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## **Austria: Catholic Women's Movement, appeal to improve working conditions for women, most affected by the pandemic**

In a statement released today to mark the International Day of the Unemployed and ahead of 1 May, the Austrian Catholic Women's Movement (KFBÖ) calls on the federal government to consider urgent action to support women's work as "women are currently more affected by unemployment than men. As "system maintainers" in factories that traditionally "pay low-wages", women are "too often subjected to poor working conditions and extra working hours, but receive little or no financial compensation". The gender gap has increased during the pandemic, despite the fact that women in particular have proven to be reliable workers, the President of the KFBÖ, Angelika Ritter-Grepl, says in the press statement, highlighting that women "have always assumed the bulk of private care work and even took on a greater share during the crisis". The KFBÖ, therefore, calls for urgent and essential measures to be taken to ensure gender equality in the distribution and remuneration of work. "An increase in unemployment benefits, a targeted employment scheme, and a reduction in working hours are paramount to allow a fair distribution between men and women of paid work and unpaid care work on a partnership basis". The KFBÖ also calls for sustainable investment in the entire care sector, better working and wage conditions, and an extra allowance for additional hours worked during the pandemic in the business, housekeeping, nursing and healthcare sectors.

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