

The Reconciliation of Employment and Eldercare

Overview from the Secondary Data Analysis

of the project *Carers@Work*

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*IAGG's VIIth European International Congress
"HEALTHY AND ACTIVE AGEING FOR ALL EUROPEANS - II"
Bologna, 2011 April 14th – 17th*

Data Sources

Results are based on a secondary data analysis of two European research projects databases: EUROFAMCARE and SHARE.

- The **EUROFAMCARE** database identifies 1,583 working carers in Italy, the UK, Poland and Germany out of about 4,000 family carers of older people.
- The **SHARE** database contains information on 583 50+ caregivers in Germany, Italy and Poland.



Carers@Work

EUROFAMCARE

National Institute of Health and Science on Aging

I.N.R.C.A.

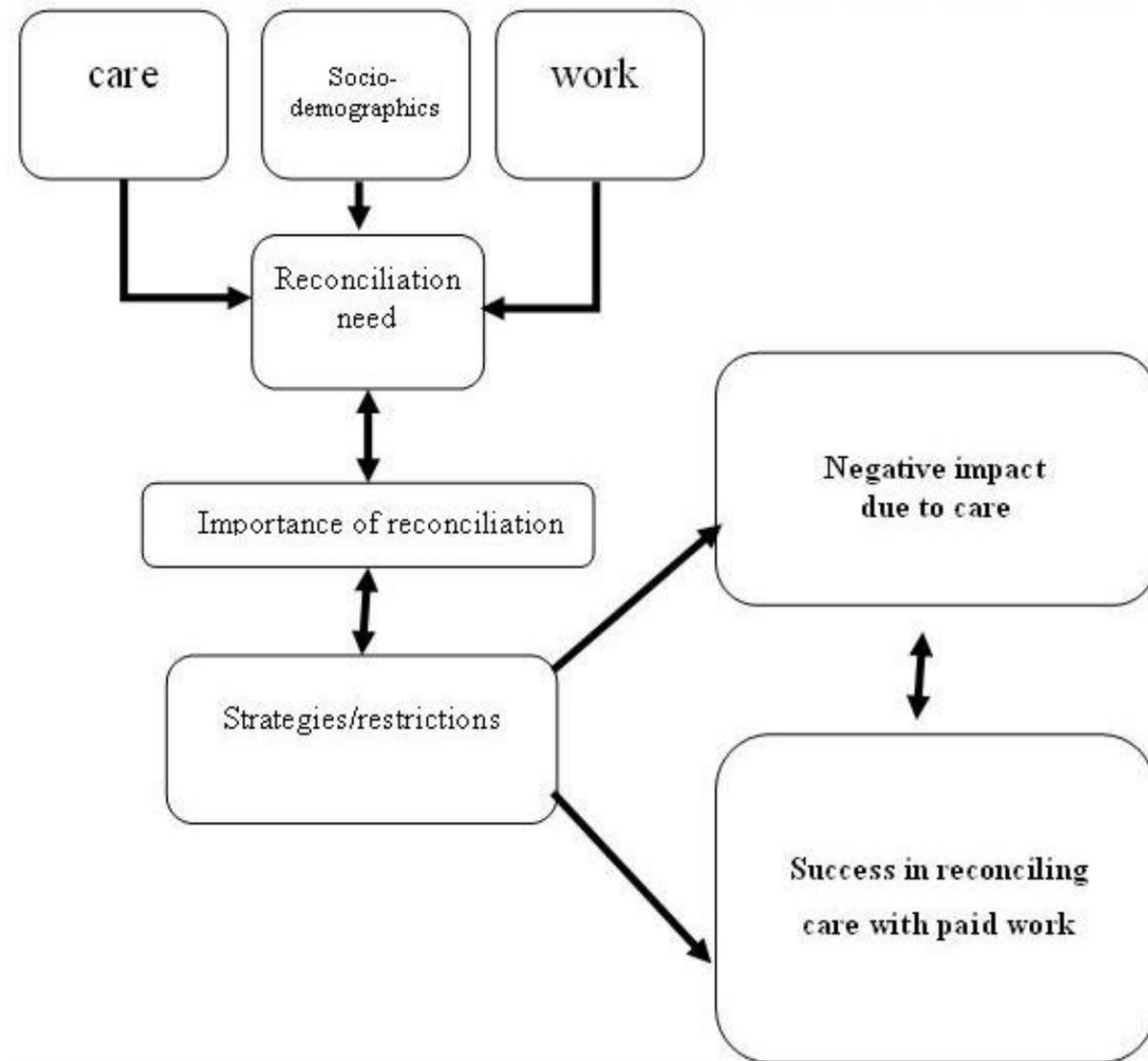
Centre for Gerontological Socio-Economic Research



EUROFAMCARE sample characteristics

	Italy		UK		Poland		Germany		All	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Working carers										
Female	298	71.6	280	75.7	297	76.7	298	72.7	1173	74.1
Male	118	28.4	90	24.3	90	23.3	112	27.3	410	25.9
Total	416	100	370	100	387	100	410	100	1583	100
% TOTAL WORKING CARERS									51%	
Not working carers										
Female	313	83.7	307	84.8	336	79.1	326	83.4	1282	82.6
Male	61	16.3	55	15.2	89	20.9	65	16.6	270	17.4
Total	374	100	362	100	425	100	391	100	1552	100
% TOTAL NOT WORKING CARERS									49%	

Conceptual framework



Methods

- The individual **satisfaction with the reconciliation** has been identified to examine whether adopted strategies succeeded or should rather be interpreted as sources of possible stress-conflict.
- **Bivariate analysis**
- **Multivariate analysis:**
 - **First outcome:** *negative impact of caregiving* (a scale measuring negative aspects linked to caregiving activity).
 - **Second outcome:** *success obtained in the reconciliation* between work and care.

