

# FAMILY-WORK BALANCE

A MAJOR CHALLENGE FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS OF MONTRÉAL



This opinion paper was adopted by the members of the Conseil des Montréalaises during the regular assembly held on January 25, 2017, and tabled at the municipal council of the City of Montréal.

#### **WORKING COMMITTEE**

Lyndsay Daudier, Sharon Hackett, Aurélie Lebrun,  
Mireille Paquet, Ghislaine Sathoud

#### **RESEARCH CARRIED OUT AMONG ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay, Arnaud Scaillerez,  
Laurent Sauvage

#### **RESEARCH AND WRITING**

Aurélie Lebrun, Mireille Paquet, Guylaine Poirier

#### **COORDINATION**

Guylaine Poirier

#### **FRENCH COPYEDITING**

Louise-Andrée Lauzière

#### **ENGLISH TRANSLATION**

Marie-Paule Kassis

#### **DESIGN**

RouleauPaquin.com

December 2017

#### **LEGAL DEPOSIT**

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2017  
ISBN : 978-2-7647-1575-8 – Electronic version

#### **CONSEIL DES MONTRÉALAISES**

1550 Metcalfe Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suite 1424  
Montreal, Quebec H3A 1X6  
Telephone: 514 868-5809

conseildesmontrealaises@ville.montreal.qc.ca  
ville.montreal.qc.ca/conseildesmontrealaises

 [conseildesmontrealaises](https://www.facebook.com/conseildesmontrealaises)

 [C\\_Montrealaises](https://twitter.com/C_Montrealaises)

#### **Acknowledgements**

The Conseil des Montréalaises would like to warmly thank everyone who participated in this project. Without their time and input, this opinion paper would not have been possible.

Current and former elected officials and women interested in municipal politics who participated in group discussions and one-on-one interviews.

Manon Gauthier, member of the Executive Committee, who oversees the file on the status of women; Lionel Perez, member of the Executive Committee and responsible for the working committee on family-work balance among elected officials; as well as Frantz Benjamin, president of the municipal council and president of the Council Presidency Commission.

Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay, a full professor in the department of economics and management, and director of the ARUC (Alliance de recherche université-communauté) on the management of age and leisure time, School of Business Administration – TÉLUQ, as well as Arnaud Scaillerez and Laurent Sauvage for research they carried out among elected officials.

Members of the research committee, in particular Mireille Paquet and Aurélie Lebrun, who committed both time and energy to write this opinion paper.



# **FAMILY-WORK BALANCE**

A MAJOR CHALLENGE FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS OF MONTRÉAL



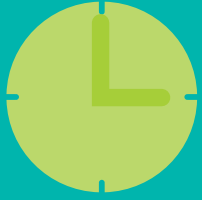
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PRESENTATION OF THE CONSEIL DES MONTRÉALAISES	3
	INTRODUCTION	4
<b>1</b>	FAMILY-WORK BALANCE: DEFINITIONS	6
<b>2</b>	METHODOLOGY	10
<b>3</b>	WORK CONDITIONS OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL: LIMITS FOR SOME ELECTED WOMEN IN BALANCING FAMILY AND WORK	12
<b>4</b>	BALANCING FAMILY AND WORK: DIFFERENTIATED STRATEGIES	22
<b>5</b>	FAMILY-WORK BALANCE: CHANGING THE MILIEU AND ATTITUDES	26
<b>6</b>	SYSTEMIC MEASURES TO REORGANIZE THE WORK OF ELECTED OFFICIALS	30
<b>7</b>	TOWARDS BETTER PRACTICES	34
<b>8</b>	RECOMMENDATIONS	38
	CONCLUSION	42
	ANNEX I	44
	ANNEX II	45
	ANNEX III	46
	ANNEX IV	48
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	50

# PRESENTATION OF THE CONSEIL DES MONTRÉALAISES

Created in 2004, the Conseil des Montréalaises (CM) is comprised of 15 female volunteers representing the diversity of the women of Montréal. It acts as both a consultative body to the municipal administration on matters related to the status of women and gender equality, either by request from the City of Montréal's municipal council of Montréal or on its own initiative. It uses intersectional feminist analysis of issues to understand the realities experienced by Montréal women.





# INTRODUCTION

From its very beginning, the Conseil des Montréalaises has organized its focus around three main axes: the living conditions of the women of Montréal, the working conditions of women employed by the City of Montréal, and governance promoting equality between women and men. The question of family-work balance emerged as a fundamental issue during research into the professional advancement of executive women at the City, which led to an important opinion paper being issued in 2008.

This hard-to-achieve balance was considered a major hurdle in the lives of professional women. In 2013, this issue was highlighted once again in an inquiry among blue collar workers, particularly women, whose work schedules made organizing family life extremely complicated, especially when young children were involved.

Since then, elected female officials with a child at home during their mandate have publicly raised the issue, at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. Several have criticized their ineligibility for benefits from the *Régime québécois d'assurance parentale* while concluding that the legal framework for elected official's time off no longer reflects current realities. For example, By-law 06-051, *Règlement sur la procédure d'assemblée et les règles de régie interne du conseil municipal* of the City of Montréal did not allow a woman to miss a single council meeting in order to give birth.

Aware of these issues, the City of Montréal has been working to address the situation for several years now. An initial report from the Council Presidency Commission was tabled in 2013. The mayor also mandated a working committee to propose a family-work plan for elected officials. This committee, chaired by Lionel Perez, member of the executive committee and responsible for the file on governance and democracy, presented his report in October 2015.

It is against this background that the CM decided, in 2015, to take a look at the experience of elected female officials and their family-work balance. In the spirit of collaboration, the CM wished to meet with the working committee composed of elected officials to coordinate the different efforts and work in a complementary manner. These discussions eventually led the municipal council to adopt Resolution CM15 1250 in October 2015, which mandated, among other things, the CM to conduct research into the realities experienced by elected officials and to draw up recommendations to better support the family-work balance of elected municipal officials.

Thereafter, the City of Montréal adopted a key by-law that allows parents to take a leave of absence from the municipal council without penalty for a period of up to 18 weeks (see Annex I). An expanded range of reasons for the absence was also adopted that takes into account family situations requiring the attention of an elected official, such as an illness in the family.

These actions inspired the government of Quebec, which adopted an amendment to Bill No. 83, *An Act to amend various municipal-related legislative provisions concerning such matters as political financing* along the same lines in June 2016.



# FAMILY-WORK BALANCE: DEFINITIONS

In this opinion paper, family-work balance (FWB) is defined as the implementation of measures, actions and practices that allow anyone who has the responsibility of helping or caring for loved ones or who assumes family duties, in whatever capacity, can do so in the most supportive conditions possible while pursuing professional activities.

## This definition is founded on the following three principles:

- > FWB applies equally to women and men, even though the responsibilities related to the domestic sphere and caregiving (children, sick or elderly people) still fall mainly to women;
- > FWB is not limited to the caring of young children. It also includes all the family responsibilities that a person assumes over the course of their life; for example, that of family caregiver. Given the diversity of individual and collective needs, it is the responsibility of the individual to define their needs with respect to FWB;
- > FWB impacts the family, the extended family as well as dependent relations.<sup>1</sup>

FWB is a challenge that affects all sectors of society. “Research into the balance between demands and responsibilities related to professional life and family life” (Québec, 2010: 2) nevertheless remains shaped by differences between employment fields, social structures and, of course, constructs linked to gender relations (Tremblay, 2012).

Family-work balance is also defined by the specific management of different social activities; in other words, the balancing of the “main categories or blocks of time that a society sets aside and visualizes to designate, formulate, pace and coordinate key social activities on which it places particular value. These main social activities or blocks of time generally break down into work time, education time, family time and free time” (Sue, 1995: 25).

FWB has moved even further to the centre of public discussion with the increasing presence of women in the workforce, families where both parents are employed, changes to the family organization and employment structure, as well as the emergence of new expectations concerning the education of children and young people (Descarries and Corbeil, 2012).

<sup>1</sup> In order to better understand the idea of “dependent relation,” refer to *Conciliation travail-famille* (BNQ standard 9700-820) from the Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ). This standard defines family life as referring to “persons with whom the worker, of either gender, has a dependent relationship, such as family members, close relatives, extended family and friends” (Québec, 2010: 3).



While mothers are more likely to feel pressure in terms of FWB, more and more fathers and other members of the family are also affected (Pacaut, 2016). The problems related to FWB have an impact on families, individuals and society generally, as well as within the workplace (Bourque and St-Amour, 2016; Pacaut, 2016). As a result of the growing general concern with these tensions (St-Amour, 2010), the Quebec and Canadian governments have modified certain legislative frameworks and implemented public policies. For example, the Quebec government policy on gender equality includes FWB as one of the seven guidelines (Québec, 2007). In addition to public policies such as parental leave funded by the State, FWB is governed by employment laws (notably the Labour Code, labour relations law and the Canadian Employment Insurance Act). A real balancing of family and work allows the implementation of true equality for women.

