

Symposium 6 – Care work and change. An across (and within) country comparison of working conditions and job quality in the care sector

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Care work and change. An across (and within) country comparison of working conditions and job quality in the care sector

Convenor:

Valeria Pulignano, Full Professor, Centre for Sociological Research, KU Leuven, Belgium.

Discussants:

Valeria Pulignano, Full Professor, Centre for Sociological Research, KU Leuven, the Netherlands and Marta Szebehely, Professor of Social Work, Stockholm University, Sweden

The symposium aims at enhancing knowledge on the social impact of policy change in care work under constraints in (welfare and power) resources during economic and financial austerity measures as well as neo-liberal marketization processes and policies in public services, in Europe. The main focus are the working conditions and job quality of workers in contemporary care work. It also discusses the factors, processes and conditions generating these employment outcomes under changing priority in care policy.

Each paper in the stream deals with the overarching theme of changing working conditions and job quality in care work. In particular, they assess their social effects and consider their theoretical and policy implications for labour markets segmentation and social change in the context of comparative studies (e.g. Beynon et al., 2002) by encompassing macro and micro perspectives (Pulignano and Doerflinger, 2018). Drawing from the sociological tradition in employment studies (e.g. Gallie 2013, 2007), combining working conditions and job quality offers an encompassing framework for research and theory development when examining employment under changing policy priority. This is because whereas working conditions deal with objective (contractual) conditions of work

(e.g. atypical work, hours of work, education and training, wages), within specific institutional-regulatory contexts (i.e. 'employment regimes', Gallie, 2007), job quality engages also with the subjective experiences of work (e.g. health and well-being, career prospects, skills development, reconciliation work-life, job autonomy, job rotation, support, task complexity)

In the light of the aforementioned aims and objectives the stream will consist of four papers addressing the main topic of study in different EU (United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, and Italy.)

Panel composition:

1. Dorien Frans, Doctoral Researcher, Nadja Doerflinger, Postdoctoral Researcher and Full Professor Valeria Pulignano, Centre for Sociological Research (Ceso), Faculty of Social Science, Belgium

"The (changing) landscape of elderly care in Belgium: challenges and outcomes for quality of working life."

2. Matthew Johnson, Senior Lecturer In Organisation Studies, Alliance Manchester Business School United Kingdom, Associate Professor Arista Koukiadaki, Alliance Manchester Business School, United Kingdom and Núria Sánchez-Mira, Postdoctoral fellow, Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research LIVES, Institut des Sciences Sociales Quartier UNIL- University of Lausanne, Switzerland

"Different means to the same end? The value (and limits) of socially responsible procurement in older people's care in the UK and Spain in a context of austerity"

3. Nadja Doerflinger, Postdoctoral Researcher and Full Professor Valeria Pulignano, Centre for Sociological Research (Ceso), Faculty of Social Science, Belgium

'Labour of love' versus profit maximization? Comparing working conditions in charitable and for-profit nursing homes in Germany

4. Andrea Ciarini, Assistant Professor. Department of Social and Economic Sciences (DiSSE), Sapienza University of Rome, Italy

"The marketisation of care in Italy. The intended» and «unintended consequences of the "aziende speciali"