Strategies/Restrictions

- EUROFAMCARE's database allowed us to identify **three main strategies** available to working carers:
 - a) reduction of working hours;
 - b) forgoing career or study opportunities;
 - c) working only on an occasional basis.

Conflict & stress situations (1)

A/B) What strategies do carers use to reconcile work and care for an older individual and what conflict and stress situation between work and care are typical among the carers?

- Strategies/restrictions are **generally** present to a larger extent in the UK and in Germany, and to a lesser extent in Poland and in Italy.
- The most used strategy turned out to be the **reduction of the working time**, with values between 21% in Germany and 6% in Poland.
- The second most adopted strategy is **working only on an occasional basis**, used by 14% of German and UK working carers and by 5% of the Italian and Polish ones.
- With slightly lower frequencies, the same order of countries also applied with regard to the need to **give up career or study** for care.

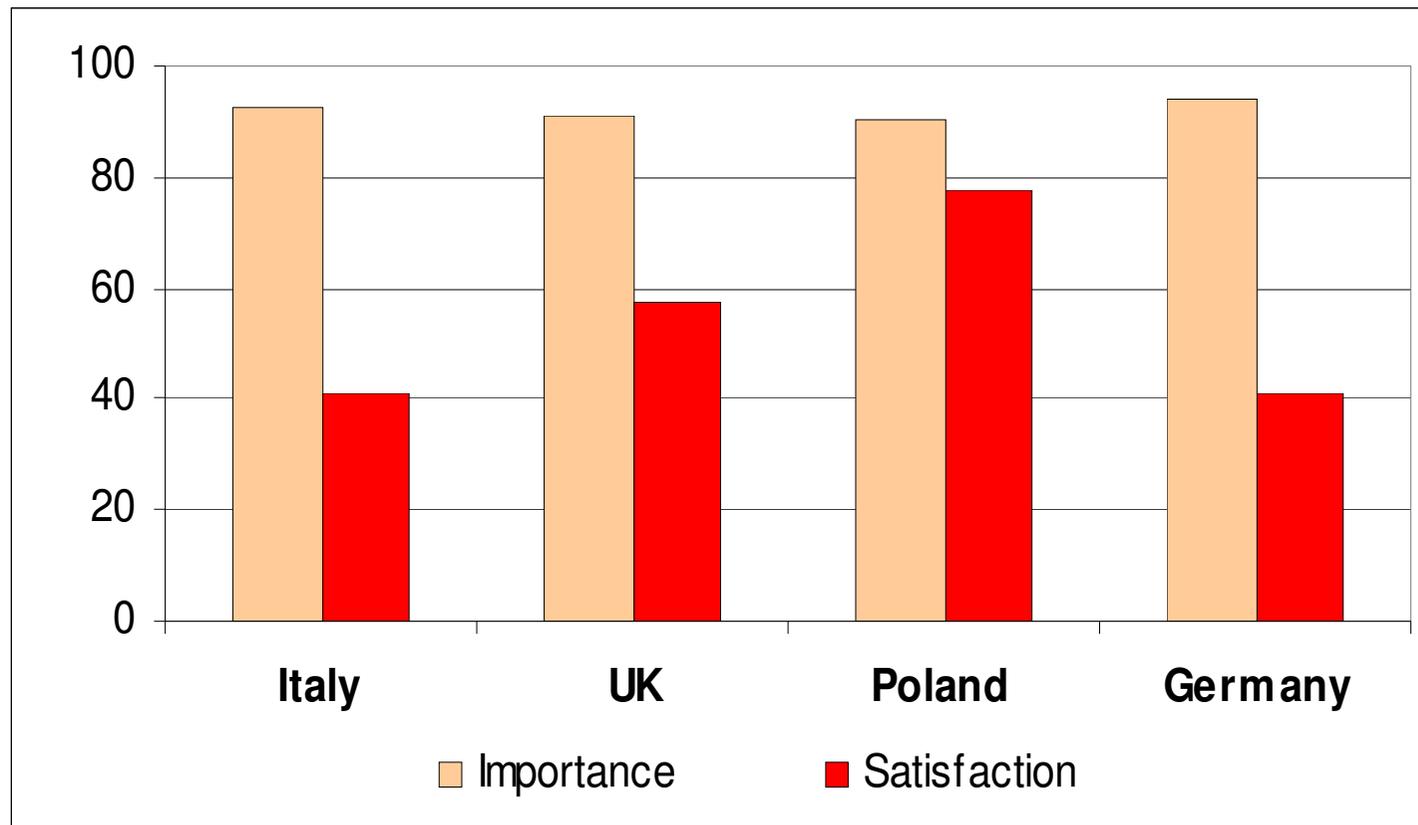
Conflict & stress situations (2)

- The level of **satisfaction** and the **importance** given by the carers to the possibility of reconciling care with work, become indicators, on one side, of the **success** obtained by the working carers in achieving reconciliation due to the followed strategies, and, on the other, of the potential experienced **stress**.