## FWB and elected officials

Persons elected to office are not exempt from FWB-related pressures and issues. However, because they are not employees but office holders, they do not benefit in the same way from policies and rights put in place by the Quebec and Canadian governments. These statutory differences are in addition to the unique dynamics of the elected role. FWB is not a problem that affects only elected officials from here. Current research shows that regardless of the country and political system, it is extremely difficult to find a satisfying balance between family and public life for elected women and men (Celock, 2010; Brenton, 2010; OCDE, 2014). Several studies have highlighted the fact that concerns related to FWB act as a barrier to active political involvement for various persons, and in particular, for women (Silbermann, 2015; OCDE, 2014; PEI Coalition for Women in Government, 2009). The difficulties associated with holding an elected office for parents push some women to wait until their children are older before getting involved (Palmieri, 2011).

An large part of the tensions in terms of FWB for elected officials is inherent to the way active political practices and institutions are constructed (Dulong, 2010). Active politics was designed by and for men and has remained for a very long time an exclusive preserve. A key consequence of this legacy is the perpetuation, despite the growing presence of women in elected functions, of a gender division in political work.

The gender division of work creates and perpetuates a segregated social organization: work reserved for women, notably domestic work, and that reserved for men, for example, politics, but also other spheres of activity, such as the army, policing and high finance. This social organization of work also creates hierarchical structures, since professions reserved for men are more highly valued and thus better remunerated while those reserved for women are devalued, more precarious, if not unpaid, and sometimes not even recognized as work, as is the case for domestic work, including the education of children.

This division of work is considered natural and normal because it is seen as the extension of traditional characteristics attributed to men and women (Kergoat, 2000; CSF, 2015). Politics has long been regarded as a vocation, based on the fact that men are traditionally free all family responsibilities and can therefore devote themselves fully to their functions. The results of studies looking into the relationship between the division of domestic work and political engagement show that men still benefit from “their position in the domestic space, with the possibility of removing themselves from the domestic sphere constituting a real comparative advantage that they have over women and of which they are fully conscious.” (Arambourou, 2014: 123). This logic leads to the creation of a workplace that is especially indifferent to FWB, despite the change in values among elected officials of both genders.



# 2

## METHODOLOGY

This opinion paper is based on data from a study done in 2016<sup>2</sup> with the aim of gathering information on FWB-related experiences of elected persons as well as persons seriously thinking about entering active municipal politics. This approach was necessary given that there is still little research on FWB in active politics and even less on specific issues at the municipal government level. Moreover, the importance of personal contexts, political dynamics and informal accommodation practices can only be analyzed by giving a voice to those whom FWB in municipal politics directly impacts.

In total, 28 people actively took part in this research, broken down into 5 discussion groups as well as 12 individual interviews. The participants were elected officials in office as well as persons seeking a position in municipal politics and person having already held an elected position at the City of Montréal. Nineteen elected officials – 12 women and 7 men – shared their FWB-related experiences. The people surveyed also included 5 former elected officials as well as 4 women interested in entering politics. These persons were recruited from among 103 elected officials at the City, as well as from a list provided by the Conseil des Montréalaises of former elected officials and persons who had participated in training activities in municipal politics.

The criteria for inclusion in the study was an interest in participating in the research. Since the FWB is an issue that affects the entire population, not just women, the sample is mixed and the clear interest on the part of men to participate illustrated the importance of taking into consideration their experiences, without foregoing a feminist analysis. Notably, the participants represented diverse family situations: with or without kids, children of different ages, nuclear families, single-parent or blended families, or families requiring the help of someone close. These situations are far from being stable over time and the multiplicity of participants' personal situations highlighted the importance of not limiting the FWB issue to families with young children. Additionally, the participation of women interested in entering active politics allowed us to confirm the impact of FWB on their decision to do so, which is corroborated by research illustrating the impact of family responsibilities in the private sphere on the participation of women in active politics.

<sup>2</sup> This research was conducted for the Conseil des Montréalaises by Arnaud Scaillez, Laurent Sauvage and Diane-Gabrielle Tremblay from the School of Business Administration of TÉLUQ University – Distance learning.

During discussion groups and interviews, participants were queried about and discussed their personal situations, the current FWB practices of the City (and, if relevant, of the boroughs) and the general FWB climate. This approach allowed them to share what they felt were obstacles to enjoying a better FWB in their own personal situation and identify promising practices already in place at the City and boroughs. Moreover, participants were asked to suggest recommendations for improving the FWB for elected officials in Montréal.

The remarks presented in this opinion paper are those of participating elected officials. The data was analyzed to report on the experiences shared by the participants, with the aim of giving greater visibility to their experiences. The citations reproduced in the following pages were modified to ensure the privacy of the individuals while respecting the integrity of their words. The Conseil would like to thank all participants who generously contributed to this research.



# WORK CONDITIONS OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL:

## LIMITS FOR SOME ELECTED WOMEN IN BALANCING FAMILY AND WORK

### OVERVIEW

#### REMUNERATION

- > Variation in remuneration is an important aspect to take into account when thinking about efficient measures to balance family and work.
- > The position of borough councillor increasingly requires a full-time commitment on the part of the office holder.
- > The process for appointing persons to additional functions is seen by participants as arbitrary, based on unknown criteria.

#### SUPPORT FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

- > The allocation of administrative and political support is done on a discretionary basis, but should be formally elaborated.

#### FLEXIBILITY REGARDING WORKPLACE AND HOURS

- > The ability to telework is highly valued.
- > Apart from mandatory meetings such as a municipal council and executive committee sessions, for example, flexibility with regards to working hours is regarded as a major advantage for balancing family and work.

#### REPRESENTATION

- > The frequent requests to make official appearances means the individual is faced with conflicting choices and planning, since these events typically occur in the evening or on the weekend.
- > Elected women notice that the population, and often, other elected officials, expect them to be available at all times.
- > The support of their partner is essential if a person is to enter politics.

A part of the interviews with elected officials addressed certain work conditions in their elected position. The elected persons themselves pointed out certain aspects of their work that had or could have an impact on their ability to balance family and work. Elected officials mainly brought up remuneration, work hours and administrative support as obstacles, but also as elements that can promote the balance between their duties at work and their responsibilities at home.

## REMUNERATION

Remuneration of elected officials is governed by the *Act respecting the remuneration of elected municipal officers*, which fixes the minimum and maximum annual remuneration of the mayor and councillors according to the number of inhabitants in the municipality. Moreover, elected municipal representatives receive an expense allowance, severance allowance or a transition allowance. Expense allowances are identical for all elected officials according to the position held, but additional remuneration varies according to the extent of individual responsibilities. It is this additional remuneration that creates a significant disparity between elected officials (see Annex III).

The exact remuneration of elected officials is difficult to predict, since it is based on the position to which the person was elected, but also on the responsibilities that are assigned to them. There is a notable difference in base remuneration between a councillor and other positions (municipal councillor, mayor).

Base remuneration of a borough councillor without additional remuneration is considered insufficient by some, particularly when the elected official is the head of a single-parent family or caring for a dependant. Furthermore, the position of an elected official entails certain expenses, for which an expense allowance is provided. Having a second source of income thus becomes mandatory for some. There are in fact some elected officials who have a second source of income, which makes managing time, and by extension, family and work, more complicated. This second source of income, however, is considered inevitable because, even if one doesn't go into politics to "make money," elected officials nevertheless have family responsibilities.

An elected woman reminds us that the vocational nature of the elected function stems from the fact that, historically, it was the leaders, essentially men, who were independently wealthy,

“ *accountants or lawyers during the day or doctors... Sitting once a month on the municipal council in the evening, smoking a cigar and drinking a glass of Scotch... It's no longer like that. We sit once a month, but for much longer.* ”

[Elected female official]

Elected officials that have another job are mainly borough councillors, who are at the bottom of the municipal pay ladder as it were. Notably, borough councillors are more often women (see Annex II).

Opinions diverge on whether having two jobs is a desirable reality or even sustainable over the long run. What is more, it seems that an increasing number of elected officials view the position of borough councillor as a full-time investment.

Some elected officials state that double employment is busy, but not unmanageable, since the function of borough councillor requires less commitment outside the borough and is conducive to working from home or at a specific place. Others mention that having two jobs inevitably makes managing their agenda more complicated. Others still, feel that the function does not determine the task: a City or borough councillor can equally work just as hard as the other.

That said, it is important to note that fewer and fewer borough councillors hold two jobs because their duties are in fact more like a full-time commitment.

The difference in remuneration is a key aspect to take into account when thinking about effective measures to reconcile family and work, since women are more often than not borough councillors. Several elected women stressed this reality:

“ If you are talking about starting a career, if you are talking about a young woman, often it is going to be the entry point... [Elected female official]. The pay side also puts a break on family-work balance, precisely because you have to split up and find another 3 days of work. Which makes it even more difficult to manage a family after that.

