. Karimli et al., 2016](#)).
- **28.8% of employed migrant women work in the care sector**, compared to **12.4% of employed migrant men** ([ILO, 2024b](#)).
- By **2030**, there is expected to be a **global shortage of about 18 million health workers** to meet the world's needs ([WHO, 2020](#)).



Care Across Regions

- Women across all regions spend more time on unpaid care work. Across the Arab region, women spend on average **4.7 times more time** on unpaid care work than men, compared to **4.1 times more** in Asia and the Pacific, **3.4 times more** in Africa, **2.1** in Europe and Central Asia, and **1.7 times more in the Americas** ([ILO, 2018](#)).
- In **Latin America**, only **54% of women** living in households with children aged 0–5 participate in the labor market, compared with 90.8% of men ([ECLAC, 2023](#)).
- In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, women devote 12%–24% of their time to unpaid work, while men devote 5%–9% ([ECLAC, 2025](#)).
- In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, 27.4% of employed women work in the broader care sector (health, education, and paid domestic work), compared with 6.0% of men. Specifically, 92% of paid domestic workers are women ([ECLAC, 2025](#)).
- 73% of the world's 75.6 million domestic workers are concentrated in just two regions: **50% in Asia and the Pacific and 23% in the Americas**. ([ILO, 2021](#)).
- In sub-Saharan Africa, **68% of community health workers are women**, mostly young, and **59%** of them have only completed primary education. Most do not receive a salary: **43% receive non-monetary incentives and 23% receive stipends** ([ILO, 2018](#)).
- In **Asia and the Pacific**, **63% of women care workers** are in informal employment, **compared with 52% of men** ([UN Women, 2024](#)).
- **Asia and the Pacific** is the world's fastest-aging region; the number of long-term care workers there is projected to reach 90 million by 2050 ([ILO, 2024c](#)).
- In the **Arab States**, only **22% of women** participate in paid work; more than half of them (53%) are employed in care-related jobs ([UN Women, 2020](#)).
- In **2022**, about **6.2 million people** worked in the care sector in the European Union, representing approximately **3% of total EU employment** ([CEDEFOP, 2023](#)).

Investing in Care



- Closing the **investment gap in the care economy** would require an annual investment of US\$5.4 trillion, equivalent to 4.2% of the **projected global GDP for 2035** ([ILO, 2022a](#)).
- Investing in **universal childcare and long-term care services** could create up to **299 million full-time jobs by 2035** ([ILO, 2022b](#)).
- Providing access to childcare for all mothers in the **markets of South-East Asia** could generate an additional **\$1.9 trillion to \$4.4 trillion of gross domestic product (GDP)** at **purchasing power parity annually** ([UN Women, 2023](#)).
- Investing in **social jobs**—including **paid care sector jobs**—could **deliver triple dividends** in terms of **GDP returns, quality jobs created, and social mobility** ([WEF, 2024](#)).
- If **2% of GDP** was invested in the **care industry**, the **overall employment rate** could be raised by between **2.4 and 6.1%**. Such an increase would create approximately **21.72 million jobs** in seven **OECD countries**, twice the number of jobs that would result from a comparable investment in the **construction industry** ([WEF, 2024](#)).



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