The distance between the importance and the satisfaction “measures” the stress:

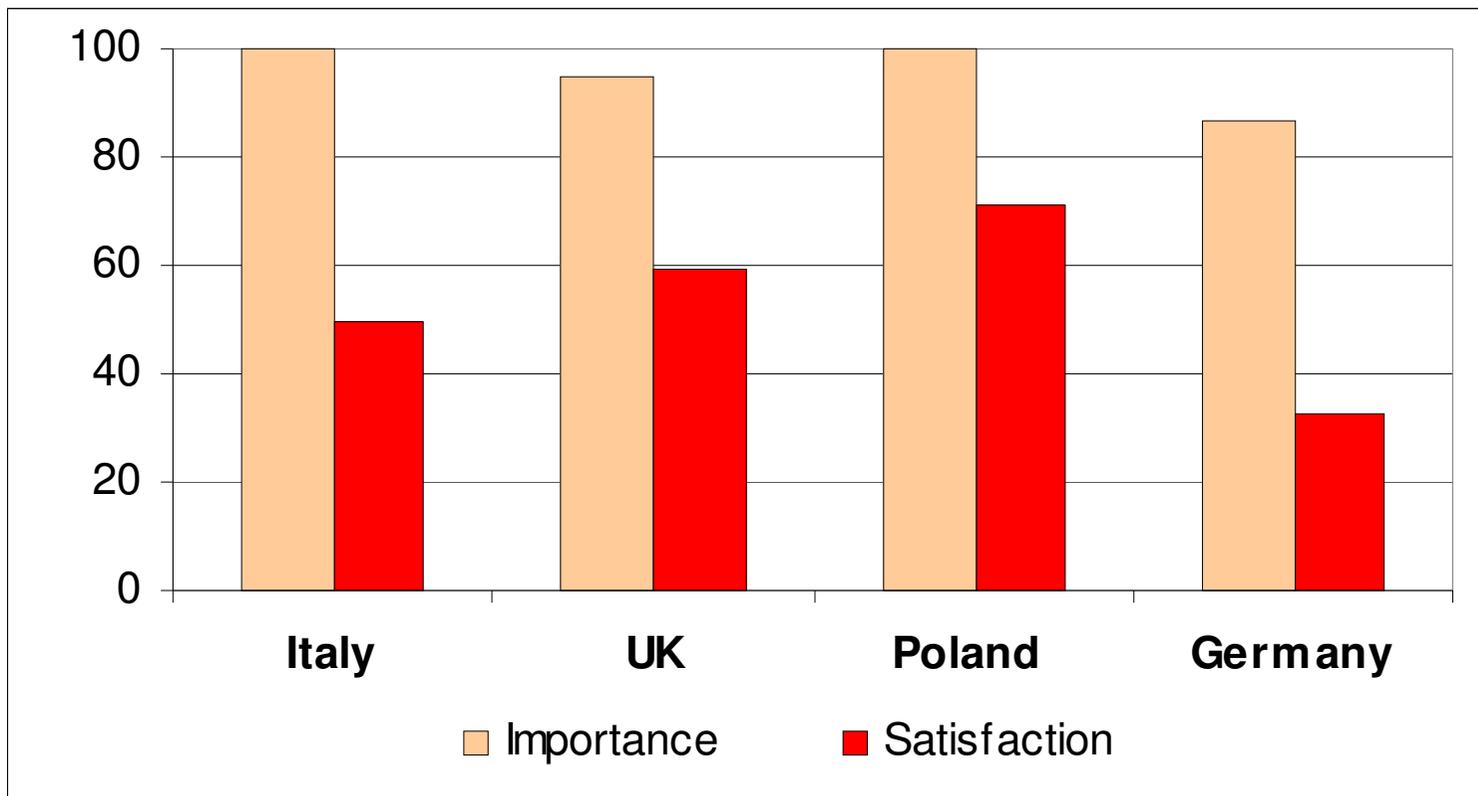
- The bigger the distance between the two columns of the following graphs, the more “losing” the strategy and the satisfaction are;
- The smaller the distance, the more “winning” the strategy is, so that the stress and conflict situations tend to reduce

Importance of and satisfaction with the reconciliation of carers who had to reduce working time due to care (%)



Importance: N: I=408; UK=336; PL=371; G=366
Satisfaction: N: I=378; UK=331; PL=373; G=364

