

# **Gender and Well-Being**

Interactions between Work, Family and Public  
Policies

## **COST ACTION A 34**

### **Third Symposium:**

**Production and Distribution of Well-Being into  
the Family: Strategies of Remunerated and Non-  
remunerated Labour and Consumption Patterns**

**25<sup>th</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

**University of Barcelona  
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**Family strategies between private and public services**

**(Europe, 1950-2000)**

**Paper prepared for the Symposium**

*Production and Distribution of Well-Being into the Family: Strategies of Remunerated and Non-remunerated Labour and Consumption Patterns, Barcelona, Spain, 25<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> June 2007*

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### Abstract

According to OECD data, in the early 1980s Germany and Sweden, which had high public social expenditure as a percentage of GDP (respectively 23.7 per cent and 29.8 per cent), had a very low percentage of domestic workers in the economically active population (respectively 0.6 and 0.05 per cent). In other countries with less developed welfare systems, such as those in the Mediterranean, and particularly Spain (where public social expenditure made up only 17 per cent of GDP) the percentage of domestic workers in the economically active population was higher. According to census data, in Spain it was 5.1 per cent in 1950 and 3.9 in 1981. Census data has to be treated very carefully. Nevertheless, the data is extremely interesting, seeming to confirm that private domestic service is by no means a necessity, if there are good public services.

This data is even more interesting if one considers female employment rates. In Spain, in fact, in 1981 33.3 per cent of women were employed, while in Sweden 77.2 per cent were: in other words, high female employment rates do not necessarily imply high percentages of domestic workers in the economically active population. More refined indicators of social expenditure show other interesting differences as far as recourse to private services is concerned. In Italy, for instance, the recourse to private domestic services has been stimulated by the very fact that a high percentage of the relatively low public social expenditure is made up of public monetary transfers (in particular pensions).

This paper focuses exactly on the relationships between different welfare regimes, the recourse to private domestic services, female employment rates and the gender division of labour both within and outside the household. It will focus both on the period during which in most European countries the recourse to private domestic service declined, more or less between the 1950s and the 1980s, and also on the following period, during which there has been a resurgence in the recourse to private domestic workers. In order to explain the reasons for this unexpected resurgence, I will analyse the differences between the two periods, focusing on the ageing of population, changing female employment rates and the feminisation of international migrations as well as on different state policies on public expenditure for social services, types of services supplied, development of the so-called "proximity services", immigration and the gender division of labour.

As far as the areas covered by my paper are concerned, I have collected data on the level and composition of public social expenditure, female activity rates, the percentage and characteristics of domestic workers in the economically active population and the ageing of population in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Belgium, the UK, Sweden and Norway. Moreover, I present information on State policies (migration policies and welfare policies) likely to stimulate or discourage the demand for domestic workers in Italy, Spain, France, Belgium, Denmark, the UK, Sweden, Germany and Austria.

## 1. Introduction\*

This paper focuses on the relationships between different welfare regimes, the recourse to private domestic services, female employment rates and the gender division of labour both within and outside the household. It will focus both on the period during which in most European countries the recourse to private domestic service declined, more or less between the 1950s and the 1980s, and on the following period during which there has been a resurgence in the recourse to private domestic workers. In order to explain the reasons for this unexpected resurgence, I will analyse the differences between the two periods, focusing on the ageing of population, changing female employment rates and the feminisation of international migrations as well as on different state policies on public expenditure for social services, types of services supplied, development of the so-called “proximity services”, immigration and the gender division of labour.

## 2. The development of the welfare state and the decline of domestic service

Traditionally Sweden is the European country where public social expenditure represents the highest percentage of GDP (Table 1<sup>1</sup> and Fig. 1). In 2003, for instance, it made up 31.3 per cent of GDP<sup>2</sup>: between 1980 and 2001 it was never less than 28.8 per cent (in 1980), even reaching 36.6 per cent in 1993, while in the European Union that percentage varied between 20.6 per cent (1980) and 26.0 per cent (1994). Spending on the family makes up quite a proportion of such public social expenditure, thus representing a substantial percentage of GDP (Table 2 and Fig. 2).

Household management had entered the Swedish political agenda as early as the 1930s. At that time a growing number of Swedish middle-class women entered the labour market and a debate arose as to whether it was appropriate for them to work outside the household. While it seemed “natural” in the eyes of many people that lower-class women should work outside the home, it seemed “unnatural”, or even dangerous to the established gender order, that middle-class women should have a job, particularly if, as seemed to be the case, they did not want to have children as long as this implied giving up their careers (there were many worries about falling fertility rates).

Among those arguing for women’s right to have a job in order to be economically independent was the social scientist, leading Social Democrat and future Nobel Peace Prize winner, Alva Myrdal. She was conscious that working women had a problem in combining family and career and suggested that, to solve it, they should have recourse to domestic workers. This solution was initially possible: an official report by the Swedish Government published in 1937 showed that in the early 1930s the demand for domestic workers had actually started to grow because of the growing economic activity of married middle-class women. Yet the economic recovery was bound to create new employment opportunities for lower-class women, and domestics became scarce. Besides the recourse to domestic service, another possible solution to the dilemma seemed to be offered by new household technologies and the growth in pre-prepared food. Yet neither appliances nor cans proved sufficient to solve the problem<sup>3</sup>.

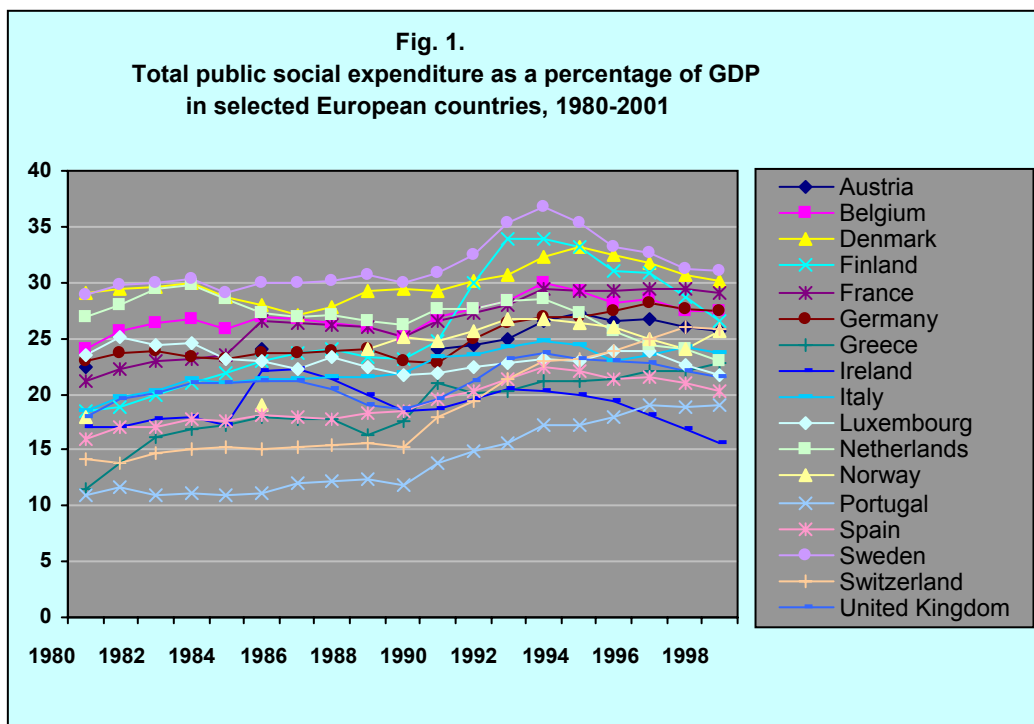
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\* English revision of the paper by Clelia Boscolo, University of Birmingham, and Stephen Harrison.

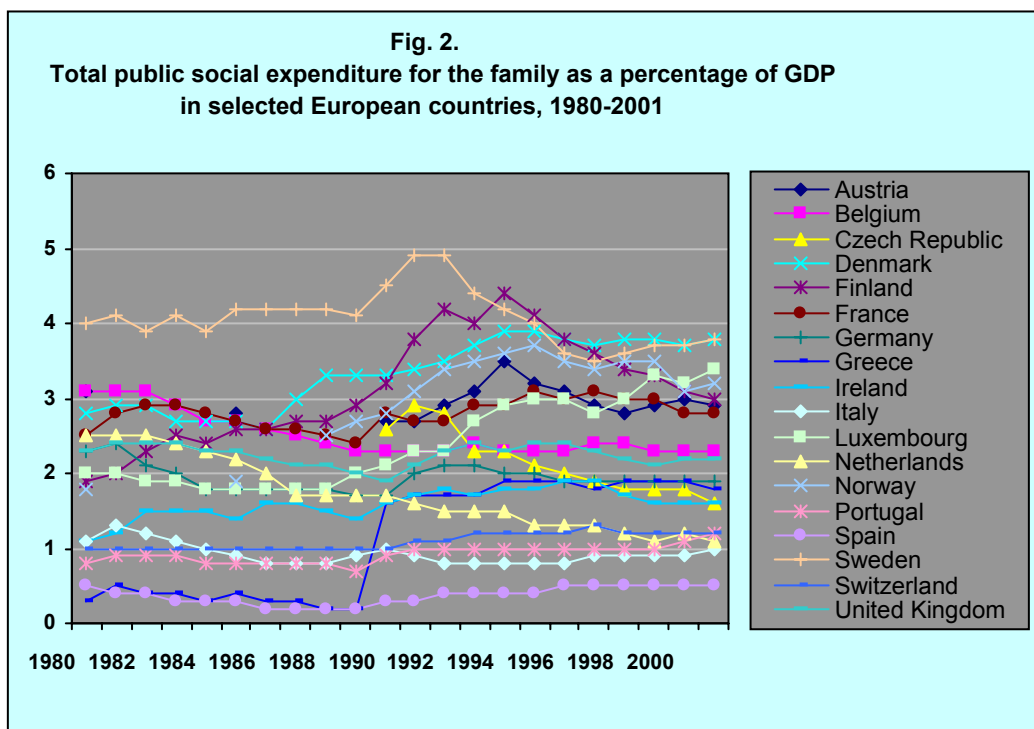
<sup>1</sup> Tables 1-4 and 7 are in the Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> [http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?datasetcode=SOCX\\_AGG](http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/default.aspx?datasetcode=SOCX_AGG).

<sup>3</sup> PLATZER E., “From Private Solutions to Public Responsibility and Back Again: The New Domestic Services in Sweden”, *Gender & History*, 18, 2006, pp. 211–221.



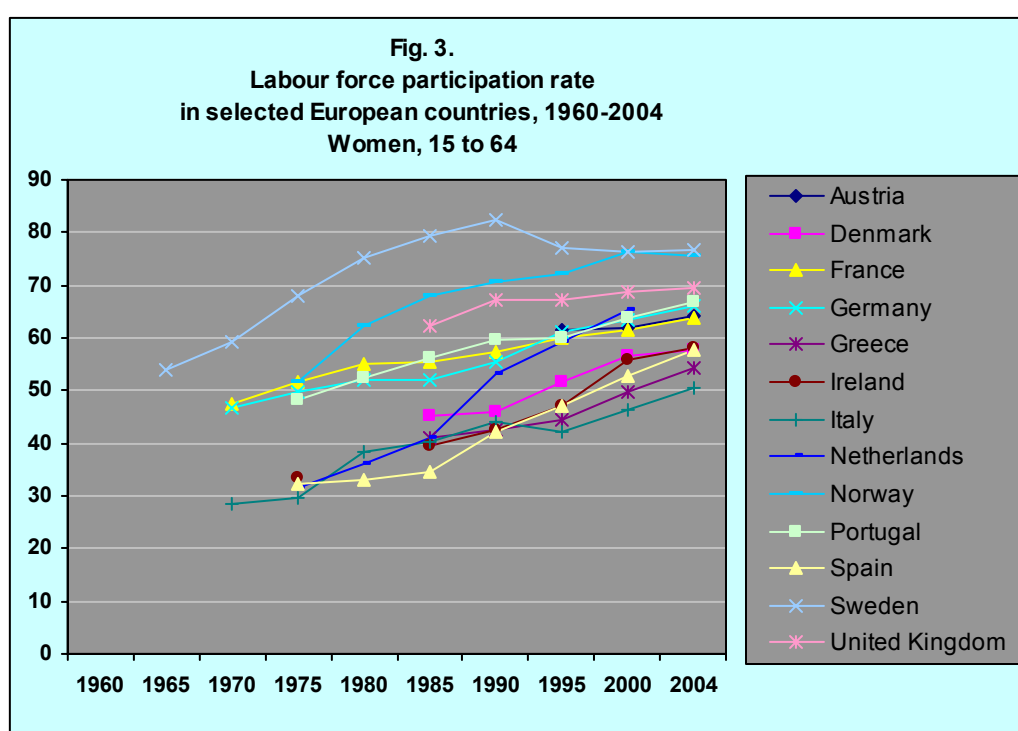
Source: see Appendix, Tab. 1.  
(OECD (2004), Social Expenditure Database (SOCX, [www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure](http://www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure)).



Source: see Appendix, Tab. 2.  
(OECD (2004), Social Expenditure Database (SOCX, [www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure](http://www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure)).

In 1932, Alva Myrdal and her husband Gunnar Myrdal, in their influential book *Kris i Befolkningsfrågan* (A Crisis in the Population Question), had suggested a radical social policy to increase birth rates. It included improvements in health care, child care and education. A debate on these issues developed in the 1930s, with some people – particularly some female Social Democrats, such as Eva Wigforss – suggesting that some domestic work could be transformed into wage labour with the State as employer<sup>4</sup>.

As is well known, in the following decades an innovative welfare system was built. This made growing female economic activity rates possible, both because the new measures and services allowed women with family responsibilities to go to work and because many people employed in the expanding public services were women. Significantly, between 1950 and 1965 the proportion of married women who worked jumped from 15.6 to 36.7 per cent<sup>5</sup>. The growth of female participation in the labour market grew steadily until the 1990s (Table 3 and Fig. 3).



Source : see Table 3.  
(Oecd, SourceOECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics).

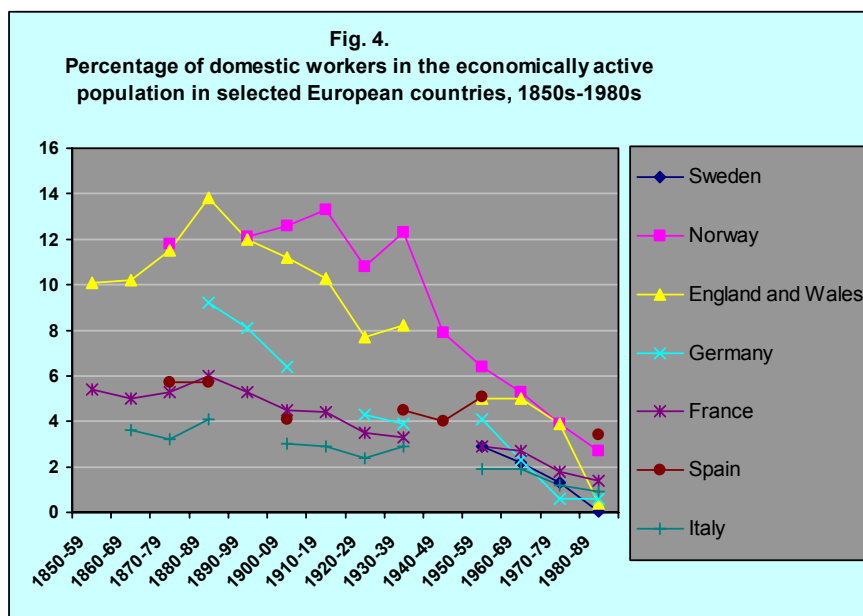
At the same time, a declining share of this growing female workforce was made up of private domestic workers. *Hushållsarbete* (i.e. “houseworkers/domestic workers”) made up 11 per cent of economically active women in 1950 and 7.5 per cent ten years later. In 1970, domestic workers were only 3.6 per cent, while in 1990 they had almost disappeared, making up 0.1 per cent of the economically active women<sup>6</sup> (see also Table 4 and Fig. 4). On the one hand, people

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*; LUNDQVIST Å., “Conceptualising Gender in a Swedish Context”, *Gender & History*, 11, 1999, pp. 583-596 (586).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 587.

<sup>6</sup> Swedish Population censuses. The data for 1970 includes children's nurses (*barnsköterska*) and domestic servants (*hembiträde*); the data for 1990 contains the following occupations: au-pair (*barnflicka*), domestic servant (*hembiträde*), domestic help (*hemhjälp*), housekeeper (*hushållerska*), houseworker (*hushållsarbete*), domestic

working in public care services enjoyed better working conditions than domestic servants, and this reduced the number of domestics; on the other hand, the development of public services reduced the need for domestic workers.



Source: see Table 4.  
(Population censuses).

The development of welfare has indeed turned out to be crucial in reducing both the need for and the offer of private domestic workers after the Second World War in many different European countries, even though it would be misleading to interpret the decline of domestic service simply as a consequence of the development of welfare (firstly, as mentioned above, the very development of the welfare state was stimulated by the scarcity of domestics; secondly, the decline of domestic service was the outcome of many different transformations). Significantly, however, by the early 1980s the percentage of domestic workers in the economically active population was particularly low in countries where the percentage of GDP devoted to public social expenditure was high, such as Sweden and Germany. Conversely, in such a country as Spain, where public social expenditure was particularly low, the incidence of domestic workers in the economically active population was especially high<sup>7</sup>.

Obviously, the total amount of GDP for public social expenditure is a rather rough index; more refined analyses show that not only the quantity of expenditure is important, but also its structure and the form of the transfer. As shown in Table 5, in the early 1980s the link between the level of public social expenditure and the percentage of domestic workers in the population seemed particularly clear in the case of the level of social expenditure for the family, even

assistant (*hushållsbiträde*), matron (*husmoder*). I am grateful to Beatrice Kalnins (SCB BV/BI) for providing me with this data.

