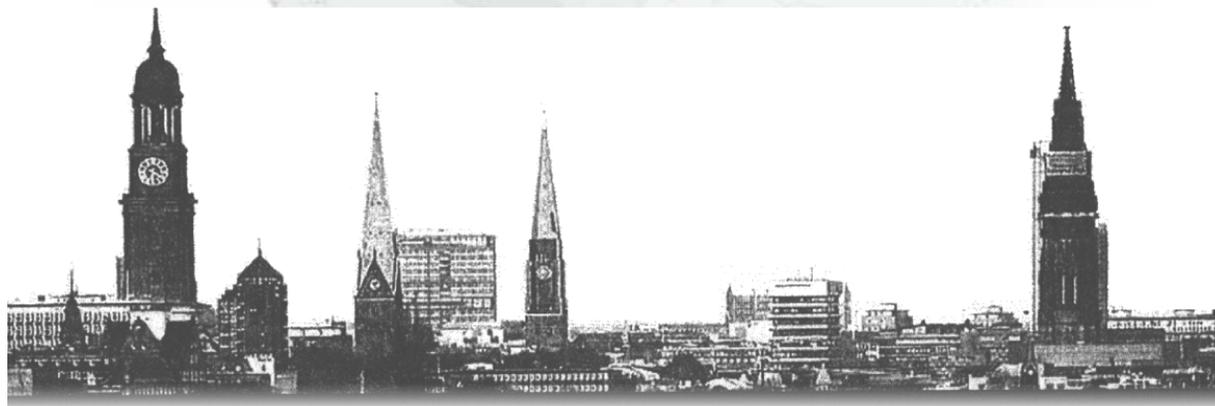


# Welcome to Hamburg!

EUROFAMCARE Final Conference  
Hamburg 18th of November 2005

## Family Care of Older People in Europe





# The 5<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme: Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources

