Peace Institute
Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies

Majda Hrženjak

INVISIBLE WORK

Majda Hrženjak
INVISIBLE WORK

Translation: Olga Vuković
Proof-reading: Michelle Gadpaille
Cover Photo: Bojan Velikonja / Dnevnik
Design: Irena Wölle
Print: Stane Peklaj
Print-run: 500 copies, first edition
Reviewed by: Vesna Leskošek, PhD, Ljubljana University
Alenka Švab, PhD, Ljubljana University

Book Series Politike
Editor: Aldo Milohnić
Publisher: Peace Institute
Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies
Metelkova 6
SI-1000 Ljubljana
E: info@mirovni-institut.si
www.mirovni-institut.si

The publishing of this book was made possible by:

Open Society Institute

Mestna občina Ljubljana
City of Ljubljana

EQUAL Community Initiative Programme

EQUAL Community Initiative Programme is managed by the Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs.

The Program is partly subsidized by the Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs.

The Program is partly subsidized by the EU.

The viewpoints expressed in this book are those of the author and are not necessarily the viewpoints of the EU.

Contents

II. (NON)PAID DOMESTIC WORK IN SLOVENIA

INTRODUCTION

This book focuses on reproductive labor, with an emphasis on domestic work and childcare, or family work – a subject that has not been frequently addressed either within sociology or within the wider fields of the social sciences and the humanities.[1] We deconstruct and problematize certain basic determinants that in the capitalist system designate domestic work as non-work, or as a labor of love performed by women, so that it is not considered "real" work. Furthermore, as work performed within the private sphere, it is not a subject of public interest; it is viewed as non-productive work that does not produce surplus value, but is primarily oriented towards consumption and is not paid. The perception that domestic work is not work leads to the invisibility of the double burden borne by contemporary women, i.e. that of paid productive work within the public sphere, and non-paid reproductive labor within the private sphere. Public, political and even feminist critique focus primarily on the participation of women in the sphere of paid work, while the problematization of the burden of reproductive labor shouldered by women is marginalized. The said perception that domestic work is not work is also the reason for the invisibility of paid domestic work, although, according to a number of research findings, it is as widespread in modern society as it was in the past. The only difference is that today it is enshrouded in silence. Yet this sphere of invisible, reproductive labor is a source of informal employment and of survival for a multitude of women (women again!), although not any women, but women of specific nationalities, a specific age and class. The workers within the informal field of paid domestic work are today primarily (illegal) women immigrants, older women, long-term-unemployed women, and, increasingly, young women who are first-time job seekers or workers whose primary jobs pay low wages, insufficient to meet the basic costs of living. As a result, there are,

[1] In this text we use the wider concept – reproductive labor or domestic labor, although we explore primarily the segment of household work, in the literature defined as family work (see Rener 2000, 284–289; Švab 2001, 144–145). Our decision to use the wider concept was motivated by our effort to problematize the general status of reproductive labor in society.

on the one hand, women who are doubly burdened by productive and reproductive work and hence forced to transfer part of reproductive labor to domestic workers selling these services on the black market, and, on the other, women who have found themselves in a financial or other threatening crisis, so they undertake the work of other women, indeed for payment, but under undefined working conditions and deprived of the rights and duties arising from labor relations. The invisibility of domestic work and the perception that it is not work therefore lead to the perception of contemporary domestic workers as non-workers. There is a saying that behind every successful man there is a woman. More pertinent to our context would be to say that behind many a successful woman there is another woman who does domestic work for her. One goal of this study is to make visible the coping strategies and conditions in which various groups of women perform domestic work – either paid or unpaid.

The problem of domestic work not being perceived as work has been exacerbated by the increasing demand for paid domestic work and an increase in informal employment in this area. It has become an issue not only in debates on gender equality, symmetrical division of labor between partners in the private sphere and measures aimed at reconciling work and the private sphere, but also in employment policies, social transfers, regulation of the domestic work sector, and, at least in countries with a large immigration population, in immigration policies. A comparison of pre-modern and modern paid domestic work shows that despite poor working conditions still predominant in this field, certain modernization, regulation and professionalization processes are nevertheless underway, and these are increasingly supported by state policies. This study is limited to the investigation of various approaches and attempts to regulate paid domestic work within the framework of policies concentrating on employment in the segment located at the intersection of the public and private sector – the social economy. Although current political considerations of domestic work are motivated by purely pragmatic reasons and limited to the transformation of (un)paid domestic work into new jobs for hard-to-employ persons, such a development nevertheless leads, if only implicitly, to a re-definition of domestic work and to the public recognition that domestic work is work, just like any other type of work.

This study on domestic work (some authors link it to the contemporary "crisis of reproduction" especially acute in two-career couples with children and in single-parent families) is a result of the SIPA project (The

System of Domestic Help), a Development Partnership that is part of EQUAL, a European Social Fund Community Initiative.

The main thesis of the study, conceptualized as an applied research project, was that the currently existing informal market of paid domestic work in Slovenia can be transformed into an area of regular employment for long-term-unemployed women and that this could reduce the burden of reproductive labor shouldered by households with small children, and women within these households, in particular. The goal of the project was to formulate recommendations for the commissioner of the project, the Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs, on how to shape the system of paid domestic work so that it generates quality jobs for hard-to-employ persons while providing services affordable to a wider circle of households.

Paid domestic work is a hidden social phenomenon which neither those who perform domestic work nor those who hire domestic workers are keen to discuss. This fact undoubtedly makes research difficult. We began by exploring in some detail the phenomenon of paid domestic work, whereby we relied on the studies and research done abroad, particularly elsewhere in Europe. It should be said that in the majority of these studies the research interest is limited to informal employment and the extremely grave situation of illegal immigrants who perform this work. While these studies are undoubtedly of paramount importance because they reveal a story of massive discrimination and abuse, the resulting conclusions are inevitably partial.[2] In Slovenia, domestic work has been the subject of ethnological and historical studies,[3] and sporadically also of sociological and feminist studies.[4] This study therefore brings to the fore a subject not yet widely recognized as relevant in Slovenia, neither within politics nor within the research sphere. We focused on the two target groups: long-term unemployed women and women in full-time employment with small children. We also sought to find constructive solutions that would lead to the creation of quality jobs in the areas of paid domestic work and the social economy.

---

2 Anti-Slavery International 2006; Anderson et al. 2006; Fish 2006; Skřivánková 2006; Ehrenreich, Hochschild 2002; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001; Parrenas 2001; Chang 2000; Anderson 2000; Chin 1998; Schester 1998; Bakan et al. 1997; Heyzer et al. 1994; Thornton 1994; Sanjek et al. 1990; Rollins 1985; Cock 1980.

3 E.g. Žagar 1986; Kodrič 1990; Makuc 1993; Šuštar 1993; Orehovec 1997; Barbič, Brezigar 1999; Mlekuž 2004.

4 E.g. Rener 2000; Žnidaršič 2000; Šadl 2004 in 2006; Verginella 2006.

The empirical part of the study included a questionnaire survey of the two target groups (households with small children and long-term-unemployed women living in the Ljubljana area). We sought to establish the magnitude of the need for domestic work and the extent of interest in this kind of employment. Next we conducted a pilot project that lasted six months. It involved thirty households with small children, which obtained free of charge domestic services provided by five long-term-unemployed women, who were regularly employed for the limited period of six months for the purpose of this project. On concluding the project, we conducted quantitative and qualitative evaluation in collaboration with both groups to establish the positive and negative sides of such a system of paid domestic work. We conducted three focus groups with long-term-unemployed women, analyzed the structure of this social group and conferred with the consultants working with the Employment Service of Slovenia to discuss their experience and viewpoints. Five interviews with informal domestic workers who work in Italy were conducted in the town of Sežana and the surrounding area (these women are registered in Slovenia as long term unemployed). All of that plus interviews with the households helped us to uncover some of the details surrounding the informal market for paid domestic work in Slovenia, although this was not the main goal of our project, nor was it planned.

The interviews revealed a number of terms in use to refer to domestic workers, including "lady," cleaner, housewife, housemaid, even "auntie" etc. This diversity of terms indicates the embarrassment of both the buyers and the providers of domestic services, which is to a large extent a result of the informal status of paid domestic work. The term we use, i.e. domestic worker or *gospodinjska delavka* in Slovene, is intended to emphasize that paid domestic work is work just like any other kind of work that requires standardization, professionalization and organized labor relations.

The first part of the study elucidates those dimensions of contemporary (non)paid domestic work that, in our opinion, starting from the premises of the SIPA project, are especially relevant for comprehending the complexity of this phenomenon. We first present the basic forms of paid domestic work in pre-modern and modern Europe, from which can be deduced the preconditions for the modernization and professionalization of this area, already in progress in some countries. Special attention is devoted to the status of domestic work in society, with an emphasis on its significance for social reproduction and on the uneven division of domestic work among various social groups, a situation which has

specific implications. We highlight the problematic structure of the area of contemporary paid reproductive work by gender, class, nationality/race, citizen status and age, which we identify as both a cause and an effect of the social invisibility of this phenomenon. The empirical studies of paid domestic work in several EU capitals reveal how difficult and indefinite are the working conditions prevailing in this area. Despite all these drawbacks, paid domestic work represents a way out of the financial crisis for many women belonging to excluded social groups, and precisely because of this the creation of quality jobs within this area is even more important. Many EU countries have already embarked on experimental creation of new and quality jobs for hard-to-employ persons in the field of social economy. Some of these experiments are presented towards the end of Part I of this study.