*That's the glass ceiling: few women in positions of power. The salary of elected women in Montréal is low, I forgot the figures, but there was an analysis done last fall, and it's actually startling. That's the reality.* ”

[Elected female official]

Moreover, the method of allocating additional duties such as the presidency of a commission for example, which comes with an increase in pay, is seen as discretionary and archaic. In fact, a large number of elected women are of the opinion that the better paying and more prestigious positions are given to a small, privileged circle in an official hierarchy, for example, the party in power or people close to the mayor.



Consequently, women surveyed have the feeling that they are at the mercy of the goodwill of people whose decisions have important repercussions on their position and pay. Several studies show that there is a “traditional order” among men and women in politics: female candidates are less often considered for decision-making positions (see Annex IV). “Political recruitment” for executive positions is based on biased rules (Arambourou, 2009).

## SUPPORT FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS AND ALLOCATION

Some female elected officials during their interviews mentioned the lack of political support, which they consider a real obstacle to balancing their duties and family responsibilities. According to some, allocation of is done on a discretionary basis. There also exists a disparity in the allocation of political staff among boroughs, since each elected official is working with different realities:

“ *each borough functions in a completely different way. We are in very different places from each other. They have a different way of organizing their office.* ”  
[Elected female official]

It's essentially the discretionary allocation of political staff that is considered prejudiced.

“ *There is administrative support and then there is politico-administrative support or political. Two things that are lumped together but are different. So, women don't have political support... since men have more important positions... but that's what I was saying earlier, it's inseparable from society in general. Society has to change too in order for that to change as well.* ”  
[Elected female official]

As such, the perception of a discretionary bias in the allocation of additional remuneration via commission appointments and of political support leads some to speak about a system that discriminates against certain elected officials. Pay and work organization are thus two important aspects to consider when thinking about the implementation of measure to facilitate family-work balance.

## WORKPLACE AND WORK SCHEDULE FLEXIBILITY

Elected officials enjoy the freedom to choose where they work: They do not need to be physically present each day at the borough's or city hall's offices (except for certain positions such as that of executive committee member), which means they can work from home or any other location of their choice. Today's communication technology allows for tasks to be easily accomplished. For elected officials, it's a major advantage, even though both men and women state that this mixing of workplace and domestic space can sometimes mean that work time encroaches on family time.

“ Absolutely. It's a lot, even to the point where, for example, as soon as I arrive home, even before I take my keys out and open the door, I automatically turn down my phone's ringer. I put it on mute. And I say to myself that maybe I will look at it before going to bed, two or three times in case there is an emergency... When it's a day off, the phone is turned off. Because if not, quality family time doesn't exist. ”

[Elected male official]

Elected women also talked about their work schedules and mentioned that family-work balance consists of managing different social times.

## WORK SCHEDULE FLEXIBILITY

As part of their mandate, elected officials are required to attend several meetings depending on the official's duties: municipal council, borough council, executive committee, commission or committee. These obligations appear in the elected official's agenda on a regular and predetermined basis.

“ There are fixed schedules. An executive committee is always on Wednesday at 8 a.m. until the end... There are things that are fixed and that you can put in your calendar. And then there are things that are variable, but where we determine the time. ”

[Elected male official]

Outside of these obligations, elected officials interviewed underscored the great flexibility that comes with the position in terms of organizing schedules.

“ In 70% of the cases, let's say 60%–70% of a given schedule, we make the decisions, we decide what we want based on our families. We can decide not to schedule a meeting before 9 a.m. and so, ever day at 9 a.m. I am free, with the exception of a fixed appointment. Until 9 a.m., I can be free to take care of my kids. ”

[Elected male official]

“ Yes, that’s the beauty of this work, in some way. It’s true that you are often busy in the evening, there are small things to take care of on the weekend, but we are really in charge of our own schedules. ”

[Elected female official]

Nevertheless, even if there is consensus on the subject, some bring up two sources of frustration: commission sessions that are traditionally held in the evening as well as public events that are mainly organized during weekday evenings and on the weekend, times when children and partners are at home. Generally, flexibility with respect to scheduling seems to be a key advantage when it comes to balancing family and work. It also happens, however, that the choice of scheduling, which can seem arbitrary, can in fact work against FWB.

## REPRESENTATION

Ultimately, it is the frequent representation requests made of elected officials that create conflicts in terms of planning and choices. These activities among the citizenry are considered important because they are seen as key responsibilities of the elected official’s mandate. In fact, public representation is the hardest to predict and a reality that cuts into family time the most often.

“ We are invited to events almost every evening. For political reasons. Sometimes we have to give a speech, sometimes to honour an organization, sometimes to recognize something... If we were to do it, we’d be out every evening. Apart from the mayor of Montréal, there is no one who goes out every evening to attend events, at least that I know of. I also made a decision on the matter. I made a choice, I choose selectively, sometimes it’s not easy, sometimes I make an extra effort, but that’s part of political life. It’s part of the elected official’s role to make these kinds of choices. ”

[Elected male official]

“ I don’t attend very many cocktail hours or if I do, it’s in the neighbourhood. There are engagements that I can’t make... I limit myself to three evenings a week. When it’s four, it has to be a very special occasion. So it really requires a lot of planning. ”

[Elected female official]

These demands on time traditionally associated with non-work are treated as a problematic aspect of the elected official's duties, since it implicitly implies that being an elected official is to always be available, that elected officials have no other concern or commitment, and no family responsibility as it were.

Incidentally, women think that elected men, but also elected women, foster this male-centric organization of politics; for example, the belief that the elected official is always on call:

“ We are back to that, because we were saying, that if I didn't have kids, would I go to all these events? And since there is always another event you could attend, to which you are invited. ”  
[Elected female official]

“ Because events come up fairly often. You also tell yourself that you are not indispensable. But it's everything that people expect of politicians. This obligation to be everywhere all the time, always available... we talk about family-work balance, but how many couples break up because the politician is never there. You have to think about that too. That's where the real obstacle is. It is in the excessive workload that is placed on politicians. Plus the responsibilities... And that they accept to do it... A big part of the representation work that is not necessary. And they accept to do it. ”  
[Elected female official]

Elected women especially see this as discriminatory, precisely because they have other responsibilities and feel penalized de facto:

“ Do you do your job well because you are everywhere all the time, so that people know you and remember who you are? All these PR events, which are typically in the evening, the cocktail hours and soirées and... If you decide to put that aside for family time, you penalize yourself on the electoral side. You're just as good of an elected official and your job is just as good, I think, except that... It's this aspect that I find hard. That I find, let's say, more discriminatory between men and women. ”  
[Elected female official]

Furthermore, in interviews with elected officials of both genders the presence and support of a partner is often mentioned as important when entering politics and pursuing a political career. In fact, the tacit commitment of women standing beside their partners when they enter politics is central to the political world, both in terms of its organization and the very fabric of this esteemed profession so closely associated with power. Elected officials are conscious that without their partner, they would never succeed; for elected women, it's their partner's official commitment that is the trigger to entering politics:<sup>3</sup>

“ So I decided to do it because the father, my partner, really committed to being there with me. ”

[Elected female official]

“ It was really the biggest thing that I had to think about but, having a partner who had a much more stable schedule, well, that made the choice to make the jump easier. ”

[Elected female official]

The need for an explicit commitment from a male partner and to a lesser extent (since it is taken for granted) from a female partner is indicative both of the increasing presence of women in politics and a persistently strong resistance to recognizing the existence of family responsibilities of elected female officials. Finally, the domestic sphere, which falls mainly to women, includes not only the daily material and emotional tasks of educating children, but also the caring for the material and emotional needs of the partner. It is this double responsibility that has allowed politics to be defined as a domain reserved for men.

The gender division at work that places “political time” outside all family restrictions and responsibilities is seen as one of the main obstacles to family-work balance:

“ Yes. Actually, it's because the machine was not designed for young women or young families. There were no young men. I am talking about the 1990s maybe. Even fewer single mothers or single-parent families... There were fewer single fathers at this time as well. But you could see that the provincial, federal and municipal machines were not at all inviting to young women or even young fathers. So I think it's in this area that there have been many, many shortcomings... ”

[Elected female official]

<sup>3</sup> This is a partial analysis – work-family balance may require additional forms of arrangements. Indeed, single-parent or same-sex parent families as well as immigrant families have to balance their professional and personal responsibilities in the context of systemic homosexual, sexual and racial discrimination.