## Services for Supporting Family Carers of Elderly People in Europe:

### Characteristics, Coverage and Usage

**E U R  F A M C A R E**

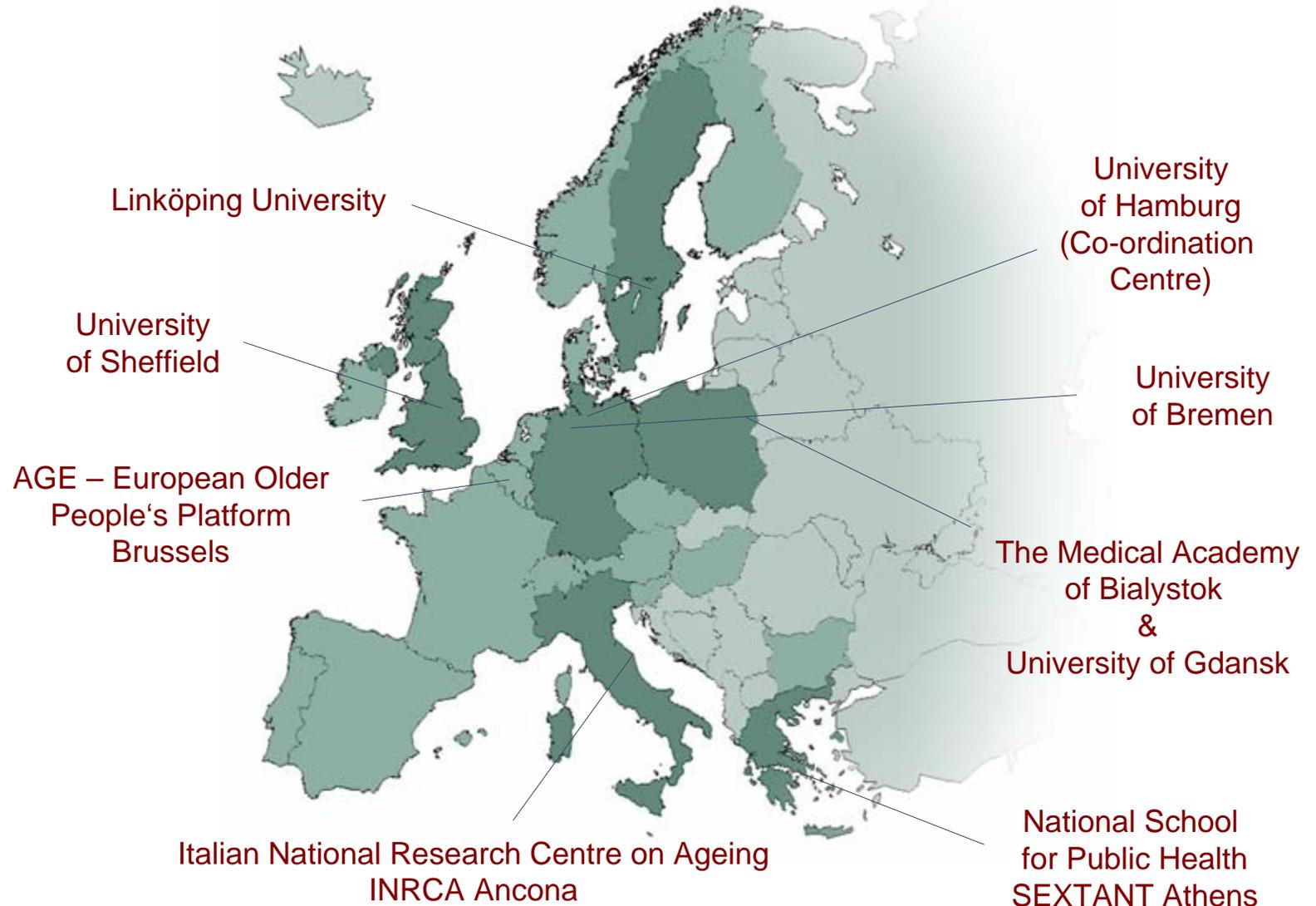
**Key Action 6: The Ageing Population and Disabilities  
6.5: Health and Social Care Services to older People**

This project (Contract: QLK6-CT-2002-02647) is supported by the European Union in the Vth Framework Programme:  
Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources - Key action 6: The Ageing Population and Disabilities  
6.5: Health and Social Care Services to Older People



# EUROFAMCARE

## Consortium



National Advisory Groups



International Advisory Board



# **Six-countries study on family care for older people: Definition of family carers, sampling and characteristics of carers and cared-for**

**Birgitta Öberg and Piotr Czekanowski**



# Definitions

- Formal carers
  - Paid carers, trained or untrained and health and social care professionals
- Informal unpaid carers
  - The majority of whom are **Family carers**





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# Sampling and recruitment





# Sampling strategy

- The data collection aimed to cover the **most relevant caregiving situations** to illustrate the **plurality of possible caregiving situations**.
- The method was based on a common strategy to ensure that the samples **offered a good representation of carers and their situation and were comparable for the six countries**.



# Standardised Evaluation Protocol for the National Surveys

Included development and standardisation of:

- questionnaires and guidelines for data collection
- how to evaluate the percentage of family carers in the whole population and to develop sampling strategies
- how to train the interviewers
- the criteria of the sample unit (i.e. definition of “family carer of older people”)





# Sample unit

The main family caregiver is any person who:

- perceives themselves to be a carer
- supports an older person 65+ for at least 4 hours per week and/or organises the care provided by others
- provides care to an older person living at home or in residential care settings (nursing homes, sheltered housing etc.)
- excluded: those who only provide financial support or companionship







# Methods

- Sample sub-areas
  - Identify at least three representative macro regions in each country
- Sample regions
  - Identify sample regions within the sub-areas based on urban/ rural characteristics
- Sample zones
  - one or more sub-areas representative of the region in term of socio-economic context and availability of services