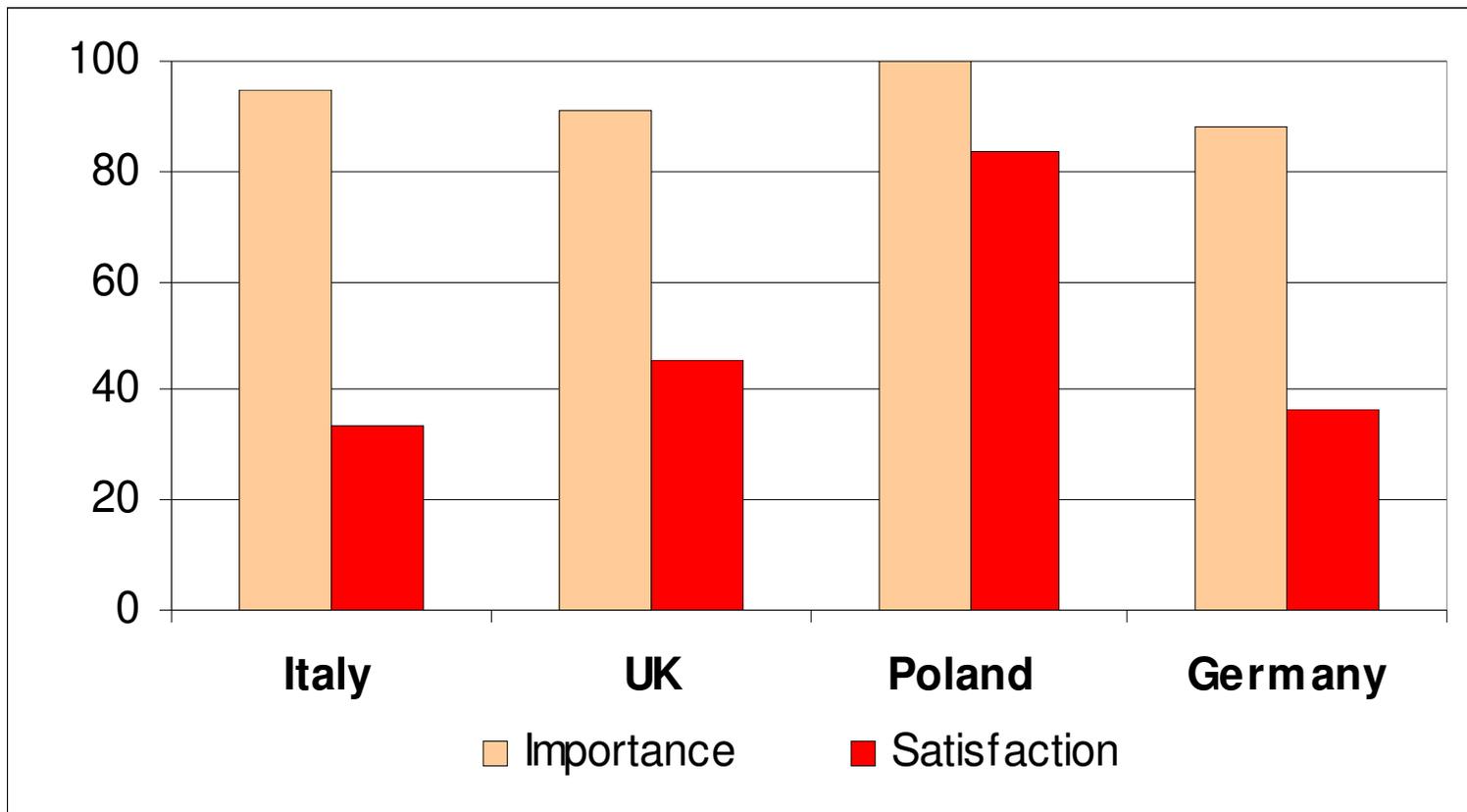
Importance of and satisfaction with the reconciliation of working carers who cannot develop career or study due to care (%)



Importance: N: I=411; UK=338; PL=371; G=365

Satisfaction: N: I=381; UK=333; PL=372; G=363

Importance of and satisfaction with the reconciliation of working carers who can work only occasionally due to care (%)



Importance: N: I=411; UK=338; PL=371; G=365

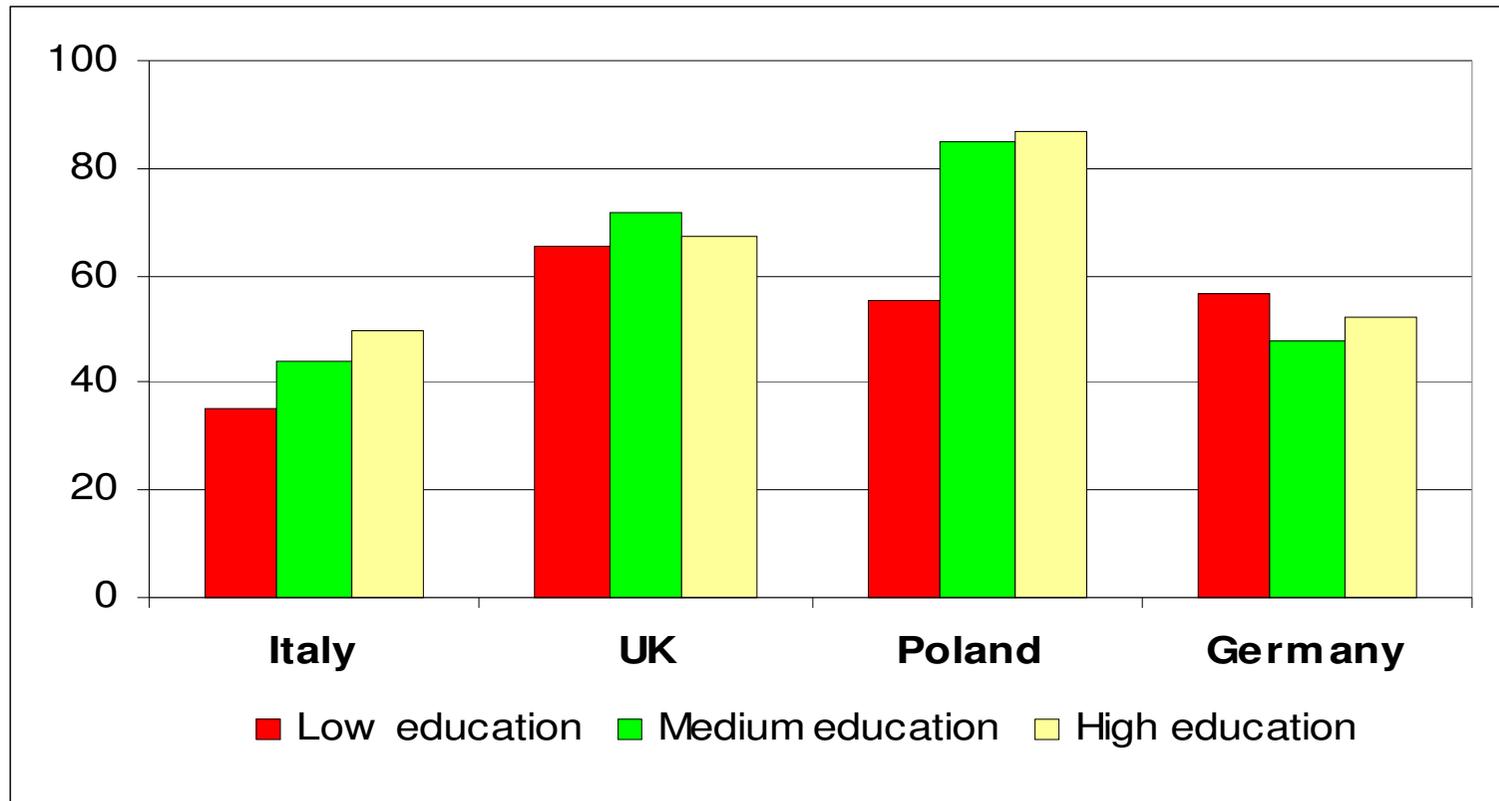
Satisfaction: N: I=381; UK=333; PL=372; G=363