“ What I find hard in finding a balance between political life and family is that those who don't have kids, who don't have these obligations, they have a much better chance to be everywhere all the time. And if you decide that you are not going to be everywhere all the time, and I think that there are a lot more guys who will choose to see their kids a lot less and be everywhere all the time, and it's to their advantage in some way, since it gives them a lot of visibility... I find that it's an aspect of political life that is definitely... perhaps I am getting ahead of your questions, but... that is the most difficult, it's the advantage that people without kids enjoy when it comes to being seen. ”  
[Elected female official]

Elected men also state the following with regards to the demand to be available at all times as part of their political duties:

“ As an elected municipal official, that means I have responsibilities at the core city, I have responsibilities first of all at the borough, so I often represent a neighbourhood, a district that is very active. There are a lot of consultations, a lot of meetings, so when an elected official is asked, you are not invited, you are told and sometimes the elected official is not even given a choice but to attend. So it's difficult. ”  
[Elected male official]

This unconditional presence is also expected with regards to the hours of municipal council meetings:

“ Yes. We had... In 20xx, our council meetings started at 7 p.m. in the evening on Mondays and finished sometimes on Thursday. So it was hard. We would finish at 11 p.m. in the evening and sometimes with an extension until midnight, 1 a.m. So the next morning, you had to be up for the kids and everything. Today the council begins at 1 p.m. in the afternoon. More time is allowed. Instead of finishing at 11 p.m., we finish at 10 p.m. We've gained an hour in the evening to get some sleep and rest. There are changes that have been made, definitely. It's not perfect. There is always something to improve, but there have been changes yes, since 20xx... The city council in the evening is a relic. And apart from the question period for citizens, it's no longer relevant. ”  
[Elected male official]



# 4

## BALANCING FAMILY AND WORK: DIFFERENTIATED STRATEGIES

### OVERVIEW

- > Women and men have different experiences when entering politics with respect to FWB.
- > Women make every effort possible so that their decision does not affect their family life.
- > The domestic sphere is always considered socially as a responsibility that falls first to women.

Fully aware of their different positions when they enter politics and afterwards in their elected roles, men and women consequently recount contrasting experiences in terms of balancing family and work.

A former elected female official remarks that when women and men enter politics, they ask distinct questions, which reflect the differentiated way women and men integrate into the political socialization process. Elected women and men view their political roles in terms that illustrate this double standard:

“ You know, there are systemic problems, for sure, but beyond that, having worked with over 100 women in my life, I am simplifying a lot here... but the men I hired would say, ‘What am I going to get out of this? Do you think that it’s going to bring me anything?’ They don’t necessarily see it in terms of pay, but in terms of reputation, recognition. While women, immediately, almost without exception, will ask, ‘Well, we’ll have to grab something to eat so you can tell me how you did it, because, what am I going to lose?’ First reflex, is to ask, essentially, what will I have to sacrifice in my personal, family, social life, as a parent, partner, daughter... It’s very, very, very deep. In the end it’s this investment, isn’t it, in one’s private life, where men and women approach things differently... This is an important aspect. There is always of course the aspect, ‘Do you think I can do it? I’m not ready.’ It’s very, very common. ”

[Former elected female official]



Elected women for their part say that during their decision to enter politics, they will ensure that this choice will not impact their ability to take care of domestic responsibilities in any way, as if no one must notice or know that they are working:

“ *That’s fundamental, fundamental, when a man is elected in politics, everything must change around him. And it’s normal, because he will say, ‘Listen, now that I’m elected, you have to make allowances for my new functions that I have to fulfill. So you have to accept that I am not here as often, that I need you to be flexible, even if I have appointments that I can’t make, because of other obligations’ and so on... A woman, on the other hand, I swear her first concern is that nothing changes. ‘Can I do this? I will agree to run as a candidate only on the condition that nothing changes around me. Whether in my life, as a mom... That they don’t notice it, at all, any real effect...* ”

[Elected female official]

This gender division at work in which the domestic sphere is a woman’s business is thus completely borne by women, who express having a very hard time challenging it and are fully cognizant that family responsibilities almost inevitably fall to them. Studies on women in politics clearly illustrate how their domestic responsibilities and chores hamper a possible career in politics.

In group discussions, elected female officials expressed the weight that they feel vis-à-vis strong social pressures that continue place the responsibility for the family on their shoulders. This weight takes the form of a deep sense of guilt and the feeling of not being good enough.

“ *As a mother, you want to be everywhere. You don’t want to miss a meeting with a teacher, you don’t want to miss report card time, you don’t want to miss a football practice... You want to be there. There’s work to do on yourself, but there is still social pressure that comes with it too. And that, that isn’t... The City can do many things, but it’s this social pressure that makes moms feel guilty of this and that...* ”

[Elected female official]

This social pressure takes the form of prejudice regarding their ability to get involved in other spheres outside private life. Some elected female officials clearly express that they are systematically the focus: for example, they have a very hard time delegating. The prejudice towards women in politics is deep-seated; women interviewed mentioned several times that they often feel that their right to be in politics and their ability to fill their duties are questioned:

“ Women, as they say, women... ‘You and your business.’ You know, I have always taken time to look after my daughter, and people comment on it... ”  
[Elected female official]

Prejudice and stereotypes remind both men and women who venture into a sphere where they are traditionally not found what their place should be:

“ I will always remember during an electoral campaign, my partner being told by lots of people, but especially by family, ‘She’s lucky to have you... And how do you find it? Do you want us to make you a meal?’ ”

“ It’s a strange kind of acknowledgement that is all messed up, a little insidious, that if the woman is not there, things don’t get done. It could still be a validation, but I don’t think it is, since it’s devaluing for men, and it places further pressure on us women. ”

“ I also have the same impression, since it is very true what you say, that men, for all sorts of reasons and mechanisms, manage more often to get what they want. Partly because they frequently hold positions that are much more important, so it comes with all the trappings. ”  
[Conversation between elected female officials]

As such, it is important to remember that for some elected women, foregoing representation activities to fill their family responsibilities – which include daily tasks as well as the well-being of all – has consequences on their political career, which can be viewed in terms of costs. For some elected women, “avoiding domestic costs,” in other words, the consequences arising from their absence, incurs “political costs” that can vary, which can also be the case for elected men. Nonetheless, contrary to their female colleagues and despite the obstacles that they can encounter, “domestic costs and political costs can both be avoided” for elected men (Arambourou, 2014: 112).

The notion and implementation of balance requires the deconstruction of the double standard that blames women who choose to work by undermining their skills and that devalues men who take care of the domestic sphere.



# 5

## FAMILY-WORK BALANCE: CHANGING THE MILIEU AND ATTITUDES

### OVERVIEW

- > The political milieu must adapt and promote FWB in order to take into account that an increasing number of elected officials have children.
- > Practices between colleagues that are often informal offer support to parents of young children, especially mothers: bringing children to work, varying the times of commissions or committees (day/evening).
- > Encourage men to embrace their role as fathers through measures specifically for them.

Several studies note that while they are present in the labour market in large numbers, notably in milieus traditionally reserved for men, women have not or very little changed these milieus. Similarly, the division of household tasks between women and men has not really evolved in the past 30 years, even if fathers do take care of their children more.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, women are faced with a double task that needs changing in the short term and presents, according to one elected woman, a dilemma:

“ We are in a dilemma. I think there are two main options. There is the option that women stay as they are, and we rush around, and then we try to downsize men's careers... Very difficult. ”  
[Elected female official]

Several elected women target courses of action to change the municipal political milieu that, according to them, involve changing men's place and attitude, but also those of women, with regards to their position in politics and their responsibilities at home.

To mitigate this reality, elected officials of both genders mentioned a series of informal practices that take place and which they rely on to maintain their political career. In daily political life, tacit or explicit solidarity between colleagues, notably between elected women, can, for example, result in tangible benefits:

“ I am lucky to be in a borough, first of all, where a majority of women have been elected to council, which maybe has an effect on... In any case, between us, on the reaction I get when I say, 'I am not going to the meeting this morning because my son is sick, and I am staying with him.' So, in this respect, I haven't had any problems. ”  
[Elected female official]

<sup>4</sup> *Portrait des Québécoises en 8 temps*, Conseil du statut de la femme, 2015, Québec, [online ligne], [<http://bit.ly/1Fs8KpF>].

An elected woman gives the example of the practice of assigning additional responsibilities to borough councillors in order to increase base pay:

“ *The number of elected officials is more or less equal in our case. There are X women out of a total of Y elected officials I believe, but the borough councillor part, it's basically women... In any case, the party is aware of the fact that our salary is really low compared to that of city councillors and try and give us responsibilities... commission vice-presidencies, they have tried to appoint councillors, borough councillors when it was possible... it increases our salary a bit. It helps us reach the same level. In any case, I appreciate it a lot. If I didn't have that, I definitely would earn much less.* ”  
[Conversation between elected female officials]

The solidarity among women is notable in interviews of elected female officials, especially when it comes to informal balancing practices or strategies. Very often, their colleagues are the sources of changes, based on the recognition that they are all in the same situation: being responsible for a family.