# SAMPLE SUBAREAS



## UK

Northern Ireland  
Scotland  
Wales  
England North  
England South

## Sweden

North  
Eastern  
South West

## Germany

North  
South  
West  
East

## Poland

North East  
South  
West

## Italy

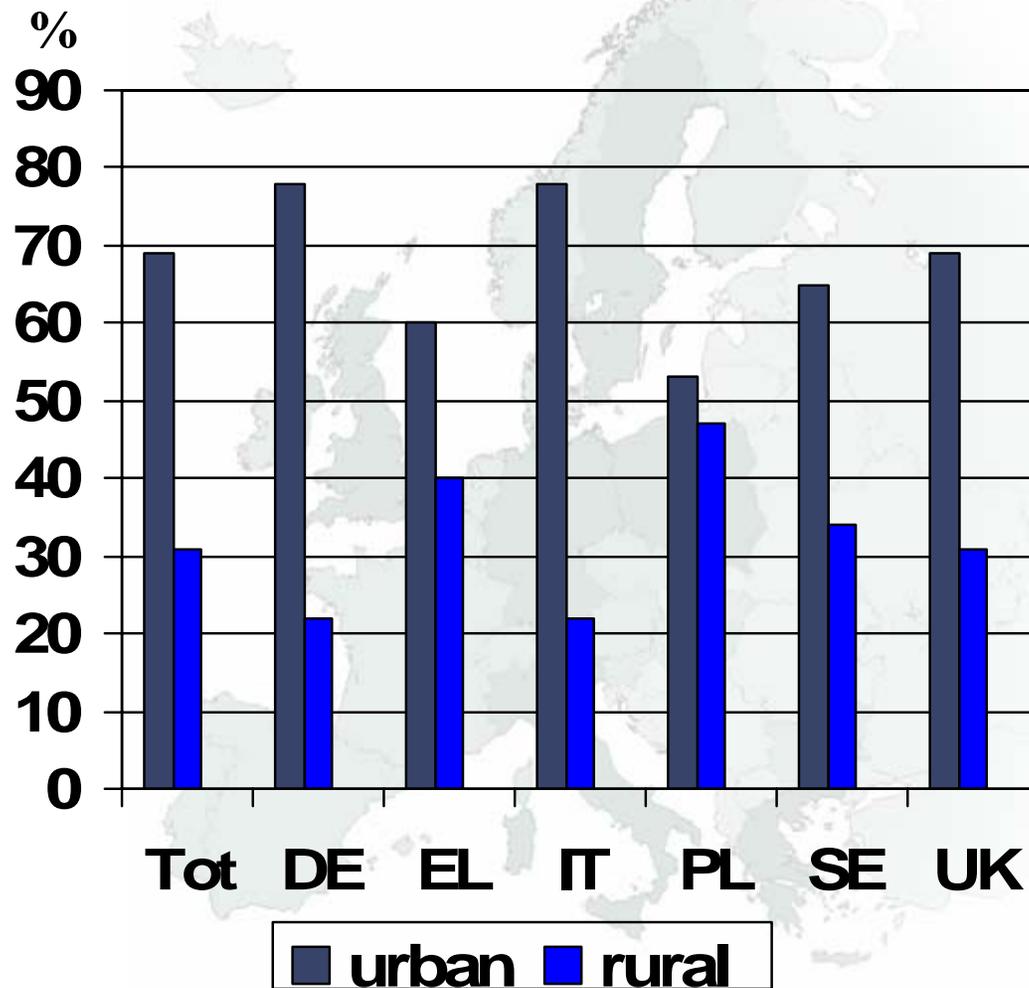
North West  
North East  
Centre  
South and Islands

## Greece

Attiki  
Peloponnesus  
Mainland Greece  
Macedonia  
Crete  
North Western Greece