Conflict & stress situations (3)

- **Stress and conflict situations** appear to be particularly widespread mostly in Germany, then in Italy, thirdly in the UK and to a lesser degree in Poland.
- in **Italy** the conflict is higher for those who can work only occasionally;
- in the **UK** there are less conflict situations for carers who work, even if they are not able to develop a career, and for those who were forced to reduce their working time. Carers who work only occasionally are the most stressed ones;
- in **Poland** carers who reduced the working time show very low stress levels,
- in **Germany** carers who had to give up their career show the biggest distance between importance and satisfaction.

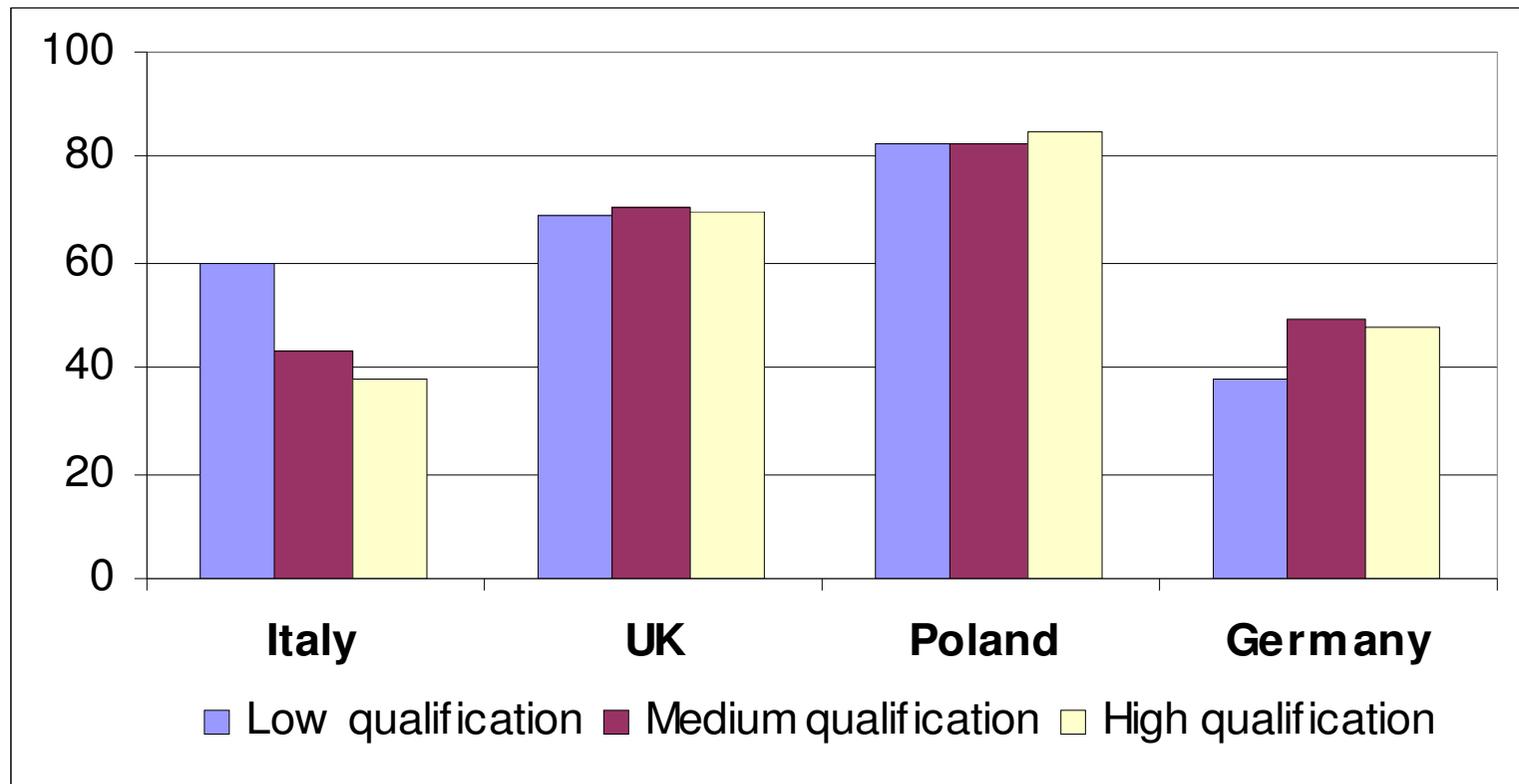
Satisfaction by level of education

C) What kind of influence does the education level of the carers have with regard to the reconciliation of work and care for an older individual?



Satisfaction by job qualification

D) What kind of influence do the employment and income situation of the caregivers' households have on the reconciliation of work and care?



