



**Caring migrants in European welfare
regimes:
The policies and practice of migrant labour filling the gaps
in social care**

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Abstract

This study analyses the role of migrant workers in social care and the policy responses to this phenomenon in Italy, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. In contrast to previous research on migrant care work, this study incorporates both private and agency-based employment in child and elderly care. It applies a comparative case study approach relying on micro level survey data, expert interviews, policy documents, newspaper articles and secondary sources. Theoretically the research engages with welfare regime theory and with theories on the politics of migration and the politics of the welfare state.

The demand for migrant workers in social care is strongest in elderly care. Cross country differences are related to variation in employment conditions. Migrant workers are overrepresented when social care jobs are badly paid, offer limited career opportunities and require extensive shift work. These employment conditions are significantly shaped by social care policies. It is argued that a Familialistic care regime, as demonstrated by the Italian case, fosters the emergence of a 'migrant in the family' model of employment. A Liberal care regime, as revealed by the UK case, induces a 'migrant in the market' model. By contrast, a Social Democratic care regime, as approximated by the case of Dutch elderly care, does not create any particular demand for migrant workers in the social care sector.

Differences in care regimes influenced Italian, British and Dutch migration and care policies divergently. In Italy the presence of private migrant care workers absolved the state from reforming its social care system and meanwhile relatively generous migration policies for migrant care workers were enacted. In the Netherlands strong stakeholders guaranteed continuous investments in employment conditions of the elderly care workforce and migration policies have not granted any privileges to care workers. UK immigration policy reform has tightened eligibility criteria for care workers; nonetheless, it is questionable whether public investments in elderly care are sufficient to attract enough native employees.



Jury: Dr Virginie Guiraudon (SciencesPo, Paris), Prof. Martin Kohli (EUI, Supervisor), Prof. Anton Hemerijck (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam), Prof. Chiara Saraceno (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung).

Bio

Franca van Hooren holds an M.A. degree in Political Science from the University of Amsterdam. During her Ph.D. research at the European University Institute she visited the Centre on Migration Policy and Society (COMPAS) in Oxford. For her research project on the policies and practices of migrant care work she conducted expert interviews in Italy, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. In 2008 she received an ESPAnet award for a paper on the politics of migrant care work in Italy, which was subsequently published in the *Rivista Italiana di Politiche Pubbliche*. She has also published in *Social Policy & Administration*, *Bulletin of Italian Politics* and in several edited volumes. In 2011 she gave a keynote address to the conference 'Making Connections: Migration, Gender and Care Labour in Transnational Context' at the University of Oxford. Franca is currently employed as a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Collaborative Research Centre 'Transformations of the State' at the University of Bremen, where she works on social policy responses to economic crises in small states.