Part II focuses on paid domestic work in Slovenia. We first glance at the past and the rich experience of Slovenia in the area of paid domestic work at home and abroad, including during the socialist era when the "household helper" job was considered dishonorable and the buying of these services a bourgeois practice. We then proceed with the analysis of the SIPA project results. We give a detailed overview of the target groups, i.e. long-term-unemployed women (who already perform these services within the informal sector) and households with small children (which to a great extent already buy these services on the black market), and finally present the results of the pilot project that involved selected households with small children that were provided with free domestic services. The study concludes with the basic guidelines for organizing and professionalizing paid domestic work in a way that will enable the users of domestic services to obtain quality service at affordable prices, and will also create quality jobs for hard-to-employ persons.

I would like to point out that this study is a result of the work of many people. I would like to express my special gratitude to the project team members Franja Arlič, Živa Humer, Mojca Sušnik and Barbara Žaucer Šefman; national partners Karel Destovnik and Nataša Kraljič Černe from Centerkontura company; Tadeja Košak and Nikola Damjanić of Ninamedia and Meta Furlan of the Employment Service of Slovenia; international partners Christina Van Nuffel of the Home Managers Development Partnership (Belgium), Lisbeth Accord, Rieke Djemani, Debby Forster and Haroonu Saad of the Women@Work in Action Development Partnership (Netherlands), Olga Nagy Tamásné of the Modellértékű NőTámogató Rendszer kiépítése Development Partnership (Hungary) and Roberta D'Ovidio and Monica de Vargas Machuca of the Nuovi

Orizzonti Per L`Economia Sociale Development Pertnership (Italy). I am thankful to domestic workers who "endured" the six-month project that did not always progress as planned, and to all participating households who opened the door for us into their homes. I am also thankful to Milena Mijatović of Gospodinjski servis, Tatjana Dolinšek of Racio Social and Nada Kirn of Sezam for their support and for the information provided.

I.

The dimensions of contemporary (un)paid domestic work

PAID DOMESTIC WORK IN PRE-MODERN EUROPE

The life-cycle model and the model of social differences

The differences between domestic work in the past and today reflect realistic social and economic changes over time. In pre-industrial Europe, social identity of male and female servants was ambiguous. They fulfilled a variety of tasks, were recruited from various social classes and could be free, or in a servant-master, or slave-master relationship with their employer. The reasons for becoming a servant were diverse, and payment was not always the only motive. In north-western parts of Europe in particular,[5] working as a servant in another's house, or in the house of a relative, was a stage in the life cycle, a kind of apprenticeship and almost a normal part of the transition to adulthood. Accordingly, it was not restricted to lower social classes exclusively. So, for example, a young man from a wealthy bourgeois family could serve as a page for an even wealthier or aristocratic family in order to learn manners, to become a protégée of the master and to be introduced into the society of reputable and influential people. It was a way to acquire good habits and education, and an opportunity for social promotion through new contacts or marriage, or at least with a help of savings. This type of service was practiced by both genders before marriage, particularly between the 14th and the 18th centuries.

Until the beginning of the 19th century, the notion of servant (male or female) did not imply only paid workers, but also wives and children. The change in the meaning of the term "servant" reflects an important process through which a gradual distinction between service and the

5 As Nagata says, in contrast to the north-western European apprenticeship model, termed the life-cycle model in the literature, the model that predominated in Southern Europe was a migration model, or a model of cultural and class differences. Dennison holds that the job of paid domestic servant also existed in Russia and Eastern Europe during the 18th and the 19th centuries, and in both variants: as migration of servants and as apprenticeship. Therefore, this area was characterized by a mixed model of paid domestic work (Nagata 2003, 6).

family was established. It brought about the decline of paternalism and the professionalization of domestic help, later equated with any other kind of paid work.[6]

Therefore, two models of paid domestic work can be identified in pre-industrial Europe during the period from the 16th to 18th century: the life-cycle model in north-western Europe, and the Mediterranean model based on cultural and class differences. In the first model, servant work was part of the transition from the family of origin towards the formation of one's own family, whereby service was considered a learning process, an opportunity to establish contacts, to move up the social ladder, save money and so forth. This period intervening between puberty and marriage, which young people filled in by doing apprenticeship and service, was made possible by a marriage pattern in which the age at first marriage was relatively high. Male and female servants helped with all types of work needed to maintain the household and keep it going, not only with household chores and child minding. A large number of young men and women from all social classes worked as servants, with the period of service being limited to the period preceding marriage. In this model, servant work did not have negative connotations and was considered a stage in life rather than an inferior status.

As Cesares reports,[7] in pre-modern Spain, dominated by what is known as the Mediterranean model of paid domestic work, domestic servants were mainly poor relatives from the countryside who worked without work contracts in exchange for food, shelter and clothing. A certain number of them worked on contract, although such contracts were frequently violated by employers; some were apprentices in workshops, but they also performed all types of domestic work; finally, there were slaves without any rights. Domestic work, according to this model, was the least attractive and was regarded as inferior. It was reserved for the lower classes, women and immigrants.

This discontinuity within Europe was gradually removed through industrialization and the dying out of the life-cycle model. Part of the reason could have been the greater employment opportunities and diversity of jobs introduced by industrialization. At the same time, the age at first marriage began to fall, with young people starting their own families immediately after leaving the family of origin. The practice of bachelor apprenticeship was disappearing, and domestic help in north-western

6 Lutz, Schwalgin 2006, 4.

7 Cesares 2004, 189.

Europe was transformed into professional paid work. Since then, domestic workers have primarily been young women from the lower social classes, as in Southern Europe, and immigrants who could not find other work.

Since the mortality rate in pre-modern Europe was high, domestic work was one of the ways to secure a home, education and work for orphaned children. Such an arrangement could produce close ties between a servant and a master, and frequently a servant served one master from early youth to the end of life. The master, in some cases also a relative, sometimes adopted the orphaned child and left him/her an inheritance. Servants were expected to feel gratitude for being let into the household, so many worked without payment. Poor families sometimes gave up their children for adoption by rich families, preferably relatives or godparents. One reason was to alleviate the financial burden, and another to create better opportunities for children by establishing strong ties between the child and a family of higher social standing. This type of service obscured the borderline between labor and kinship relations, sometimes leading to the exploitation of children, from whom the adoptive parents expected gratitude, lifelong loyalty and care in times of illness or old age.[8]

Work in a pre-modern European household, even a small one, was extensive and tiresome. Servants had to pump and heat water, fetch food from the market, collect/chop wood, keep fire burning, cook, wash, spin yarn, look after the children and the sick, clean and so on. Although neither men nor women had employment outside the home, servants' help was virtually indispensable to keep the household going, because the family was also a production unit. Industrialization separated work from home, constituted the public and the private spheres, and gradually restricted woman's role to childcare and household duties.

Accordingly, until the onset of industrialization in the 17th century, almost every married woman, save for those from poor classes, had a domestic servant who helped with the household chores and childcare. Industrialization changed this. Dafoe, writing in 1725, mentions a serious lack of female servants, one that boosted their wages to such levels that an ordinary merchant could not afford one any more. Consequently, instead of helping in the shop and in striking bargains, a merchant's wife had to toil at home and do all the household chores alone.[9] This

8 Miscali in Sarti 2002, 6.

9 Dafoe in Oakley 2000, 38.

record shows how industrialization led to social and economic changes that gradually confined women to the home, the household and the private sphere. Before industrialization, the majority of domestic work was performed by hired servants, children and unmarried young women. A married woman, the mistress, only supervised their work while she herself was engaged in a family business.

Despite the apprenticeship or the life-cycle model, in pre-modern Europe, as in present time, paid domestic work was the only option available for immigrants. Today, this area is dominated by transnational and transcontinental migrations, while in the past migration was from rural to urban areas.

Various research studies[10] suggest that in pre-modern Europe domestic help was not gender specific – both genders were recruited, but they performed gender-specific tasks. Men worked outside the house, in the garden, in the fields, stables etc. while women did the housework and looked after children. For young women who wanted to leave their parental home but did not want to marry, a servant's job was the only alternative to prostitution. Today, the demand for once typically male household-related work has all but disappeared, while the demand for domestic help, care for children and the elderly has been rising steeply.

Below are several other obviously problematic structural characteristics of paid domestic work in the past that, despite certain changes, still remain common to contemporary paid domestic work, as well.

Forced domestic work

In the past, domestic work was frequently an area of forced labor. Similarly, forced domestic work remains one of the main motives behind trafficking in women in the present, closely following sexual exploitation. Women are trafficked primarily in order to be forced to perform typically female "labor of love": housework, care for children, and sex.[11] An important difference between "modern" and "traditional" slavery is that in the past the master had the legal and exclusive right over the slave, while today slavery is outlawed. The Committee Against Modern Slavery (CCEM) established five criteria that define modern slavery:

- identity papers (generally the passport) are confiscated by the employer. The worker is thus deprived of all legal existence and finds him/herself in a state of total dependence;

[10] Lundh 2004; Dubert 2004; Casares 2004; Sogner 2004.

[11] Ehrenreich et al. 2002, 5.