<sup>7</sup> SARTI R., "Conclusion. Domestic Service and European Identity", in Suzy Pasleau and Isabelle Schopp (eds), with Raffaella Sarti, *Proceedings of the Servant Project*, Liège, Éditions de l'Université de Liège, 2005 (but 2006), 5 vols. (*PSP* in the next notes), vol. V, pp. 195-284, esp. p. 266 (available online on <http://www.uniurb.it/sarti/>).

though it has to be stressed that the very definition of domestic workers was and is problematic and thus any comparison among countries highly risky<sup>8</sup>.

The level of public social expenditure, particularly that for the family, also turned out to be relevant in relation to the female participation rate to the labour force, which was particularly high in those countries which devoted a higher percentage of GDP to public social expenditure supporting the family (Table 6).

<b>Table 5. Public social expenditure on the family (1980) and percentage of domestic workers in the economically active population (1980-82) in selected European countries</b>			
Country	Public social expenditure on the family	Country	Percentage of domestic workers in the economically active population
Spain	0,5	Spain	3,4
Italy	1,1	Italy	0,9
Norway	1,8	France	0,9*
Germany	2,3	Germany	0,6
UK	2,3	Norway	0,5
France	2,5	UK	0,4
Sweden	4,0	Sweden	0,05

Source: see Table 2 and Table 4 (except for France).

\* Original census data, category "5632 Employés de maison et femmes de ménage chez des particuliers", percentage calculated on the employed ("Population active ayant un emploi").

<b>Table 6. Public social expenditure (1980), public social expenditure on the family and female participation rates (1980) in selected European countries</b>					
Country	Public social expenditure as percentage of the GDP	Country	Public social expenditure on the family as percentage of the GDP	Country	Female labour force participation rate
Spain	15,9	Spain	0,5	Spain	32,9
Norway	17,9	Italy	1,1	Italy	38,4
Italy	18,4	Norway	1,8	Germany	51,9
France	21,1	Germany	2,3	France	55,1
Germany	23,0	France	2,5	Norway	62,2
Sweden	28,8	Sweden	4,0	Sweden	75,3

Source : see Table 2 and Table 3.

These developments have contributed to a radical change in the respective roles of family members, and particularly of women, private domestic workers and public services in guaranteeing care and well-being. As mentioned, in a first phase Alva Myrdal suggested that employed middle-class women should or could have recourse to domestic workers to combine work and family. Actually, at that time this was quite a new vision of the role of domestics in

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 252-254; SARTI R., "Who are Servants? Defining Domestic Service in Western Europe (16<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> Centuries)", in PASLEAU S. and SCHOPP I., (eds), with SARTI R., *Proceedings of the Servant Project*, Liège, Éditions de l'Université de Liège, 2005 (but 2006), 5 vols (in the next notes *SPP*), vol. II, pp. 3-59 (available online on [www.uniurb.it/sarti](http://www.uniurb.it/sarti)).



middle-class households, since traditionally they had been hired (also) to allow middle-class women to be “idle” housewives, not to enter the labour market<sup>9</sup>. If Swedish women had widely adopted this solution, the result would have been a society with a high labour force participation rate by middle-class women and with lower-class women also highly involved in the labour market but very often as maids. But soon this solution turned out to be impossible to adopt.

The following development showed that it was possible to have at the same time high middle- and lower-class women labour force participation rates and very low percentages of domestic workers. The expansion of public services accounted for this result, even though there were also other reasons for it, such as the acceptance, by many middle-class women, of bearing the double burden of job and family (as lower-class women had traditionally done) and, but to a very limited extent, the re-distribution of domestic chores and care between women and men. Thus a certain Lady Stocks was not too far from truth, when she wrote (with some nostalgia for the past), in 1971, that “the professional class women [had] borne the main brunt of the twentieth century social revolution, as a result of the almost total withdrawal from their homes of resident domestic service“. According to Lady Stocks, “the professional class woman [was] no longer in a relatively privileged position as compared with her working class sisters. The working class woman [had] greatly benefited by the expansion of the welfare state”, while the professional class woman had now to perform herself the “tedious and repetitive duties” – once performed by the maid – “which nearly all women dislike and most men succeed in avoiding”. As a consequence, the professional class woman “apart from the national health service, had less to gain and more to lose from the equalization of spending-power resulting from expanding social services and progressive taxation”<sup>10</sup>.

Indeed, while already in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries among parts of European (and American) public opinion the idea had spread that modernisation would imply the disappearance of domestic workers, in the decades after the Second World War scholars and ordinary people were increasingly convinced that domestic workers (particularly live-in ones) were now definitively on the way out<sup>11</sup>. For instance, in 1973 the sociologist Lewis A. Coser spoke about “servants” in terms of “obsolescence of an occupational role”<sup>12</sup>.

The ongoing change in the composition of the labour force supported this conviction: as Gøsta Esping Andersen wrote, “by 1960, domestic servants accounted for 2–3 per cent of the labour force in most countries; by the 1980s they had virtually disappeared”<sup>13</sup>. While in general this is true, Table 4 and Figure 4 show that the decline of domestic service was seemingly less radical in Spain, Italy and – partially – France, than in Scandinavian countries, Germany and the United Kingdom, a fact that practically reversed the traditional differences between Southern and Northern Europe as far as the incidence of servants in the population is concerned (traditionally there were more servants in the North than in the South<sup>14</sup>).

<sup>9</sup> SARTI R., “Conclusion. Domestic Service and European Identity”, p. 266.

<sup>10</sup> LADY STOCKS, “Reflections on the Passing of Resident Domestic Service”, *Contemporary Review*, 218, Feb. 1971, pp. 71-73 (71).

<sup>11</sup> SARTI R., “Conclusion. Domestic Service and European Identity”, pp. 248-251 and 263-266; EAD., “Da serva a operaia? Trasformazioni di lungo periodo del servizio domestico in Europa”, *Polis. Ricerche e studi su società e politica in Italia*, XIX, 2005, n. 1, pp. 91-120.

<sup>12</sup> COSER L. A., “Servants: The Obsolescence of an Occupational Role”, *Social Forces*, LII, 1973, pp. 31-40.

<sup>13</sup> ESPING ANDERSEN G., *Social Foundations of Post-industrial Economies*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 55-56.

<sup>14</sup> See for instance REHER D. S., “Family Ties in Western Europe: Persistent Contrasts”, *Population and Development Review*, XXIV, 1998, pp. 203-235; SARTI R., “Who are Servants?”, pp. 54-54, with further references

### 3. The recourse to private and public services in different welfare regimes

A lively debate is taking place about the classification of different welfare regimes, often using as a starting point the influential typology developed by Esping-Andersen, who has distinguished between social-democratic, conservative and liberal welfare regimes<sup>15</sup>. It is obviously impossible to focus on this debate. Yet it seems relevant to recall the role of different welfare regimes in offering people the opportunity to resort to public services, in inducing them to have recourse to private ones or, finally, in forcing them to take care of their own welfare (or even to accept lacking welfare if they are not able to take care of it themselves). Opportunities and constraints deriving from public policies do indeed affect the strategies pursued by individuals and families in order to secure their own well-being. This clearly may affect their role in society, particularly – it seems – in the case of women.

In this sense, for instance, the Swedish social democratic welfare regime, which supplies publicly financed high quality childcare services as well as widespread care for the elderly, makes it possible to have a high level of participation of both men and women in the labour force with only very limited recourse to private domestic services (Table 3 and Fig. 3, Table 4 and Fig. 4, Table 7 and Fig. 5)<sup>16</sup>.

Conversely the Mediterranean welfare states – which are considered by certain authors an extreme case of the “conservative” welfare regime and by others an autonomous type of welfare regime<sup>17</sup> – were (and in large part still are) based on the assumption that families were, and are, the main care givers. In other words, while the Scandinavian welfare regime aims to realise a certain “de-familiarisation”, transferring to the State part of the work traditionally accomplished by the family, the continental welfare states, and particularly the Mediterranean ones, are familialistic.

Take the case of Italy. In the past, working women were encouraged to retire very young to devote themselves to housework: in particular, women who were married and/or mothers and who worked in the public sector could retire after only 15 years of work<sup>18</sup>, while public support for children and the elderly was limited. As shown in Table 2, Italian public social expenditure on the family between 1980 and 2001 has always been about 1 per cent of GDP, while the European average has always been over 2 per cent (reaching almost as high as 5 per cent in Sweden in the early 1990s). Expenditures on cash benefits and services to support the families are indeed traditionally very low. In 1999 expenditure on family and maternity support only represented 3.6 per cent of the Italian expenditure in social protection against an EU average of 8.3 per cent. The only area where Italy was, and is, very generous were/are pensions<sup>19</sup> (Table 7,

<sup>15</sup> ESPING-ANDERSEN G., *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1990.

<sup>16</sup> SARTI R., “Conclusion. Domestic Service and European Identity”, p. 266; KOFMAN E., “Gendered Migrations, Livelihoods and Entitlements in European Welfare Regimes”, paper prepared for the Report of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development *Gender Equality: Striving for Justice in an Unequal World*, April 2005, p. 24 (available online:

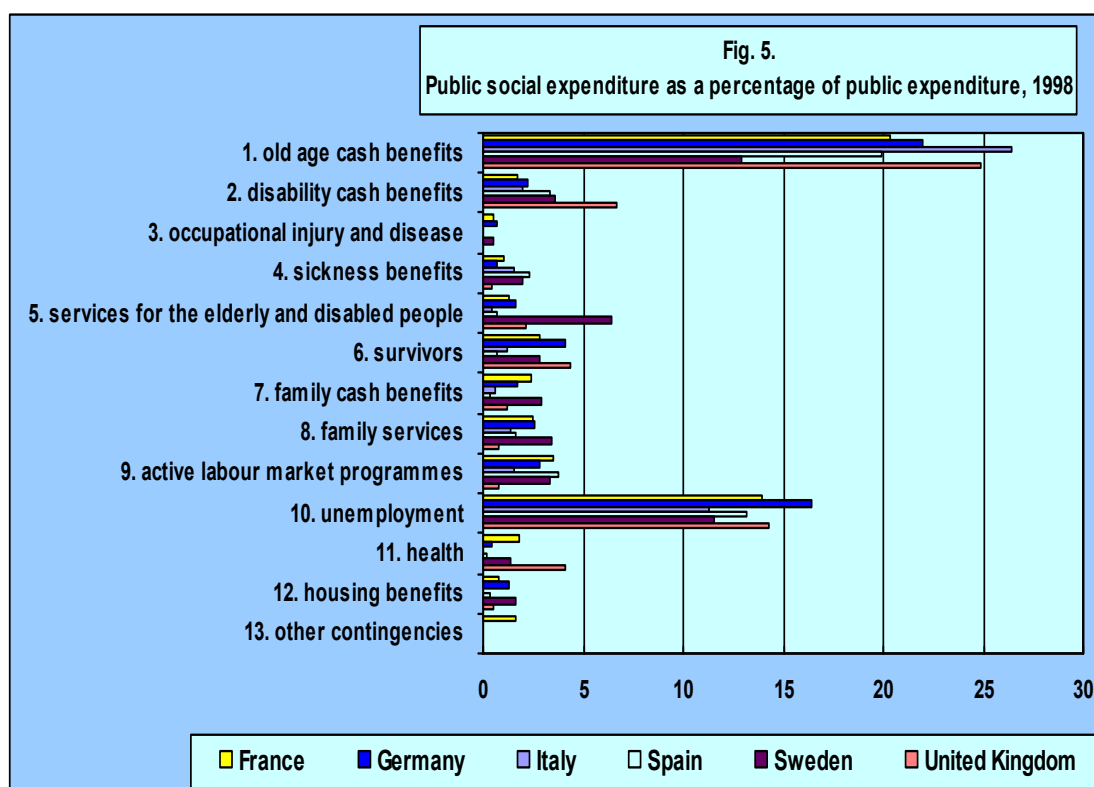
[http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFrame?ReadForm&parentunid=3D6D3CEDC4703D17C1256FF00046C428&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=http://www.unrisd.org/unpublished/\\_genderequality/\\_kofmanel/content.htm](http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFrame?ReadForm&parentunid=3D6D3CEDC4703D17C1256FF00046C428&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=http://www.unrisd.org/unpublished/_genderequality/_kofmanel/content.htm)); KOFMAN E., “Gendered Migration, Social Reproduction and Welfare Regimes: new dialogues and directions”, paper prepared for the 6<sup>th</sup> European Social Science History Conference, Amsterdam, 22-25 March 2006. I am grateful to the author for allowing me to quote from this paper, p. 13.

<sup>17</sup> According to Esping Andersen, *Social Foundations*, p. 66, “There is, in other words, no clear evidence in favour of singling out Southern Europe (with Japan) as a special case of familialistic welfare”.

<sup>18</sup> SARTI R., ““Ho bisogno di te””. La protesta degli anziani per la regolarizzazione di *carers* e lavoratori domestici clandestini” (Italia, 2001-2002), in Borderías C. and Renom Pulit M. (eds), *Dones i moviments socials pel benestar*, Barcelona (forthcoming).

<sup>19</sup> Eurostat, *Social protection. Expenditure on pensions accounted for 12.7% of the EU's GDP in 1999. Old-age pensions make up three-quarters of the value of all pensions*, (Collection: News Releases; Theme: Population &

Fig. 5 and Fig. 6). Not surprisingly, the labour force participation rates of Italian women were as low as 28.6 per cent in 1970, and 42.3 per cent in 1995 (compared to, respectively, 53.8 and 77.3 per cent in Sweden, see Table 3).



Source: Oecd, Social Expenditure Database.

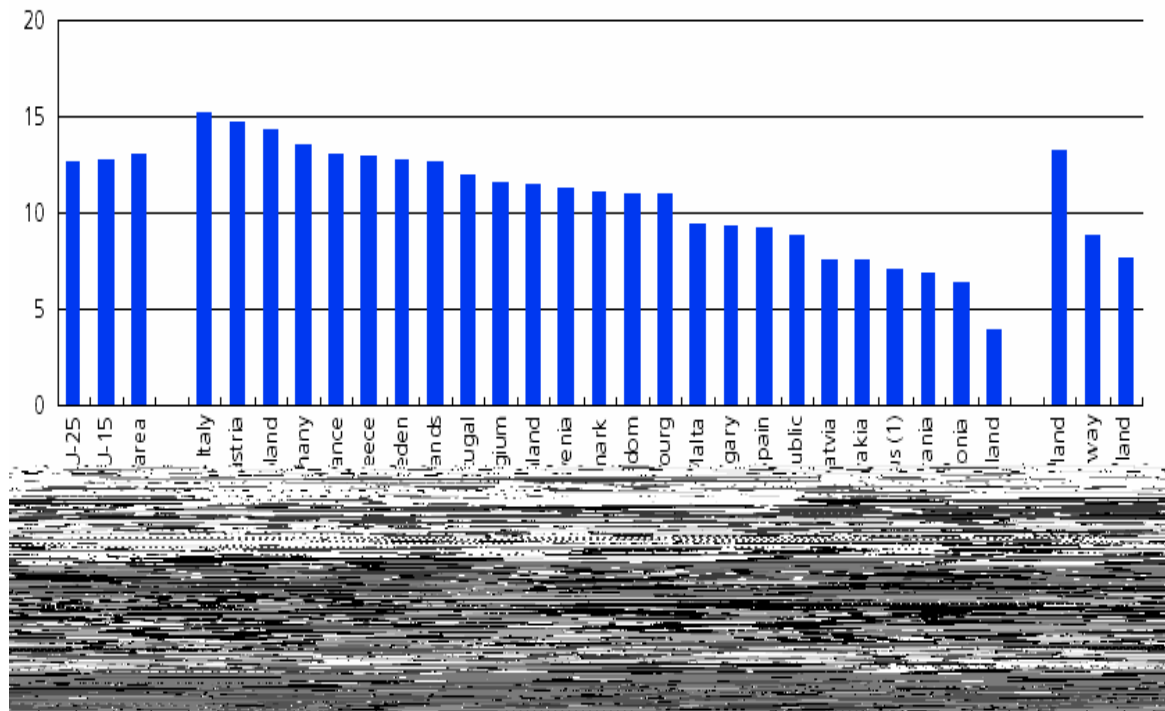
As previously mentioned, today public help in caring is still quite limited. Yet, since the mid-1990s, it is no longer possible to retire very young. In spite of this, pensions represent more than 60 per cent of Italian expenditure on social welfare<sup>20</sup> and more than 15 per cent of GDP, the highest rate among the EU countries (Fig. 6). In Italy, indeed, cash benefits have a much more important role than benefits in kind (Fig. 7). Thus Italian families “have a fairly high likelihood of being recipients of some kind of public monetary transfer” while, with the exception of health care, “transfer and protections are embedded in a context where few services are available on a generalized basis”. This system clearly makes the recourse to private services possible<sup>21</sup>.

Social Conditions, No. 50/2002, 25 April 2002, available on the website <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/> and IPPOLITO R., *Vivere in Europa. Un confronto in cifre*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2002, p. 55. See also SARACENO C., “Le politiche per la famiglia”, in BARBAGLI M. and SARACENO C., *Lo stato delle famiglie in Italia*, Bologna, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1997, pp. 301-310 (p. 306); Istat, *Rapporto annuale. La situazione del paese nel 1999*, Roma, Istat, 2000, pp. 349-355.

<sup>20</sup> Eurostat, *Social protection. Expenditure on pensions*.

