



Press Information Vorwerk Group

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Does Family Planning Sideline Careers?

As a partner of the German women's national football team, Vorwerk once again puts the gender care gap in the spotlight with a high-profile panel on balancing work and family life.

Wuppertal (Germany), 24 October 2025 – How can the new generation of parents share work and family responsibilities as equal partners, and what needs to change for social structures to keep pace? These questions were at the heart of the panel discussion "Careers on the Sidelines: What Is the New Generation of Parents Doing Differently?", hosted by Vorwerk together with The League around the UEFA Women's Nations League semi-final between Germany and France.

While top sporting performance took centre stage on the pitch, figures from society, business and sport discussed how parental roles are changing and what conditions are needed to make equality a reality in everyday life. The panel continued the previous year's discussion on the gender care gap and focused on the growing discrepancy between the expectations of modern parents and existing structures: the unequal distribution of unpaid care work and the vision of a generation that shares responsibility.

"This issue is enormously important to us and is therefore closely linked to our commitment as a partner of the German women's national team," says Dr Bettina Graf, Head of Customer Marketing at Vorwerk Deutschland. "Equality, compatibility and self-determination are values that connect sport and the workplace. We want to make them visible beyond sport and provide impetus for genuine change."

A changing society: parental roles between aspiration and reality

Current figures from Germany's Federal Statistical Office, Destatis, show how wide the gap remains. On average, mothers in Germany perform 5 hours and 32 minutes of unpaid care work per day, compared with 3 hours and 29 minutes for fathers. This is a difference of around two hours per day, or more than 45 working days per year.* It has a direct impact on careers, income and equal opportunities.



Studies by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs and the Federal Agency for Civic Education also show that the attitudes and values of young parents are changing. According to the 2024 Family Report by the Federal Ministry, mothers and fathers increasingly want an equal division of responsibilities and more flexible working-time models. The Ninth Family Report highlights self-determination, time prosperity and work-life compatibility as key requirements for a functioning family life today. The Federal Agency's 2024 Social Report also shows that employment by both parents is becoming increasingly accepted as the norm.

These developments mark a generational shift. A new generation of parents wants to share responsibility, rethink role models and adapt structures to a modern understanding of family and work.

Inspiration and honest insights

Around 50 guests joined the panel discussion at Düsseldorf's Merkur Spiel-Arena and online. The high-profile speakers from sport, business and society included author Alexandra Zykunov, "dadfluencer" Sebastian Tigges, entrepreneur Madeleine Alizadeh and former national team player Melanie Leupolz. The discussion was moderated by Amina Ndao of Sky Sport.

They explored how parenthood and careers affect one another and where policymakers, businesses and society need to adjust conditions so that equality can genuinely be put into practice.

"The fact that Vorwerk is addressing this issue and giving it a platform in the context of women's football sends a strong signal," says Stephanie Gonçalves Norberto, founder of the initiative The League. "Our work is centred on visibility and equal opportunities in sport, topics that are equally relevant in the workplace and in discussions about balancing work and family life. Making this connection is an important step."

The key conclusion: parents today want to share responsibility, but gaps in childcare, rigid working-time models and stereotypical expectations continue to slow progress.

A strong signal for balancing work and family life

"As a direct sales company, we offer our self-employed advisors a working model that can be combined with family and personal commitments," says Dr Thomas Stoffmehl, Speaker of the Executive Board of the Vorwerk Group. "Every day, we see that work-life compatibility is not a peripheral issue, but a key to equal opportunities and securing skilled professionals. That is why we want to initiate public debate and make new perspectives visible."

For decades, Vorwerk has offered women and men an environment in which professional and personal commitments can be balanced, flexibly, independently and in harmony with family and everyday life. Today, more than 115,000 self-employed advisors work for the Wuppertal-based family-owned company.

** Current Destatis figures were requested by Vorwerk in advance of the event.*



ABOUT VORWERK

Vorwerk is Europe's number one direct sales company and the global leader in the direct sales of premium household appliances. The internationally operating family-owned company was founded in Wuppertal, Germany, in 1883. Vorwerk's core business is the production and distribution of premium household products (Thermomix® kitchen appliance, Kobold cleaning systems). Vorwerk always seeks direct contact with its customers. Advisors are at the heart of the company's activities and serve as the primary point of contact for customers. The Vorwerk family also includes the akf-Group. Vorwerk generated Group sales of EUR 3.2 billion in 2024 and is active in more than 60 countries worldwide.

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