- the domestic slave is sequestrated, and fear of the police is inculcated;
- he/she works 15 to 17 hours a day, seven days a week and receives little or no wage;
- his/her living conditions are contrary to human dignity (no private room, little food, beating and sexual exactions);
- family ties are broken and isolation is complete (the domestic does not have a mastery of the language of the country he/she is living in).[12]

Many research studies have established that it is precisely the European capitals where examples of slave labor conditions can be found, particularly where domestic workers are illegal immigrants.[13]

Paid domestic work as total institution

When speaking of paid domestic work in the historical context, one should not overlook the dominion and power embodied in the master/mistress-servant relationship. In the past, servants were part of the family and lived in the household for which they worked. This type of employment, says Hantzaroula, can be defined as Goffman's total institution. Goffman defined total institution as "a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time together, lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life"[14] Even today paid domestic work continues to be one of the rare types of employment where the worker may live in the private sphere of the employer, which is definitely an exceptional labor relation. The employers/masters were in a position to organize and supervise all the activities, duties and tasks of live-in domestic workers, plus their sleep, diet, movements and communication. The dividing line between leisure time and rest, on the one hand, and work time, on the other, was vague. The purpose of this total possession of and control over the time, movements, work and relationships of the employee was to eliminate the previous identity of the employee and create a new person who catered exclusively to the needs of the employer. The outward manifestations of various methods of depersonalization, to which some contemporary domestic workers are also subject, were special clothes or uniforms worn by the servants, specific gestures he/she had to use,

12 Pasleau, Schopp in Sarti 2002, 9.

13 Anti-Slavery International 2006; Ehrenreich, Hochschild 2002; Parrenas 2001; Chang 2000; Anderson 2000; Chin 1998 ipd.

14 Goffman in Hantzaroula 2004, 382.

separate spaces for servants, monitoring of their honesty and restricted access to food.[15] Through the redefinition of servants' identity, the social identity of the master also became redefined. The function of an obedient servant was not only to reduce the burden of work, but also to signal the master's social status. Through the modernization of paid domestic work, whose main feature is a transition from one to several employers and the resulting fall in the number of live-in domestic workers, this dimension of paid domestic work has been disappearing, although it may still be found even today in live-in arrangements.

Paternalistic/maternalistic relationships

In the traditional system of paid domestic work based on the patriarchal system, the relationship between the employer and the worker was paternalistic. The employer was responsible for security and leadership, and the worker had to be obedient, loyal and committed to his/her work. Rollins argues that because contemporary employers are mainly women, whose position is structurally different from that of men, the relationship between domestic workers and employers has changed from paternalistic to maternalistic. The dynamics of the two are indeed similar, and yet they are not fully equivalent. While paternalism implies some kind of power that has a political, economic and ideological basis, maternalism is a concept that relates to an internal family role involving support, nursing, care and responsiveness to needs. As Rollins says: "While maternalism may protect and nurture, it also degrades and insults. The 'caring' that is expressed in maternalism might range from an adult-to-child to a human-to-pet kind of caring but, by definition (...), it is not human-to-equal-human caring. The female employer with her motherliness, protectiveness, and generosity is expressing in a distinctly feminine way her lack of respect for the domestic as an autonomous, adult employee."[16] In modern times, through gradual modernization and professionalization of domestic work, the maternalistic relationship between the domestic worker and the female employer[17] has begun the

15 Hantzaroula 2004, 382.

16 Rollins 1985, 186.

17 Although we are aware that in some cultures and social classes paid domestic work is also performed by men, in this text the term domestic worker is used in the sense of 'female domestic worker.' The underlying assumption here is that domestic services are structured by gender and performed mainly by women, at least in contemporary Europe.

slow transformation into a professional relationship between a service provider and a service user, but it can never be completely impersonal because the work takes place within the private sphere.

Gender, class, nationality, race

One important trait that represents a discontinuity between pre-modern and modern paid domestic work is the by now widespread designation of domestic workers as "Others" based on class, national and racial identity. This practice reflects changes in the composition of the population employed as paid domestic workers, and the type of work they perform (the restriction of paid domestic work to housework and to looking after children and other family members who need care, meaning reproductive non-labor). These changes are a consequence of economic and social changes brought about by industrialization and globalization and by the narrowing of the circle of employers to the upper middle class. In the most extreme variant of this phenomenon, paid domestic work is identified with specific ethnic groups and the global division of reproductive labor. While in the past, except in the life-cycle model, recruitment into domestic work was largely determined by social class, in today's globalized world it is also determined by gender, nationality and race. The concomitance of female gender, low socio-economic status and a specific ethnic background or race is a phenomenon frequently found in the area of domestic work today.

Much as in the past, paid domestic work still provides households with the required workforce for reproductive activities. Only a small portion of past and contemporary households engaged domestic workers for status reasons only. In pre-modern Europe, domestic work had a clearly defined place in society, was visible and recognized as needed. Today, the situation is different: domestic help is invisible, mainly unregulated and not recognized as needed. While during certain historical periods the hiring of domestic help may have been a status symbol, contemporary users of domestic services (mainly females) shy away from admitting that they hire informal domestic help. The main reason is the definition of reproductive labor as non-labor that is in the domain of women's private sphere. Today, households buy domestic services to resolve the problem of housework, childcare and care for the sick, and thus enable women to fully participate in the labor market. Until another alternative for relieving employed women from the burden of domestic work is found, paid domestic work, mainly done by women as well, will continue to be a prerequisite for the reproduction of the modern capitalist economy.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF DOMESTIC LABOR INTO NON-LABOR AND THE DOUBLE BURDEN BORNE BY CONTEMPORARY WOMEN

Unpaid private non-labor

With the separation of work and home caused by industrialization, domestic reproductive labor was transformed into non-labor. The enormous amount of domestic work accomplished by women, plus their care for family members, particularly children, became something private, non-productive, and therefore invisible. Reproductive labor is therefore socially invisible and performed mainly by women within their private spheres. Domestic work is defined as a "labor of love", a work that does not arise from the social contract but is a natural female attribute. It is unpaid and is not part of the gross national revenue; it is simply not work. By not recognizing the value of a specific kind of work, society obtains free of charge a large amount of work needed for its reproduction. Given the vast amount of unpaid reproductive labor done by women, even the minimal payment for domestic work would lead to an extensive redistribution of social resources. In *Housewife*, today already a classic work, Oakley published the results of one of the first research studies on housework, exposing it as work that has the "status of non-work" in modern society, that is unpaid, that must be accomplished, and is explicitly women's work.[18] Women perform the major part of domestic work (housework, care, consumer-related, organizational and relational work). As Hochschild put it, when they come home from work they start a "second shift."[19] The asymmetrical, gendered division of reproductive labor and the social invisibility of reproductive labor obstruct gender equality despite the elimination of legal and institutional obstacles to it.

Within feminist circles, particularly Marxist feminist circles, the debates about domestic work were most lively during the 1970s and the 1980s. The subjects discussed extensively were payment for housework,

[18] Oakley 2000, 11–13; Gregson et al. 1994, 79.

[19] Hochschild 1989.

inclusion of the economic contribution of domestic work in the gross national product and the importance of domestic work for the reproduction of the workforce.[20] Less thoroughly discussed were the issues of the transformation of private reproductive labor into the public sector, the socialization and collectivization of domestic work (e.g. public laundries, public diners providing food at affordable prices and childcare), all of which proceed from the Marxist concept of women's emancipation and the treatment of domestic work issues.[21] Indeed, the conceptualization of domestic work proved to be a rather difficult task.[22] It involves an extremely complex set of activities that by no means include just cooking, tidying up and bringing up of children. The result of these activities is no more and no less than social reproduction, on the individual as well as the wider, systemic level. An important conclusion arising from the perception of motherhood and housework as inseparable is that family work includes two dimensions: emotional and rational. It is, therefore, a complete work determined by the very inseparability and interdependence of emotional and rational elements. Švab holds that family work is substitutable only in part (e.g. through domestic help services), and only in its material and rational dimensions, while its emotional dimen-

20 Freeman 1973; Coulson et al. 1975; Federici 1975; Landes 1975; Križman in Kozmik, Neubauer 1995.

21 Benston 1969, 103; Federici 1975, 193.

22 Rener (2000, 284–290) defines domestic work as follows: "Domestic work is all unpaid private work; family work is all unpaid (feminine) work within the family sphere, while household work is that part of family or domestic work that ensures the material survival and reproduction of labor force." Švab (2001, 144–145) focuses on family work as part of domestic work and says: "Family work is a concept that denotes a series of activities needed for everyday functioning of a family and its members: household work, childcare, financial and administrative work, technical repairs (home repairs, garden work etc.), and relational work. A special place within the complex of family work goes to relational work, which includes the nursing of family members, sick members, elderly care, alleviation of external (environmental) frustrations (school, workplace) and creation of a pleasant atmosphere within the family. A special aspect of relational work is the creation of balanced independence, individuality, freedom and protection, and this is women's work. Relational work is important primarily because of the manner in which it is performed. In addition to being explicitly gender-specific (it is performed by women, i.e. mothers), it is also emotional. It involves the emotions of others and at the same time it functions on the principle of empathy, meaning that it requires the ability to identify with other person's difficulties, feelings (...) An important place within the complex of family work is occupied by consumption-related work, ranging from consumption itself, shopping and transport to the ability to use various services and master communication with institutions that participate in the management of everyday life".

sion, particularly mother's work, is hard to replace.[23] This means that domestic help services may relieve households only from certain types of domestic tasks, while a large part of invisible work continues to be shouldered by women.