# Urban / rural distribution

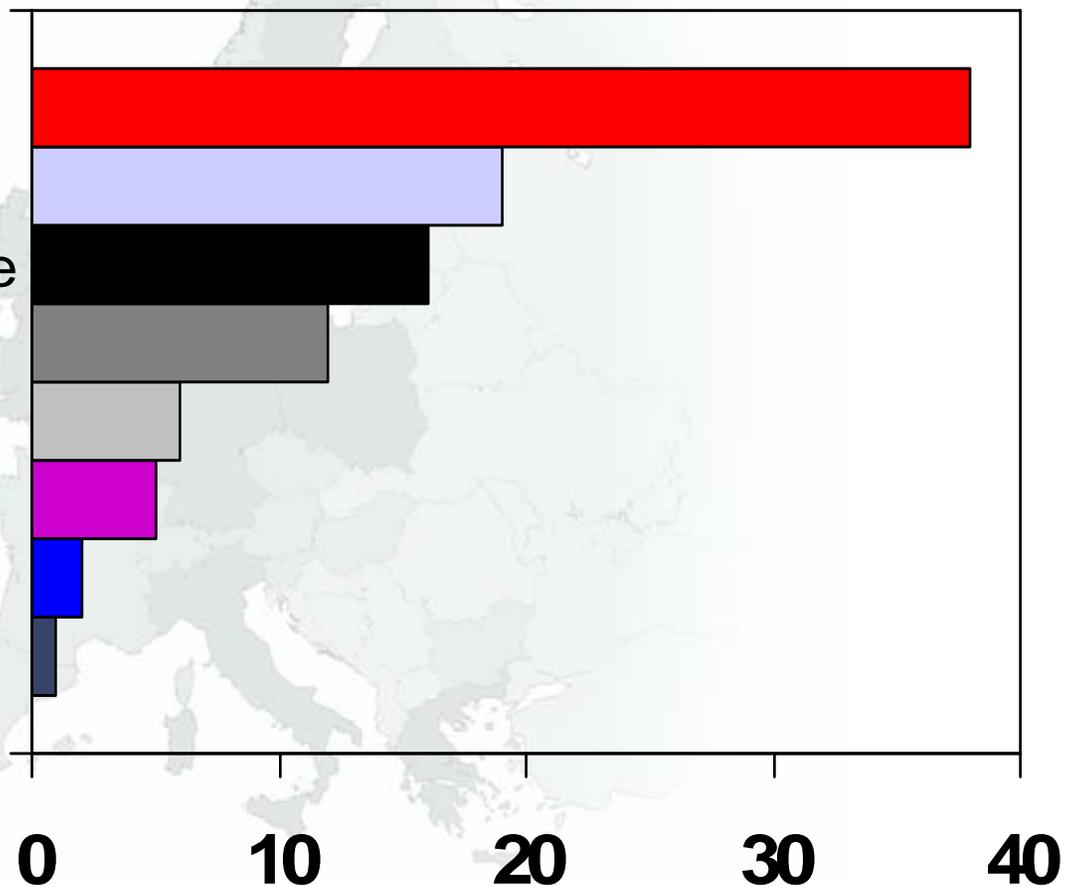




# Recruitment channels

Saturation within zones  
using multiple sampling channels

- word of mouth
- door to door
- health and social care
- advertisement
- religious org
- voluntary org
- other
- lists





# Difficulties in recruitment

- Some countries had a large number of refusals from door to door contacts
- Insufficient support from service providers or health care services
- Few respondents when using advertisement
- DE and SE had to use social research agencies to speed up the data collection (UK used a social research agency from the outset)







# Comparison with existing data

	DE	EL	IT	PL	SE	UK
Territorial parameter	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes
Urban/rural	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Description of older people	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Description of carers	partly	n/a	partly	n/a	partly	n/a



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## Summary (1/2)

- The sample is **not representative in strictly statistical terms**
- The application of combined geographical and urban rural parameters ensures that the sample should be **representative in a demographic, cultural and socioeconomic sense**
- Use of small zones, **saturation recruitment**, and a **variety of sampling modes** ensures for covering the variety of caring situations





## Summary (2/2)

### The EUROFAMCARE sample is:

- a unique sample with a variety of different caring situations based on the description by the carers themselves
- useful for a comparison between situations
- comparable to the known profile of older/cared-for in the EU
- in line with the known descriptions of carers
- the differences and similarities between and within countries are in line with the expected variation in the cultural, demographic and socio-economic situations in the six core countries