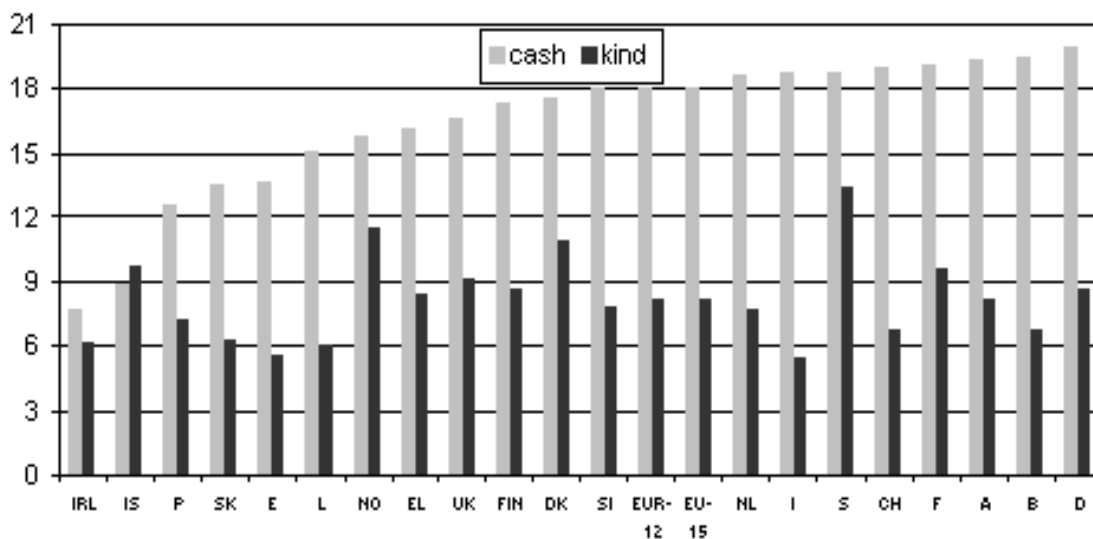
<sup>21</sup> SCIORTINO G., “Immigration in a Mediterranean Welfare State: The Italian Experience in Comparative Perspective”, *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*, VI, 2004, pp. 111-130 (p. 215).

Fig 6. Expenditure on Pensions, 2003 (as a percentage of GDP)



Source: *Europe in figures*. Eurostat Yearbook 2006-2007, p. 128.

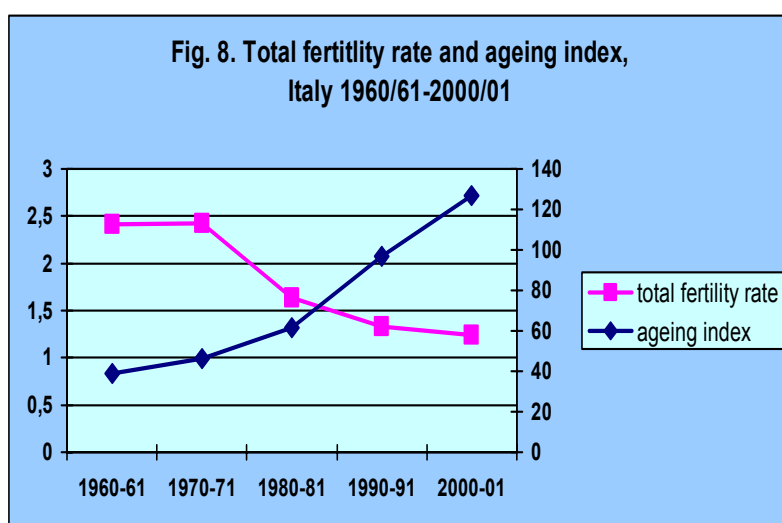
Fig. 7. Expenditure on cash benefits and on benefits in kind as a percentage of GDP, European Union, 1999



Source: ABRAMOVICI G., *Social protection: expenditure on cash benefits and on benefits in kind*, Eurostat, *Statistics in focus, Population and social conditions*, Theme 3, 16/2002.

Several factors have contributed, in the last few years, to making the recourse to private services an increasingly real, rather than only possible or virtual, choice. Among these factors we can list

- the growing need for care due to the very rapid ageing of the population (Fig. 8): in 2004, the elderly made up 19.2 per cent of the population, the highest percentage in Europe<sup>22</sup>);
- the very limited re-distribution of housework and care between men and women<sup>23</sup>;
- the increasing labour force participation rates of women (Table 3, Fig. 3), which – in spite of the very low fertility rate (Fig. 8) – make it increasingly difficult to cope with the growing need for care<sup>24</sup>.



Sources:

Eurostat, *Population statistics - Data 1960- 2003, Edition 2004*, p. 78 (total fertility rate, i.e. average number of children per woman of child-bearing age); Istat, *L'Italia in cifre 2001*, Rome, Istat, without date, p. 4; Istat, *Annuario statistico italiano 2002*, Rome, Istat, Rome, 2002, p. 32 (ageing index, i.e. the number of people 65 years old or over per hundred people under age 15).

As we have seen, in other contexts, too, there was also a growing need for private domestic services, for instance in inter-war Sweden. Yet in the Swedish case the growing demand was not met by a correspondingly increased offer of paid domestic labour. Conversely, in the last decades the growing Italian demand has been satisfied (and even stimulated) by the increased offer of relatively cheap domestic labour and care by migrants<sup>25</sup>.

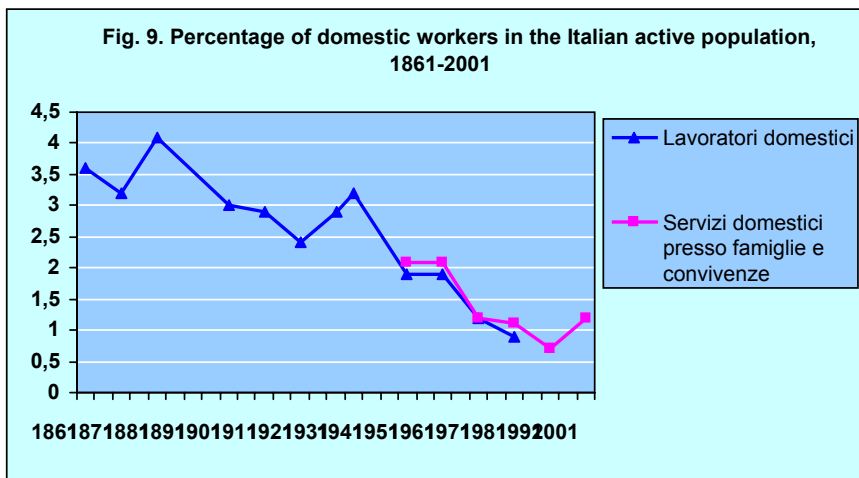
In fact, census data offers only limited support to the thesis of a growing recourse to paid domestic help: in the last two censuses (1991 and 2001) indeed, data on domestic workers is merged within a larger category (“Servizi domestici presso famiglie e convivenze”), not exactly comparable to that used in previous years. This choice was probably quite a paradoxical consequence of the idea that private domestic workers were disappearing, because it took place precisely in a period when the number of domestics started to grow again after a long decline (Table 3 and Fig. 9).

<sup>22</sup> *Europe in figures. Eurostat yearbook 2005*, Luxembourg 2005, p. 84.

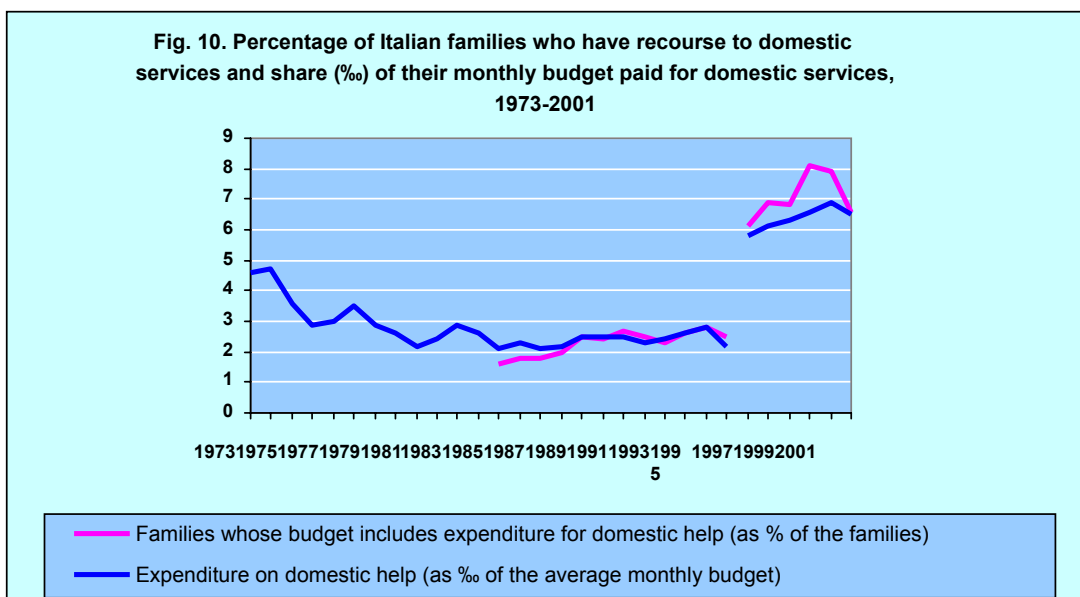
<sup>23</sup> Istat, *Rapporto annuale. La situazione del Paese nel 2004*, Roma, Istat, 2005, 258sgg.

<sup>24</sup> In the 1990s the Italian total fertility rate was as low as 1.18 (<http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>).

<sup>25</sup> SARTI R., “Domestic Service: Past and Present in Southern and Northern Europe”.



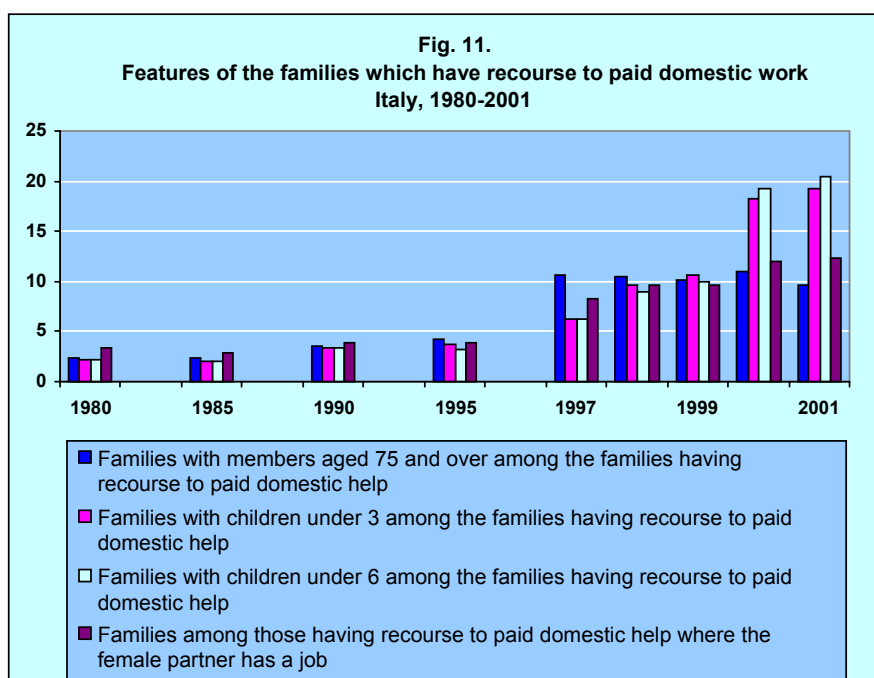
Source: my calculations on Italian Population Censuses (see also Table 4, particularly as for the category "Servizi domestici presso famiglie e convivenze").



Source: COLOMBO A., "Il mito del lavoro domestico: struttura e cambiamenti in Italia (1970-2003)", *Polis*, 19 (2005), pp. 435-464 (Fig. 1, p. 442).

Notes:

Families whose expenditure in the month before the inquiry included paid domestic work as % of Italian families  
Expenditure on domestic service as % of the average monthly expenditure of Italian families.



Source: Data provided by COLOMBO A., "Il mito del lavoro domestico: struttura e cambiamenti in Italia (1970-2003)", *Polis*, 19 (2005), pp. 435-464 (Table 7, p. 456). The inquiry which is the source of the data used in this figure has been restructured in 1997

Unfortunately, indeed, data on domestic workers is quite scattered and often problematic (not least because today many domestic workers are undocumented migrants who work irregularly). However, the more reliable statistics confirm this trend. Research by Asher Colombo, for instance, has shown that the share of the monthly budget spent by Italian families on domestic services declined between the early 1970s and the mid-1980s, slowly grew between 1985 and 1995 and increased sharply from 1997 to 2001, and that, between 1985 and 2002, the percentages of Italian families which had recourse to paid domestic help showed a similar trend (Fig. 10)<sup>26</sup>.

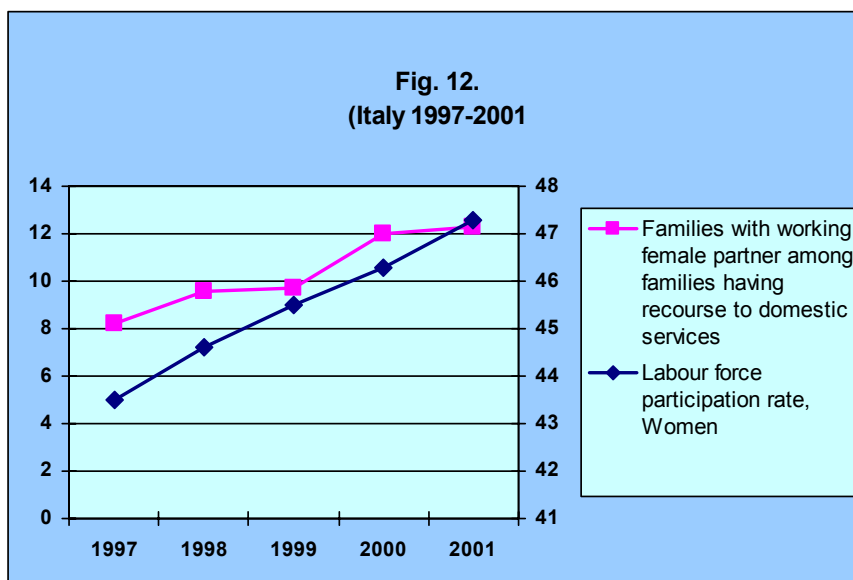
Significantly, among the families which have recourse to domestic services, the share of families with little children has dramatically increased (Fig. 11): if we consider the sharp drop in the Italian fertility rate, this increase confirms how difficult it is today for Italians to have children and raise them (the drop in fertility itself shows this).

As far as day nurseries for children under 2 (*asili nido*) are concerned, in 1998 they were present in only 77.6 per cent of Italian municipalities with more than 20,000 inhabitants. Moreover, available places were insufficient and only some of the applications were accepted. Therefore only 6 per cent of babies attended them, the lowest percentage in Europe. Significantly, 72 per cent of these children had an employed mother, and this confirms the obvious point that - *ceteris paribus* - working women have a higher need of help<sup>27</sup>. As shown in Table 3 and Fig. 3, in the last few years the labour force participation rate of Italian women has rapidly increased (42.3

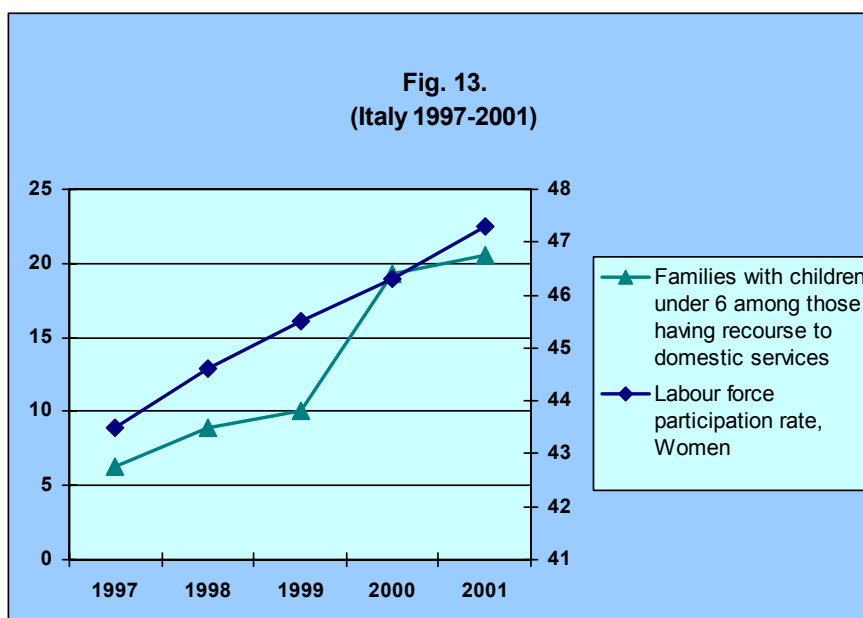
<sup>26</sup> COLOMBO A., "Il mito del lavoro domestico: struttura e cambiamenti in Italia (1970-2003)", *Polis*, 19 (2005), pp. 435-464 (Fig. 1, p. 442). Another source available from 1996 and not limited to the month before the inquiry gives a higher percentage of families which have recourse to domestic service (between 8.4 and 9.2 per cent in the period 1996-2001, see SARTI R., "Noi abbiamo visto tante città, abbiamo un'altra cultura". Servizio domestico, migrazioni e identità di genere in Italia: uno sguardo di lungo periodo", *Polis. Ricerche e studi su società e politica in Italia*, XVIII, 2004, pp. 17-46 (p. 20).

<sup>27</sup> Istat, *Rapporto annuale. La situazione del Paese nel 2000*, Roma, Istat, 2001, p. 253.

per cent in 1995, 50.6 per cent in 2005), yet the share of children under 3 who attend day nurseries has experienced only a little growth: in 2004 up to 9 per cent (only 67 per cent lived in municipalities with day nurseries)<sup>28</sup>. It is thus not surprising that families have increasing recourse to the market, i.e. to baby-sitters and domestic workers, in order to solve their problems in managing the family organisation and secure their well-being (Fig. 12 and Fig. 13).



Source: see Fig. 11 and Oecd, SourceOECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics.