“ *My child is X years old and well, last week, I didn't have a babysitter and my partner not being there... I am fortunate to have an elected woman who chairs the Y commission who really believes in finding a balance, she has not stopped telling me since the start... 'Come here. I will be there. I'll take care of it, you'll have help.'* ”  
[Elected female official]

“ *One of the female presidents of my commissions, who believes in balancing family and work, decided that we would do half and half. Half of the assemblies in the day, and the other half in the evening. So citizens have their time as well and the other half... It even works for organizations that come to see us, since they too are working and also trying to find a balance in some cases. They can come see us during the day. It's a formula that works, really.* ”  
[Elected female official]

Elected officials also mention attending public representations, accompanied by their family, which are viewed as a major hurdle in terms of balancing family and work:

“ *And that was really... the biggest decision that I had to make before going into politics, because I knew very well that political life is very demanding, and on top of that, I had many family obligations. So I did my electoral campaign with them. And on each door that I knocked I said, 'If you vote for me, here's what you can expect.'* ”  
[Elected female official]

Moreover, it is frequently the case that public representations are family activities and, as such, naturally support FWB. However, according to elected officials, the presence of their family is often temporary, since, over time, children eventually choose for themselves what activities they do.

Elected women have also raised the point that this balancing strategy could backfire on them, once again, because of the double standard they are faced with:

“ *I wonder though because I really get the impression that people... at least... know us more because you get noticed with one or two kids, and the stroller and all the stuff, but men don't do that. So, I am a woman, mother and elected official, while my male colleagues are simply elected officials. When I go out with my kids, I did so recently, I was at an opening for a vernissage, I was all alone, I had the stroller. Plus, it was an opening for kids... You are not dressed up and you just breath and you don't look like anyone special. That's what a lot of men do. They have a distinguished presence that comes with their position and all that, and me, I have 1,000 bags and have to feed the baby, and I am making a mess.* ”  
[Elected female official]

“ *So I'm not sure to what extent we are reinforcing the fact that a woman comes with her kids because she kinda has to and then the guy, well... you know, he doesn't bring them or he brings them for a reason, he is really more secure and he's backed. I will always remember the electoral campaign. I arrived with my child and then the other arrived with his sister who was carrying his coat... But that's the reality we live in.* ”  
[Elected female official]

Even though women describe the dilemmas and prejudice unique to them when it comes to balancing family and work, they also highlight the necessity to put in place measures that target men in order to challenge stereotypes that assign domestic duties to women exclusively and discredit men, and encourage them rather to assume their place:

“ *If we create the space, they may not take it, but if it's there, they might very well take advantage of it, and then it's going to mean that it's not women all the time. Because I find that you have to apply equality and parity measures as often as possible if you want to remove that much pressure from the backs of women. Fathers also have to pull back. That way, it's not just women who set limits.* ”

[Former elected female official]

These demands for men to become more involved in the challenges of balancing family and work have been under way for the past few decades, as seen in the paradigm shift in parental leave (OCDE, 2014). Some elected officials see these changes as generational: Young men are more open to identifying as fathers in political life and to assuming related responsibilities than men older than 45, for whom “politics is a choice, you do that and nothing else.” (Dialogue between three elected male officials). Indeed, intergenerational pressure exists and it takes the form of resistance to change:

“ *Sometimes, we see young colleagues and we think, 'Really, you come to the city, you should know that it's not easy.' But, you know, people who complain that the municipal council finishes late... come on, it finishes late, the council finishes late... It's a milieu where there are unknowns. You can't organize political life just so, in such a straight way as you would in a normal job. When it's a borough council meeting, and things get heated in the room, and there are 100 instead of 3, it's definitely going to finish late. So it's obvious that you know your babysitter will have to stay longer.* ”

[Former elected male official]

# 6

## SYSTEMIC MEASURES TO REORGANIZE THE WORK OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

### OVERVIEW

- > Demands regarding family-work balance evolve over time. An increasing number of adults have to take care of children as well as their aging parents.
- > The support of a family and network, or their absence, is a critical factor in FWB.
- > FWB can be facilitated through the implementation of simple measures such as those that concern the scheduling of meetings.
- > The introduction of formal FWB measures constitute a promising way to challenge prejudice and transform the organizational culture.

During the interviews, elected officials of both genders noted that the presence of women, but also anyone that has family responsibilities, in municipal politics hinges on a series of informal, if not discretionary practices that make the family-work balance possible.

It is acknowledged that politics is learned on the go; no school exists that teaches elected officials how to perform their functions. Research has shown that duties women take on do not provide them with the same kind of practical knowledge of politics or the same recognition within the group than the duties assumed by men. That's why, to ensure that women can fulfill their mandate on an equal footing and that politics is a sphere exempt from discrimination, it is important to change the political milieu and its attitudes while formalizing best practices.

While there are actually many ways in which to successfully achieve a balance in daily life, they are still too haphazard and uncertain, notably because, as many have mentioned, the nature of balancing family and work is constantly shifting. A family's needs are not the same when children are older and when grandparents in turn need assistance. FWB takes different forms for each family and is a particular issue for elected officials of the sandwich generation,<sup>5</sup> who have to deal with family situations that their parents did not have to. FWB is thus always evolving; the conjugal status and the number and age of children are factors that change over time:

<sup>5</sup> The sandwich generation refers to people who are caught between the often conflicting demands of caring for children and the elderly. Online: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/040928/dq040928b-fra.htm>.



“ So I became a single parent again. And it was extremely difficult. My child was a bit older... but you don't leave an X-year-old child alone at home five days a week. So I had to limit the number of engagements. I remember that I scheduled no more than two evenings... It was a constant stress always trying to be... I was the only parent, if you want... It was very, very taxing... The change was very difficult because when I got involved, it was not at all the same situation. ”  
[Elected female official]

“ Well, I have to say that I have my mother who is still here. But she doesn't live close by and I would say that since recently, I would say that it's a lot more me who does the helping, than her helping me... My mom is getting older now and I have to assist her. ”  
[Elected female official]

A change in the family situation impacts the forms that the balance between family and political duties take, but also impacts the nature of support that the family can provide. For example, the partner's commitment, which is critical, can disappear after a person enters politics:

“ With the second child, my partner told me, 'I'm taking time off, but I am no longer going to follow you everywhere.' While a nanny maybe could have done it, but give the child... You know, I also understood, so it was a very different family arrangement. ”  
[Elected female official]

Moreover, the support of the family network while very effective for some can be completely inexistent for others or can take other forms:

“ Oh and family, it's that too. I cannot rely on them because we are immigrants, but it seems to me that it would be good to promote this as well. You know, seeing more of the family beside the father and mother... Because it must be good to have grandparents, even neighbours, a little like the African way where the whole village raises a child. ”

[Elected female official]

“ I don't think it's possible. I don't always get along with the father of my daughter, but I admit that he has always been there, because if not, plus... I cannot count on family. ”

[Elected female official]

“ I would say that we can't manage just with a partner and extended family. In any case, it's not true in my situation. ”

[Elected female official]

These limits can occur in the organization of elected officials' work. Informal practices were implemented in the boroughs to facilitate FWB at the request of borough councillors. Practices that, as one elected woman mentions, are fairly simple to put in place:

“ Maybe there are boroughs that always held meetings at 7 a.m. And then at some point someone raised their hand, 'No, we cannot.' And, in other boroughs, it works well. ”

[Elected female official]

In other cases, the spring break for school age children is taken into account when planning borough council meetings, allowing elected officials to set time aside for their children:

“ I had the borough council meetings moved so that it never took place on... It had always been during spring break, it's the first Monday in March... I said, 'I will not come if you do it at this time.' So we moved it... The civil servants are definitely very happy, there are no longer any borough council meetings during spring break... It's a fairly simple measure. ”

[Elected female official]

However, the exact opposite can occur since schedules for commissions vary from one commission to the next.

“ *It's never definite, we do half and half... It's the evening straightaway, and if the president says: 'No, we're going to do it differently,' then it changes. So, you know, in another commission, I had tried to address this matter, and I was the only young mother in the group...* ”

[Elected female official]

Elected officials' reflections about their strategies and practices regarding the balancing of family and work illustrate, beyond the implementation of tangible measures, the need for clear guidelines that signal the necessity to think about FWB in collective terms due to the wide variability in situations,

“ *It depends if you are a man, if you are a woman, if you [are] adopting, if it's a birth, a teenager going through a hard time, a child who is sick, a parent who is dying...* ”

[Elected female official]

Implementing systemic measures that take into account FWB-related demands, for example, the fact that an increasing number of elected officials are involved in the family sphere and that this takes many forms, does away with the perception that women alone are responsible for achieving this balance. It also avoids placing decisions that affect all elected officials in the hands of a few.



# TOWARDS BETTER PRACTICES

## OVERVIEW

### OBSTACLES TO FWB

- > Expectation by the population that elected officials be available at all times, informal processes that give rise to problematic perceptions.