# Family carers





# Characteristics of the family carers

- Age
- Gender
- Family relationship to the cared-for person
- Ethnic origin and nationality
- Religious denomination and religiosity
- Education
- Employment
- Family situation
- General caring situation
- Health status
- Quality of life





# Characteristics of the Carers (1/8)

- The mean age of carers is **55**.  
*(from 51 years in the Polish sample and 52 in the Greek sample to 65 years in the Swedish sample).*
- More than **3/4** are women.
- **60%** of carers are children and children-in-law (49% + 11%) of the cared-for persons, followed by their **spouses/partners (22%)**  
*(only in Sweden are “spouse/partner” carers more prevalent than “child” carers).*





## Characteristics of the Carers (2/8)

- Considering carers' **ethnic origin** and their **nationality**, the carers are homogeneous in each of the studied country samples.
- Almost **3/4** of the total number of the carers belong to a **specific religious denomination** (from 51% in Sweden to 96% in Poland).
- The largest group of family carers has attained an „intermediate” **level of education (57%)**, although with high differences within the studied countries (e.g. Greece: 41% and the UK: 69%).





# Characteristics of the Carers (3/8)

- In general, the percentage of **employed carers (41%)** is smaller than the percentage of non-working carers (**59%**).
- In total **15% of carers had to reduce their working hours** because of caring for elder relatives





# Characteristics of the Carers (4/8)

- **Non-working carers:** most of them are retired (only 35% in the Greek sample up to 91% in the Swedish one).
- Many carers bear some **additional costs** because of the caring process (for example the cost of medicines or costs due to additional travelling).





## Characteristics of the Carers (5/8)

- **3/4** of carers are married/cohabiting, **4/5** of them have children.
- The average **size of the carers' households** (including the carer himself/herself) is almost **3 persons per household** (Polish sample: nearly 4 persons, in Sweden **2** persons).
- Over half of the carers **live in the same household or building as the older person**. Every fourth carer in the European sample needs at least 10 minutes by car, bus or train to get to the cared-for person.



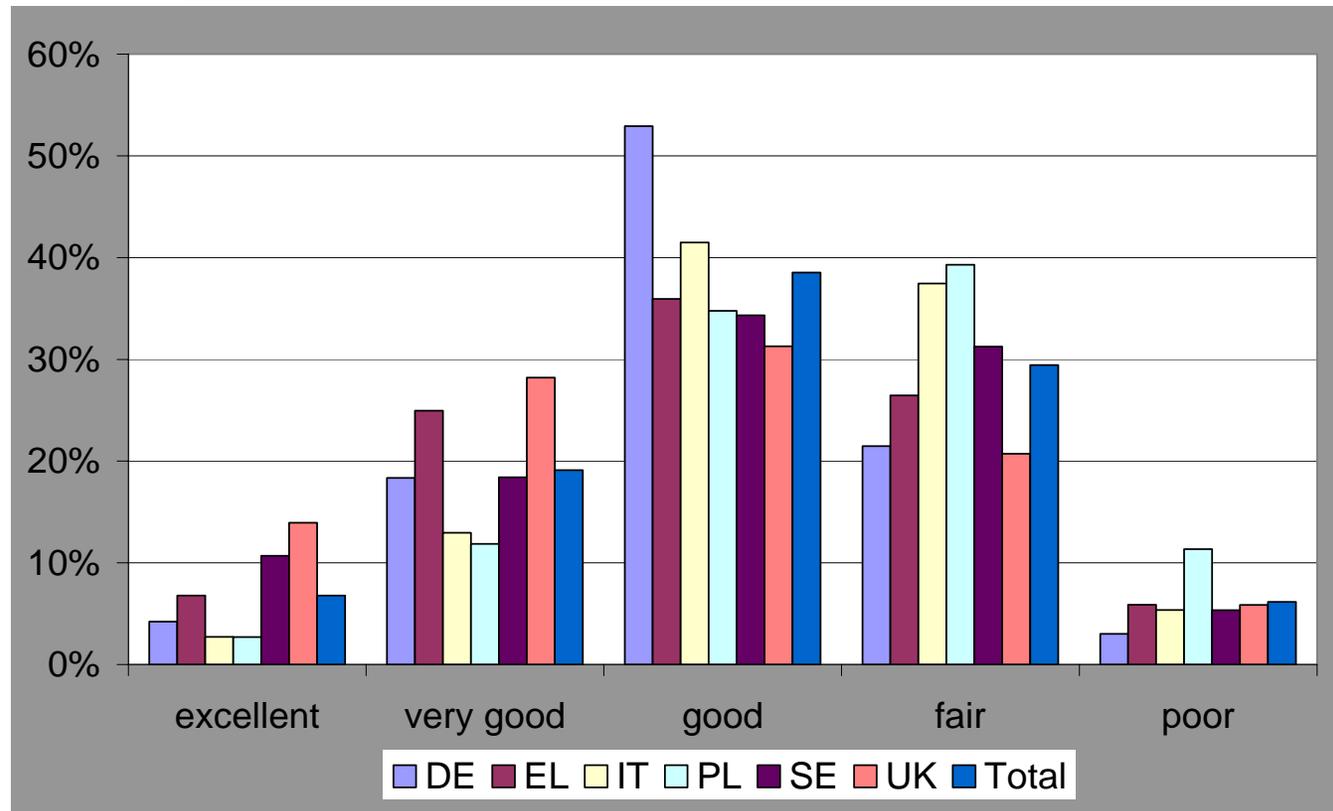
# Characteristics of the Carers (6/8)