N: I=161; UK=139; PL=169; G=170

Gender differences

- E) Within the context of the actual parameters of employment and family-work, what kind of gender inequalities are due to the reconciliation problematic?**
- In all four countries **female working carers** represent the **majority** of working carers (three out of four carers are female), although some country differences can be observed (e.g. Poland).
 - In general, female carers are more likely than men to **reduce their working time**.
 - In all countries **women are the most penalised about career developments**, being able to work only occasionally or to give up work completely.

Supports for working carers

- F) Which kind of support at the public, company or societal level is most efficient for the reconciliation of employment with caring for older individuals?**
- In all countries the majority of the sample can easily count on a **support informal network**.
 - In all countries (in particular in the UK and in Germany), carers who mostly follow **strategies** or experience **restrictions** are those **without an informal support network** or who can rely on it with some difficulties.

Multivariate analysis: Predictors of negative impact due to care (1)

Strategies/restrictions

- **Giving up career or studies:** co-determinant for the negative impact in the UK
- **Reducing working hours:** co-determinant for the negative impact in Germany.

This means that, limited to these specific cases, the reported decisions are not considerable positively experienced strategies, but rather perceived as limitations that increase the conflict/stress level.

Predictors of negative impact due to care (2)

ITALY		
Independent variables	Outcomes	Coefficient
Level of education	Low (Reference)	
	Medium	2.875 *
	High	3.485 *
Dependency degree	Independent (Reference)	
	Slightly dependent	1.188
	Moderately dependent	3.014 ***
	Severely dependent	2.374 **
Positive value		-0.710 ***

Predictors of negative impact due to care (3)

UK		
Independent variables	Outcomes	Coefficient
Work restrictions	Impossibility to develop career or studies	2.602 *
Gender	Male (Reference)	
	Female	1.570 *
Marital Status	Married/Cohabiting (Reference)	
	Widowed, Divorced/Separated, Single	-1.385 *
Support network in care	Yes, easily (Reference)	
	With some difficulties	0.317
	No	2.986 **
Positive value		-0.714 ***
Type of work	High qualification (Reference)	
	Medium qualification	-0.605
	Low qualification	-2.529 ***

Predictors of negative impact due to care (4)

POLAND		
Independent variables	Outcomes	Coefficient
	Independent (Reference)	
Dependency degree	Slightly dependent	0.675
	Moderately dependent	1.923 **
	Severely dependent	4.425 ***
Positive value		-0.434 ***

Predictors of negative impact due to care (5)

GERMANY		
Independent variables	Outcomes	Coefficient
Work restrictions	Reduction of working hours	1.863 *
Gender	Male (Reference)	
	Female	-2.292 *
Relationship to elder	Daughter (Reference)	
	Son	-2.688 *
	Daughter in law	-0.971
	Spouse/Partner	1.851
	Other	-1.742 *
Average number of care for the elder in a week		0.046 **
Support network in care	Yes, easily (Reference)	
	With some difficulties	1.445 *
	No	1.205
Positive value		-0.553 ***
Type of employment	Private sector employee (Reference)	
	Public sector employee	-0.153
	Self employed	-1.691 *
	Other	-1.177

Predictors of success in reconciliation (1)

“Pooled” model (no country distinction)

- **Strategies/restrictions** show no influence on probability of success;
- **Availability of support network:** who can not rely on anybody, have about 50% less probability of success in reconciling work and care;
- **Positive value:** when it increases, the probability of success in reconciliation increases, too;
- **Type of contract:** full-time employees are 1.5 times more likely to better manage reconciliation than those working part time. (This might suggest that the reduction of working hours can be considered as a “restriction” rather than as a successful strategy).

Predictors of success in reconciliation (2)

“Fixed effects” country model

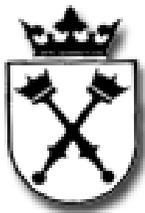
- The **country effect**, once introduced among the dependent variables, became the only statistically significant one.
- Carers from **Poland** and the **United Kingdom** are more likely to be successful in reconciling work and care than their **German** counterparts, indeed almost six times and almost three times respectively. **Italy** instead does not differ significantly from Germany.