The processes of men's inclusion in the division of labor within the private sphere through the concepts of "new fatherhood"[24] propounded by modern family policies proceed at a much slower rate than the processes of women's inclusion in the public sphere and the labor market. As empirical data show, the changes in gender factors that determine domestic work are an especially slow process and a "protracted" revolution.[25] Men are included in domestic work only selectively and gradually, and this inclusion is restricted to the activities they find more desirable and more pleasant. This means that men, for example, participate in childcare, but only in those tasks that are more pleasant and offer more personal satisfaction: for example, playing with the children, walks, excursions, and assistance in learning. "Less pleasant sides of childcare", for example, care for a sick child, are still women's duties. One characteristic of the gendered division of domestic labor is that women devote more time to childcare and repetitive household chores (e.g. cooking, cleaning etc.), meaning the type of work that must be accomplished on a daily basis and at fixed time, while men continue to have greater control over the time they spend on domestic work (e.g. small repairs around the house, car maintenance etc.).[26]

Care work, which includes the practices of care for oneself and others, for example, looking after family members who need nursing care, is an extension of domestic work performed by women. Data on absence from work in Slovenia to care for a family member[27] indicate that women continue to be the providers of care and nursing within the privacy of the home, given that they are absent from work for caring and nursing reasons six times more often than men. Women also continue to be the organizers and caretakers of the household and family members; they manage the "invisible" work in its entirety, meaning all types of work that are indispensable, obligatory and that cannot be delayed.

23 Ibid., 146.

24 Hochschild 2003; Švab 2001.

25 Hochschild 2003.

26 Hochschild 2003; Švab 2001.

27 The analysis of the state of affairs. The basis for the Proposal for the Resolution on the national program for equal opportunities. (2005-2013), 2005, p. 7.

Contemporary paid domestic workers actually perform the work that modern society expects to be accomplished by women in their roles of wives and mothers without payment and as a labor of love. Paid domestic work is held in low social esteem and has low market value, which also perpetuates the low status of women performing it. The low market value of paid domestic work is not a result of the low demand for it (demand has been increasing recently) or of the easiness of the work itself (it is physically demanding and includes an emotional dimension if care work is involved), but of the low social esteem of women's reproductive labor.

The interpellation of a woman into a mother and a housewife

The requirement of industrialization that economically productive labor be concentrated within large organizations outside the family is, therefore, a factor that decisively influenced the establishment of the contrast between private, economically unproductive labor at home, and the public domain of paid, productive labor. In pre-industrial societies, the structures of work and family were intertwined, forming an integrated cultural unit. A productive unit was a family composed of a father, a mother, in some cases grandparents and unmarried brothers and sisters, children, hired hands and apprentices (as already mentioned, these were children and young people of both genders and from all social classes). The fundamental traits of the family industry were the unity of work and capital (the family was the owner of livestock and tools, and it also contributed workers who received payment for their work in the form of "family" wages), with the work place being in the vicinity of the home.[28] Although the gendered division of labor existed in the past as well, women's role was not restricted to reproductive activities related only to housework and childcare, but women also participated in production activities. Oakley reports that during the pre-industrial period in England women were weavers, millers, tavern keepers, fish sellers, and butchers; they also baked and sold most of the bread consumed, and brewed large amounts of beer.[29] All of that was regarded as domestic work; reproductive and productive labor were not separate or valued differently.[30] In pre-industrial societies, work did not cause estrangement

[28] Hall 1980; Oakley 2000, 28.

[29] Ibid., 29.

[30] Hall 1980, 35.

from family life, and values related to work and family roles did not have, as a consequence, mutually contradictory goals. All adults (as well as the majority of children) worked, and the position of adults of both genders within the community stemmed from identification with the family as much as it did from identification with a specific kind of work.

The differentiation of the family and the economy caused by the transition to industrial production introduced a new differentiation of family roles. Industrialization affected both man's and woman's role. While for men it opened the world outside home, mainly by expanding the range of employment opportunities, it restricted the world of women and confined them to their homes. A woman became a non-employed, economically dependent housewife, and a man the sole breadwinner supporting his wife-housewife and children. Such a gendered division of roles became part of the set of ideals pursued by the middle class during the first decades of the 19th century, one that remained in place even after World War II. At the beginning of the 20th century, it also became part of working-class culture, although economic circumstances prevented many working class families from putting it into practice.

Taking England as an example, Oakley speaks of the three periods between the 18th and the 20th century during which the social position of woman underwent gradual changes: (1) the first lasted from 1750 to the early 1840s, when the factory as a production site began to displace the family, but women still worked outside the home; (2) the second period extended from the 1840s to 1914, when the fall in out-of-home employment among married women concurred with the increasingly widespread conviction that the domestication of women was completely natural; (3) the third was the period that began in 1914, characterized by the express encouragement of women's employment, although with some interruptions (these were a consequence of the two world wars, among other things); this trend culminated in 1950 with the mass employment of women, and then again later, when the conditions of work became intensified, with the gradual problematization of gendered division of labor within the family.[31]

Paradoxically, the early mechanization of the textile industry led to an increase in the number of women and child workers. When women first began to work in factories, the breaking up of the family was not a necessary consequence. Early thread mills respected the tradition of family work and hired whole families. Parents could still exercise their author-

[31] Oakley 2000, 150.

ity and instruct children just as they had done before. During the 1820s, technological changes and the increasingly protective labor legislation imposed restrictions on child labor that until the end of the 18th century was the mainstay of the industry. When factories ceased to hire whole families, work and private life became physically separated, so employed parents were confronted with the question of childcare. Servants were a partial solution. It should be pointed out that not all women of the early 19th century worked in factories, nor was it their only employment option. Unmarried women worked primarily as servants, while middle class daughters and wives worked neither outside the home nor at home. The ideology that prevailed was that work was a shame for women and that women's employment outside the home was evil in itself. It also had an impact, although limited, on the working class. Factory reforms gradually restricted women's work, first in coalmines, then in factories, until in 1841 the board of factory workers in England demanded a "gradual elimination of all kinds of women's work from factories."[32]

The Victorian attempts to remove women from spinning mills and factories and send them back home also triggered changes in men's identity. With the transition to factory production, men's position also changed radically. The loss of traditional work roles and new restrictions on child labor caused a serious crisis in family life and unity. The increasing dependence of children on adults and restrictions imposed upon women by their reproductive role split the work between husband and wife, so the husband became the main breadwinner, and the wife was responsible for raising children; she and the children lived off the husband's income. However, the female factory worker threatened this setup. Oakley holds that it was precisely the fear of this threat that motivated the early legislation on the employment of women. At that time, the principle that women should perform only unpaid domestic work began to be advocated publicly. Restrictions and women's employment outside home were morally condemned, because it presumably damaged women's physical health and because one of its consequences was the neglect of family and home, or in brief, it stood in contrast to the "natural" gendered division of labor.[33] This was also the period when the roles of the middle class woman and the working class woman became differentiated. The doctrine of women's domestication, which referred to middle class women, implied that the married status meant full time employment, frequently of an

32 Ibid., 56.

33 Ibid., 58.

"idle lady." The idle life of female family members became a sign of the prosperity of a middle class Victorian family. One of the main functions of the Victorian family was to provide a peaceful and well organized refuge where a man could take a respite from competition and the strains of new industrial working environments. In these circumstances, women acquired a new function, namely to reproduce the labor force through the emotional support they provided to their husbands.[34]

Davidoff analyzed the role of servants in the idealized image of the middle class European woman, presenting her as pure, tender, moral and decent. Such an ideal image actually induced the separation of a woman from her functions producing two mutually dependent yet opposite poles. While a female servant performed dirty physical work, the mistress could devote herself to the sublime emotional work expected by her husband and children. By employing a servant, middle and higher class women symbolically reconciled the two conflicting identities: they remained home caretakers without getting their hands dirty. The mistress could be aloof, pure and spiritual as long as she had a servant who was dirty, physical and immoral.[35]

The ideology that work outside home was a "misfortune and shame" for married women was accepted by the working class only during the late 19th century. Oakley reports that from the mid 19th century in England, a great part of the female population undertook servant jobs. Nevertheless, from the 1870s onwards, servants became harder to find, since young women preferred to work in shops or offices or to give lessons, all of which were occupations increasingly dominated by women. On the other hand, an increasing number of middle class women wanted to have a servant. The prevalent conviction among the middle class was that the roles of housewife and mother might come in conflict with each other. It was argued that the middle class mother vitally needed help with domestic work, not in order to idle her time away but to be able to dedicate all her energy to the education of children.[36] However, since there was an insufficient number of female servants available, the roles of middle-class and working-class women again came closer. The combination of the mother and housewife role, until then typical of the working class only, now became the norm. This emphasis on motherhood indicates the changes in the position of children in society that took place during

34 Hall 1980, 49.

35 Davidoff in Anderson 2000, 18.

36 Crow in Oakley 2000, 66.

this period.[37] From the mid 19th century onwards, mortality began to decrease, so by the end of the century child mortality was very low. Since it became increasingly likely that a child would survive and become part of the adult world, the attitude to children also changed. While in the 17th century childhood ended at the age of seven or eight, the development of the modern educational system made children dependent on adults for a much longer time. Industrial society's need for a skilled workforce, a ban on child labor and the establishment of the general educational system excluded children from the active inclusion in society typical of the pre-industrial period when children were considered "miniature adults." At the same time, the separation of the family and the economy caused a retreat of the family from society, domesticated women by interpellating them into the primary roles of mother and housewife, and promulgated the idea that the home was a private space in which a woman held a special place and had a special mission.