- Most family carers **care for only one older person** (81% in the Greek sample to 93% in the German sample).
- Over **1/3** of all carers also **care for at least one younger person.** (60% in Greece and 9% in Sweden)
- The average **duration of caring** in our sample was **60** months (from 47 months in Germany up to 70 months in Poland).





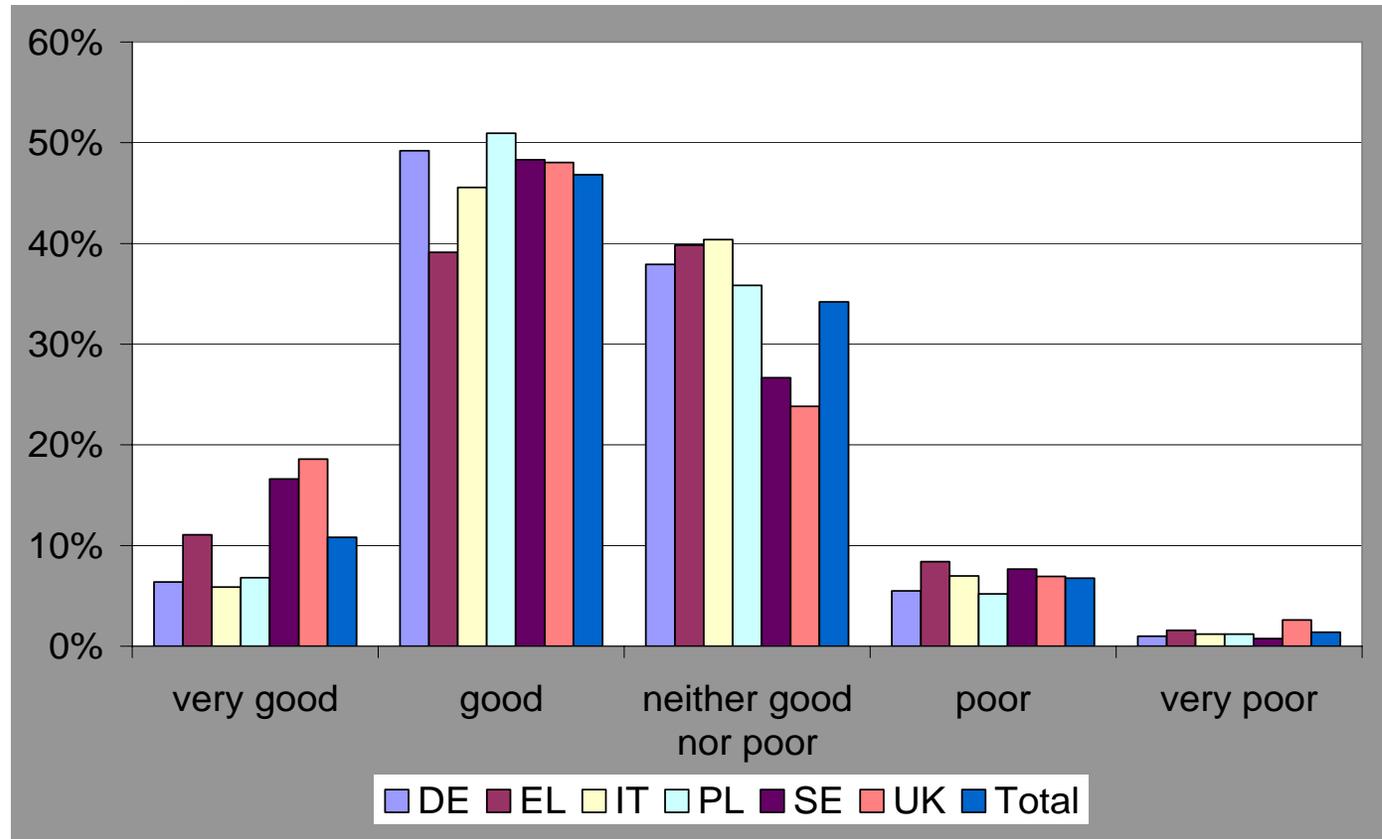
# Characteristics of the Carers (7/8)



