

Global and Local Care Chains in Slovenia

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Incentives for research of informal paid care work in Slovenia

- Symptoms of care deficit
- Lack of researches from Eastern European countries

Research “*Informal paid domestic work: trends in Slovenia and EU*”: methodology

- Contextualization: descriptive indicators of care, migration and labour regime
- Demand side: quantitative methodology; sample 2677 households, telephone survey, structured interviews
- Supply side: qualitative methodology, 29 semi-structured personal interviews with cleaners, child carers and elderly carers

Research questions

- acquiring empirical data on the current growth of informal forms of paid care work in private homes on demand and supply side for child care, elderly care and cleaning separately
- provide a detailed picture on the scope and form of the presence of the "global care chain" in Slovenia
- explore the question of dependence of the provision of care in Slovenia on intersections of class, gender and ethnic inequalities.

Contextualisation: child care regime

- Mass full time employment of women since the post war era
- The socialist legacy has provided a well established, quality and subsidized network of kindergartens
- 3-month mother's leave and 9-month parents' leave are covered in the amount of 100% of the wage, which the parents are entitled to share
- Father's leave is 90 days long, but only fully payed for 15 days
- From 2009 on, Slovenia is witnessing a noticeable lack of kindergarten vacancies
- A small number of municipalities introduced 100 EUR subsidy as a substitute for child care they are unable to provide

Contextualisation: elderly care regime

- overwhelming trends in ageing of population
- mixed economy of elderly care services
- pensioners, particularly women, are structurally a group with high risk of living in poverty
- institutionalized care for the elderly is scarce and expensive, therefore families opt for home care
- the public system of home care is not sufficient enough to meet the demand
- Consequently, the majority of elderly persons requiring assistance is entirely dependent on informal social networks, particularly on their families

Contextualisation: migration regime

- 3,4% of immigrants out of the total two million population
- The majority of migrants are from the so-called 'third countries' and 90% of them from the republics of the former Yugoslavia, from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the first place
- feminization of migration in Slovenia is low as the migrants are predominantly male (in 2008 93% were male)
- the prevailing reason for acquisition of temporary residence permits for women is family reunion
- the ethnicisation of public and informal paid care sector due to: intensive economic immigration in 1980'; restructuring of the national states in 1990' – refugees, asylum seekers; after-war economic and political devastation foster immigration of young girls

Contextualization: labour regime

- self-employment,
- supplementary work and small jobs (under discussion),
- registration of social services,
- concessions for elder care and child care,
- registration of nannies at home
- professional qualification for the social carer
- visible trend of marketization

The scale and the structure of in-house care in Slovenia

- In 2009 5% of Slovene households had in-home help: 81% for cleaning, 10% for child care and 23% for care of the elderly.
- **Care deficit:** 7,4% commercial sector, 21% public sector, 71% informal paid care
- **Feminization:** In 98,3% the care workers is female, in 81% of Slovenina ethnic origin and in 16,3% the work is provided by a person from former Yugoslavia
- **Poverty:** In 44,2% of households the care work is provided by a pensioner, in 24,4% by a fully employed person as additional work and in 17,4% by unemployed person
- **Class inequalities:** the frequency of the use of home care services is increasing with household's income and education level
- **Motives:** an ill family member in 50% of households, work overload in 37,8% and in 11,8% the status and life-style related reasons
- **live in** care worker in 2,5% of households

Informal paid nannies

- Gender: women, rarely men
- Status: students and pensioners
- Ethnicity: Slovenians only
- Profile: all levels of education, all social classes
- Motive: voluntary: financial surplus, pleasure of working with children, rarely work for a living
- Power relations: relatively balanced, apparently familiar
- Live out

Carers for the elderly

- Gender: women, rarely men
- Status: middle aged (un)employed women and pensioners, predominantly singles
- Ethnicity: Slovenians and migrants from the 1980's (majority from Bosnia and Hercegovina)
- Class: predominantly lower economic classes
- Motive: sometimes voluntary: financial surplus, common sense of helping the elderly; often: work for a living
- Power relations: relatively balanced; apparently familiar; worker as 'the other'
- Live out and live in

Cleaners

- Gender: women only
- Profile: women of all generations, employed, unemployed, pensioners; mostly single; vocational or elementary education
- Ethnicity: migrantss from the 1980's and “new” migrants (majority from Bosnia and Hercegovina)
- Class: living in poverty
- Motive: non-voluntary: work for a living
- Power relations: unbalanced, worker as 'the other': exploitation, humiliation, racism, work overload
- Live out

Conclusions and further research

- In child care and elderly care “local care chains” predominate.
- In Slovenia, ‘global care chains’ and co-occurrence of female gender, 'other' ethnicity and economic poverty prevail in the cleaning sector, which is the least valued and the most labor intensive, requiring no qualifications and staying the least regulated area.
- “Local care chains” point to the fact that the areas of low qualified service work in public and commercial sectors, which are flexible, physically demanding and poorly paid structurally create the offer of informal cleaning of private homes of wealthy families.
- Many of those who are earning low pensions or wages are often those who have been or still are working in public care work as cleaners, care givers, service.