### PROMISING PRACTICES

- > Changes to work schedules
- > Access to babysitting services
- > Opening of public spaces to families
- > Parental and caregiver leave
- > Awareness and training
- > Access to a family room

### CHANGES AT THE CITY OF MONTRÉAL

We have seen that the maintenance of certain aspects of the political profession and the current expectations of politicians make FWB even more challenging. Unpredictable and atypical work schedules, long work hours and little availability or the absence of parental leave are generally identified as formal barriers to FWB for elected officials, as is the absence of babysitting services for children.

The informal nature of some decisions and appointment processes are regarded as further obstacles: They tend to favour persons who are in the position to be constantly present, even excessively so, at places of work and disadvantage persons who have family or caregiving obligations (OCDE, 2014). It is worth noting that it is through the increased presence of women, young people and parents in active politics who wish to be more involved in family life that the current institutional limits become especially obvious (Palmieri, 2011; Brenton, 2010). That's why it is important to not only ensure changes to elected officials' work conditions, but to also keep in place actions that encourage all women and men to participate in active politics.

The expectations of voters in terms of the availability of their representatives outside typical work hours, underpinned by the increasing use of information technology and social media, also make FWB difficult (Royce, Farney and Loat, 2013; Brenton, 2010; Palmieri, 2011). As well, research reveals a political work culture that is problematic in as far as voters as well as elected officials

among themselves tend not to be sensitive to the needs, health and specific situations of political representatives (Royce, Farney and Loat, 2013). Within institutions and parties, a positive work climate as well as collaboration and collegiality were regarded as factors that facilitate a better FWB for elected officials (Royce, Farney and Loat, 2013).

## PROMISING PRACTICES

For elected officials and political institutions, FWB represents a significant challenge where a balance must be struck between expectations concerning political representation, accountability, electoral competition and entrenched formal rules. Nevertheless, several categories of reforms have been implemented in order to facilitate FWB for elected officials.<sup>6</sup> The reforms include:

- > **Change to work schedules** and, specifically, to the dates and times of council sittings, as well as committee meeting times. For example, the Canadian, Swedish and Norwegian federal parliaments have synched their sitting calendar with the school calendar (OCDE, 2014). In Ontario, British Columbia and Quebec, assemblies are held earlier and the Welsh parliament has set the time for committee meetings between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. inclusively (OCDE, 2014; Royce, Farney and Loat, 2013).
- > **Access to babysitting services for children.** Several political institutions make available on-site babysitting services to elected officials, including the Canadian (Royce, Farney and Loat, 2013), Portuguese and Irish (OCDE, 2014) parliaments. In Norway, in addition to a babysitting service at work, the parliament reserves places for children of elected officials at nearby nursery schools (OCDE, 2014). Financial funding for babysitting is also proposed as a measure that supports FWB (Palmieri, 2011).
- > **Opening of public spaces to families.** In addition to babysitting support, several measures aim to make places such as city hall easier to navigate for families. Of these, official authorization to breastfeed in the assemblies and meetings, the legality of the presence of children in assemblies as well as the creation of spaces dedicated to family time are considered of great importance (Palmieri, 2011). In all cases, there is consensus that these authorizations must lay out transparent and clear rules in order to avoid discretionary decisions.

---

<sup>6</sup> Also see the table in the study by Palmieri, 2011, p. 100, online, [<http://bit.ly/1LAD2Ea>].

- > **Parental and caregiver leave.** The possibility for elected persons to take a leave of absence without being penalized, with or without pay, is also an important measure to facilitate FWB. The implementation of such leaves presents legislative and political challenges that are, however, not insurmountable, as we have seen in Montréal. In Israel, the Knesset has experimented with a 12-week parental leave for both women and men. In other countries, elected officials may officially take a leave of absence for an indeterminate period in the place of parental leave (Palmieri, 2011). In all cases, the main difficulty is who will replace the elected person during their leave. To address this, governments have adopted different solutions. In Australia, it is possible for people to vote by proxy. In the Netherlands and other countries using a proportional representation system, a temporary substitute is chosen from the electoral list. Finally, in Estonia, elected officials who take a leave of absence are temporarily suspended from parliament (Palmieri, 2011).
- > **Awareness and training.** In order to support elected persons, several institutions also make available professional training in politics. As part of this training, FWB and potential solutions to personal pressures can be explored. This is the case at the American Congress and Canadian parliament (Institute of Politics, 2017; Fekete, 2015). Likewise, the *Association des municipalités basques* publishes a guide for newly elected women where the question of FWB is addressed (Sarea, 2015). These elements have the potential to raise awareness among all elected officials in as far as there is a cultural dimension to FWB in active politics.

Due to the very nature of active politics, these measures will always be limited. Moreover, they will only be successful if they are accepted as legitimate by voters (Burke, 2016).

## CHANGES AT THE CITY OF MONTRÉAL

In interviews and discussion groups, elected participants also mentioned that recent changes (see Annex I) to promote FWB represent progress and, for some, have already had a positive impact.

For several years, the City of Montréal has taken steps to regulate and formalize certain practices in order to eliminate all discretionary aspects. An excellent example is the clarification and modification of the rule allowing elected officials to take up to 18 weeks of leave in the event of sickness, birth or the adoption of a child, or for any other need related to the fulfillment of family responsibilities.

The interest in this measure and the acceptance that it seems to have won among elected officials stems primarily from the fact that it recognizes that family responsibilities fall to all elected officials, not just women. These different leaves of absence allow elected men to stop working in the

event of the birth of a child or a prolonged illness involving someone close to them. Consequently, elected officials no longer feel a sense of guilt for not fulfilling responsibilities related to their mandate and are not penalized for their absence.

“ I think that already, I was just speaking about guilt, but the fact that the 3-month leave for the birth of a child has been formalized, it's to tell yourself that you don't have to feel bad for not being present at the council. That's already a good step in acknowledging that you don't bring a child into this world and then return to work the next day. Some do it, I think, but... ”  
[Elected female official]

This change is viewed as a significant step forward in balancing family and political work.

## A family room

Certain boroughs have made efforts to create an environment that is suitable for children. This entails breastfeeding rooms, a babysitting area during borough council sessions, and in particular, a change in attitude so that children receive a courteous welcome.

The presence of a breastfeeding room at city hall is regarded as convenient for people who require such a space. If the very presence of such a room physically represents a change in attitude, its use is nevertheless limited, people who use it are few and the necessity is intermittent and disappears once the child grows.

## Babysitting and creation of a list of babysitters

During interviews, several people raised the possibility of creating a list or network of babysitters who would be familiar with the work and demands of an elected official. This measure could be especially useful to people who do not have a family network to rely on:

“ You mentioned a minute ago, the notion of a good babysitter. Not everyone has access to a good one. We've already talked about it... A network of good babysitters can make a difference... So it's something that might resolve the famous question, do you take a break or get a nursery for elected officials? versus, do you have someone who can go over to the house, who elected officials can refer among themselves if needed. ”  
[Elected female official]



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Conseil des Montréalaises (CM) supports and promotes an approach to balancing family and work that is embedded in a spirit of collective solidarity in the face of family responsibilities that can fall to anyone during their lifetime. The Conseil recognizes that elected officials contend with a range of obstacles in their efforts to successfully balance their professional and personal lives.

Mainly, the CM observes a culture that continues to attribute the duties related to the domestic sphere, especially those of caring for members of the family such as children, primarily to women.

The CM, however, reminds the reader that the issue of family-work balance does not concern women exclusively. Elected men must be targeted by measures to facilitate their acceptance of practical changes that can pave the way for balancing measures, but which will also allow them to be beneficiaries without being stigmatized.

Moreover, for the CM, all measures that allow an efficient balance between family and work are inseparable from a desire to achieve true equality for women.

Political professions, including that of the elected person, have long been the exclusive domain of men. It is important to recognize that FWB is one of the obstacles that elected women face in playing a greater role in politics.

The CM defines family-work balance as the implementation of measures, actions or practices that allow any person who takes on responsibilities for assisting or caring for persons close to them or who assume family responsibilities, in whatever form, to do so in the most supportive conditions possible while pursuing professional activities.

Measures for family-work balance are a way for the City of Montréal to provide elected persons with an environment that helps them successfully fulfill their mandate.