Institute of Sociology

Jagiellonian University

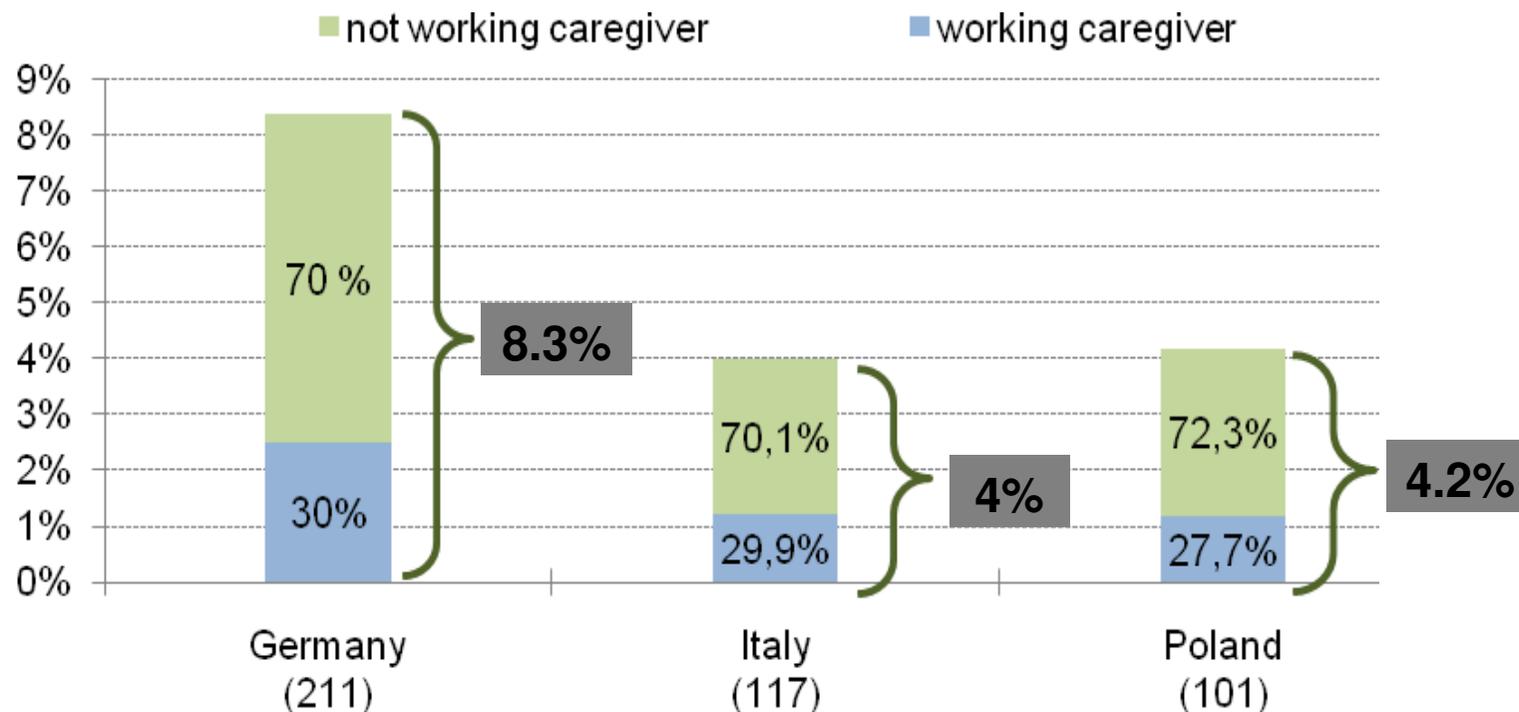
Krakow, Poland



Aims of the study and limitations

- The aim is matching the project's research questions with possible variables from SHARE survey;
- However, data are **not fully compatible** with the research questions leaving many unanswered;
- In any case it was possible to draw the general picture of working carers in three countries: **Germany, Italy** and **Poland**.

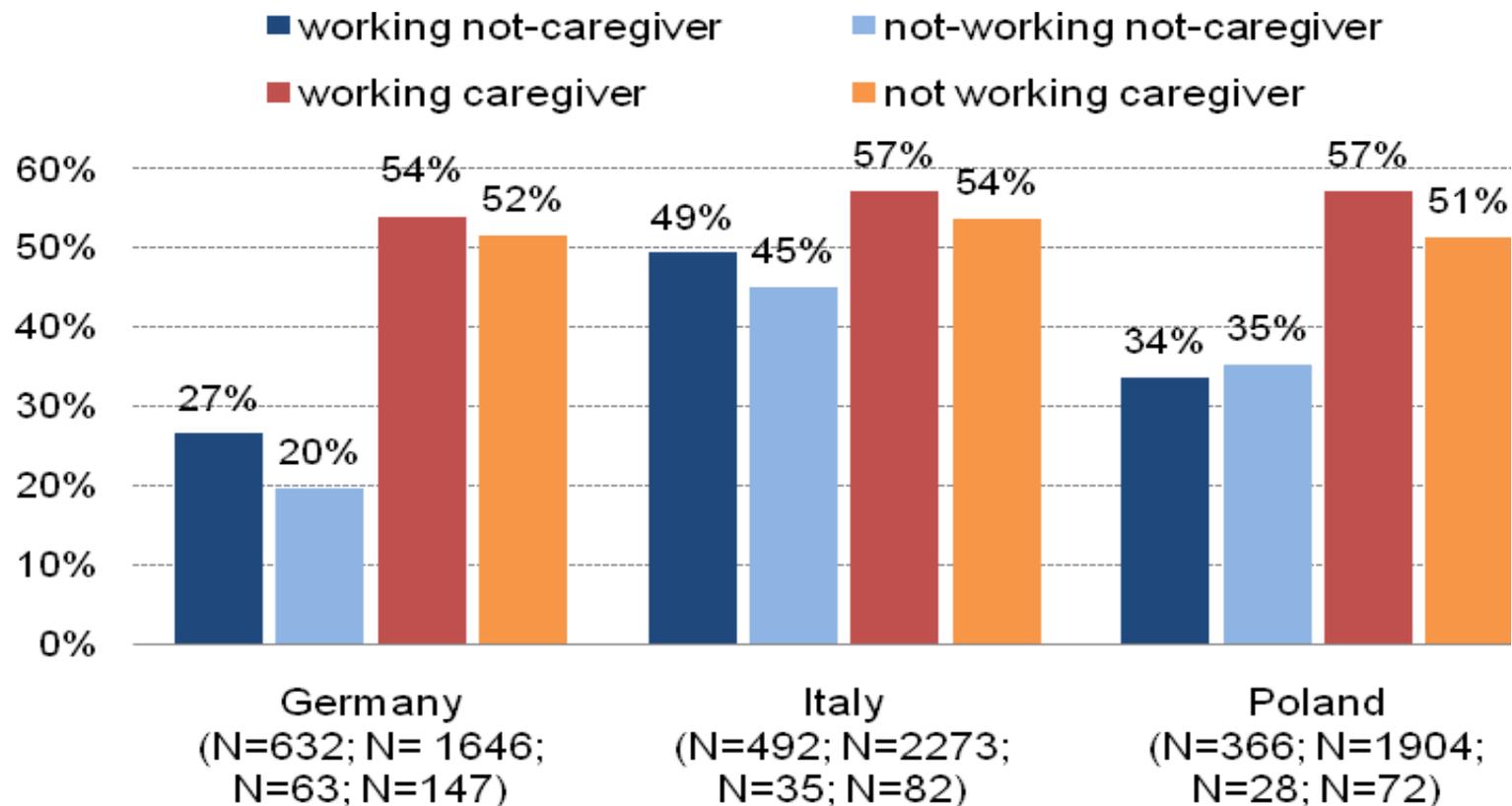
Working and non-working carers 50-plus



Caregivers: % of general population aged 50-plus;