The return of women to the public sphere of productive, paid work

From the early 1920s, the combination of the mother/housewife role and the paid worker role again became increasingly characteristic of woman's position in society. The two world wars created demand for more female workforce. In the 20th century, women triggered an important shift in society: they entered public life, particularly the process of education and the labor market. In all European countries, women were attaining higher levels of education in all respects, including university education, with the number of women with university degrees now being higher than that of men. In addition, women's participation in the labor market is increasing, where they constitute a valued workforce, owing to their high levels of education. The EU states encourage active inclusion of women in the labor market. Households with both partners in full-time employment have recently become the rule rather than the exception in Eastern and partly in Southern Europe as well. These changes should completely wipe away the pattern of gendered division of labor established by industrialization, where man is the breadwinner and woman a home caretaker.

The massive entry of women into the labor market made apparent the numerous symptoms of the deeply rooted gender inequality in modern

[37] For more, see Ariès 1990.

societies. These inequalities are manifested in the horizontal and vertical segregation of the labor market by gender and salary differences, with women scoring worse than men. The European Commission Report on equality for men and women, 2005, states, among other things, that on average women earn 15% less than men for each hour worked. Williams, for example, reports that the difference in the salaries of mothers and non-mothers has been increasing lately: "Though the wage gap between men and women has fallen, the gap between the wages of mothers and others has widened in recent years".[38] A number of European studies[39] revealed that the scope and quality of women's employment depends on the number of children they have, and that women, including mothers, prevail in part-time jobs and flexible working arrangements. A woman with one child or more is more likely to decide to stay at home or seek a part-time job than a childless woman. At the same time, the number of children has an opposite effect on the unemployment rate among men and their numbers in part-time jobs. Both decrease with the increase in the number of children. According to the report mentioned above, as many as 32.6% of women and only 7.4% of men in the EU have part-time jobs. Behind all of these symptoms is the sole reason – despite the great number of women included in the educational process and their massive presence on the labor market, women continue to be responsible for unpaid reproductive labor.

Therefore, the social roles of genders have not changed essentially, although the circumstances have. Active inclusion of men in the activities within the private sphere is much slower than the process of women's inclusion in the public sphere and the labor market. From this unbalanced dynamics of changing gender roles in society, arises the dual burden shouldered by women, consisting of unpaid, non-valued work within the private sphere and paid work within the public sphere. The research study *How Europeans spend their time* showed that in the majority of EU countries women perform two thirds of domestic work, on average. This means that women spend more time on domestic, unpaid work and less time on paid work than men. Such a situation directly affects the competitiveness of women on the labor market and leads to gender inequality when it comes to the distribution of resources and power. Apart from that, it also seems that the amount of time needed for housework has not been decreasing, although the number of household appliances is grow-

38 Williams 2000, 2.

39 Webster 2005.

ing, and women have more opportunities to gain recognition outside the home.[40] The study *Outsourcing of Domestic Tasks and Time-Saving Effects* has not confirmed the thesis that the growing number of household appliances has reduced the effect of domestic work on the position of women in the labor market.[41] The research project *Working Women's Choices for Domestic Help* revealed that a decision to hire domestic help is primarily conditioned by the number of hours a woman spends at work, her job position and the level of her (and her partner's) income. Another important determinant is the presence of children aged 4 to 12.[42] In the hierarchy of domestic chores, the most valued are activities related to childcare, cooking and shopping. Accordingly, middle class women mainly accomplish these tasks on their own, with the help of their partners. The lowest ranking in this hierarchy are labor-intensive activities (primarily cleaning and ironing), which are the tasks increasingly transferred to paid domestic workers.[43] In attempting to reduce the time needed for housework, women continue to resort to, or have been returning to, domestic workers to relieve them from the burden of housework at least several hours a week. However, they do not talk about it, so few people are aware of this fact.

40 Feminist theory also offers different opinions. Walby, for example, argues that domestic work no longer essentially affects the position of women on the labor market. The main reason in her opinion is the increasing number of household appliances. However, she also relativizes her thesis that the influence of domestic work on women's position on the labor market has been decreasing by invoking the facts about population aging and the increasing burden borne by middle-aged women who care for the elderly (Walby 1997, 50–55).

41 The study has established that the use of microwave ovens, dish washers and the option of eating out reduce to a certain extent, although not essentially, the time needed to accomplish domestic work, but the same cannot be said about the use of cloth dryers, irons, vacuum cleaners etc. One fact that should be taken into account is that the widespread use of household appliances has raised the standards of cleanliness. The study also concluded that the strategy of hiring a domestic worker most contributes to time saving. It further pointed out that all strategies employed to reduce the amount of domestic work, ranging from eating out to the use of technical tools and the hiring of domestic help, are tied to income level, meaning that these strategies are employed by households that have a good socio-economic position (Van der Lippe et al. 2004). Accordingly, these strategies unburden only certain women.

42 Tijdens et al. 2003.

43 Cleaning is the most time-consuming and physically most strenuous category of reproductive labor; it accounts for almost two thirds of all hours spent on household chores. Employed women endeavoring to reduce the time needed for household work gain most from transferring this category to a paid domestic worker (Van der Lippe et al. in Šadl 2004, 985).

Reconciling work and private life – deficient measures

The reconciliation of work and private life is a concept included in equal opportunity policies that aim at encouraging equal division of domestic labor in practice and raising awareness about it. As Stratigaki's[44] content analysis of relevant European documents showed, the concept of reconciling work and family life changed over time – the meaning of the initial, fundamentally feminist notion of equal division of domestic labor shifted towards a more market-based and productive idea of "encouraging flexible forms of work for women" so that they can more easily reconcile work and family duties. This definition conceals the fact that unpaid, "non-productive" domestic labor (or non-labor) is in reality a problem facing not only women but society as a whole. The difficulty of reconciling work and private life is not treated as a problem in itself, but as an obstacle to women's greater participation in the labor market.[45] Therefore, this concept addresses primarily the gender aspect of work sphere organization, and less the gender aspects of intimate sphere organization. What is actually involved is a constant adjustment of family life to the needs of the labor market, but there is no communication in the opposite direction. The measures taken to reconcile work and private life are primarily aimed at achieving and maintaining the active participation of women in the labor market, which is in the interest of the employers, among other things because of the increasingly higher levels of education attained by women. Accordingly, these measures are primarily concerned with creating opportunities for women to combine childcare with paid work, while little attention is devoted to the encouragement of men towards equal division of labor within the private sphere. As a result, these measures reproduce the norm according to which a woman is responsible for unpaid reproductive labor within the private sphere, while men's participation in it is optional. The fact that inequality within the work sphere is a consequence of inequality within the intimate sphere is not acknowledged. For this reason, the assumption behind employment policies pursued by the EU as a whole and its individual member states, that the measures introduced to reconcile work and private life could contribute to the elimination of the causes

44 Stratigaki 2004, 1.

45 Because of this, the main problem in reconciling work and private life is held to be the absence of affordable childcare services adaptable to long and flexible working hours.

of gender inequality on the labor market, appears misleading. These measures primarily focus on creating a system of affordable and quality childcare services and nursing services for other members of society needing nursing care, and on the flexibilization of work that is expected to bring about "family friendly" shorter working hours, individualization of work time, work from home, flexible working hours and the like.[46] When evaluating the measures aimed at reconciling work and private life while taking gender equality as the point of departure, meaning gender equality not only on the labor market but in society in general, it is necessary to call attention to some problematic points. Part-time jobs rarely enable women to achieve, for example, financial independence or job promotion, not to mention leading positions. Women are encouraged to take part-time jobs, but this type of work is explicitly marginalized in modern environments. Flexible and atypical forms of employment frequently go hand in hand with lower salaries, weak social protection, lower or no bonuses, and discontinuity of employment. Seen in this light, the encouragement of women towards this type of employment might help to reconcile work and private duties, but it also reproduces the inequality of women in the labor market and within the private sphere of domestic work. In order for flexible working time, atypical employment arrangements and part-time jobs to truly contribute to the reduction of gender inequalities on the labor market, men should also be included in these schemes to a greater extent. In fact, these measures are primarily targeted at women, rather than men; moreover, the target group does not include all women, but women-mothers. This method reproduces the modern pattern of gendered role division, according to which women are responsible for childcare and home and therefore need to be given help in order to be able to perform both public, paid work and domestic, unpaid (non)work. In other words, it reproduces the pattern of gender roles that it is supposed to transcend.

On the whole, it seems that the measures aimed at reconciling work and private life are more concerned with certain other goals than with gender equality on the labor market, but these other goals are not explicit. Nevertheless, in the European Commission report one can read that good measures aimed at reconciling work and private life contribute to the reduction in gender differences and improvements in the quality of the working environment, and help to solve the problems of negative demographic trends. Viewed in this light, the ultimate goal of the measures

[46] www.mageeq.net

is to enable women to give birth more frequently, to take good care of their homes and families and to be active simultaneously on the labor market. And all that is done in the name of gender equality!

What these measures lack is the problematization and re-definition of the status of unpaid domestic work, currently not perceived as work. Such a problematization should start from the fact that domestic work is extensive and demanding and that it is one of the supporting pillars of every social system. Second, it should aim to achieve a fair and balanced division of domestic responsibilities between genders. Finally, it should ask in what ways the active population, and women in particular, can be relieved of at least a portion of domestic work. These issues do not receive sufficient attention when formulating measures intended to reconcile work and private life, neither on the EU level nor on the level of individual countries.

Paid domestic work and gender equality: one step forward, two steps back

The circumstances surrounding the return of women to the sphere of productive paid work (and the public sphere in general), which gathered pace during the second half of the 20th century, are different from those that were in place in pre-industrial society. The right to non-discrimination at work and in education, the right to equal payment for equal work and work of equal value, the right to equal access to employment, to equal treatment within the systems of compulsory social security and occupational systems of social security (health insurance, retirement and disability schemes, unemployment insurance) – all these are rights that women won through their hard struggle only in the 20th century. These rights today ensure formal legal equality and are understood as universal rights. Theoretically, legislation ensures equal opportunities enabling women to participate on an equal footing with men in the public sphere of paid productive work and politics. However, the "universal" norms that are observed in the public sphere are norms based on male standards. Women must aim for them and adjust to them if they want to take part equally.[47] The assumption underlying the public sphere in democracy is the norm of the "universal human being," whereby the question of who sets the standards for the universality of human beings is not challenged. The fact that the concept of the "universal human being" is constructed

47 Meier et al. 2005, 47, 58; Schecter 1998; Anderson 2000; Williams 2000.

according to hegemonistic rules set by white, adult, heterosexual males is not recognized or challenged. On the contrary, every departure from this absolute norm is understood as a deviation, anomaly or inferiority. Therefore, women may participate in the public sphere if they adjust to male standards that dominate the public sphere and are considered universal norms. Even in Scandinavian countries distinguished by a high proportion of women in politics and on the labor market, research studies have shown that workplaces are dominated by an organizational culture that is based on male norms, and its message to women is that they have to behave as men if they want to occupy men's positions.[48]

This univerzalization of standards and the circumstances of one social group represents a critical point within feminism, as well. Much like the male norms and conditions that are valid as standards within the public sphere, the experiences and problems of middle or upper class heterosexual women in western societies are a norm within feminism. Accordingly, only those women who have resources that enable them to hire domestic workers will have the privilege of participating in the public sphere of paid productive work and politics, starting from a position that at least approaches the "equal opportunity" principle. Women belonging to weaker social and economic groups are still not in a position to do so. Such a situation will not change as long as society is organized on the principles of unequal division of labor within the public and the private sphere, where underestimated and unpaid work within the private sphere is woman's responsibility.

As Ehrenreich and Hochschild emphasized, the globalization of housework and childcare brought together active, ambitious and independent women from around the globe, i.e. career-oriented, upper middle-class women from rich countries and women from poor, third-world countries and post-socialist societies, who strive to improve their own and their families' socio-economic situation. However, these women do not struggle for common goals, as the second wave of western feminism had anticipated. The set of privileges and "equal opportunities" enjoyed by one group and inaccessible to the other stands like a wall between them. The relationship between them is a maternalistic relationship of mistress and servant, or of employer and employee.[49]

It is precisely the phenomenon of paid domestic work where the concurrence of gender, class, nationality and race culminates, producing

[48] Højgaard 1998.

[49] Ehrenreich et al. 2002, 11.

an intra-gender conflict within the relation mistress-servant (domestic worker), i.e. inside the apparently homogeneous social group of women. In this way, gender conflict is internalized as a conflict between groups of women having different starting positions, with these positions in modern society being primarily a consequence of the socio-economic situation, age, nationality and race. By arguing that the participation of women in the public sphere (without challenging the universal male norms governing it) is the only way to achieve gender equality, the perception that work within the public sphere is more valuable than work within the private sphere is implicitly reaffirmed. This reproduces the social, economic and ideological invisibility of domestic work.[50]

The feminist debate about the differences among women and their different socio-economic, national, racial and other starting points indicates that the integration of women into the public sphere no longer appears as a satisfactory solution to the gender inequality problem. Instead, a thorough re-evaluation of both the private and the public spheres and their functions and roles should be considered.

50 Schecter 1998.

STRUCTURAL TRAITS OF CONTEMPORARY PAID DOMESTIC WORK

The factors that increase demand for domestic services

After World War II, theorists predicted the complete disappearance of paid domestic work in modern societies. Coser, for examples, gives two explanations to support this thesis: domestic work would no longer be needed because home appliances would take over the work of domestic workers, and the imbalance of power, manifested in the relationship between the domestic worker and the buyer of her services, was not in harmony with democratic principles of modern societies.[51] Yet in modern societies the occurrence of paid domestic work as informal employment has again begun to rise steeply after a period of several decades when it all but disappeared. The reasons should be sought in socio-economic changes: women's gaining of an ever stronger foothold in the labor market and in the public sphere, which coincides with the reproduction of the understanding of domestic work as female non-work; the disappearance of extended families and their transformation into nuclear families; the rise in the number of single-parent families; demographic trends such as population aging and the feminization of migration, unemployment and poverty. Apart from these factors that explicitly affect the position of women in modern societies, other significant factors are the globalization of the labor market, including of reproductive labor, and the automation of work, which contributes to an increase in unemployment among certain social classes while producing over-employment of other social classes.

Although there exists a consensus within scholarship and general knowledge that in modern times paid domestic work is a result of the overload of work shouldered by women and a way to avoid gender and generational conflicts related to the division of domestic labor, the demand for paid domestic work cannot be fully explained by these reasons. Paid domestic work also has status implications, and that in two regards.

51 Coser in Ozyegin 2001, 31.

A key component of the domestic worker's role is that, by doing work instead of a mother/wife/daughter, she also reproduces an imaginary identity of the employer as a member of the middle/upper class who is not a physical laborer and who embodies purity. This is contrasted with the identity of a domestic worker who is a physical laborer, probably an immigrant and a member of a lower class. Anderson holds that this aspect is particularly obvious as the phenomenon of the racialisation of domestic work that in western European societies was, and still is the rule rather than the exception. Second, many households hire a domestic worker not because they are overloaded with work needed to maintain the household, but in order to be able to maintain a specific lifestyle. For example, a domestic worker in France says: "Every day I am cleaning for my madam, one riding shoes, two walking shoes, house shoes, that is every day, just for one person ... plus the children, that is one rubber and one shoes for everyday school, that is another two... And that is other shoes for the children. Fourteen shoes every day..."[52]

However, the primary source of the increasing demand for paid domestic work in modern times is the service class, or the new middle class. The largest group of domestic help users, says Šadl,[53] although by no means the only one, are two-career heterosexual couples and the professional elites. Other growing group are affluent single persons and older people living alone. Undoubtedly, single-parent families, too, need flexible childcare services and help at home in order to be able to stay in paid employment, but it is a question whether such families can afford this service.

Inadequate definitions of paid domestic work

As already mentioned, experts estimate that in modern societies the number of domestic workers in individual households has not essentially decreased compared to their numbers in the past.[54] In western Europe, North America and in rich Asian and African countries, paid domestic work is performed predominantly by women, many of them being immigrants from Eastern Europe, East Asia, Latin America and poor African countries. Many are illegal immigrants, or they are "illegalized" at least in two respects: because they have no residence permit and be-

52 In Anderson 2002, 16.

53 Šadl 2004, 982.

54 Lutz, Schwalgin 2006, 4.

cause they are not registered as being employed. They work within the "twilight zone" of the informal labor market, without permanent residence or work permits, and they are excluded from the system of citizen rights such as health care, education, pension schemes, sick leave compensations, paid vacation etc. Their living and working conditions are extremely uncertain.

Paid domestic work seems to be another type of low-quality employment: the work day is long, wages are low, and working duties are often humiliating. Nevertheless, paid domestic work is in many respects different from other "low-paid" jobs. It mainly involves housework and childcare, meaning duties that are not understood as work in its true sense, so domestic workers are not perceived as "true" workers. Domestic work is to a great extent "moonlighting," so the worker does not enjoy legal protection. Her work, wage and work time are not defined nor is her relationship to the employer, which is in many cases one of mutual, existential co-dependence. One of its peculiarities is that it is somewhat affected and quasi-familiar. Domestic work is done within the private, intimate sphere, away from the eye of the public. So, despite the increasing scope of paid domestic work in modern rich societies, this kind of work remains invisible, and so do those who perform it and those who pay for it. The contemporary area of paid domestic work is therefore a combination of the suppressed problems and paradoxes of the modern world, for example, gender inequality, the overload of unpaid domestic work needed for social reproduction shouldered by women, increasingly large differences in the distribution of resources and opportunities among various social/population groups, the global division of work etc. Although an increasing number of women work within the area of paid domestic work in individual households, the conditions under which they work and their experiences have been largely unresearched. Much like unpaid domestic work, paid domestic work, too, represents a big challenge for modern feminist, sociological and political theory.

The problematic definition of domestic work mentioned above has proved to have purely practical implications – for domestic workers, the absence of a definition is simply a practical problem. According to the most general definition, there are two types of domestic work: housework (cleaning, tidying up, cooking etc.) and care for the children and household members needing nursing care. The most frequently heard complaint of domestic workers is that they have to perform "all" tasks, including, for example, gardening, cleaning of the garage, of the employer's work premises, sometimes even cleaning of the apartments of the

employer's relatives and friends, care of household pets etc.[55] Or, that in addition to the childcare initially agreed on, they end up performing all the household chores. On top of that, cooking, tidying up and shopping are expected to be accomplished "on the fly," and accordingly, these tasks are not recognized as work by the employer. The International Labor Organization thus defines the domestic worker: "Domestic helpers and cleaners sweep, vacuum clean, wash and polish, take care of household linen, purchase household supplies, prepare food, serve meals and perform various other domestic duties. Tasks include: (a) sweeping, vacuum cleaning, polishing and washing floors and furniture, or washing windows and other fixtures; (b) washing, ironing and mending linen and other textiles; (c) washing dishes; (d) preparing, cooking and serving meals and refreshments; (e) purchasing food and performing various other related tasks; (f) performing related tasks; (g) supervising other workers".[56] However, this definition is too narrow in light of the tasks that contemporary house workers actually fulfill. Above all, it does not include the provision of care, such as childcare and nursing of the elderly and the sick. The definition of the tasks of informal house workers is not standardized, and there is no control over whether employers adhere to the definition. Accordingly, employers can demand that domestic workers perform any type of job. Apart from that, the working hours of a domestic worker are also undefined. A domestic worker who is hired on a daily basis is expected to be available and "on duty" around the clock, and those who come in once a week are expected to tidy up the entire household within four hours.

"Live-in", "live-out"

Contemporary domestic workers are therefore not classified on the basis of the type of work they perform (e.g. baby-sitters, housewives, nurses), given that the majority of them, as they themselves report, perform "all" domestic work. The classification of contemporary domestic workers is primarily based on the living arrangement – live-in or live-out workers.[57] The tasks of live-in workers usually include childcare or looking after the family members who need nursing care, while live-out workers' tasks typically include housework and cleaning, and occasionally childcare

55 Anderson 2000, 15.

56 ILO International Standard Classification of Occupations 1990.

57 Katzman 1979; Thornton Dill 1994; Anderson 2000.

during the day; those who do only the housework and cleaning may work either for one or for several households. Anderson reports that the demand for live-in workers in western European capitals has been on the increase.[58] The second main criteria in domestic workers' classification relates to the country of origin of the worker and her citizen status, that is to say, whether or not they have residence and work permits. The studies of paid domestic work have revealed that a large proportion of domestic workers in European capitals have immigrant status.[59] Although there is a widespread conviction that the majority of domestic workers belong to the poorest economic class, and that they lack formal education, which is thought to be the reason for their taking on domestic jobs, this is not quite true. The high prices charged by recruitment agencies in Europe actually suggest that the transfer and costs involved in the search for a domestic job can only be afforded by women who in their home countries belong to the middle class and have occupational education, some even a university degree. Although the women from poor parts of the world who move to richer countries and look for domestic jobs are undoubtedly in a difficult position in their home countries, poverty is not invariably the only reason behind their decision to move and take up this type of job. Other reasons include sexual discrimination, for example, forced marriage, bans on divorce or other forms of culture-specific violence against women. Sometimes, women emigrate to escape failed marriage or to reunite with family already living abroad. Parrenas, who conducted a comprehensive study among Filipino domestic workers in Rome and Los Angeles, tells of women who work abroad in order to maintain the middle-class lifestyles of their extended families back home, which may include their children, husband, parents and brothers' and sisters' families.[60]

58 Anderson 2002, 28.

59 Schester 1998; Anderson 2000; Cancedda 2001; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001; Parrenas 2001; Ehrenreich, Hochschild 2002. According to UNIFEM data, in recent years there has been an increase in the number of women migrating because they are the primary or even the only bread winner in the family. Globally, women account for 50% of the international emigrant population; in countries that are predominantly sources of immigration (e.g. the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Indonesia), during the period 2000-2003 they accounted for 80% of the emigrant population (UNIFEM 2002). The great majority find jobs in the modern "love industry" – either as domestic workers and attendants, or as sex workers. This is an area of informal and unregulated work, at the intersection of the private and the public sphere, and the legal and the illegal. Their work generates profit for the country of origin and for the host country.

60 "I actually spent quite a lot of time with Valentina. She sometimes spent the night at my apartment. One day, when I was visiting her at her employer's home, a letter arrived

"Live-in" domestic workers in particular are frequently, although not as a rule, recruited from the immigrant population, including illegal immigrants. These workers are under serious stress caused by a constant threat of expulsion, and many are burdened by debt, either owned to an agency, or a relative in their home country, or a member of an informal network in the host country. A job in a household that also provides accommodation and food appears as a good solution in a situation where an emigrant finds herself in an unknown country where she has to find a job, pay the rent, and learn the language and cultural habits, all the while hiding from the authorities. However, live-in jobs have many negative sides: poor wages and undefined working hours that extend to their being on duty around the clock, because the job usually involves care for young children or sick or older people. Early morning hours are dedicated to children, late night hours to attending to guests and employers and dog walking, and even during the night the worker has to respond to any calls or to crying children. In the meantime, she performs routine household chores: cleaning, washing up, polishing, shopping, cooking, laundry, ironing etc. Live-in workers frequently do their work in complete social isolation. They find themselves in an unknown cultural environment and have no other social contacts or connections save for those with the members of the household. The only opportunity for socialization and the only time they have for themselves is one day off per week, although not all employers necessarily observe that. Another problem that live-in workers face is the lack of privacy – some do not have their

from the Philippines. Upon reading it, she suddenly became distressed and could not help but comment sarcastically that she always gets a headache when she receives a letter because almost always it is a request for money. I asked to read the letter and found out that her parents were asking for additional funds to pay for the graduation dress of her sister, the costs of her other sister's participation as a muse in a town fiesta, and the party her parents feel obliged to give because of their daughter's role in the fiesta. They wanted at least U.S.$200. Valentina had actually not been upset by having to send them money but was upset over not having the money to send them" (Parrenas 2001, 101). Another story of a Filipino domestic worker: "I have not been able to save any money at this point (after seven years in Rome). Even though I am the youngest (of four children), I am the breadwinner of my family. I send them 500.000 lira (U.S.$333) every month. Life is hard when you are single. My sisters are married, and so my parents do not expect as much from them. My brother lives with my parents, and he does not have a job but has a lot of children. ... So I support his family. ... At least I am able to help my family. Let's say I continued my career as a policewomean (in the Philippines), my salary would have just been enough for myself" (ibid., 111). Although there is no doubt that by far the strongest motive behind both immigrant and local women's decision to work in the field of informal paid domestic work is absolute poverty, the examples above show that poverty is a relative notion but that the pressure experienced by women is no smaller for that reason.

own room, others are asked to leave the door to their room open so that they can hear the children if they call during the night, and so on. And this is not all there is to it – live-in workers cannot have their own family and children. Or, if they do have a family in their home country, they are separated from it for long periods of time and have to leave their children to the care of relatives or hired childminders. It is not unusual for a domestic worker who has emigrated to Europe to hire a childcare worker at home to take care of her own family. Anderson estimates that live-in immigrant domestic workers in Europe are between 20 and 40 years old, meaning still in their reproductive age.[61]

A special kind of live-in arrangement is the au-pair system. Some European countries formalized this agreement on cultural and educational exchange, intended especially for young women who want to learn a language, in 1969 in Strasbourg. Au-pairs find a position with a western European family through an au-pair agency. Their duties include help with childcare and household work, and in exchange they are given accommodation, food and pocket money. Au-pair status is not conceptualized as work status; au-pairs can work only a certain number of hours a week, and can stay in the host country for two years at the most, depending on the contract. Although formal protection is in place, there are many abuses. The au-pairs Anderson interviewed reported that they had to work throughout the day, performing all kinds of tasks, and had to be available all the time. Many reported sexual harassment etc.[62] Nevertheless, many au-pairs remain in the target country even after the expiry of their au-pair status.

While there is a high demand for live-in domestic workers on the part of employers, equally high is the demand for live-out arrangements on the part of domestic workers. The theorists of paid domestic work treat live-out arrangements as a modernization compared to live-in arrangements.[63] Live-out workers usually work for several employers. Those whose duties involve a combination of household work and childcare may work for one employer only, but their working hours are better de-

61 Anderson 2000, 43. Legal immigrant domestic workers in Singapore must sign a statement that they will not marry a Singapore citizen during their stay in the country. They must not become pregnant and they have to undergo pregnancy tests in six-month intervals. If the result is positive, a domestic worker may be immediately deported to her country of origin. The passport is deposited with the employer, as is 20% of the earnings set apart for the expenses of potential deportation (Bakan, Stasiuls 1997, 5).

62 Anderson 2006, 24.

63 E.g.. Katzman 1978; Thornton Dill 1994; Ozyegin 2001.

fined. Nevertheless, long working hours occur frequently with this kind of arrangement, as well. If the duties include childcare, the working day starts early in the morning, before the employers leave for work, and ends at night, when they return home. Live-out workers who work for several employers must be skillful managers of time to cover the distance from one workplace to another. The time they spend traveling from one place to another is usually not paid and is not counted as working time, although it may amount to as many as 15 hours a week, with the result being abnormally long working hours on the weekly level. Despite this, a live-out arrangement has its advantages over the live-in arrangement: there is less personal control on the part of the employer; a domestic worker is not so critically dependent on the employer, because losing a job with one household does not lead to a complete loss of income. The situation becomes complicated if a live-out domestic worker herself has small children, works long hours and has a low income. The reconciliation of long working hours with childcare is very difficult in such a case.

In Europe, the usual pattern found in the area of domestic help involves younger immigrants from poor parts of the world who have just arrived in Europe. After spending a few years as live-in domestic workers, they have paid off their debts, have become accustomed to the new culture and have established social networks, so they achieve a higher level of independence that enables them to choose a live-out arrangement.[64] Local women working as domestic help only rarely live with the family for which they work. Usually, these are students or women in their late middle age, or retired women who cannot find another job or have a very low income. The demand for live-in workers is expected to rise along with the increasing demand for elder care, nursing, and childcare outside of kindergarten operating hours, caused by the ever longer working hours and more strenuous jobs of parents.

