

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR INFORMAL CARERS : A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE ON POLICIES ACROSS EUROPE

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Outline

- ❖ Why this topic matters?
- ❖ Aims and methods
- ❖ Main results
- ❖ Discussion

Why this topic matters?

- ❖ European context of cost containments and future supply of informal care is uncertain¹
 - Informal care “deficit”
 - Rising old age dependency ratios
- ❖ Tension between the necessity to rely on informal carers to reduce costs and the need to develop public policies to support informal carers²
- ❖ Description of the kind of support informal carers currently receive in order to help design sustainable and efficient support services

Aims and Methods

- ❖ Comprehensive picture of availability of support services across EU27 to complement recently published or on-going research^{3,4,5}
- ❖ Mapping across the 27 EU member states. Review of the published evidence was supplemented by a detailed questionnaire designed and sent to 27 national experts.

Country experts (1)

Country	Name	Institution
Austria	Birgit Trukeschitz	Vienna University – Research Institute for Economics of Aging
Belgium	Maria Isabel Farfan-Portet	Catholic University of Louvain
Bulgaria	Svetla Tzolova	National Centre of Public Health Protection
Cyprus	George Samoutis	University of Nicosia
Czech Republic	Tomas Roubal	Ministry of Health
Denmark	Karsten Vrangbaek	University of Copenhagen
England	Vanessa Saliba	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Estonia	Triin Habicht	Estonian Health Insurance Fund
Finland	Jan Klavus	National Institute for Health and Welfare
France	Sandra Mounier-Jack	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
Germany	Marcial Velasco	Technical University of Berlin
Greece	Daphne Kaitelidou	University of Athens, Centre for Health Services Management and Evaluation
Hungary	Barbara Koncz	National Institute for Health Development
Ireland	Suzanne Cahill	Trinity College Dublin, School of Social Work and Social Policy
Italy	Margherita Giannoni	University of Perugia

Country experts (2)

Country	Name	Institution
Latvia	Lolita Vilka	University of Riga, Department of Social Work
Lithuania	Jurate Macijauskiene	Kaunas University of Medicine, Geriatric Clinic
Luxembourg	Dieter Ferring	University of Luxembourg
Malta	Maria Cassar	University of Malta
Netherlands	Ronald Batenburg	Institute for Health Services Research
Poland	Adam Kozierekiewicz	Jagiellonian University Medical College, Institute for Public Health
Portugal	Silvina Santana	University of Aveiro
Romania	Victor Olsavszky	WHO Country Office
Slovakia	Lucia Daubnerova	International Neurotrauma Research Organisation
Slovenia	Anja Milenković-Kramer	University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Medicine, Institute of Pathology
Spain	Alexandrina Stoyanova	University of Barcelona
Sweden	Anna Melke	University of Goteborg

Topics covered in the mapping exercise

National context	Support services	
	Services	Legal entitlements
Data availability	Cash benefits	Pension credits
Identification process	Helpline and counselling	Conciliation of caring and employment
National policy	Information	Needs assessment
	Respite care	
	Training	

Informal care is defined as any help provided to family and friends with functional limitations (which includes ADLs as well as IADLs).

NATIONAL CONTEXT

Main results (1)

Lack of data and absence of adequate identification process

Data availability

- ❖ Availability and quality of data varies considerably between countries (from up-to-date national statistics to no national sources available at all).

Identification process

- ❖ Weak point in most countries.
- ❖ Informal carers are still mainly identified *via* the cared-for person.

