

Changing care-policies between substitutions and supplement
Regulating the Grey Care Markets - Austria and Germany in Comparison
by

Antje Eichler M.A.¹

Stream: Transnational Care Markets: European Regimes in the age of migration

In the ageing European societies with a growing need in services for old people in need of care a new development can be observed especially in the family-base care regimes Germany and Austria: 'Grey care markets' originate. On one side of this 'market' old people in need of care and their families asking for long-time-care-services, on the other side migrant care worker offer this services for a lower price than it's usual at the national market for formal care-services.

At the same time we can explore different strategies of regulating this grey care markets in both countries. With the „Hausbetreuungsgesetz“ (2007) the Austrian Federal Government reacted on the growing grey care market in Austria. This law is seen as a „novelty in Austrian legislation“ and it can also be interpreted as a policy change within the care-, migration-, family- and employment policy in the Austrian welfare state. This law legalises migrant care workers and open the austrian labour market for low paid migrant care worker. In comparison to Austria, Germany prefers another strategy of regulating the grey care market. The needs for payable long term care offers should be satisfied with the „Haushaltshilfemodell“ (2005). In this context migrant care worker are not integrated in the labour market, instead they are more seen as guest worker and as a supplement to the family-care. The main strategy for satisfaction the needs of long-term-care is still to support the families by a cash-for-care-policy. With this strategy the german government wants to protect the national labour market against low paid worker out of eastern european countries.

This paper shows the different processes of care policies in Austria and Germany by reconstructing the public and political discourses around migrant care workers and 24-hours-care-arrangments between the years 2001-2008. This article argues by an institutional perspective (Immergut 1992/Tsebelis 2000, 2002), that political institution plays a role in accounting for different patterns of integration migrant care worker in to the national labour market. It is pointed out, that the traditional conservative family-based-care-model is changing into a mixed-model, which integrates migrant care worker or low wage workers as a substitute or as supplement to the family. The differences in regulation of the grey care market are finally discussed within the care regime (Bettio/Plantenga 2004; Simonazzi 2008) and welfare state regime (Esping-Andersen 1989) approach.

¹ PhD-Student at the University of Trier, Department of Sociology, Chair of Social Policy, Universitätsring 15, 54286 Trier; Call: +49 651 201 2612; E-Mail: eichler@uni-trier.de