Health status: the “healthiest” carers, i.e. who answered “Excellent” or “Very good”, are more likely to live in the UK (42%), followed by Greece (32%), Sweden (29%) and Germany (23%). This category of carers is the smallest in Poland (15%) and in Italy (16%).



# Characteristics of the Carers (8/8)



The highest quality of life (answers „Very good” and „Good” taken together) is found among the British and the Swedish carers (67% and 65% respectively), and the lowest in the Mediterranean samples, i.e. in the Greek (50%) and in the Italian (51%) samples.



# Older people



# Characteristics of the Older people

- Age
- Gender
- Marital status
- Ethnic origin and nationality
- Pension
- Place of living and household composition
- Health situation
- Need for support





## Characteristics of the Older people (1/4)

- The **mean age** is almost **80**.
- Over **2/3** of the cared-for are **women** (from 58% in the Swedish sample to 73% in the Polish one).
- Over **half** of all older people are **widowed** with a smaller percentage still married or cohabiting (apart from the Swedish sample where most are married/cohabiting).





## Characteristics of the Older people (2/4)

- The older people are to a large extent homogeneous in their **ethnic origin and nationality**
- The vast majority of **older people** receive a pension or some other kind of state funded financial support.
- Almost **93%** of older people **live at home** (from 83% in the Swedish sample up to almost 100% in the Polish one).