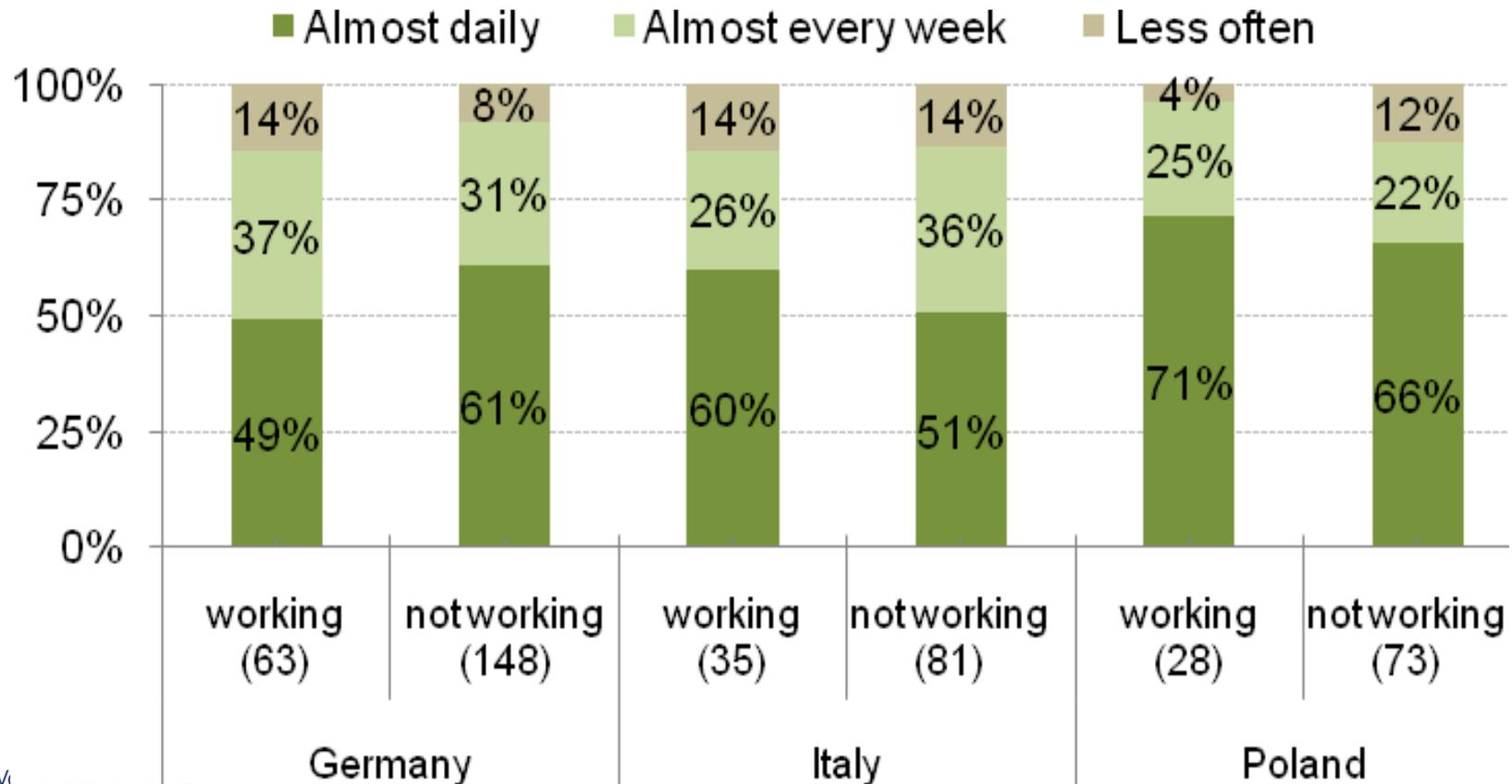
Job situation: % of Caregivers

How often do you think that family responsibilities prevent you from doing what you want to do?



(% of answers "often" and "sometimes")

Frequency of caring for a sick or disabled person in the last month



Results from SHARE analysis

- Only about 1/3 of carers are employed or self-employed and about 40% (in Italy) to 47% (in Poland) are retired
- **The differences between working and not working caregivers are significant, as the first group has usually a higher income and a higher education level**
- Caring obligations are significant obstacles in everyday life
- More than half of working carers declare caring role means - often or sometimes prevented from doing things they would like to do
- Most of the caregivers are carrying out their caring tasks on daily basis, which certainly hinders their flexibility and deprives them of free time, causing stress

Concluding Remarks

- Working carers complain that *caring obligations prevent them from doing things they would like to do*;
- **Reconciliation** of work and care can be **burdensome**, especially when there is *no help and support from others* and/or if the *degree of dependency of the cared for person is high*;
- Workers want to maintain **full time work** as long as possible and to devote only the remaining time to caregiving activities: *staying in the workforce reduces stress to a great extent*;
- The stronger the **positive feelings**, the lower the negative impact deriving from caregiving and the higher the probability of a successful reconciliation of work and care;
- *The majority of working carers are women, who are the most penalised and unsatisfied*: they suffer most from the restriction of not been able to work.