Source: see Fig. 11 and Oecd, SourceOECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics.

<sup>28</sup> Istat, *Rapporto annuale. La situazione del Paese nel 2006*, Roma, Istat, 2007, pp. 287-288.



Nowadays, grandparents play a crucial role in child-raising: according to the aforementioned inquiry, in 1998 43.7 per cent of children under the age of 3 and 42.8% per cent of those between 3 and 5, including those who went to day nurseries and nursery schools, were looked after by grandparents, while, at that time, only 6.3 per cent of children under the age of 3 were looked after by baby-sitters at least once a week. Less than 5 per cent of families with children under 11 paid for babysitting. Thus, as far as child care is concerned, the informal network was still quite efficient, probably also due to collapsing fertility, ageing of the population and improving health among the elderly. In other words, grandparents are increasingly likely to be alive, still in good health and to have few young grandchildren. But it is clear that ongoing change is undermining traditional solutions<sup>29</sup>. According to a regression analysis by Colombo, the three factors mainly affecting the propensity to buy domestic help in the market are education, the presence in the family of children under 6 and the presence in the family of the elderly<sup>30</sup>.

According to an inquiry by the Italian statistical office (Istat), in 1998 16.6 per cent of Italian families with at least one person aged 80 or over had recourse to some kind of paid help. In 2003 the correspondingly percentage had grown to 18.3 per cent<sup>31</sup>. It has to be stressed that a growing share of the elderly live alone, even though the Italian share of such is still lower than the European average,<sup>32</sup> and that, according to recent research, as many as a quarter of the elderly aged 75 and over who live alone had recourse to some kind of paid private domestic help<sup>33</sup>.

On the one hand, hiring a babysitter or a so-called *badante*, i.e. a carer for an elderly person, represents a break in the trend towards the decline in recourse to domestic workers: thus, it can be seen as a true novelty, if compared with the recent past, when children and elderly people were mainly cared for by relatives; alternatively, it can be seen as a return to a solution which was very common in a more remote past, when wet-nurses, governesses and carers for the elderly were quite common in middle and upper-class families (but today they are spreading even in lower-middle class families)<sup>34</sup>.

On the other hand, it can be seen as a choice consistent with the traditional suspicion of Italians of the institutionalisation of the elderly (and of children). Even though the share of the elderly living in residential care homes or in nursing homes has increased in the 1990s, in 2001 only 2 per cent of the Italians aged 64 and over lived in such institutions (Tab. 14)<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> Istat, *Rapporto annuale. La situazione del Paese nel 2000*, p. 253.

<sup>30</sup> Colombo A., "Il mito del lavoro domestico", p. 455\*.

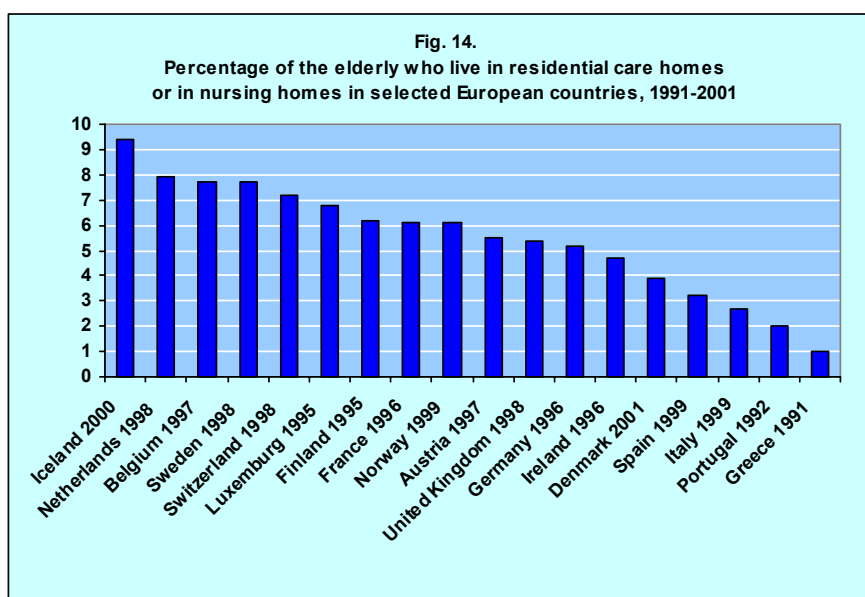
<sup>31</sup> Istat, *Rapporto annuale. La situazione del Paese nel 1999*, Roma, Istat, 2000, p. 466; Istat, *Rapporto annuale. La situazione del paese nel 2004*, Roma, Istat, 2005, p. 291.

<sup>32</sup> In Italy in 1998, 39 per cent of women aged 65 and over and 12 per cent of men of the same age lived alone: corresponding percentages for the EU are respectively 44 per cent and 16 per cent, see Eurostat, *The life of women and men in Europe. A statistical portrait of women and men in all stages of life* (Collection: News Releases; Theme: Population & Social Conditions, N. 121/2002 - 8 Ottobre 2002).

<sup>33</sup> ZANATTA A. L., *Sintesi della ricerca su Lavoro di cura, genere, migrazioni*, withoutdate <http://www.welfare.gov.it>.

<sup>34</sup> SARTI R., "«Noi abbiamo visto tante città, abbiamo un'altra cultura»", pp. 20-22.

<sup>35</sup> Istat, *L'assistenza residenziale in Italia. Regioni a confronto. Anno 2001*, Roma 2005, 52, 56.



Source: PESARESI F. and GORI C., "Servizi domiciliari e residenziali per gli anziani non autosufficienti in Europa", *Tendenze nuove*, July-Oct. 2003, nos 4-5, pp. 433-470, tab. 4, p. 15.

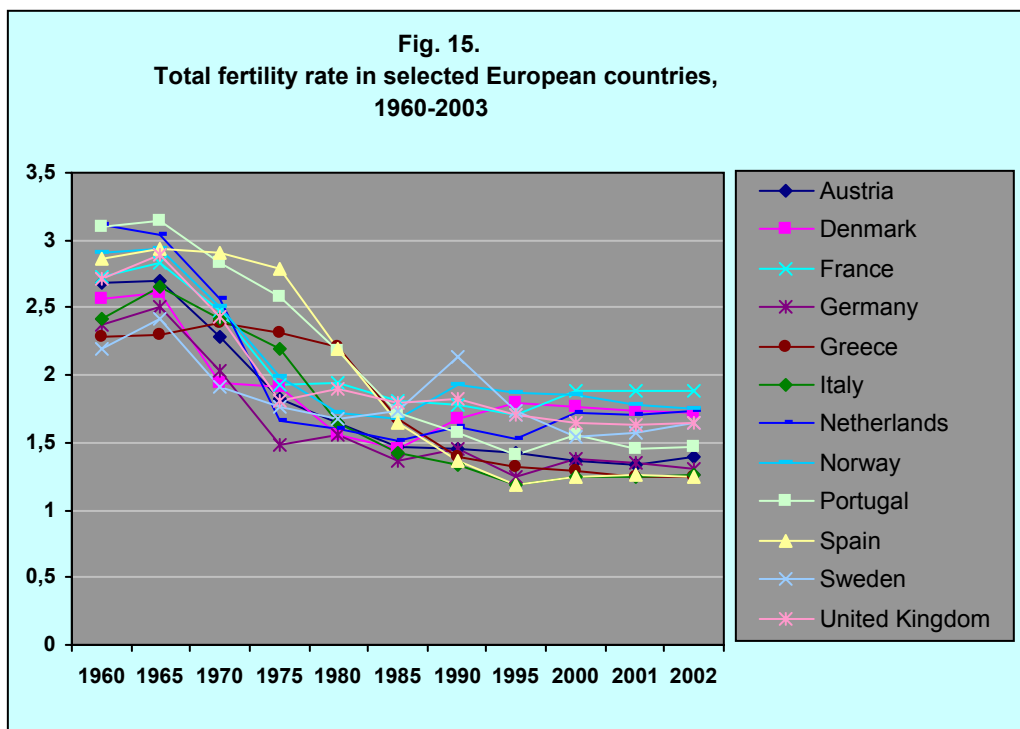
(available online: <http://digilander.libero.it/newsfornurse/pesaresi.pdf>).

Spain, Italy, Portugal and Greece display indeed the lowest share of institutionalised elderly people. This is not the sole feature that these countries have in common. Take for instance Italy and Spain: in both countries public social expenditure on the family makes up only a low share of GDP (Table 2 and Fig. 2); both have similar, still quite low, but rapidly growing, labour force participation rates by women (Table 3 and Fig. 3); both have experienced, particularly between the early 1980s and the mid-1990s, sharply and rapidly falling fertility rates (Fig. 15) while the old age dependency ratio had for about forty years, i.e. 1960-2000, a very similar trend (Fig. 15). So we can therefore speculate whether Spain too is witnessing a growing recourse to private domestic workers. Actually, data on Spain is quite contradictory. However, it also seems to confirm an increasing recourse to private domestic workers<sup>36</sup>.

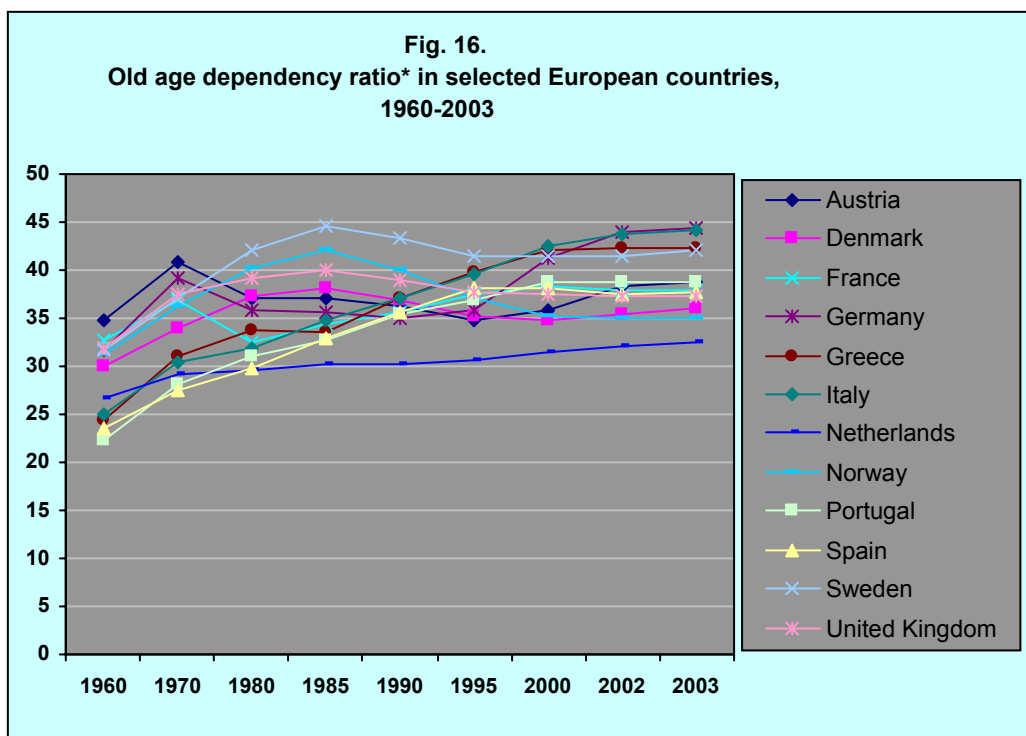
Does it mean that a growing recourse to private domestic workers is, today, a solution adopted by families who live in countries (notably the Mediterranean) where public social expenditure on the family is very low, the population is rapidly ageing, the female participation in the labour force is quickly growing and the "super-women" – whose "sacrifices in the 1980s and 1990s have allowed not only Southern European countries to cope better with welfare retrenchment as compared to Central and Northern Europe" but "have also facilitated higher aggregate public and social expenditure with the implementation of governmental programmes other than those directly related to family and personal services" – are probably disappearing?<sup>37</sup> Data to answer this crucial question is extremely scattered but such does not seem to be the case.

<sup>36</sup> COLECTIVO IOÉ, *Mujer, inmigración y trabajo*, Madrid, Imsero, 2001, p. 449; PARELLA RUBIO S., *Mujer, inmigrante y trabajadora: la triple discriminación* Barcelona, Anthropos, 2003, pp. 290-1.

<sup>37</sup> MORENO L., "Mediterranean Welfare and 'Superwomen'", Unidad de Políticas Comparadas, Working Paper 02-02. According to Moreno, the disappearance of "super-women" "may also bring about new uncertainties on whether the Mediterranean welfare regime can survive, as we have known it until present".



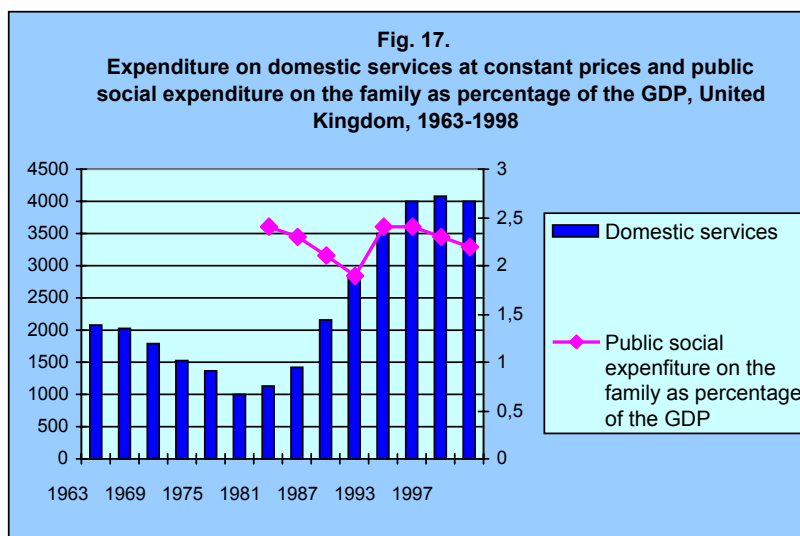
Source: Eurostat, Population Statistics 2004, p. 63.



Source: Eurostat, Population Statistics 2004, p. 63.

\* Population aged 60 and over as a percentage of population aged 20-59.

In the United Kingdom, where public social expenditure on families is not too generous but higher than in Italy or Spain (Table 2 and Fig. 2), “accurate records of household expenditure on domestic service date back to 1963. The amount spent in real terms (...) declined steadily until 1978, when it reached a figure of just under £1 billion. Expenditure on domestic services then increased steadily every year from 1978 until 1997, when it stood at over £4 billion”. Interestingly, at least in a first phase (i.e. in the 1980s) this extraordinary growth took place in a context characterised by declining public social expenditures on the family ((Fig. 17) and growing social inequality<sup>38</sup>.



Source: Table 2 (for the public social expenditure on the family) and *Expenditure on domestic services at constant prices, 1963-1998 (Selected Years): Social Trends 30* (<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/xsdataset.asp?vlnk=480&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=272>).

Note: “This category includes domestic help, childcare payments and nursery, creche and playschool payments. The type of domestic service we are likely to spend money on has, of course, changed over the years” (*ibid.*)

Surprisingly, the recourse to domestic work also grew in Denmark, where public social expenditure on the family made up a growing share of GDP between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s and experienced only little variations thereafter, remaining however the highest in Europe (Table 2 and Fig. 2). In 2004 it was said that the “personal and domestic services constitute one of the fastest growing sectors (...). In 1998, the growth was 24% with a turnover of around € 130 million”<sup>39</sup>. I will show in the next pages that this trend is less paradoxical than one would imagine.

But what about other countries?<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Expenditure on domestic services at constant prices, 1963-1998 (Selected Years): Social Trends 30* ([www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/xsdataset.asp?vlnk=480&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=272](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/xsdataset.asp?vlnk=480&Pos=&ColRank=1&Rank=272)). On the “resurgence in paid domestic work” in the UK see GREGSON N. and LOWE M., *Servicing the Middle Classes. Class, gender and waged domestic labour in contemporary Britain*, London and New York, Routledge, 1994; COX R., “Exploring the growth of paid domestic labour: A case study of London”, *Geography*, 85, 2000, pp. 241-51.

<sup>39</sup> RENOY P., IVARSSON S., VAN DER WUSTEN-GRITSAI O. and MEIJER E., *Undeclared work in an enlarged Union. An analysis of undeclared work: an in-depth study of specific items* (European Union, directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs), May 2004, p. 171 (in the next notes: *UW 2004*).

<sup>40</sup> The next page is taken with few differences from SARTI R., “Domestic Service: Past and Present in Southern and Northern Europe”.

According to available data, in Germany the number of private household employees increased from 667,000 in 1987 to about a million in 1992 and 1.2 million in 1997. In 2002 the Hartz Commission, a committee created to give recommendations to improve the functioning of the German labour market, concluded that in the household sector there were between 1.2 and 2.9 million workers who did not declare their employment. 10.4 per cent of households employed some kind of domestic help in 1991, 11.3 per cent in 2000.<sup>41</sup>

In France in the last few years according to Thomas Amossé there has been an “explosion of domestic help”: there were 261,440 *assistantes maternelles*, *gardiennes d’enfants* and *travailleuses familiales* in 1990 and 538,390 in 1999<sup>42</sup>. Moreover, in 1995, there were around 250,000 permanent users of domestic services, 469,000 in 1998 and almost 800,000 in 2002<sup>43</sup>.

In Belgium there were 85,901 domestic workers registered by the Belgian Office of Social Security (ONSS) in 1993, and these were obviously only a proportion of the domestic workers, and 94,939 in 1999<sup>44</sup>.

Research on the Netherlands, Austria and even Norway and Sweden seems to confirm an increasing recourse to private domestic workers<sup>45</sup>.