## THE CONSEIL DES MONTRÉALAISES RECOMMENDS THAT:

- 1** The City of Montréal commit to formalizing all practices supporting the balancing of family and work for elected officials and to implement standardized and transparent practices;
  - > With this in mind, the City of Montréal draw up an action plan on family-work balance intended for all City of Montréal elected officials;
  - > The commitments and achievements of the City of Montréal on family-work balance be included in the next action plan *Pour une participation égalitaire des femmes et des hommes à la vie de Montréal*;
- 2** The City of Montréal make administrative staff more available to elected officials in order to cover for absences and to meet the specific needs related to family-work balance. Moreover, the procedure for allocating this staff must be governed by a non-partisan process and communicated to all elected persons;
- 3** The City of Montréal continue to implement and promote a free babysitting service, available to elected officials and citizens, during municipal and borough council meetings;
- 4** The City of Montréal equip the family room at city hall with an audiovisual device that would allow occupants to follow debates and participate in deliberations and votes;
- 5** The City of Montréal undertake a review of the formal and informal practices facilitating family-work balance among all political bodies and boroughs in order to define and publicize promising practices;

**6** The City of Montréal maintain and increase its efforts regarding impact of scheduling on family-work balance;

**6.1** The City of Montréal document the different practices regarding work schedules at boroughs and political bodies;

**6.2** The City of Montréal vary the times of commissions and public consultations in order to facilitate family-work balance as well as the participation of all members of the population;

**7** While acknowledging the City's leadership with regards to the granting of parental leave for elected officials, the City of Montréal:

**7.1** Promote the existence of this leave among the Montréal population since it represents a significant step forward;

**7.2** Recognize that it will need to be improved with further measures, since it does not meet all the needs of elected officials in terms of FWB;

**7.3** Maintain a dialogue with elected official, parties and the government of Quebec about legislative practices and changes that would encourage FWB;

**8** The City of Montréal continue to support the presence of women in politics, specifically, that the City:

**8.1** Continue to organize activities such as Cité Elles Mtl;

**8.2** Encourage parties to offer sufficient training to candidates and that it offer general formal training to new elected officials of both genders on how the city functions and measures in place to support family-work balance;

**9** The City of Montréal be responsible for producing an annual report on family-work balance among elected officials that will be submitted to the Presidency Commission for informational purposes and follow-up;

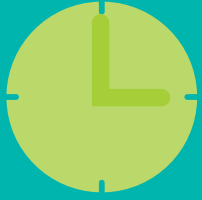
**9.1** This report contain data on the current needs of elected officials with respect to family-work balance;

**9.2** This report record and identify the practices of the City, boroughs and political bodies regarding family-work balance among elected officials;

**9.3** This report be distributed among elected officials and that it be made available to all Montrealers;

**10** Given the real demands made on borough councillors of both genders – often in a full-time capacity – that the City study the possibility of asking the government of Québec, as part of the law granting Montréal metropolis status, the power to determine the remuneration of elected officials and that it request a change to elected official's base remuneration;

**11** The appointments to different commissions and political bodies respect gender parity and that remuneration of these commissions and political bodies respect the principle of pay equity.

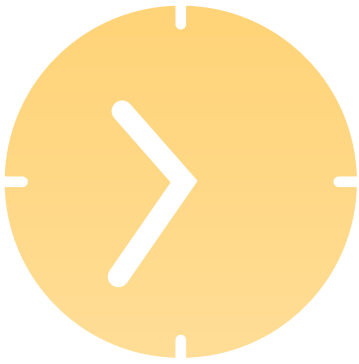
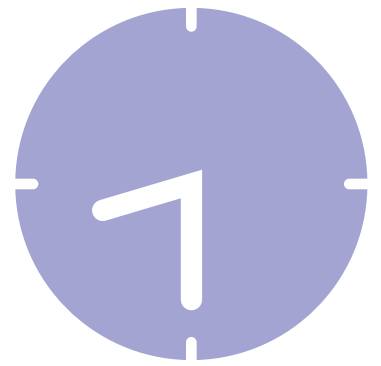


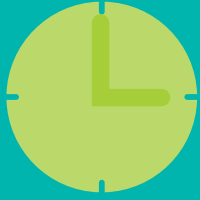
# CONCLUSION

The balancing of family and work, as much for mothers as for caregivers, is a critical issue in achieving true equality between women and men.

Elected officials who participated in this study have clearly spoken: work organization, i.e., political work, must change to reflect the different arrangements of today's immediate and extended families.

Several countries have developed supportive and promising practices. The City of Montréal is also committed to this path. This recognition must be accompanied by a strong desire to evolve and significant commitments. That is why the Council has tabled 11 recommendations to the City of Montréal. The members of the CM are committed to following up on them and pursuing the work with elected officials and the City of Montréal to ensure that everyone can benefit from effective means to balance their family and professional responsibilities in the most supportive conditions possible.





# ANNEX I

## FWB TIMELINE AT THE CITY OF MONTRÉAL

### Spring 2011

Introduction of a new schedule for municipal council sessions:

2 p.m. to 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 11 p.m.

### December 2012

Municipal council mandates the Presidency Commission to propose a family-work balance plan for elected officials.

### May 2013

Report submitted by the Council Presidency Commission.

### September 2013

Response of the executive committee.

### Spring 2015

Working committee chaired by Lionel Perez mandated to study certain questions related to FWB – Survey among 103 elected officials (51.5% response rate).

### June 2015

Meeting between the working committee and the Conseil des Montréalaises.

Report tabled by the Presidency Commission on assembly schedules: Maintenance of Monday schedule: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

### October 2015

Working committee chaired by Lionel Perez tables its report to the City of Montréal's executive committee.

### Municipal council on October 27, 2015

#### [Adoption of recommendations](#)

#### CM15 1250

1. Absence of any member of the municipal council or borough council due to the birth or the adoption of a child will not result in the termination of the elected official's mandate for a maximum period of 18 weeks.
2. The municipal council mandates the CM to lead a qualitative research study, including discussion groups and the assessment of the impact of the redistribution of responsibilities on other elected officials when an elected official takes a leave of absence.

### Winter-summer 2016

Conseil des Montréalaises: research carried out on FWB among elected officials.

### Since April 2016

A babysitting service for citizens and elected officials is available during the municipal council session on Monday evenings, between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. It is also offered on Tuesdays if the session runs until the next day, between 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

### June 2016

Government of Québec: amendment to Bill No. 83, *An Act to amend various municipal-related legislative provisions concerning such matters as political financing*, which allows any elected official to take a leave from council sessions for a maximum period of 18 consecutive weeks.

### Fall 2016

Conseil des Montréalaises: drafting of opinion paper.

### Spring 2017

Filing of the CM's opinion paper at the municipal council.

# ANNEX II

## WOMEN ELECTED AT THE CITY OF MONTRÉAL

### 2016

45 women elected out of 103

**43.7%**

### Borough mayors

5 women out of 19

**26.3%**

### Municipal councillors

19 women out of 46

**41.3%**

### Borough councillors

21 women out of 38

**55.3%**

## GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

### Municipal council

[including borough mayors and city councillors]

24 women out of 65

**36.9%**

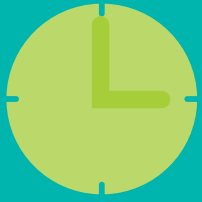
### Executive committee

4 women out of 13 [including the mayor of Montréal]

Including a vice-president

**30.8%**





# ANNEXE III

Remuneration paid by the City to elected officials, as provided for in By-law 02-039

## BASE REMUNERATION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND BOROUGH COUNCIL MEMBERS

(a. 1) FUNCTION	BASE REMUNERATION
Mayor	\$74,596
Municipal councillor	\$53,469
Borough councillor	\$30,892
Municipal councillor appointed by the mayor to the Ville-Marie borough	\$70,866





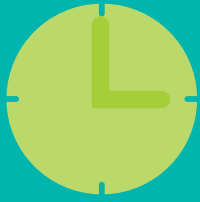
## ADDITIONAL REMUNERATION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND BOROUGH COUNCIL MEMBERS

(a. 2) FUNCTION	ADDITIONAL REMUNERATION
Mayor	\$79,871
President of executive the committee	\$68,916
Vice-president of the executive committee	\$59,410
Member of executive the committee	\$42,181
Leader of the opposition	\$42,181
Majority leader	\$29,704
Opposition party leader	\$ 17,822
Council president	\$42,181
Council vice-president	\$11,882
<b>BOROUGH MAYOR:</b>	
> Borough with a population of less than 50,000	\$11,882
> Borough with a population between 50,000 and 100,000	\$ 17,822
> Borough with a population over 100,000	\$26,139
Deputy mayor	\$1,782/4-month period
Associate councillor	\$17,822
President of a council commission	\$17,822
Vice-president of a council commission	\$11,882
Member of a council commission	\$5,940
President of advisory committee on urban planning	\$3,565
<b>Expense allowance***:</b>	\$16,216
The bill provides council members with an expense allowance equal to 50% of their remuneration, up to \$16,216, for 2016. All allowances given in this table are paid by the City of Montréal.	

