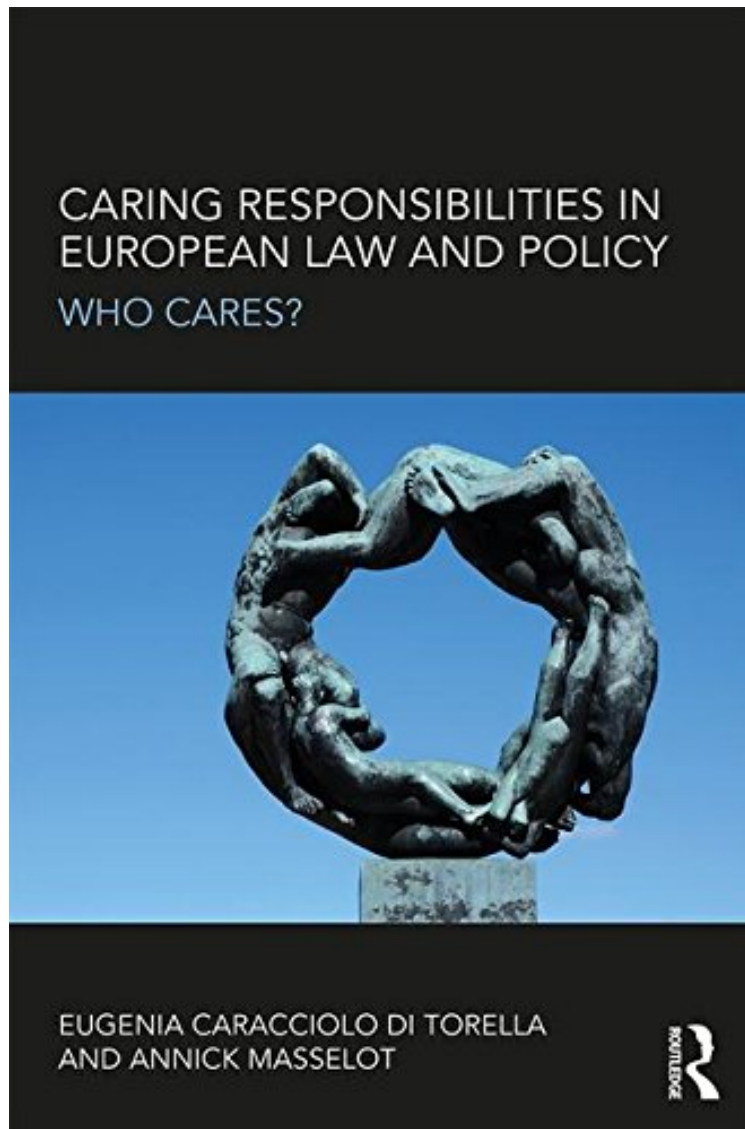


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## Caring Responsibilities in European Law and Policy: Who Cares?

*Eugenia Caracciolo Di Torella, Annick Masselot*  
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Historically the care of children and family members has been perceived as a private issue, a personal choice provided informally within the family, and accordingly has been ignored by legislators who has focused instead on the leave

and time provisions in employment law. However, demographic transition, changes in the workplace and the new fluid model of families, together with the massive presence of women in paid employment mean that traditional informal arrangements are no longer feasible. The process of, have resulted in an increase in the number of people who need care whilst there are fewer people in a position to provide informal care. This is largely the situation across Europe where, although with substantial differences, care work is fast leaving the private sphere to acquire a public dimension. This book looks at how EU law and policy have, over the years, addressed the theoretical and practical issues of care. It shows that, potentially, the EU care legal and policy framework is dynamic and evolving but remains piecemeal and lacking a comprehensive care strategy across Europe. The book analyses caring responsibilities both for children, and for people with chronic illnesses or disabilities as well as the growing number of older people requiring care, and suggests organising caring responsibilities into the two broad categories: traditional and unspoken care. The book argues that a clear framework needs to be established for all types of care which can develop following the same principles and at the same speed. Alongside this it calls for an increased recognition of the rights of the carers. Considering it unlikely to be achieved through EU traditional legislation the authors look towards the Open Method of Coordination as an alternative process. Ultimately the book underlines the crucial importance of starting to explore this area and to trigger a much needed debate with a view to redeploing the traditional understanding of care to meet the needs of a fast-changing society and, accordingly, in order to set the platform for policy and legislative development.

About the Author Eugenia Caracciolo Di Torella is a lecturer at the University of Leicester, UK. Annick Masselot is Marie Curie Fellow at the National Centre for Research on Europe at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand.