

Caring for family carers

Policies, Services and Recommendations

Presentation of research findings

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Aim of WP2 research

- To shed light on the challenges for the family care support system, with focus on **Austria, Italy, Portugal and Spain**;
- The overall guiding question of this report is how family carers can be best supported in their outstanding contribution to society.
- Specifically, the aims of the study are to:
 - discuss why the issue of the family care has to find recognition on policy debate here and now;
 - explore the socio-economic profile and situation of family carers;
 - examine the existing approaches and services for family carers and the carers' satisfaction with these reliefs;
 - provide examples of good practice and/or innovative approaches

Definitions

Family carers

- Is not referred to child care and not to paid care work;
- But to: “who look after family, partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have any disabilities. The care that they provide is unpaid.” (Eurocarers)

Informal caregivers

undeclared or illegal long term carer workers, who might receive a salary

Long Term Care / LTC

- a range of services for persons who are dependent on help with basic activities of daily living over an extended period of time
- to persons with physical or mental handicaps, the frail elderly and particular groups that need support in conducting their daily life activities (OECD)

Family care on the top of EC policy agenda

- In 2005, EU Member States agreed on the commitment to *“accessible, high-quality and sustainable health care and long-term care by ensuring: access for all, to adequate health and long-term care and that the need for care does not lead to poverty and financial dependency; and that inequities in access to care and in health outcomes are addressed”*
- In 2007, European ministers of employment and social affairs declared it a top priority to support family care in a message to their heads of state.

National LTC Systems

- Home or community care is preferred to institutional care throughout Europe;
- The EC 2009 recommends:
 - **Austria** should improve the access to information, guidance and training for family carers
 - **Italy** should improve the efficiency by means of a more rational use of resources; focusing on community and home services by moving towards an integrated approach between regional and local levels
 - **Portugal** should enhance the provision of LTC and reducing geographical disparities
 - **Spain** should enhance the provision of LTC and counter regional disparities

Trend toward care provided by (undocumented) migrant care workers

- Reasons:
 - Feminisation of the labour market
 - Increase of number of persons to be cared (ageing population)
 - Restructuring of the welfare state systems
 - Changing family structures (mobility, single households)
- No meaningful, comparable data found in terms of number, qualification, levels of training
- Significant number of EU-research projects in this field

Family carers - Facts and figures

- 100 million carers in EU25, 25% of citizens
- Value of their efforts exceeds countries' spending on formal care
- Mostly women (60 to 77%), mean age is 55 years
- 1/3 care of older AND for someone younger ("sandwich generation")
- 19 millions (6% of population) care at least 20 hours per week (in 2005)

■ Of these, 24% were aged 65+

Family carers - Facts and figures

- Average caring period lasts 60 months, (47 month in Germany, 70 months in Poland)
- 59% are non-working in gainful work
- More than half feel “trapped” in care, feel isolated, report worse emotional well-being
- Motives: love, affection, duty religious motives, lack of alternatives (50% of carers)

Countries comparison

Number of family carers

- **Austria:** 6.7% of adult population, 2/5 are in paid work
- **Italy:** 11% of 50+ population
- **Portugal:** 2.3% of total population
- **Spain:** 12.4% of all households, 21% of total population

Time used for caring

- **Austria:** 1/2 of carers spend 5 to 15 hours /week, 1/4 more than 15 hours/ week
- **Italy:** housewives: 15.4 hours, public employed: 7.7 hours, private employed: 8.5 hours
- **Portugal:** 68.3% of family cares: more than 4 hours/day
- **Spain:** 56% on daily basis, 22% care every week, average: 7 hours/ day

Countries comparison

Employment patterns:

- **Austria:** 55% are not on the labour market, 43% are employed, 1/4 have cut back or abandoned gainful work
- **Italy:** 50% are not working on full time basis, 60% are dissatisfied with their economic situation
- **Portugal:** no data available
- **Spain:** 22% are employed, 50% are housewives, 12% have stopped working

Reliefs for family carers

- may encompass several stakeholders
- financial benefits
 - focus on the reduction of the carers' financial burdens: carer allowances, payments of income during care leave, tax and pension credits, available to people in paid jobs and/or to inactive caregivers are measures supporting carers financially
- Non-financial benefits
 - such as respite care, care leave and counselling: reduce the psychological and physical burdens

Reliefs for family carers

- Less than 1/3 of carers had used any support services
- Lack of information, low quality, inadequate coverage, distribution problems (rural areas)
- 50% of EU-citizens were satisfied with public support were unsatisfied (Portugal: 40% are not at all satisfied)

Policies focusing on the labour market participation

- Possibility of part time work, short time leaves
- Should consider the specific needs of women
- Should set incentives for men

Reliefs for family carers

Policies focusing on securing the provision of care

- modularisation of professional care services
- respite care and day care centres
- information and counselling services, & care techniques, health aspects, information on how to organise work and health

Policies focusing on cost control of care

- The assessment of policy proposals often reaches the conclusion that family care is less costly than institutional care, however ignoring the wage loss and expected losses regarding the carer's pension rights.

Your are warmly invited to give
feedback to the report

Thank you very much for your attention!