According to Ellinor Platzer, in Sweden the last decades witnessed important changes. On the one hand, there were drastic cuts to public sector spending, which reduced health services as well as those for children and elderly care (see also Table 3). On the other hand, a growing number of women started to work full-time rather than part-time (see also Fig. 18). Both these changes increased the demand for private services. This demand could be met thanks to spreading unemployment, growing social inequality and the arrival of refugees from former Yugoslavia and some African countries<sup>46</sup>. In other words, these changes have led to an expansion of paid domestic work in Sweden, too, even though the public sector still provides households with relatively abundant elderly and child care.

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<sup>41</sup> MAYER-AHUJA N., “Three worlds of cleaning: women’s experiences of precarious labor in the public sector, cleaning companies and private households of West Germany, 1973-1998”, *Journal of Women’s History*, 16 (2004), pp. 116-41; *UW 2004*, p. 169; SCHUPP J., “Quantitative Verbreitung von Erwerbstätigkeit in privaten Haushalten Deutschlands”, Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung”, *Materialien*, 11, 2002, p. 24, also published in GATHER C., GEISLER B., RERRICH M.S., (eds.), *Weltmarkt Privathaushalt. Bezahlte Haushaltsarbeit im globalen Wandel*, Münster, Westfälisches Dampfboot, 2002, pp. 50-71.

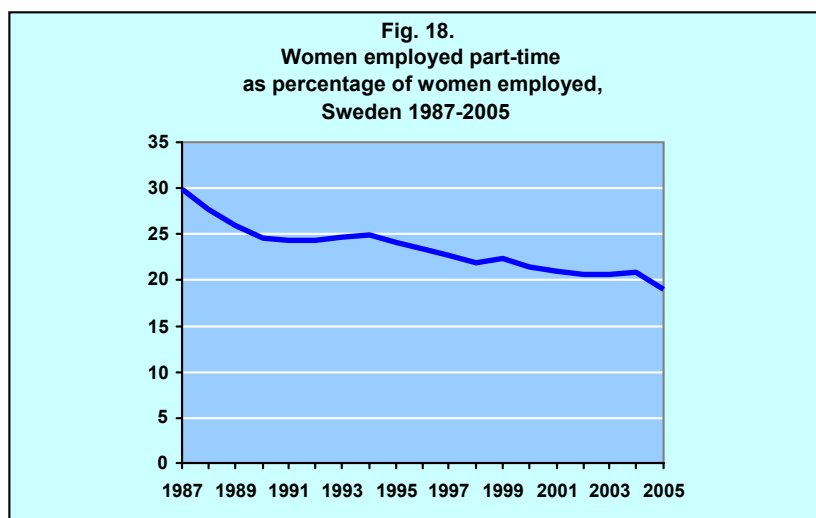
<sup>42</sup> AMOSSE T., “L’espace de métiers de 1990 à 1999”, *Insee première*, 2001, n. 790.

<sup>43</sup> I am referring to the data provided by RENOOPY P., IVARSSON S., VAN DER WUSTEN-GRITSAI O. and MEIJER E., *Undeclared work in an enlarged Union. An analysis of undeclared work: an in-depth study of specific items*, European Union, Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs, May 2004, pp. 165-166.

<sup>44</sup> PASLEAU S. and SCHOPP I., “The Three Colours of Domestic Service in Belgium”, in FAUVE-CHAMOUX A. (ed.), *Domestic Service and the Formation of European Identity. Understanding the Globalization of Domestic Work, 16<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> centuries*, Bern-Berlin etc., Peter Lang, 2004 (but 2005) (in the next notes: AFC), pp. 435-53 (440); French version in PASLEAU S., and SCHOPP I., (eds), with SARTI R., *Proceedings of the Servant Project*, Liège, Éditions de l’Université de Liège, 2005 (but 2006), 5 vols., vol. V (in the next notes: SPP), vol. 2, pp. 125-146.

<sup>45</sup> UNGERSON C., “Commodified care work in European labour markets”, *European Societies*, 5, 2003, pp. 377-96; DE RUIJTER E., “Trends in the Outsourcing of Domestic Works and Childcare in The Netherlands. Compositional or Behavioral Change?”, *Acta Sociologica*, 47, 2004, pp. 219-234; WIDDING ISAKSEN L., “Gender and Globalization: Care across Borders. New Patterns of Institutional Interaction: the Case of Norway”, in AFC, pp. 455-469 and in SPP, vol. 2, pp. 147-159; PLATZER E., “From Private Solutions to Public Responsibility and Back Again”.

<sup>46</sup> PLATZER E., “From Private Solutions to Public Responsibility and Back Again”.



Source: OECD, Population and labour force statistics.

Discussing the case of Norway, Lise Widding Isaksen notes that the Norwegian welfare state was built “through the utilisation of the reserve pool of labour represented by women”: a reservoir of care by now exhausted. Ageing of the population and rising fertility rates have increased the need for care but in the 1980s-1990s a growing number of women started to work full-time. Women in the 45-60 age range, in particular, have thus become “sandwiched”: they are in demand as workers, as grandmothers and as daughters. “The concept of double work in this generation does not merely refer to the combination of salaried work and care work but also to the fact that they may have double care responsibilities. They may be needed both as relief in looking after their working children’s children and at the same time be required to offer a “helping hand” to their increasingly frail parents”. At the same time, problems of gender equality in the division of labour within families are unsolved: women still bear the main responsibility for housework and care work at the same time as they pursue full-time careers”, while men continue to be “absent fathers” and “absent sons”. Even though, in Norway, the welfare state is still the main supplier of the care services necessary to everyday life, there is a growing recourse to different kinds of private services. But new public solutions are also being worked out<sup>47</sup>.

Even more than in Norway, the German welfare state has been constructed on the assumption that women would perform their reproductive labour in the family<sup>48</sup>. Indeed, the share of working women was and is lower than in Sweden or Norway (Table 3 and Fig. 3). At the same time, the recourse to private domestic service was rare. Among the possible reasons for this, there were the bad working conditions in private domestic service, which encouraged women to flee from the sector<sup>49</sup>. Another possible reason was the creation, from the 1950s onwards, of a public cleaning service for state offices, schools and hospitals. As Nicole Mayer-Ahuja has shown, it aimed to provide needy women with subsistence wages, social insurance protection, and a long-term job perspective and indeed attracted many workers, reducing the supply of

<sup>47</sup> WIDDING ISAKSEN L., “Gender and Globalization”, pp. 147-148\*.

<sup>48</sup> KOFMAN E., “Gendered Migration, Social Reproduction and Welfare Regimes”, p. 12. For more details, see KOFMAN E., “Gendered Migrations, Livelihoods and Entitlements in European Welfare Regimes”, p. 23.

<sup>49</sup> See KELLER G., *Hausgehilfin und Hausflucht, ein soziales Problem von gestern und heute*, Dortmund, Verlag “Soziale Welt”, 1950, p. 92.

domestics<sup>50</sup>. Interestingly, most people interviewed in Berlin in the mid-1990s by Bridget Anderson “believed that the practice of hiring a domestic worker to clean one’s house was relatively new” in the city, “really beginning only in the early 1990s”<sup>51</sup>. The growing labour-market participation of West German women<sup>52</sup>, particularly from the 1980s, contributed to increasing the demand for reproductive labour together with those changes common to most European societies that Bridget Anderson and Annie Phizacklea, in their 1997 European report on migrant domestic workers, expected would foster a growing recourse to private services: first of all the rapid ageing of the European population and the insufficient provision for the care of the elderly and the infirm by the state<sup>53</sup>. As elsewhere, however, changes in middle-class life-style may also account for an increased demand for private services<sup>54</sup>. Migrants, as well as “shuttle” domestic workers from Eastern Europe, have allowed countries to cope with this increasing demand for private services through informal employment<sup>55</sup>. The increasing privatisation of former public services and the consequent worsening of the cleaners’ working conditions in cleaning companies may have increased the number of people willing to work as domestic workers (for instance as charwomen) in private households, while a certain tolerance towards the grey labour market probably contributed to making this possible<sup>56</sup>.

#### 4. Policies which (directly or indirectly) encourage the recourse to paid domestic services

##### 4.1. Migration policies

The shrinking supply of labour was probably the main factor that caused domestic service to decline for around a century, i.e. between 1880s-1980s (in most European countries the decline briefly stopped or reversed only in the 1930s: see Table 4 and Fig. 4). As mentioned, this shrinking supply contributed to stimulating the development of the welfare state. Conversely, in the last few decades, the abundant supply has made possible a revival in the recourse to domestic service which thus represents the reversal of a century-long trend. In this section I will analyse, though very briefly, the main factors which directly or indirectly encourage the current recourse to domestic work. In this light, I will start with a short analysis of the factors which affect the supply of domestic workers, since the very fact that many/few people willing to work as domestics exist has an influence on the strategies pursued by families and individuals (including domestic workers themselves) to secure their own well-being.

<sup>50</sup> MAYER-AHUJA N., “Three worlds of cleaning: women’s experiences of precarious labor in the public sector, cleaning companies and private households of West Germany, 1973-1998”, *Journal of Women’s History*, XVI, 2004, pp. 116-141.

<sup>51</sup> ANDERSON B., *Doing the Dirty Work? The Global Politics of Domestic Labour*, London - New York, Zed Books, 2000, p. 78.

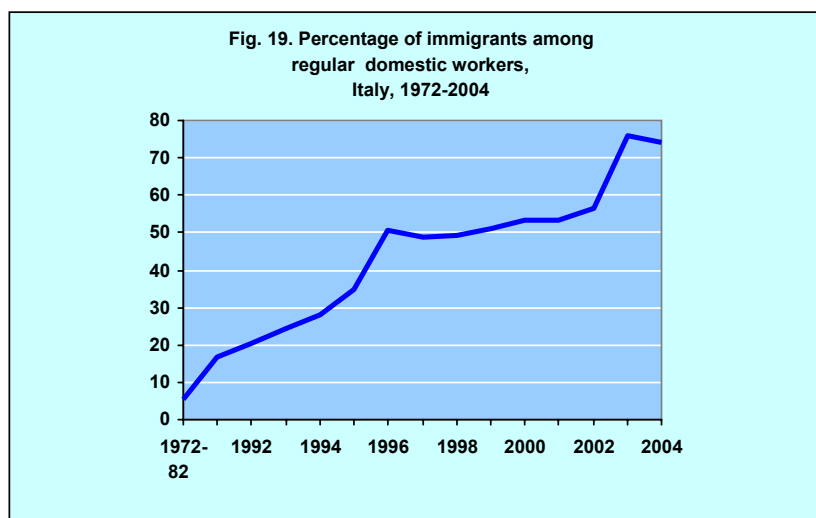
<sup>52</sup> In Eastern Germany there was a high rate of female participation in the labour force.

<sup>53</sup> ANDERSON B. and PHIZACKLEA A., *Migrant Domestic Workers. A European Perspective. Report for the Equal Opportunities Unit, DGV*, Commission of the European Communities, May 1997.

<sup>54</sup> LUTZ H., “At your service Madam! Domestic Servants, Past and Present” (available online: <http://www.vifu.de/new/areas/migration/projects/lutz.html>). According to Lutz, “childcare is demanding, cleaning with environmentally-friendly products is time-consuming, the preference for clothing made of natural fibres necessitates more extensive care (hand washing and steam ironing), standards of cleanliness have risen, people have more pets and therefore greater responsibilities for caring for them and so on”. The attention towards these changes has been particularly encouraged by GREGSON N. and LOWE M., *Servicing the Middle Classes*: see for instance p. 81 on the consequences of the introduction of natural fibres and eco products.

<sup>55</sup> Marianne Friese has been one of the first scholars to stress this phenomenon: see FRIESE M., “East European Women as Domestics in Western Europe. New Social Inequality and Division of Labour among Women”, *Journal of Area Studies*, VI, 1995, pp. 194-202.

<sup>56</sup> MAYER-AHUJA N., “Three worlds of cleaning”.



Source: SARTI R., "Noi abbiamo visto tante città, abbiamo un'altra cultura". Servizio domestico, migrazioni e identità di genere in Italia: uno sguardo di lungo periodo", *Polis. Ricerche e studi su società e politica in Italia*, XVIII, 2004, pp. 17-46 (1972-2002: based on the database of the Italian Institute for Social Security, the Inps; Inps database for 2003-2004)

Growing/shrinking social or/and economic inequality on the one hand and/or an increasing/declining possibility to move from poorer to richer areas have a crucial influence on the supply of domestic work in the marketplace, even though, in the past, forms of domestic service have also existed where the masters were not necessarily better off than their servants<sup>57</sup>. Moreover, cultural factors affect the supply of domestic workers as well (in the US, for instance, according to the 1900 census, of women in employment, 42.6 per cent of the German born, 60.5 per cent of the Irish-born and 61.9 per cent of the Scandinavian-born worked as servants or laundresses while corresponding percentages reached only 11.6 per cent for the Italian-born and 20.6 per cent for those from Russia and Poland<sup>58</sup>. This at least partially reflected traditional differences between different European areas for the diffusion of domestic service and its cultural acceptability<sup>59</sup>).

Growing social and economic inequalities on a global scale are today characterising the world, where it becomes increasingly easy at practical (not legal) level to move from one place to the other.

After the so-called "end of communism", for instance, social inequality has dramatically increased in the countries once belonging to the Soviet bloc. At the same time, after this end it has become increasingly possible for people from those countries to emigrate abroad, which has resulted in huge flows towards Western Europe which have boosted the offer of domestic work.

In developing countries, on the other hand, neo-liberal policies, often imposed by international agencies such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund, have implied cutbacks of welfare policies and deregulation of the labour market, which, in turn, have persuaded a

<sup>57</sup> SARTI; "Who are domestic servants?".

<sup>58</sup> KATZMAN D., *Seven Days a Week. Women and Domestic Service in Industrializing America*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1978, p. 49.

<sup>59</sup> SARTI R., "The Globalisation of Domestic Service in a Historical Perspective, in LUTZ H. (ed.), *Migration and Domestic Work: A European Perspective on a Global Theme*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2007, forthcoming.



growing number of people to migrate to wealthier countries<sup>60</sup>. At the same time, the governments of some countries have encouraged their nationals to emigrate abroad in order to enjoy richer remittances from foreign countries. The Philippines, in particular, have encouraged women to work abroad as domestics<sup>61</sup>.

As a consequence, immigrants today make a crucial contribution in boosting the offer of (cheap) domestic work in Western countries. Actually, it is not very easy to establish the share of the labour market “occupied” by migrants, because both immigrant and national domestics are very likely to work irregularly. Moreover, different European countries have different “traditions” as far as the presence of foreigners among domestics is concerned: in countries such as England, France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands such a presence has ancient roots and from the late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was even conceived as a means to cope with the growing scarcity of national domestics. Conversely, until two or three decades ago nationals of countries such as Italy and Spain were more likely to become migrant domestic workers themselves than to hire an immigrant as a domestic. Only recently have they been transformed from countries which export domestic workers to countries which import them<sup>62</sup>. Fig. 19 shows how the share of foreigners among domestics *regularly* employed in Italy has changed in the last few decades. Certainly, it is not a precise picture of reality, because of the high share of illegal employment, which possibly affects, today, more national domestics than foreigners (in other words, national domestic workers have not disappeared as one could conclude looking at this figure<sup>63</sup>). However, it gives an idea of the importance that migrants may have (and often have) in this field.

One of the main features peculiar to the present is precisely the fact that, today, we have an impressive import-export of care across national boundaries that mirrors the profound imbalance between rich and poor (or impoverished) countries. Care is now a resource widely extracted from the South of the world and from Eastern Europe by Western countries: citizens of Western countries can be better cared for because they can afford to pay for “high quality” care<sup>64</sup> and to the point that “global care chains” have developed inasmuch as relatively well-off and educated women in the South of the world or Eastern Europe hire domestic workers to care after their own children and migrate to Europe or the United States to work themselves as nannies, while the women they have hired, who may be migrants themselves, too (from rural to urban areas), may in turn have left their children to some relatives or even to some paid people<sup>65</sup>. In other words, economic imbalances between countries also imply a different opportunity of access to good quality care, at least as far as the care that can be bought in the private sector is concerned.

Migration policies of both exporting and importing countries have thus to be taken into account. Here I will briefly mention only those of the importing ones. From the 19<sup>th</sup> century until some

<sup>60</sup> See for instance MISRA J. and MERZ S. N., “Neoliberalism, Globalization, and the International Division of Care”, paper for consideration in *The Wages of Empire. Globalization, State Transformation, and Women’s Property* (available online: see [www.umass.edu/sadri/pdf/WP/WP14%20-%20Misra%20Merz.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/sadri/pdf/WP/WP14%20-%20Misra%20Merz.pdf)), p. 9.

<sup>61</sup> PARREÑAS R. S., *Servants of Globalization. Women, Migration and Domestic Work*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2001.

<sup>62</sup> SARTI R., “The Globalisation of Domestic Service in a Historical Perspective”.

<sup>63</sup> For a discussion of this point see COLOMBO A., “‘They call me a housekeeper, but I do everything.’ Who are domestic workers today in Italy and what they do?”, *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 12, 2007, pp. 207-237 (note 11, p. 234).

<sup>64</sup> See particularly PARREÑAS R. S., “Neo-liberalism and the Globalization of Care”, in *SPP*, vol. IV, pp. 205-223, also published, in a slightly different version entitled “Gender Inequalities in the New Global Economy”, in *AFC*, pp. 369-378.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*; RUSSELL HOCHSCHILD A., “Global Care Chains and Emotional Surplus Value”, in HUTTON W. and GIDDENS A. (eds.), *On the Edge: Living with Global Capitalism*, London, Jonathan Cape, 2000, pp. 130-146.

decades ago, many countries enacted precise policies aiming at controlling and influencing the influx of migrant domestic workers and at establishing their status in the country of immigration<sup>66</sup>. Conversely, in the last decades large numbers of migrant domestic workers are undocumented, both in the sense that they do not have the documents necessary to stay and/or work in the country where they are actually employed, and in the sense that their presence and features are not documented, escape registration by migration authorities, statistical offices and the like. This does not mean that the “new” domestic workers are not affected by immigration policies, rather the contrary. Immigration policies are crucial in shaping the features of migrant domestic workers even in the case of undocumented migrants: the very condition of illegality of undocumented migrants who are not involved in any criminal activity but only lack visas or residence permits precisely depends on these policies. Particularly severe policies are indeed nowadays likely to foster illegality and to worsen the migrants’ condition rather than discourage undocumented immigration<sup>67</sup>. As a consequence, the choice, shared by many governments, of having a severe immigration policy and, at the same time, a relatively relaxed attitude towards the enforcement of the laws against the employment of undocumented migrants, as is often the case in domestic service, is a highly “political” choice, that may border on semi-legalised exploitation, since it clearly implies particularly low prices for domestic work. In this way, nationals have access to cheap domestic services while the state “saves” on public social expenditure (both for the nationals and for the foreigners who, as illegal immigrants, have (almost) no right to social protection<sup>68</sup>).