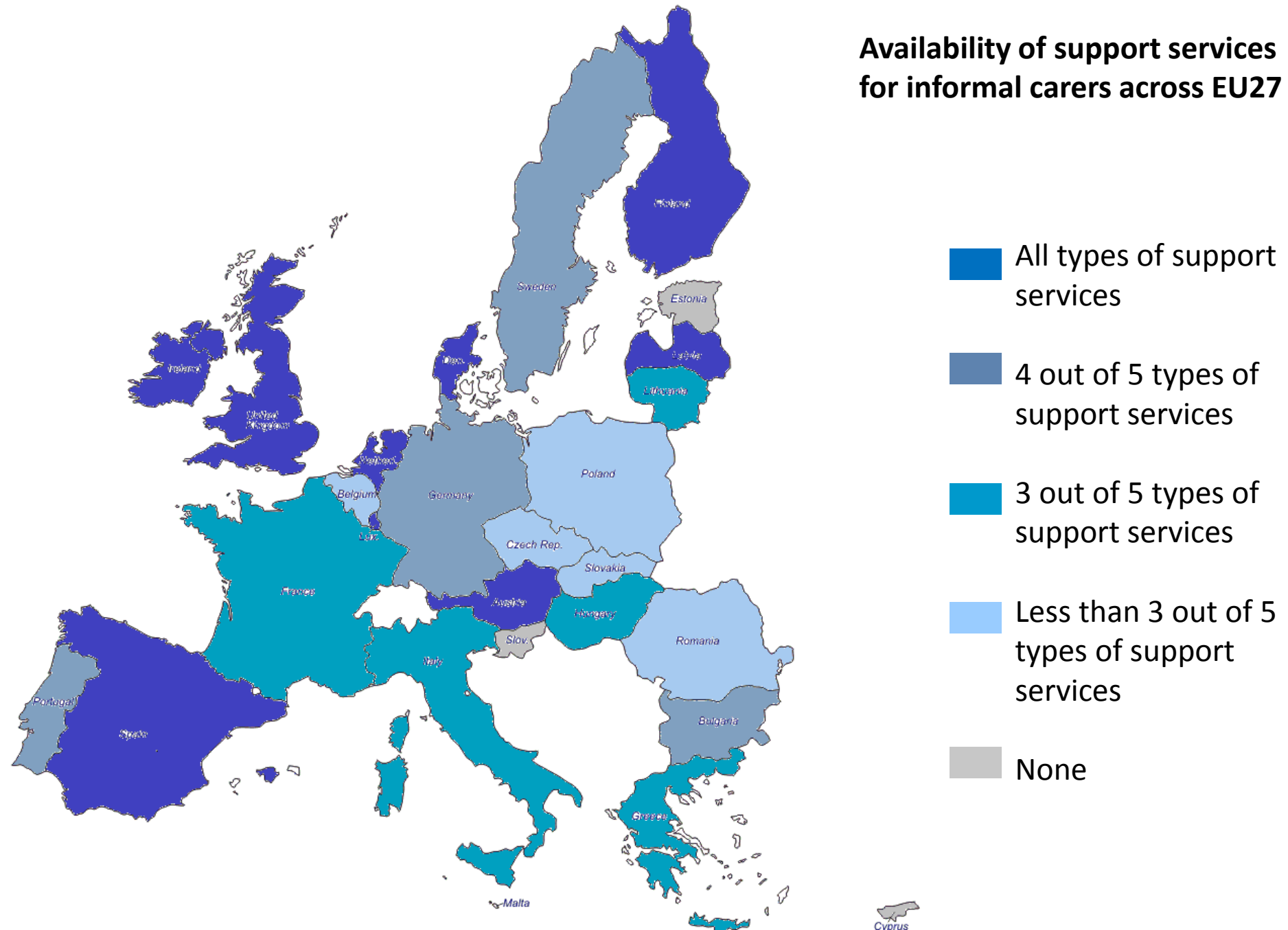
Existence of a national policy targeted at informal carers across EU27



- National policy
- Some elements of a policy or only at regional/federal level
- No national policy

SUPPORT SERVICES

Availability of support services for informal carers across EU27



LEGAL ENTITLEMENTS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Main results (3)

Diversity of legal entitlements and lack of needs assessment

Pension credits


- ❖ 12 countries do not offer any pension credits.
- ❖ When offered, pension credits can depend on the intensity of caregiving or the severity of the disability of the care receiver
- ❖ No information on how much protection to pensions is offered and whether it is enough to sustain basic standards of living.


Needs assessments

- ❖ Only three countries have a specific needs-assessment in place for informal carers; in other EU countries, the needs of informal carers are assessed *via* the cared-for person.

Conciliation of informal caring and employment



 No specific measure in place but allows some time off work as supported leave

 Specific paid and unpaid care leave and flexible working arrangements

 No measure in place

DISCUSSION

Discussion (1)

European systems of informal care

How to make sense of these variations across EU countries?

- ❖ An alternative to existing typologies^{6,7,8}
- ❖ Twigg's four ideal-types of relation between informal carers and welfare agencies^{9,10}:
 - ❖ Carers as resources
 - ❖ Carers as co-workers
 - ❖ Carers as co-clients
 - ❖ Superseded carers or 'carer-blind' systems

⁶Kraus et al., 2010; ⁷Da Roit & Le Bihan, 2010; ⁸Saraceno & Keck, 2010

⁹Twigg, 1989; ¹⁰Twigg & Atkin, 1994

European systems of informal care (based on Twigg's classification)



- Carers as resources
- Carers as co-workers
- Carers as co-clients
- Superseded carers

Discussion (2)

Challenges

- ❖ Data collection
- ❖ Blurry divide between formal and informal care in many Eastern-European countries
- ❖ Lack of comparable data readily available

Discussion (3)

Policy implications?

- ❖ Increasing awareness and identification of carers
- ❖ Quality of caregiving
- ❖ There is no “one size fits all”
- ❖ The changing role of informal carers

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

For further information, please contact:

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