**Note:**

Borough by-laws can set different remuneration for borough councillors and for certain positions performed at the borough level. *(Updated January 1, 2016)*

Source: City of Montréal, Service du greffe



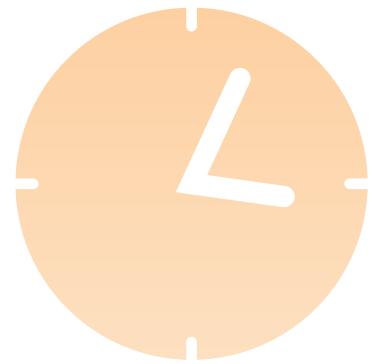
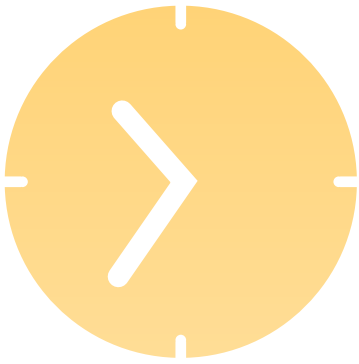
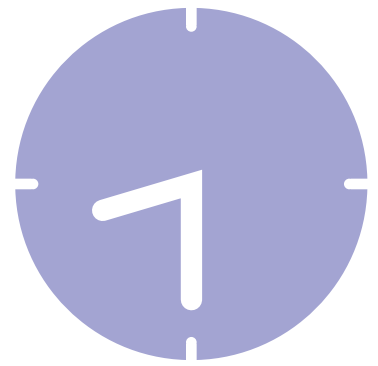
# ANNEX IV

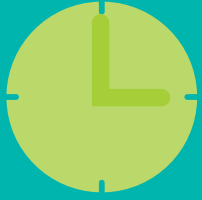
## PRESENCE OF ELECTED WOMEN IN PERMANENT COMMISSIONS

Permanent commissions	2011				2016			
	P	VP	W/T	%	P	VP	W/T	%
Council presidency	M	W/M	3/9	33.3	M	2 M	3/9	33.3
Social development and Montréal diversity social	W	W/M	6/11	54.5	M	W/M	6/11	54.5
Finances and administration	M	2 M	3/11	27.3	M	W/M	4/11	36.4
Transportation and public works	M	W/M	3/11	27.3	M	W/M	5/11	45.5
Water, environment, sustainable development and large parks	M	2 W	7/11	63.6	W	W/M	8/11	72.7
Culture, heritage and sports	W	W/M	6/11	54.5	W	W/M	6/11	54.5
Economic, urban and housing development	M	2 M	2/11	18.2	M	2 M	4/11	36.4
Public safety	M	2 M	1/9	11.1	W	2 M	3/9	33.3
Contract review	M	2 M	3/11	27.3	W	2 W	6/11	54.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2/9</b> <b>22.2%</b>	<b>6/18</b> <b>33.3%</b>	<b>34/95</b> <b>35.8%</b>	<b>35.8</b>	<b>4/9</b> <b>44.4%</b>	<b>7/18</b> <b>38.9%</b>	<b>45/95</b> <b>47.4%</b>	<b>47.4</b>
Inspector General	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	W	W/3 M	6/12	50
Montréal land use and development plan	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	M	W	3/7	42.9
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>					<b>1/2</b> <b>50%</b>	<b>2/5</b> <b>40%</b>	<b>9/19</b> <b>47.4%</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL 2016</b>					<b>5/11</b> <b>45.5%</b>	<b>9/23</b> <b>39.1%</b>	<b>54/114</b> <b>47.4%</b>	

### LEGEND

P = Presidency VP = Vice-presidency W/T = number of women/total W = Woman M = Man





# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ARAMBOUROU, CLÉMENT (2014). "Les masculinités du métier politique: contribution à l'étude des logiques de production du genre en politique au temps de la parité," Doctoral thesis in political science, University of Bordeaux.
- ARAMBOUROU, CLÉMENT (2009). *La division sexuée du travail politique*. Conference "Rapports de genre, rapports de classe: femmes, travail, métiers de l'enseignement," Axis 3: "Articulations entre les rapports de classe et ceux de genre," Bordeaux, France, [online], [<http://espacesmarxbordeaux.apinc.org/IMG/rtf/InterventionClementArambouroEspacesMarx2.rtf>, 2009.<halshs-00514450>].
- BOURQUE, MÉLANIE and NATHALIE ST-AMOUR (2016). "Les politiques de conciliation travail-famille: la nécessité d'une analyse intersectorielle?" *Politique et Sociétés*, 35 (2-3), p. 15-18.
- BRENTON, SCOTT (2010). *What lies beneath: the work of senators and members in the Australian Parliament*, Canberra, Australian Parliament.
- BURKE, ASHLEY (2016). "MPs looking for family-work balance may say goodbye to Friday sittings. Commons committee looking into more family-friendly work structure," *CBC News*, February 27, 2016, [online], [<http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/mps-family-friendly-1.3464459>].
- CELOCK, JOHN R.D. (2010). *The Next Generation: Young Elected Officials and Their Impact on American Politics*, Bloomsbury Academic, 224 p.
- CONSEIL DES MONTRÉALAISES, (2008). *Garder le cap sur l'ascension professionnelle des femmes aux postes de cadre à la Ville de Montréal*, Montréal, 48 p.
- CONSEIL DU STATUT DE LA FEMME (2015). *Les femmes en politique: en route vers la parité*, Québec, [online], [[https://www.csf.gouv.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/avis\\_femmes\\_et\\_politique\\_web2.pdf](https://www.csf.gouv.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/avis_femmes_et_politique_web2.pdf)].
- CONSEIL DU STATUT DE LA FEMME (2015). *Portrait des Québécoises en 8 temps*, Québec, [online], [<http://bit.ly/1Fs8KpF>].
- DESCARRIES, FRANCINE and CHRISTINE CORBEIL (2005). "L'articulation famille-travail: une problématique en voie de s'imposer," in: Tremblay, Diane-Gabrielle. *De la conciliation emploi-famille à une politique des temps sociaux*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, p. 61-68.

- DULONG, DELPHINE (2010). *La construction du champ politique*, Rennes, PUR, 375 p.
- FEKETE, JASON (2015). "How to be an MP: 197 rookies learning how to set up an office and maintain a proper work-life balance," National Post, November 9, 2015, [online], [<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/how-to-be-an-mp-197-rookies-learning-how-to-set-up-an-office-and-maintain-a-proper-work-life-balance>].
- INSTITUTE OF POLITICS (2017). "Bipartisan Program for Newly Elected Members of Congress", [online], [<http://iop.harvard.edu/get-inspired/bipartisan-program-newly-elected-members-congress>].
- KANTHAK, KRISTIN (2012). "Work-life balance and why women don't run." OUPblog, [online], [<http://blog.oup.com/2012/09/work-life-balance-and-why-women-dont-run>].
- KERGOAT, DANIELÈLE [2000], "Division sexuelle du travail et rapports sociaux de sexe," in Helena Hirata *et al.*, *Dictionnaire critique du féminisme*, p. 35-44, Paris, PUF.
- KOOP, ROYCE, FARNEY, JAMES and ALISON LOAT (2013). "Balancing Family and Work: Challenges Facing Canadian MPs," Canadian Parliamentary Review, (spring), p. 37-42.
- OCDE (2014). *Women, Government and Policy Making in OECD Countries: Fostering Diversity for Inclusive Growth*, OCDE, Paris.
- PACAUT, PHILIPPE (2016). "L'évolution des difficultés de conciliation travail-famille des mères et des pères en emploi au Québec," *Familles en mouvance / Bulletin de liaison*, Vol. 13, Fall, p. 12-15.
- PALMIERI, SONIA (2011). *Gender-Sensitive Parliaments: A Global Review of Good Practice*, Inter-Parliamentary Union, 148 p.
- PEI COALITION FOR WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT (2009). *Whose Job is it Anyway? The Life and Work of an MLA Research and Recommendations on Work-Life Balance for PEI MLAs*, [online], [[http://www.womeningovernmentpei.ca/sitefiles/File/research/WhoseJobsItAnyway\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.womeningovernmentpei.ca/sitefiles/File/research/WhoseJobsItAnyway_Summary.pdf)].
- QUÉBEC, BUREAU DE LA NORMALISATION (2010). *Norme BNQ 9700-820 : Conciliation travail-famille*.

QUÉBEC, Secrétariat à la condition féminine (2007). *Pour que l'égalité de droit devienne une égalité de fait. Politique gouvernementale pour l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes.*

ST-AMOUR, NATHALIE (2010). *Vers une politique de conciliation travail-famille au Québec : des enjeux complexes et en évolution*, Doctoral thesis in social services, University of Montréal.

SAREA, OREKA (2015). *Thinking about Politics. Welcome Manual for Women Elected Officials*, Bilbao: EUDEL/Association of Basque Municipalities and EMAKUNDE / Basque Institute for Women, [online] [[http://www.eudel.eu/destacados/basqueskola/files/2016/01/guia-mujeres-electas\\_EN.pdf](http://www.eudel.eu/destacados/basqueskola/files/2016/01/guia-mujeres-electas_EN.pdf)].

SILBERMANN, RACHEL (2015). "Gender Roles, Work-Life Balance, and Running for Office," *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 10(2), p. 123-153.

SUE, ROGER (1995). *Temps et ordre social. Sociologie des temps sociaux*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition), 313 p.

TREMBLAY, DIANE-GABRIELLE (2012). *Conciliation emploi-famille et temps sociaux* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec.