Actually, nowadays most European countries “do not recognise domestic labour as a valuable form of work which warrants a work permit”<sup>69</sup>. Only Italy, Spain, Germany (through the so-called *Riestermodell*, but to a very limited extent) and, from autumn 2006, Austria, have special provisions for domestic workers<sup>70</sup>. These provisions are absolutely inadequate to allow an influx of *documented* migrants sufficient to meet the demand. Nevertheless they affect domestic workers, contributing to defining who will take a place as a domestic (for instance, at least in Italy and Spain the schemes applied in the last few years have affected the gender composition of domestic staff, contributing to a slight re-masculinisation<sup>71</sup>).

Besides “normal” migration policies, amnesties too, are likely to affect the supply of migrant domestic work. In Italy, for instance, the last one (2002), only allowed regularisation of dependent workers and domestic workers. It led to the regularisation of about 700,000 people, about half of them domestics<sup>72</sup>.

In the last three decades (1973-2002), Italy has regularised, through several amnesties, as many as 1,424,000 irregular migrants. Italy is not the sole country that has introduced regularisation programmes, even though no other European country has enforced such a wide regularisation

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<sup>66</sup> SARTI R., “The Globalisation of Domestic Service – A Historical Perspective”.

<sup>67</sup> MATTINGLY D., “Making maids: United States immigration policy and immigrant domestic workers”, in HENSHALL MOMSEN J. (ed.), *Gender, Migration and Domestic Service*, London-New York, Routledge, 1999, pp. 62-79.

<sup>68</sup> Significantly, some authors when defining the condition of undocumented migrant domestic workers, speak of “illegalisation”, see LUTZ H. and SCHWALGIN S., “Irregular Migration and the Globalisation of Domestic Work: Migrant Domestic Workers in Germany”, in AFC, pp. 297-315 and *SPP*, vol. 4, pp. 225-241; LUTZ H., with the collaboration of SCHWALGIN S., *Vom Weltmarkt in den Privathaushalt. Die Neuen Dienstmädchen im Zeitalter der Globalisierung*, Opladen & Farmington Hills: Barbara Budrich, 2007.

<sup>69</sup> KOFMAN E., “Gendered Migration, Social Reproduction and Welfare Regimes”, p. 10.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.; SARTI R., “The Globalisation of Domestic Service – A Historical Perspective”.

<sup>71</sup> SARTI R., “Domestic service: Past and Present in Southern and Northern Europe”.

<sup>72</sup> BARBAGLI M., COLOMBO A. and SCIORTINO G. (eds.), *I sommersi e i sanati. Le regolarizzazioni degli immigrati in Italia*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2004; SARTI, ““Ho bisogno di te””. Precise final data on the exact numbers of people regularised is still lacking.

programme. Greece has regularised about 900,000 immigrants, Spain 585,000, France 266,000, Portugal 253,000, Belgium almost 74,000, The Netherlands 21,000, the United Kingdom 17,500<sup>73</sup> (Table 8).

As a consequence, at least in part, of these different policies, today, at European level, Spain and Italy, together with Cyprus, have the highest share of immigrants (net migration) in their populations, respectively, in 2003, 17.6 and 10.4 per thousand inhabitants (Cyprus has 17.2)<sup>74</sup>. Many of these immigrants work precisely in the sector of domestic services: in Spain, in 1999, among foreigners with a work permit, 7.9 per cent of men and even 61.3 per cent of women were employed in domestic service<sup>75</sup>. They are also the countries of the European Union (data on EU15) with the lowest public social expenditure on the family (Table 2, Fig. 2). We can speculate whether they also are the countries with more domestics: it seems possible, but precise data for comparison is lacking, and actually also other countries (among them France) seem to have quite consistent numbers of domestics<sup>76</sup>. Clearly, not only migration policies affect the domestic sector.

Table 8. Amnesties for undocumented immigrants in Europe, 1973-2002								
	Italy	Greece	Spain	France	Portugal	Belgium	NL	UK
1973-79	5,000	0	0	43,000	0	7,448	16,800	2,271
1980-84	0	0	0	121,000	0	0	0	0
1985-89	105,000	200,000	43,800	0	0	0	0	5,100
1990-94	217,626	0	109,135	15,000	39,166	0	2,000	4,240
1995-99	461,616	374,000	21,300	87,000	35,082	6,137	0	5,900
2000-04	634,728	351,110*	410,292	0	179,200	60,000	2,300	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,423,970</b>	<b>925,110</b>	<b>584,527</b>	<b>266,000</b>	<b>253,448</b>	<b>73,585</b>	<b>21,100</b>	<b>17,511</b>

Source: BARBAGLI M., COLOMBO A. and SCIORTINO G., "Introduction" to BARBAGLI M., COLOMBO A. and SCIORTINO G. (eds.), *I sommersi e i sanati. Le regolarizzazioni degli immigrati in Italia*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2004, p. 11.

\* Applications presented.

#### 4.2. Fighting unemployment and the informal economy<sup>77</sup>

One of the aims of amnesties might be, and often is, to reduce irregular labour. Actually, in recent decades, several European governments have tried to expand the so-called "proximity

<sup>73</sup> BARBAGLI M., COLOMBO A. and SCIORTINO G., "Introduction" to BARBAGLI M., COLOMBO A. and SCIORTINO G. (eds.), *I sommersi e i sanati*, p. 11. For more details, see APAP J., DE BRUYCKER Ph. and SCHMITTER C., "Regularisation of Illegal Aliens in the European Union. Summary Report of a Comparative Study", *European Journal of Migration and Law*, II, 2000, pp. 263-308.

<sup>74</sup> Table "Net migration, including corrections, per 1,000 inhabitants", in *Europe in figures. Eurostat yearbook 2005*, Luxembourg 2005, p. 74.

<sup>75</sup> Sònia Parella Rubio, *Mujer, inmigrante y trabajadora: la triple discriminación*, Barcelona 2003, 160. In Italia, base ai dati del censimento del 2001, l'11,2% dei lavoratori stranieri *residenti* era impiegato nel settore dei "servizi domestici presso famiglie e convivenze", a fronte dell'1,0% degli italiani (tra le donne straniere tale percentuale raggiungeva il 23.7%, tra gli uomini era del 4.3%), vedi Istat, *Gli stranieri in Italia: analisi dei dati censuari*. Edizione provvisoria. 14° Censimento generale della popolazione e delle abitazioni, 21 ottobre 2001, Roma 2005 ([www.istat.it](http://www.istat.it)), 134-6.

<sup>76</sup> SARTI R., "Conclusion. Domestic Service and European Identity", p. 267.

<sup>77</sup> This section is taken, with little change, from SARTI R., "Conclusion. Domestic Service and European Identity", pp. 271-276; see also SARTI R., "Domestic Service. Past and Present in Southern and Northern Europe", pp. 235-238.

services” to stimulate the “emergence” of the so-called “black economy” and/or (re)include unemployed and marginal workers in the labour market. The so-called “proximity services” (which include domestic service) do indeed belong to the new sources of employment defined by the EC in 1995<sup>78</sup>.

In 1995 the French authorities had already started to encourage the expansion of paid domestic services (seen by some analysts less as a luxury than as a need for overburdened families who do not necessarily belong to the upper and middle classes<sup>79</sup>). Until the reform of 1986-87, state intervention simply aimed to provide particularly needy people with good and not too expensive services. Yet in 1986-87 the employers of domestic workers older than 70 were exempted from the payment of social charges and later on exemptions were also introduced for babysitting. These measures show that the authorities had begun not only to try and help people in need but also stimulate the demand for domestic services in order to create employment, a trend more clearly confirmed after 1992, when the field of services which enjoyed some exemptions or tax reductions was increasingly widened and the red tape involved in employing workers was reduced<sup>80</sup>. As a result, an increasing number of households declared that they enjoyed some kind of paid domestic help, particularly after the introduction, in 1994, of the *chèque emploi service*, which allows people to buy domestic services without hiring a domestic worker. As mentioned above, in 1995, there were around 250,000 permanent users of domestic services, 469,000 in 1998 and almost 800,000 in 2002 (but the number of employees has not increased at the same rate. In 1998 there were 370,000 people employed in the sector, 426,000 in 2002, and many were employed for only a few hours weekly: by 1996 the system had created only 40,000 full-time jobs, and at a high cost for the state (at that time the public deficit was roughly € 1,200 for each job created). Furthermore, the *chèques* were mainly used by the rich, and the percentage of elderly people aged 70 and over among employers decreased from 36.2 in 1998 to 33 in 2002, even though their absolute number was growing<sup>81</sup>).

Reactions to this policy have differed. On the one hand, the system has actually reduced undeclared work<sup>82</sup> (in the mid-1990s two employers out of three and three domestic servants out

<sup>78</sup> CANCEDDA A., *Employment in Household Service*, Dublin, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2001 ([www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0102.htm](http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/htmlfiles/ef0102.htm)); PASLEAU S. and SCHOPP I., “The Three Colours of Domestic Service”, p. 446; PASLEAU S. and SCHOPP I., “Les trois couleurs du service domestique”, p. 126.

<sup>79</sup> FLIPO A., “La demande de services de proximité: une mise en perspective”, in CONSEIL D’ANALYSE ÉCONOMIQUE, *Emplois de proximité*, Paris, La Documentation Française, 1998, pp. 103-135. The same happens in Italy, see the texts listed in note 689.

<sup>80</sup> DEBONNEUIL M. and LAHIDJI R., “Services de proximité, État et marché”, in CONSEIL D’ANALYSE ÉCONOMIQUE, *Emplois de proximité*, pp. 41-60 (pp. 45-46). See also RAYSSAC G.-L., POUQUET L., SIMON M.-O., LE DANTEC V. and LEGRAND C., *L’aide à domicile et les employés de maison*, p. 15, 111; LALLEMENT M., “Famille et emplois de service”, in MARUANI M., *Les nouvelles frontières de l’inégalité. Hommes et femmes sur le marché du travail*, Paris, La Découverte, 1998, pp. 157-167; DUSSUET A., “‘On n’est pas des domestiques !’. La difficile professionnalisation des services à domicile”, *Sextant*, nos 15-16, 2001, pp. 279-295 (p. 283); FOUQUET A., “Le travail domestique: du travail invisible au ‘gisement’ d’emplois”, in LAUFER J, MARRY C. and MARUANI M. (eds.), *Masculin-féminin: Questions pour les sciences de l’homme*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2001, pp. 99-127.

<sup>81</sup> I am referring to the data provided by RENOY P., IVARSSON S., VAN DER WUSTEN-GRITSAI O. and MEIJER E., *Undeclared work in an enlarged Union. An analysis of undeclared work: an in-depth study of specific items*, European Union, Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs, May 2004, pp. 165-166 ([http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/publications/2004/cev104021\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2004/cev104021_en.html)). Because of the very complex French system, data provided in different texts often uses different classifications and is thus also different, see in particular AUDIRAC P.-A., TANAY A. and ZILBERMAN S., “L’évolution du poids des services et des emplois familiaux en France”, in CONSEIL D’ANALYSE ÉCONOMIQUE, *Emplois de proximité*, pp. 94-98; and RAYSSAC G.-L., POUQUET L., SIMON M.-O., LE DANTEC V. and LEGRAND C., *L’aide à domicile et les employés de maison*, pp. 49-55.

<sup>82</sup> RENOY P., IVARSSON S., VAN DER WUSTEN-GRITSAI O. and MEIJER E., *Undeclared work in an enlarged Union*, p. 165.

of four may not have been regularly registered<sup>83</sup>). Furthermore, it created some employment, professionalised services and democratised the possibility of having recourse to domestic help, as its supporters stress. On the other hand, as its critics counterclaim, it only creates some *petits boulots* (minor casual jobs) and risks giving birth to a “new domesticity”<sup>84</sup>. In France, in fact, there are critics, such as André Gorz, who think that the expansion of personal services simply implies the impoverishment of part of society and the birth of a dual society with a class of new servants. Gorz believes that replacing the activities which anyone could perform by himself/herself with commercialised services runs the risk of nullifying one’s capacity to take responsibility for oneself, thereby destroying the foundations of autonomous existence, and the even basis of social relationships. How much longer can we avoid the danger of commercialising maternity and paternity, of commodifying children and organs, of selling not only what we produce but also what we are?<sup>85</sup> Other analysts are less pessimistic, and discuss how to use proximity services to create jobs, to reduce social inequality and to improve the quality of family life without resurrecting the traditional master/servant relationship (*relations de domesticité*). “Dependence or freedom”, which will be the lot of the new domestic workers? This is, in brief, the issue debated in France, to use Geneviève Fraisse’s words<sup>86</sup>. Among the solutions suggested within this debate, there is the increasing recourse to state subsidies, distributed to families according to their degree of need in order to allow them to buy services. In the eyes of many analysts, however, private households do not seem appropriate for the development of correct labour relationships: they are not controlled and the traditional master/servants relationship represents a threatening model. Some analysts thus suggest an increasing recourse to a growing externalisation of the labour relationship even when the home is maintained as workplace, recalling the role, from this point of view, of collective agreements and intermediate bodies between employers and employees (already quite common in France) that can act as employers of domestic workers<sup>87</sup>. However, it has to be stressed that, in France, domestic workers paid with the *chèques emploi service* enjoy all social rights<sup>88</sup>. As far as I can ascertain, the situation is more problematic in other countries.

In Belgium, where, according to an inquiry, in 1993 about 14.4 per cent of families employed domestic helps, only 1.3 per cent proposed an employment contract to their home-workers and

<sup>83</sup> RAYSSAC G.-L., POUQUET L., SIMON M.-O., LE DANTEC V. and LEGRAND C., *L’aide à domicile et les employés de maison*, p. 55.

<sup>84</sup> DUSSUET A., “‘On n’est pas des domestiques !’”; LECOMTE S., “La bonne, figure résurgente d’une ‘travailleuse frappée d’indignité’. À propos de la ‘néo-domesticité’”, *Sextant*, nos 15-16, pp. 319-344.

<sup>85</sup> GORZ A., “Perché la società del lavoro salariato ha bisogno di nuovi servi?”, in BASCETTA M. et alii, *Nuove servitù*, Roma, Manifestolibri, 1994, pp. 61-70. See also GORZ A., *Métamorphoses du travail : critique de la raison économique*, Paris, Gallimard, 2004 (first ed. Paris, Galilée, 1988).

<sup>86</sup> FRAISSE G., “Domesticité, emplois de service et démocratie”, in MARUANI M., *Les nouvelles frontières de l’inégalité*, pp. 153-156.

<sup>87</sup> See for instance the papers collected in the volume CONSEIL D’ANALYSE ÉCONOMIQUE, *Emplois de proximité*, briefly described in the Conclusion to *SPS* (see the section 5.3. “Expected Disappearance and Current Revival: Some Quantitative Data”, 1950-2000), DUSSUET A., “‘On n’est pas des domestiques !’”, p. 293.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 279-280. In addition to the *chèques emploi service* (CES), the *titre emploi service* (TES) was introduced in 1996 in France. “It allows work councils, regional and local authorities and welfare associations to guarantee financial assistance to their own staff members who hire someone to provide domestic services in their homes. Like the CES, the objective of the TES is to simplify hiring domestic services in a legal way. The main difference from the CES is that with TES, the private person does not employ someone, but is a client of a company that operates as the service provider. The private person receives the TES from his or her employer as part of the salary. Thus, unlike the CES, the TES is not for sale in a bank, for example. The TES is intended mainly for private households that normally do not have access to domestic services. In this group, however, little extra demand has been generated” (RENOOY P., IVARSSON S., VAN DER WUSTEN-GRITSAI O. and MEIJER E., *Undeclared work in an enlarged Union*, p. 166).

only 1 per cent paid social contributions<sup>89</sup>. Since 1986, the authorities have tried to make domestic service more interesting to potential employers through exemptions from the payment of social charges and through fiscal advantages. Yet the impact of these measures has been very limited, probably because black labour remains more convenient, as well as the labour performed by the unemployed who work with the *Agences locales pour l'Emploi* (ALE) or *Plaatselijke Werkgelegenheidsagentschappen* (PWA). As Isabelle Schopp and Suzy Pasleau have shown, the ALE-PWA, organised in 1987 and compulsory in all municipalities since 1994, were created to help the unemployed and to supply services difficult to find in regular work circuits. Between 1995 and 2000 the number of people working in the ALE-PWA increased from 10,808 to 40,049. Thus the ALE-PWA system has created some employment and has also pushed some “black” workers out of undeclared jobs (4 per cent of the jobs carried out within the system may have been formerly undeclared).

