

CIRCULAR CARE - Project Number 272146

FINAL REPORT - SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT

Period covered: 1 September 2011 – 31 August 2013

I. PROJECT AND OBJECTIVES

This project contributed to the debate on “**circular migration**” by drawing the attention to the participation of migrant women's in the home care sector in Europe and by taking this sector as a possible realm for the application of such a migratory scheme. In fact it was of the greatest importance to consider the impact of “circularity” on a labour sector which, in all EU Member States, sees an impressive amount of participation of (regular and irregular) foreign workers, especially Eastern European women. Based on this scenario, the case of **Ukrainian, Polish and Georgian care workers** in the province of **Reggio Emilia**, Italy, came into sight as a very interesting one for the intense character of the phenomenon and the reactions it has provoked at the policy level.

The **general research objective** of this project was thus to assess the *convenience* of circular migration for the overall improvement of the home care provision which is meant to provide the basis for an amelioration of both care and work conditions not only from the standpoint of workers, but also from the perspective of the Italian care receivers and their family members. In the aim to articulate this general objective, the project pursued three interrelated **specific research objectives**: 1) the impact of “circularity” on the employment relationship between migrant (care) workers and Italian employers. The project analysed how the rotation of different workers affected labour conditions, organisation of tasks, interactions between employer and employee, quality of the service provided, satisfaction of care-receivers (and their families), and, finally, fulfilment of workers' personal and professional goals. 2) The way “circularity” of migrants affects the household based provision of home care services for elderly, sick and dependent people. This sheds light on the interconnection between welfare market and public service interventions (welfare agencies, state health system, municipal services). And finally, 3) the conditions which allow “circularity” to take place in an efficient and profitable way. In this perspective, features have been looked into such as: the functioning of the migrant community, the existing services (i.e. bonus) in favour of households with dependent persons, and finally the strategies for the management of the arrival, settlement and work integration of foreigners provided by local authorities or no-profit organisations.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES

From the point of view of the gathering of qualitative data, the fellow has interviewed 33 Italian employers (men and women) of Eastern European home-carers. These were in most cases children of aged dependant people. Next to them, 13 Ukrainians, 10 Georgians, and 13 Polish workers have been interviewed. In all these groups, a significant number of interviewees had a direct or indirect experience of circular migration, in this specific sector of work. The fellow has also interviewed 10 key-informants and has done participant observation during informal gatherings of Eastern European women. All interviews have been done in the city of Reggio Emilia and in the surrounding small towns. The fieldwork was organised in two phases: between January and July 2012 for the interviews with Italians, Ukrainians and Georgians, and between January 2013 and April 2013 for the interviews with Polish workers.

During these two years, Marchetti has also been very active in the host institution with **organising events and activities**. Amongst them is the coordination of the interdisciplinary Working Group on Gender, Race & Sexuality which she has founded with other post-doc fellows. Importantly, together with the scientist in charge, Prof. Anna Triandafyllidou, she has coordinated an

Exploratory Workshop funded by the European Science Foundation which took place in November 2012.

The last year of project was mainly used by the fellow to prepare several publications based on the results of the project. Two of these publications are **articles for peer-reviewed journals**. The first is titled “Dreaming circularity? Eastern European women and job-sharing in paid home care” and it will come out on the *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* before the end of 2013. The other one is titled “Mothers and grandmothers on the move. Labour mobility and the household strategies of Moldovan and Ukrainian migrant women in Italy”, co-authored with Professor Alessandra Venturini, and it will come out on the *International Migration* journal also before the end of 2013.

During the second year, Marchetti, again together with Professor Anna Triandafyllidou, has worked towards the **publication of two different edited volumes**. The first is a Special Issue on the topic of circular migration in care work which is titled “Migrant Domestic and Care Workers in Europe: New Patterns of Circulation?”. This is expected to come out before the end of 2013. The papers have been written by some of the participants to the ESF Exploratory Workshop that it was mentioned above. The second volume is an edited book en “Employers, Agencies and Immigration: Care Work in Europe” – which has already being accepted by Ashgate and should come out in the early 2015.

In terms of presentation of results to various audiences, Marchetti has presented the findings of the project on several occasions, across Europe and in the USA. She has given several presentations at the RSCAS of the EUI, at the IMISCOE conference in Warsaw, at the 8th Feminist research conference in Budapest, at the International workshop “Gender, care and migration” in Montreal, and at the European Conference on Politics and Gender in Barcelona. Another very important opportunity for the fellow to discuss this project has been the visiting mission at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. The fellow has been hosted by the Sociology department under the supervision of Prof. Rhacel Parreñas from 20th August till 12th October 2012. This mission served both the purposes of dissemination of research results and of further enhancing the training experience.

III. RESULTS

The results of the research project CIRCULAR CARE have gone beyond the most positive expectations. In particular, it is important to emphasise the following achievements and their impact:

- A total of 79 in-depth interviews were conducted during the fellowship, indeed a particularly high number of interviews for a qualitative research project. These include 33 interviews with Italian employers (a category usually very difficult to approach), 37 Eastern European care-workers and 10 key informants. Amongst them, it is worth noticing the making of interviews with Georgian women migrants who are still a very invisible group in Europe. This opens up the possibility to a comparative publication confronting their case with the one of other Eastern Europeans which would fill a gap in migration studies.
- the innovative character of the CIRCULAR CARE project can be sized by the interest that it has raised amongst scholars, publishing houses and other funding bodies. The topic of circular-care has met the interest of the European Science Foundation which has awarded a grant for organising an Exploratory Workshop around this matter. Both the *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* and the Ashgate publisher have reacted positively to the proposal, made by the fellow and the scientist in charge, of a volume around this topic.
- it was possible to follow closely the experimentation done by local administrations of new forms of management of home based elderly care performed by migrant workers. The fellow was directly involved and consulted as an expert on care, migration and welfare issue. She organised three focus-groups, one with each subject involved in the experimentation: the elder care-receivers, their children, and the care-workers. In this context, the fellow has developed close cooperation and networking with local administrations and social services through regular meetings and the setting

up of a Facebook page
(<https://www.facebook.com/legirandole.sabrina?fref=ts>).

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