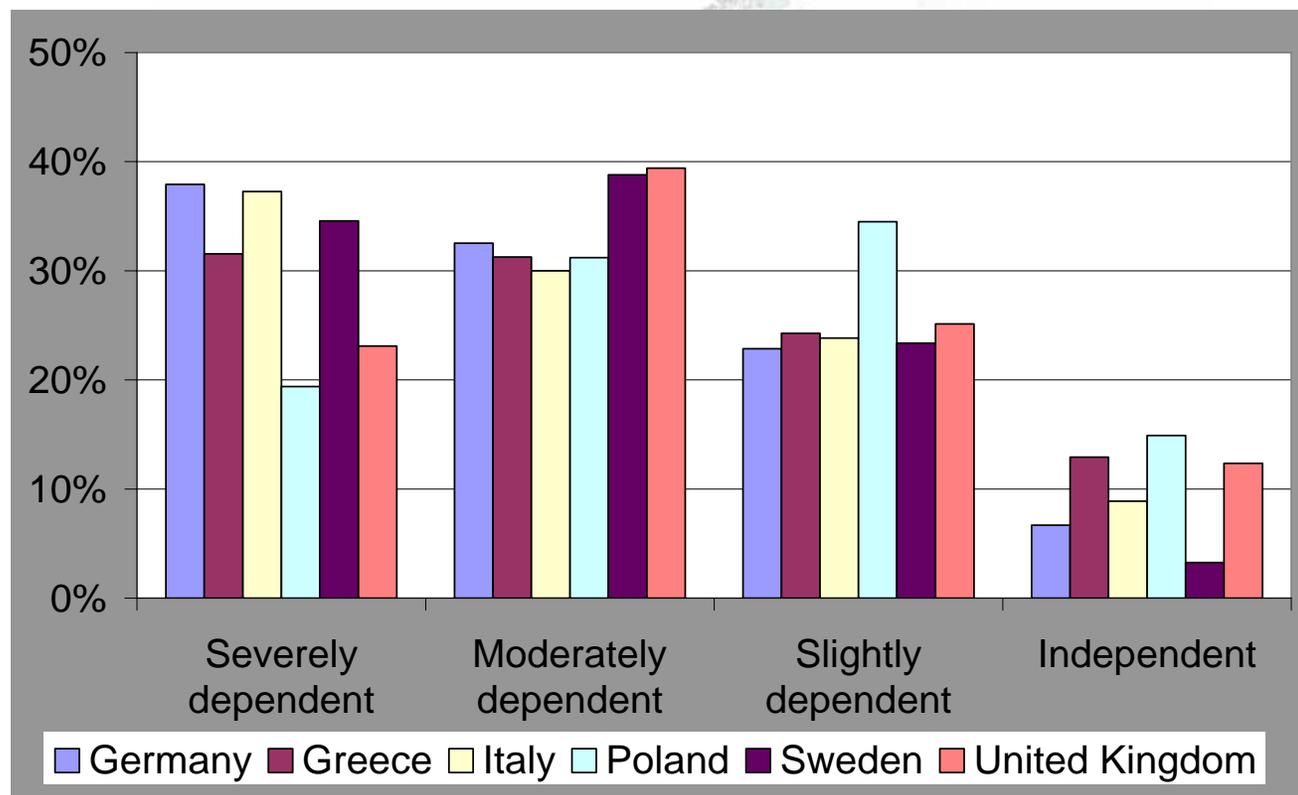
## Characteristics of the Older people (3/4)

- Over **2/3** of the **older people live with others** (from 56% in the German sample to 79% in the Italian and 80% in the Polish ones).  
*Usually they live with their partners or/and with their children.*
- Only **1/10** older people in our study is **independent in most activities of daily living**.





## Characteristics of the Older people (4/4)



The variation between countries in overall **dependency** is reflected in variation between countries in the **different categories of needs**, i.e. mobility, health, etc.





# Summary (1/2)

- We observe similarities between the country samples in CAREERS' gender, marital status (especially in the percentages of married couples), people having children and being employed.
- The differences among CAREERS between the country samples refer especially to: the kind of family relationship between a carer and a cared-for person (child vs. spouse), the status of non-working carers (retired vs. housewives/ husbands), their health status (feeling healthy vs. non-healthy) or to the time period of caring (short vs. long).





## Summary (2/2)

- As for the OLDER PEOPLE we observe similarities between the country samples in age, marital status, access to pension or financial support from their States.
- The differences among OLDER PEOPLE in the country samples relate mainly to gender, place of living (at home vs. not at home), the way of living (alone vs. with others); to the degree of the dependency and to the need for help in various types of activities.





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**Thank you for your attention!**

**Any comments, any questions???**