Yet it also creates confusion between proximity services and “odd jobs” (in 1999 ALE-PWA workers worked on average 29 hours monthly). Furthermore, many important rights are not granted to ALE-PWA employees: no wages are due during non-working periods; the worker has no right to a wage in case of sickness, accident or if she/he is absent when responding to a job-offer or for family reasons; several provisions on holidays, welfare, etc. are not applicable to him/her. If one considers that it is difficult to move from an ALE-PWA to the regular circuit, the conclusion is that the ALE-PWA system creates “grey” labourers who are often condemned to a very precarious existence. However, a reform of the ALE-PWA system is currently under way. Since 2003-2004, a “service vouchers” scheme has been in force in Belgium. The user/employer (private individuals) buys service vouchers of 6.2 € for one hour’s work (a charge which is tax deductible for up to 2140 € per year) from an issuing company (Accor TRB) or a local employment agency; then she/he can ask a specifically authorised company (a commercial company, a non-profit-making organisation, a mutual insurance company, a public centre for social aid (“CPAS” in French), a social-purpose business, a self-employed worker) to send a worker to her/his residence to carry out the required service(s). Contrary to the “chèqu-ALE” system, there are no requirements linked to a minimum unemployment period for the service providers. Moreover, they become proper wage-earners, hired by a company by signing an open-ended contract (at least part-time)<sup>90</sup>.

A different system has been tried out in Denmark. In 1994 the *Hjemmeservice* (Act on the Home Service Scheme) came into force. It aimed to reduce unemployment among people with little or no formal education by way of developing services likely to improve the conditions of the families, and particularly of the elderly, i.e. services such as cleaning, window cleaning, shopping, cooking, doing the laundry and walking the dog. According to the scheme, the state paid a subsidy of 50 per cent of the wages (to obtain the subsidy, the work had to be performed by authorised companies). This scheme was criticised for several reasons: according to its critics, it created an artificial market of household services as well as a new proletariat of domestic servants; it was expensive for the taxpayer and was the source of many frauds (there was indeed little control on the companies run by domestic workers). As a consequence, the

<sup>89</sup> VAN HAEGENDOREN M., “L’économie informelle dans la vie quotidienne des femmes. Rapport final”, *O.S.W.*, no. 8. Women’s Studies de l’UIA, 1993, quoted by DE KEYZER D., *Madame est servie*, p. 324. The inquiry involved 300 families.

<sup>90</sup> PASLEAU S. and SCHOPPI I., “La domesticité en Belgique de 1947 à l’aube du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle”, pp. 258-260; PASLEAU S. and SCHOPPI I., *The Role of Domestic Services in EU*, paper presented at the Workshop *Informal/Undeclared Work: Research on its changing Nature and Policy Strategies in an Enlarged Europe*, Brussels, European Commission, 21<sup>st</sup> May 2003 ([http://www.cordis.lu/improving/socio-economic/conf\\_work.htm](http://www.cordis.lu/improving/socio-economic/conf_work.htm)); PASLEAU S. and SCHOPPI I., “The Three Colours of Domestic Service in Belgium”, pp. 448-450; PASLEAU S. and SCHOPPI I., “Les trios couleurs du service domestique”. I am grateful to Isabelle Schopp for her very useful information on the Belgian system. See also RENOY P., IVARSSON S., VAN DER WUSTEN-GRITSAI O. and MEIJER E., *Undeclared work in an enlarged Union*, pp. 159-162.

subsidy was removed from window cleaning, shopping, walking the dog, etc., while gardening and other outdoor maintenance work received a subsidy equal to 35 per cent of its cost from 2000 onwards. For the other services, the subsidy was reduced to 40 per cent. Yet since the beginning of 2004, it has been applied only to cleaning services for retired people, even though very many Danish households had recourse to the scheme (80 per cent in 1998, on average five times a year) and almost 90 per cent of those who used it were satisfied. While on the one hand the scheme succeeded in improving the families' living conditions, on the other hand it had little influence on turning undeclared labour into formal labour: only 10 per cent of the users employed undeclared labour to perform domestic chores before the introduction of the scheme. Furthermore, it created only a limited number of new jobs (3,700 by 2000)<sup>91</sup>.

The first efforts by the German authorities to fight unemployment by offering incentives to potential employers date back to the mid-1980s. Even though, at that time, no statistical attention was paid to *minijobs* in private households there was the impression that a certain tendency towards social polarisation was likely to result in a growing number of cleaning jobs in private households (the definition of *minijobs* referred to those jobs which were not registered by social insurance or revenue administrations because working hours and income were below the threshold of the German health, retirement and unemployment insurance, and thus neither contributions nor wage taxes were due. They constituted the stronghold of semi-legal or illegal employment). Since 1989, in particular, employment in private households has been subsidised by tax reductions, provided that the domestic workers were covered by German insurance schemes: a measure that was labelled by its critics as the 'maid privilege' (*Dienstmädchenprivileg*)<sup>92</sup>. The idea that many jobs could be created if low-skill services were sufficiently cheap was further developed in more recent years, especially following the recommendations of the so-called Hartz Commission (2002). In Germany, according to Jürgen Schupp, in 2000 there were almost 3 million households which had regular recourse to paid domestic help, yet there were fewer than 40,000 employees registered by social insurance<sup>93</sup>. The law implementing these recommendations came into force in April 2003. According to this law, the so called *minijobs* in private households worth up to € 400 per month are taxed only at an all-inclusive rate of 12 per cent and are free from any other taxes or contributions to social insurance (5 per cent for pension cover scheme, 5 per cent for health insurance system and 2 per cent as a lump sum tax). Before the introduction of the reform, the limit was € 325, and the all-inclusive rate for the employer was 22 per cent. As Karen Jaehrling has explained, "combined to that, the households get a tax credit amounting to 10% of their expenses (up to a limit of € 510 per year)". "These jobs come with almost no social insurance. The employees are not provided with health and unemployment insurance, and their contributions to the pension scheme will not even add up to a pension that exceeds the public welfare benefit. That is to say, the core of the reform consists of a financial subsidy that encourages private households to act as employers, but this time only for part-time jobs not covered by social insurance. It is now the responsibility of the employees themselves to arrange

<sup>91</sup> LIND J., "Denmark: Private Service Growth. Towards a New Trajectory for Employment and Regulation?", in DØLVIK J. E. (ed.), *At your Service? Comparative Perspective on Employment and Labour Relations in the European Private Sector Services*, Bruxelles, P.I.E. & Peter Lang, 2001, pp. 189-230; RENOY P., IVARSSON S., VAN DER WUSTEN-GRITSAI O. and MEIJER E., *Undeclared work in an enlarged Union*, p. 170; PLATZER E., "Domestic Services and the Division of Labour. The Example of the Danish Home Service Scheme", *Humanetten*, X, 2002, (<http://www.vxu.se/hum/publ/humanetten/nummer10/art0207.html>); I am grateful to Ninna Nyberg Sørensen and Ellinor Platzer for information on the more recent changes to the scheme.

<sup>92</sup> MAYER-AHUJA N., "Three worlds of cleaning".

<sup>93</sup> SCHUPP J., "Quantitative Verbreitung von Erwerbstätigkeit in privaten Haushalten Deutschlands", in GATHER C., GEISSLER B. & RERRICH M. (eds.), *Weltmarkt Privathaushalt*, pp. 50-70; also published in DIW Berlin, *Materialien*, no 11, 2002 ([www.diw.de/deutsch/produkte/publikationen/materialien/docs/papers/diw\\_rm02-01-11.pdf](http://www.diw.de/deutsch/produkte/publikationen/materialien/docs/papers/diw_rm02-01-11.pdf)).

for social protection in the case of illness, unemployment and age". At the same time, the scheme extends financial subsidies to professional service companies, granting households a tax credit of 20 per cent of their expenses for services provided by these companies (up to a limit of € 600 per year). Yet for these companies, this advantage is almost nullified by the fact that they have to pay a sales tax of 16 per cent "in addition to the full social insurance contributions of both employers and employees": in other words, customers will pay a substantially higher price in the case of the service company than in the case of the *minijob*. This raises serious worries, because "there is no big difference left between a *minijob* and informal work". However, the advantages for employers are few, and this probably explains why some months after the reform there were only a few more registered jobs in private households than before (33,500 compared to around 27,000 in 2002). In short, these measures are likely to result (if anything) in an expansion of the "grey labour market"<sup>94</sup>. More generally, indeed, the solutions adopted until now have not been successful in creating new, regular, adequately protected jobs, thus securing the well-being of the domestic workers involved in the programmes to expand domestic services.

### 4.3. Services versus cash benefits

As Joya Misra and Sabine Merz have written, "welfare state restructuring as well as less state support for workers" "means greater pressure on women to find a way to meet their family's needs, often by hiring immigrant workers cheaply"<sup>95</sup>. As seen in previous pages, this seems the case in several contexts. Yet not only neo-liberal policies have to be taken into account to explain this trend: we cannot ignore that not only the demise of the welfare state but also new forms of welfare policies may encourage a certain commodification of care. In fact, one could argue that any welfare policy providing services for the family implies a certain commodification of care, inasmuch as the state takes over services formerly supplied by family members for free and pays a wage to people for providing, also for free or at a low price, the same services. Yet, according to certain scholars in the case of services provided by the state in this way, we should not speak of proper commodification, because the aim of these policies is redistribution, not profit<sup>96</sup>.

<sup>94</sup> JAEHRLING K., "Political Reforms in the Domestic Service Sector – Aims and Impact", in *PSP*, vol. V, and in *AFC*, pp. 235-246 (pp. 243-244). See also MAYER-AHUJA N., "Three worlds of cleaning"; RENOOY P., IVARSSON S., VAN DER WUSTEN-GRITSAI O. and MEIJER E., *Undeclared work in an enlarged Union*, pp. 168-171.

<sup>95</sup> See for instance MISRA J. and MERZ S. N., "Neoliberalism, Globalization, and the International Division of Care", p. 9.

<sup>96</sup> DANNA D., "Care work for elderly people in different welfare regimes: the cases of Italy", paper presented at the meeting of the European Consortium for Sociological Research Conference *Comparing European Studies. Assessing ten years of sociological research: 1995-2005*, Paris, 25-26 November 2005 (available online: [www.ecsr.sciences-po.fr/pdf/Danna\\_ab.pdf](http://www.ecsr.sciences-po.fr/pdf/Danna_ab.pdf)). On different welfare regimes and arrangements for the care of the elderly see also PHILLIPS J., "Paid work and care of older people", in DREW E. (ed.), *Women, Work and the Family in Europe*, London, Routledge, 1998, pp. 66-75; DE VINCENTI C. (ed.), *Gli anziani in Europa. Sistemi sociali e modelli di welfare a confronto. IX Rapporto CER-SPI*, Roma - Bari, Laterza, 2000; RANCI C. (ed.), *L'assistenza agli anziani in Italia e in Europa: verso la costruzione di un mercato sociale dei servizi*, Milano, Angeli, 2001; GORI C. (ed.), *Il welfare nascosto. Il mercato privato dell'assistenza in Italia e in Europa*, Roma, Carocci, 2002; WEINKOPF C., *Haushaltsnahe Dienstleistungen für Ältere. Expertise für den 5. Altenbericht der Bundesregierung „Potenziale des Alters in Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft – Der Beitrag älterer Menschen zum Zusammenhalt der Generationen“ im Auftrag des Deutschen Zentrums für Altersfragen (DZA)*, Gelsenkirchen, Institut Arbeit und Technik, Wissenschaftszentrum NRW, 2005 (available online on the website [www.potenziale-des-alters.de](http://www.potenziale-des-alters.de)); SARTI F., *La sostenibilità del lavoro di cura. Famiglie e anziani non autosufficienti in Emilia-Romagna. Sintesi del progetto*, Bologna, Agenzia sanitaria regionale dell'Emilia-Romagna, 2005; etc.



Other forms of state intervention are indeed likely to encourage a more proper commodification. Both the extension *and* the type of state intervention are crucial indeed in shaping the functions performed by the family and, consequently, also the recourse to private domestic services and caring<sup>97</sup>. As for the *types* of state intervention, an important distinction, indeed, is that between the provision of services and cash allowances, as already mentioned. As Clare Ungerson has stressed, “recent developments in the funding of care in many European countries and some of the states of the United States have appeared to follow a similar pattern: all of them have developed forms of care delivery which allow for the care user to receive cash instead of care services, and use this cash to employ directly their own caring labour. These forms of cash are nearly always in the form of cash payments from the state”<sup>98</sup>.

The consequences of these payments differ. For instance, if care users are free to pay whoever they want with the money they receive, even their relatives (as is the case in many countries, such as Austria, Italy and The Netherlands), and actually pay them, on the one hand the value of the care supplied may end up being recognised and accrued, yet on the other hand wives and daughters (female relatives are over-represented among carers) may be bound through the state allowance to a quite traditional role. At the same time, however, “the payment of kin to care has the potential to commodify a set of tasks that until very recently have been regarded as classic ‘unpaid work’”<sup>99</sup>, creating forms of family and household relations whereby some family members move into employment relations with each other. As noted by Ungerson, when care work is generated through a combination of cash, affection and obligation, “costs of care are expected to be lower than the cost of organized, formal care”, even though, at least for the moment, cash allowances for care paid to relatives do not seem to have such negatives consequences<sup>100</sup>.

Another problem seems more serious. The introduction of cash for care, in fact, “can encourage the further development of care work that is carried out by untrained, unskilled, unprotected and even undocumented labour”<sup>101</sup>. This is exactly what happened in Italy, where many families have used cash allowances to pay undocumented migrant domestic workers. Recently, the problem has prompted a certain debate, and local authorities are now introducing regulations to avoid fostering undeclared work through their cash payments for care<sup>102</sup>. In other words, in these cases public subsidies may turn out, quite paradoxically, to foster the black economy.

## 5. Two thoughts in conclusion

European countries have elaborated different welfare systems to secure care for their inhabitants. These different systems imply different roles, in each context, of the family on the one hand, and of the State on the other. According to David Reher, these differences are rooted in the past and have to do with domestic service. In spite of great regional differences, life cycle service was indeed generally more common in Northern and Central Europe than in Southern

<sup>97</sup> See for instance SCIORTINO G., “Immigration in a Mediterranean Welfare State”; KOFMAN E., “Gendered Migrations, Livelihoods and Entitlements in European Welfare Regimes”.

<sup>98</sup> UNGERSON C., “Commodified care work in European labour market”, p. 377.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 381-382.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 380.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 382.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 383-384; ROSSI A., *Anziani e assistenti immigrate. Strumenti per il welfare locale*, Roma, Ediesse, 2004; SARTI R., “Servizio domestico, migrazioni e identità di genere”, available online [www.uniurb.it/scipol/drs\\_servizio\\_domestico.pdf](http://www.uniurb.it/scipol/drs_servizio_domestico.pdf); SARTI R., ““Ho bisogno di te””.

Europe (even though servants were usually numerous in Mediterranean cities, in Southern Europe they were quite rare in the countryside). This means that, in the North, a higher share of adolescents left their parents quite young to work as servants in a different household, thus loosening their relationship with their parents. Conversely, in the South children generally lived longer with their families. As a consequence, in the Mediterranean region, according to Reher, “much of the aid given to vulnerable members of society came from the family or from individual charity, while in Northern societies this was largely accomplished through public and private institutions”<sup>103</sup>.

As shown above, after the Second World War the decline of domestic service was faster and greater in Northern countries than in Italy or Spain, and this led to a reversal of a long-term balance as far as the presence of servants in different European areas is concerned. This change also reversed the relationship between domestic service and welfare as described by Reher: while in the past, according to Reher, public welfare was more developed where servants were more numerous, i.e. in Northern and Central Europe, and less developed where servants were few, i.e. in Southern Europe, after the Second World War servants became *less* common in countries with a well-developed public welfare system and vice-versa.

In fact, in past centuries things were possibly more complicated than argued by Reher, as I have discussed elsewhere<sup>104</sup>. As shown by Richard Wall, for instance, servants did not necessarily cut off the ties from their families<sup>105</sup>. Moreover, in the past one of the several possible reasons for servant keeping was to guarantee adequate care to children – who in the middle and upper classes were looked after by wet-nurses and governesses, taught by tutors and so on<sup>106</sup> – and the elderly (the analysis of wills shows that legacies to servants in order to ensure that they would assist the elderly who wrote the will were not uncommon<sup>107</sup>). If considered from this vantage point, the current recourse to domestic service to cope with the need of care which (interestingly) characterises very different systems is not particularly innovative and possibly testifies that we need a really new and innovative welfare state<sup>108</sup>.

<sup>103</sup> REHER D. S., “Family Ties in Western Europe”, p. 209.

<sup>104</sup> SARTI, “Domestic Service. Past and Present in Northern and Southern Europe”, p. 231.

<sup>105</sup> WALL R., “The Social and Economic Significance of Servant Migration”, in AFC, pp. 19-42 and in *SPP*, pp. 47-69.

<sup>106</sup> As for children, see DELPIANO P. and SARTI R. (eds), *Servants, Domestic Workers and Children. The Role of Domestic Personnel in the Upbringing and Education of the Master's and Employer's Children from the Sixteenth to the Twenty-first Centuries*, Special Issue of *Paedagogica Historica*, XLIII, 2007, no 4, forthcoming.

<sup>107</sup> SARTI R., “Servire al femminile, servire al maschile nella Bologna sette-ottocentesca”, in NAVA P. (ed.), *Operaie, serve, maestre, impiegate*, Torino, Rosenberg & Sellier, 1992, pp. 237-264; ARRU A., *Il servo. Storia di una carriera nel Settecento*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1995; CAVALLO S., “Family obligations and inequalities in access to care in Northwestern Italy, seventeenth to eighteenth centuries”, in HORDEN P. and SMITH R. (eds.), *The Locus of Care. Families, communities, institutions and the provision of welfare since antiquity*, London, Routledge, 1998, pp. 90-110; MISCALI M., “Servir au féminin, servir au masculin”, in *SPP*, vol. II, pp. 73-86; Ead., “Los criados y la tierra en la Cerdeña del siglo XIX”, in SARASÚA C. (ed.), *Criados y mozos en la organización histórica del trabajo agrario*, special issue of *Historia Agraria*, XV, 2005, no. 35, pp. 27-48, etc.

<sup>108</sup> ESPING ANDERSEN G. *et al.*, *Why We Need a New Welfare State*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003 (2002<sup>1</sup>).

## APPENDIX: TABLES.

Table 1. -Total public social expenditure as percentage of GDP																						
	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Australia	11,3	11,2	12,3	12,9	13,3	13,5	13,4	13,2	12,4	12,7	14,2	15,3	16,3	16,5	16,2	17,8	18,0	17,7	17,8	17,5	18,6	18,0
Austria	22,5	m	m	m	m	24,1	m	m	m	m	24,1	24,4	25,0	26,6	27,3	26,6	26,7	26,0	25,7	26,1	26,0	26,0
Belgium	24,1	25,7	26,4	26,7	25,9	26,9	26,7	26,4	26,0	25,2	26,9	27,7	28,4	29,9	29,2	28,1	28,6	27,5	27,5	27,2	26,7	27,2
Canada	14,3	14,7	17,2	17,4	17,2	17,4	17,4	17,1	16,8	17,2	18,6	21,1	21,8	21,6	20,6	19,6	18,8	18,3	18,4	17,4	17,3	17,8
Czech Republic	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	17,0	18,3	18,7	19,2	19,2	18,9	18,8	19,7	19,5	19,8	20,3	20,1
Denmark	29,1	29,4	29,6	29,9	28,7	27,9	27,0	27,8	29,2	29,5	29,3	30,2	30,7	32,3	33,1	32,4	31,7	30,7	30,2	29,8	28,9	29,2
Finland	18,5	18,9	20,0	21,0	21,9	23,0	23,6	24,1	23,3	23,1	24,8	29,9	33,9	33,9	33,1	31,1	30,9	28,7	26,5	26,1	24,5	24,8
France	21,1	22,2	22,9	23,1	23,5	26,6	26,4	26,2	26,0	25,2	26,6	27,2	28,0	29,5	29,3	29,2	29,4	29,4	29,0	28,9	28,3	28,5
Germany	23,0	23,7	23,8	23,4	23,1	23,6	23,6	23,9	24,0	23,0	22,8	24,9	26,4	26,9	26,9	27,5	28,1	27,6	27,4	27,4	27,2	27,4
Greece	11,5	13,8	16,2	16,9	17,2	17,9	17,7	17,7	16,4	17,5	20,9	20,1	20,2	21,1	21,2	21,4	22,1	22,1	22,8	23,6	23,6	24,3
Hungary	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	20,8	20,0	20,1
Iceland	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	16,4	17,1	17,8	18,2	18,4	19,0	18,8	18,5	18,7	19,6	19,7	19,8
Ireland	17,0	17,1	17,7	17,9	17,3	22,1	22,2	21,4	20,0	18,4	18,6	19,5	20,4	20,3	20,0	19,4	18,2	16,8	15,6	14,2	13,6	13,8
Italy	18,4	19,8	20,3	21,4	20,9	21,3	21,3	21,5	21,6	21,9	23,3	23,5	24,3	24,7	24,4	23,0	23,5	24,2	23,7	24,1	24,1	24,4
Japan	10,2	10,6	11,0	11,3	11,1	11,0	11,4	11,5	11,1	10,9	11,2	11,3	11,8	12,4	13,0	13,5	13,7	13,8	14,5	15,1	16,1	16,9
Korea	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	3,1	2,9	3,2	3,3	3,4	3,6	3,9	4,2	5,9	6,9	5,6	6,1
Luxembourg	23,5	25,2	24,4	24,6	23,2	23,0	22,2	23,3	22,4	21,7	21,9	22,4	22,8	23,1	23,0	23,8	23,9	22,6	21,7	21,5	20,0	20,8
Mexico	m	m	m	m	m	1,8	1,7	1,8	2,0	2,7	3,8	4,3	4,6	4,9	5,4	5,4	4,9	5,0	4,9	5,0	5,0	5,1
Netherlands	26,9	27,9	29,5	29,8	28,6	27,3	26,9	27,0	26,6	26,2	27,6	27,7	28,3	28,6	27,2	25,6	24,4	24,0	23,0	22,5	21,8	21,8
New Zealand	17,2	17,4	18,3	18,2	17,5	18,1	17,9	18,7	20,2	21,5	21,9	22,3	22,2	20,4	19,4	18,9	18,8	19,8	20,0	19,5	19,2	18,5
Norway	17,9	m	m	m	m	19,1	m	m	24,1	25,1	24,7	25,7	26,8	26,7	26,4	26,0	24,9	24,1	25,7	25,8	23,0	23,9
Poland	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	15,5	22,1	26,2	25,6	24,4	23,8	23,9	23,3	22,0	22,2	21,9	23,0
Portugal	10,9	11,7	11,0	11,1	11,0	11,1	12,0	12,2	12,4	11,9	13,9	14,9	15,6	17,2	17,3	18,0	19,1	18,9	19,1	19,8	20,5	21,1
Slovak Republic	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	19,2	19,1	18,7	19,0	18,9	18,3	17,9
Spain	15,9	17,0	17,1	17,8	17,6	18,2	17,9	17,8	18,3	18,5	19,5	20,3	21,4	22,5	22,0	21,4	21,6	20,9	20,3	19,9	19,9	19,6
Sweden	28,8	29,8	30,0	30,3	29,0	30,0	30,0	30,1	30,6	29,9	30,8	32,4	35,3	36,8	35,4	33,2	32,7	31,3	31,1	30,6	29,5	29,8
Switzerland	14,2	13,8	14,7	15,1	15,3	15,1	15,3	15,5	15,6	15,3	17,9	19,3	21,3	23,0	23,2	23,9	25,0	26,0	25,9	26,1	25,4	26,4
Turkey	4,3	4,5	4,9	5,2	4,5	4,2	4,4	4,6	5,3	6,4	7,6	8,2	8,5	8,3	7,9	7,5	9,7	10,8	11,1	13,2	m	m
United Kingdom	17,9	19,5	20,1	20,9	21,0	21,1	21,2	20,5	19,1	18,6	19,5	21,1	23,1	23,7	23,2	23,0	22,8	22,0	21,5	21,2	21,7	21,8
United States	13,3	13,5	14,0	14,1	13,2	13,0	13,1	13,1	13,0	13,0	13,4	14,5	15,2	15,4	15,4	15,4	15,2	14,9	14,4	14,2	14,2	14,7
OECD-21 *	17,7	18,5	19,1	19,5	19,1	19,6	19,6	19,7	19,5	19,4	20,5	21,6	22,7	23,2	22,8	22,5	22,6	22,2	21,8	21,8	21,5	21,8
OECD 23 *	17,9	m	m	m	m	19,8	m	m	m	m	20,9	21,9	23,0	23,5	23,1	22,8	22,8	22,4	22,2	22,1	21,8	22,0
OECD-28 *	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	19,1	20,3	21,4	21,9	21,5	21,2	21,3	20,9	20,8	20,8	20,5	20,8
OECD-30 *	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	20,8	20,6	20,9
EU-15	20,6	m	m	m	m	22,9	m	m	m	m	23,4	24,4	25,6	26,5	26,0	25,4	25,4	24,7	24,1	24,0	23,6	23,8
EU-19	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	24,0	23,5	23,3	22,8	23,1

\* 1999 data for Turkey for 2000 and 2001 OECD averages.

Source: OECD (2004), Social Expenditure Database (SOCX, [www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure](http://www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure)).

Table 2. Public social expenditure for the family as percentage of GDP																							
	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	
Australia	1,0	1,0	1,2	1,3	1,2	1,2	1,1	1,2	1,3	1,4	1,5	1,7	2,0	2,1	2,2	2,6	2,8	2,7	2,6	2,6	2,9	2,8	
Austria	3,1	m	m	m	m	2,8	m	m	m	m	2,7	2,7	2,9	3,1	3,5	3,2	3,1	2,9	2,8	2,9	3,0	2,9	
Belgium	3,1	3,1	3,1	2,9	2,7	2,7	2,6	2,5	2,4	2,3	2,3	2,3	2,3	2,4	2,3	2,3	2,3	2,4	2,4	2,3	2,3	2,3	
Canada	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,7	0,7	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,5	0,9	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,9	
Czech Republic	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	2,6	2,9	2,8	2,3	2,3	2,1	2,0	1,9	1,8	1,8	1,8	1,6	
Denmark	2,8	2,9	2,9	2,7	2,7	2,7	2,6	3,0	3,3	3,3	3,3	3,4	3,5	3,7	3,9	3,9	3,8	3,7	3,8	3,8	3,7	3,8	
Finland	1,9	2,0	2,3	2,5	2,4	2,6	2,6	2,7	2,7	2,9	3,2	3,8	4,2	4,0	4,4	4,1	3,8	3,6	3,4	3,3	3,1	3,0	
France	2,5	2,8	2,9	2,9	2,8	2,7	2,6	2,6	2,5	2,4	2,8	2,7	2,7	2,9	2,9	3,1	3,0	3,1	3,0	3,0	2,8	2,8	
Germany	2,3	2,4	2,1	2,0	1,8	1,8	1,8	1,8	1,8	1,7	1,7	2,0	2,1	2,1	2,0	2,0	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	
Greece	0,3	0,5	0,4	0,4	0,3	0,4	0,3	0,3	0,2	0,2	1,6	1,7	1,7	1,7	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,8	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,8	
Hungary	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	2,7	2,7	2,5
Iceland	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	2,2	2,3	2,3	2,1	2,4	2,5	2,5	2,4	2,3	2,3	2,3	2,6	
Ireland	1,1	1,2	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,4	1,6	1,6	1,5	1,4	1,6	1,7	1,8	1,7	1,8	1,8	1,9	1,9	1,7	1,6	1,6	1,6	
Italy	1,1	1,3	1,2	1,1	1,0	0,9	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,9	1,0	0,9	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	1,0	
Japan	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,5	0,4	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,6	
Korea	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	
Luxembourg	2,0	2,0	1,9	1,9	1,8	1,8	1,8	1,8	1,8	2,0	2,1	2,3	2,3	2,7	2,9	3,0	3,0	2,8	3,0	3,3	3,2	3,4	
Mexico	m	m	m	m	m	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,1	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,2	0,2	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	
Netherlands	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,4	2,3	2,2	2,0	1,7	1,7	1,7	1,7	1,6	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,3	1,3	1,3	1,2	1,1	1,2	1,1	
New Zealand	2,2	2,0	2,0	1,9	2,1	2,3	2,6	2,4	2,4	2,7	2,6	2,3	2,3	2,1	2,1	2,1	2,2	2,6	2,6	2,4	2,3	2,2	
Norway	1,8	m	m	m	m	1,9	m	m	2,5	2,7	2,8	3,1	3,4	3,5	3,6	3,7	3,5	3,4	3,5	3,5	3,1	3,2	
Poland	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	1,8	2,4	2,3	1,9	1,5	1,1	1,0	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,9	
Portugal	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,9	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,7	0,9	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,2	
Slovak Republic	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	2,5	2,3	2,2	2,2	1,9	1,7	1,5	
Spain	0,5	0,4	0,4	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,3	0,3	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	
Sweden	4,0	4,1	3,9	4,1	3,9	4,2	4,2	4,2	4,2	4,1	4,5	4,9	4,9	4,4	4,2	4,0	3,6	3,5	3,6	3,7	3,7	3,8	
Switzerland	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,1	1,1	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,3	1,2	1,2	1,2	1,2	
Turkey	0,9	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,8	0,7	0,7	0,8	0,9	1,0	1,2	1,3	1,2	1,0	0,5	0,3	1,2	1,1	1,0	1,1	m	m	
United Kingdom	2,3	2,4	2,4	2,4	2,3	2,3	2,2	2,1	2,1	2,0	1,9	2,1	2,3	2,4	2,3	2,4	2,4	2,3	2,2	2,1	2,2	2,2	
United States	0,8	0,7	0,7	0,7	0,6	0,6	0,4	0,4	0,5	0,4	0,5	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,6	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4	
OECD-21 *	1,6	1,7	1,7	1,7	1,6	1,6	1,6	1,6	1,6	1,6	1,8	1,8	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	
OECD 23 *	1,7	m	m	m	m	1,7	m	m	m	m	1,8	1,9	2,0	2,0	2,1	2,0	2,0	2,0	2,0	2,0	2,0	2,0	
OECD-28 *	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	1,8	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,9	1,8	1,8	1,8	1,8	
OECD-30 *	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	1,9	1,9	
EU-15	2,0	m	m	m	m	2,0	m	m	m	m	2,1	2,2	2,3	2,3	2,4	2,3	2,3	2,2	2,2	2,2	2,2	2,2	
EU-19	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	2,1	2,1	2,1	2,1	2,1	

\* 1999 data for Turkey for 2000 and 2001 OECD averages.

Source: OECD (2004), Social Expenditure Database (SOCX, [www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure](http://www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure)).

<b>Table 3. Labour force participation rate in selected European countries, Women, 15 to 64, 1960-2004</b>										
	<b>1960</b>	<b>1965</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>1975</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2004</b>
Austria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	61,6	61,8	64,2
Denmark	-	-	-	-	-	45,1	46,1	51,7	56,6	57,7
France	-	-	47,6	51,5	55,1	55,6	57,2	59,9	61,7	63,8
Germany	-	-	46,5	49,6	51,9	51,9	55,5	61,1	63,3	66,1
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	41,0	42,6	44,3	49,7	54,1
Ireland	-	-	-	33,3	-	39,7	42,6	47,3	55,7	58,0
Italy	-	-	28,6	29,5	38,4	40,2	44,0	42,3	46,3	50,6
Netherlands	-	-	-	31,7	36,1	40,9	53,1	59,1	65,4	-
Norway	-	-	-	51,7	62,2	67,8	70,7	72,1	76,5	75,7
Portugal	-	-	-	48,1	52,4	56,4	59,6	59,9	63,8	67,0
Spain	-	-	-	32,3	32,9	34,6	42,2	47,1	52,9	57,7
Sweden	-	53,8	59,3	67,9	75,3	79,3	82,5	77,3	76,4	76,6
UK	-	-	-	-	-	62,4	67,3	67,1	68,9	69,6

Source : Oecd, SourceOECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics.

Table 4. Percentage of domestic workers in the economically active population in different European countries (1851–2001)							
Year	Sweden	Norway	England & Wales	Germany	France	Spain	Italy
1851			10,1		5,4		
1856							
1857							
1860						11,4	
1861			10,2				3,6
1866					5,0		
1869							
1871			11,5				3,2
1875		11,8					
1876					5,3		
1877						5,7	
1880							
1881			13,8		6,0		4,1
1882				9,2			
1886					5,8		
1887						5,7	
1890		12,1					
1891			12,0		5,3		
1895				8,1			
1896					4,8		
1900		12,6				4,1	
1901			11,2		4,5		3,0
1906					4,4		
1907				6,4			
1910		13,3					
1911			10,3		4,4		2,9
1920		10,8					
1921			7,7 (7,0)		3,5		2,4
1925				4,3			
1926					3,2		
1928							
1930		12,3				4,5	
1931			8,2 (7,5*)		3,3		2,9
1933				3,9			
1936					3,3		3,2
1939				3,9			
1940						4,0	
1946		7,9					
1950	2,9	6,4				5,1	
1951			5,0 (3,9**)	4,1			1,9
1954					2,9		
1960	2,2	5,3					
1961			5,0 (1,7**)	2,3			1,9
1962					2,7		
1968					2,5		
1970	1,3	3,9		0,6			
1971			3,9 (1,9**)				1,2
1975					1,8		
1980	0,05	2,7 (0,5*)		0,6			
1981			0,4			3,4	0,9
1982					1,4		
1990	0,005	3,3 (0,2*)					
1991			0,3				(0,7)***
2001		3,1 (0,06*)		0,7			(1,3)***

Source: SARTI R., "Conclusion. Domestic Service and European Identity", in PASLEAU S. and SCHOPP I., (eds), with SARTI R., *Proceedings of the Servant Project*, Liège, Éditions de l'Université de Liège, 2005 (but 2006), 5 vols., vol. V, pp. 195-284 (available online on <http://www.uniurb.it/sarti/>), Appendix (based on population censuses). Please see this text (pp. for a discussion of the methodological problems Appendix for a detailed description of the sources and the categories employed).

\* 1980-2001, figures in brackets: people employed in private households as a percentage of the total number of people employed. The other data refer to a larger category, the so-called "Personal services" (*Personlig tjenesteyting*)

\*\* 1951-1971, figures in brackets: percentage without Charwomen and Office Cleaners (1921, 1931, 1951); percentage without Charwomen, Office Cleaners, and Window Cleaners (1961); percentage without Charwomen, office cleaners, window cleaners, and chimney sweeps (1971).

\*\*\* 1991-2001, figures in brackets: these figures refer to a wider category than domestic workers in private households, i.e. to domestic services in families and co-habitations (*servizi domestici presso famiglie e convivenze*).

Source: Oecd, Social Expenditure Database.

Tab. 7. Public social expenditure as a percentage of public expenditure in selected European countries, 1998													
	1. old age cash benefits	2. disability cash benefits	3. occupational injury and disease	4. sickness benefits	5. services for the elderly and disabled people	7. family cash benefits	8. family services	9. active labour market programmes	10. unemployment	11. health	12. housing benefits	13. other contingencies	90. public social expenditure
France	20,3	1,7	0,5	1,0	1,3	2,8	2,4	2,5	3,5	13,9	1,8	0,8	55,3
Germany	22,0	2,2	0,7	0,7	1,6	4,1	1,7	2,6	2,8	16,4	0,4	1,3	57,4
Italy	26,4	2,0	-	1,5	0,4	1,2	0,6	1,4	1,5	11,3	0,0	0,0	51,5
Spain	19,9	3,3	-	2,3	0,7	0,7	0,3	1,6	3,8	13,2	0,2	0,3	48,4
Sweden	12,9	3,6	0,5	2,0	6,4	2,8	2,9	3,4	3,3	11,5	1,4	1,6	53,6
UK	24,9	6,7	0,1	0,4	2,1	4,4	1,2	0,8	0,8	14,3	4,1	0,5	62,9

Source: Oecd, Social Expenditure Database.