Although the majority of the literature on contemporary domestic workers is primarily concerned with the downsides of domestic work, which are to a great extent a consequence of the lack of regulation in this area, the experiences of domestic workers are diverse and some are positive.[65] Anderson concluded that two factors have the greatest impact

64 Anderson 2000.

65 Maria from the Philippines, working as a live-in domestic worker in London, reports: "I earn enough so that I can help my family in the Philippines. I get more than $1000 a month and everything is free. They pay for my Social Security, and they handled my papers. They pay for my ticket home every year. When I go, they also give me vacation pay for two months. That is why I don't have a problem here. Everything is free, and

on the quality of working and living conditions for domestic workers in Europe: their relationship with the employer (live-in/live out), and their status within the country (citizenship status and work permit, legal/illegal work).[66] Most of the negative aspects of paid domestic work stem from the informal employment of illegal immigrants who live in the employer's household. This type of paid domestic work fully corresponds to the traditional model, except that today both the domestic workers and the employers are violating the law.

Who paid domestic workers are: coincidence of gender, class and nationality/race

There is therefore a consensus in the literature that paid domestic work, and particularly the area of live-in arrangements, is to a great extent occupied by immigrants.[67] Several reasons lead to this situation. We have already mentioned that the live-in arrangement appeals to immigrants, because it provides shelter, accommodation and food, and gives them time to adjust to a new culture, learn the language and become included in social networks. In this way, domestic workers become "one of the family," which may be a good or a bad solution, depending on the household. The syntagm "one of the family" is well-known to researchers of domestic work, and it points to the evidently ambivalent relationship between the employer and the domestic worker.[68] The apparently relaxed relationship and care for good working conditions usually conceal an asymmetrical relationship. The domestic worker is expected to do the work in such a manner and with such a commitment as if she were caring for her own family, but the kindly appearance of the employer still rests on the mistress-servant relationship. The motive behind making the domestic worker "one of the family" is to make her available to the greatest extent possible, and to make her willing, caring, and ready to make sacrifices for the household. This relegates her own family to the background. And it is precisely the obligations of the domestic worker towards her own family that make the demand for immigrant domestic workers so high.

---

they also cover my insurance. ... It is OK. Anytime I want to leave, I can. ... That is why I lasted long with this family. If that were not the case, I would have probably returned to the Philippines a long time ago" (Parrenas 2001, 103).

66 Anderson 2000, 48.

67 Schester 1998; Anderson 2000; Parrenas 2001; Ehrenreich, Hochschild 2002; Fauve-Chamoux 2004.

68 Bakan et al. 1997.

Although there are many local women, not only from the working class, who are without employment and would be willing to take a domestic job, either as a main or a side job, most of them decline live-in arrangements. They prefer to work for several employers, a few hours a week for each. One reason is that their priority is their own homes and families, so they cannot become "one of the family" or be as committed to the employer's household as they are to their own. On the other hand, immigrant women with families and children willingly exchange unpaid domestic work at home for paid domestic work abroad, entrusting the care for their own families to other women (mothers, sisters, the oldest daughter, a hired caretaker etc.) or a partner.[69]

Contemporary domestic workers mainly consider this type of work as a transition stage and a source of income that enables them to resolve the current crisis or become settled in a new society. Owing to the second-rate social image of this type of work, every domestic worker wants the domestic job to last the shortest time possible. However, many immigrants from poor countries, even those with higher education, earn much more as domestic workers in rich western countries than they would earn at home working as, for example, teachers or engineers. The money they send home enables the upward economic and social mobility of their families, particularly children, while they themselves are in a paradoxical situation of upward economic mobility and steep downward social mobility. Parrenas estimates that between 34% and 54% of the entire Filipino population depends on money earned by emigrant domestic workers. Accordingly, says Parrenas, domestic work, or care as she names it, is the biggest export item of the Philippines.[70]

Obviously, immigrant domestic workers earn profit not only for the household for which they work, but also for their country of origin and the host country. For the host country, domestic reproductive work remains free of charge in the sense that educated local women can participate in the labor market and contribute to reproduction while paying for domestic work from their own pockets. Since many immigrant women stay and work in a host country for a limited period of several years and then return to their home countries, they do not incur costs in the form of old age pension for the host country. Generally, they do not bring with them their own children, so the costs of their children's education and

69 For more on the phenomenon of transnational families, which is closely connected with the feminization of migration and modern immigrant domestic workers, see Parrenas 2002, 80–116.

70 Parrenas 2002.

healthcare are borne by the country of origin. On the other hand, the country of origin gets a considerable inflow of cash from emigrant domestic workers. According to UNIFEM data, the money emigrant workers send to their families at home represents the second largest capital flow to the "developing countries;" it exceeds by almost three times their formal development potential and may amount to as much as 10% of the gross income of such a country.[71]

The great demand for paid domestic workers in rich societies today makes possible one of the rare routes of legal migration.[72] Contemporary domestic workers are recruited from a variety of cultures, ethnic groups and races, and many of them are well educated. Cultural differences between the domestic worker and the employer carry the potential for the cultural mixing of various social classes, nationalities, races, languages, religions etc., much as was the case in the past. This mutual influence has several aspects. For example, child minders mediate their culture to the children in their care through the stories they tell, the language they speak, culture-specific diet practices and socialization methods. Yet there are also cultural conflicts between domestic workers and household members, since the employers generally do not take into account cultural differences and perceive these as a disturbance rather than an advantage. A domestic worker coming from a foreign country or continent, or belonging to a different religion, may be perceived on the part of the household members as the "Other", an enemy, or as one who introduces strange customs. Such a characterization, coupled with the image of a domestic worker as a sexual seducer and therefore a source of impurity, leads to not so rare sexual and other abuses of domestic workers. So, for example, the fear that a domestic worker of a different nationality, race, social class, or religion designated as the "Other" will infect the household, may lead to extraordinary demands

71 UNIFEM 2000.

72 The Canadian program launched in 1992 enables citizens of Canada to hire a live-in domestic worker. The future employer registers his demand with the employment agency, but he/she has to prove that he/she first tried to employ a Canadian citizen but could not find one. The prospective domestic worker must complete a 6-month educational course or prove that she has at least one year of experience in the area of domestic work and care work. She also has to undergo medical examination. On completing these steps, she is issued residence and work permits valid for one year, which can be extended for the period of one year. After working for two years as a live-in worker, she can ask for landed-immigrant status, which entitles her family from the country of origin to join her in Canada if the family can prove that it can support itself. After three years of landed-immigrant status, they can become Canadian citizens (Chang 2000, 135).

such as that she wash her clothes separately, that she use a separate set of dining utensils or similar. In this way, an informal hierarchy becomes established where the quality of domestic workers is judged based on the stereotypes about the country and culture from which she comes. These stereotypes[73] depersonalize domestic workers, deny their individuality and mark them as the representatives of a specific social type. Accordingly, not all workers share the same experience of paid domestic work. It is an area of class, racial and ethnic differentiation that produces more or less privileged workers. Women coming from the third world countries are usually paid less and treated worse than European women who can obtain more secure arrangements and have more symmetric relationships with their employers.

Recruitment methods

The literature on this issue identifies several basic methods available to immigrant workers who want to obtain a domestic job in Europe. The most vulnerable are those women who come to Europe in an unorganized manner, for example, as tourists, and who do not have social networks in the town where they work. Most of them have no money and face the threat of deportation. They turn for assistance in finding jobs to organizations such as Caritas, the Red Cross, or the Church. It is precisely this group of women who most frequently accept live-in jobs, since the private sphere of a household that ensures shelter and food provides a protection against expulsion. This places them in a situation of complete dependence on the good will of the employer.

Another method of recruitment, perhaps the most frequent and safe, involves informal networks.[74] Relatives or friends already living in the

[73] Anderson interviewed an employer in Athens who thus described her many domestic workers: "I have a problem with women from Ethiopia: they are lazy, and they have no sense of duty, though they are good-hearted. ... I have a lot of experience. I have had ten girls from Ethiopia. They like to be well-dressed – hair, nails; for that they are good. ... Then the Albanians – that was terrible. They are liars, always telling lies. And telephone maniacs because they have never had telephones. And they have no knowledge of electronic appliances. For seven months I had that girl. ... Then I had one from Bulgaria. The Bulgarians are more civilized, more sincere, more concerned about work. But they are very unhappy" (Anderson 2002, 109).

[74] Edita, from Peru, works as a domestic worker in Barcelona: "My sister said, 'If you want to come to Barcelona, come to Spain and I have got a job for you.' So, I came and the next day I was working. ... I came with a friend as well. ... Then came the sister of my friend, and then came my husband, her husband and her mother, ... and we had another house, a bigger one. Then I called everybody and my sister and my cousin – she was

target country may lend an immigrant the money needed to pay for the journey and help him/her with finding a job and accommodation. It is good if the employer is known in advance, since that enables them to obtain a work permit. However, many employers promise to arrange the paperwork, and are perhaps honest in their intention to do so, but the complexity and duration of procedures may divert them from the idea of recruiting a foreign domestic worker. As a result, even domestic workers recruited through informal networks are often compelled to live in a country illegally and become dependent on their employers. Some employers use the arrangement of paperwork as an excuse to retain the passport and other personal documents of a domestic worker.

The third method is the recruitment industry that involves agencies specializing in recruiting workers from poor parts of the world. These agencies are very diverse, and most operate on the edge of the law. One example of unlawful dealings is a provision of forged documents or obtaining a signature from a fake employer to obtain a work permit. A woman relying on such an arrangement may pay as much as three thousand dollars for the service and end up seeking a job on her own.[75] The high interest loans offered by agencies to immigrant workers, ostensibly to cover expenses, constitute one of the most acute problems in the operation of recruitment agencies.

Another method that was problematized primarily in Great Britain involved the legislation that allowed non-European employers or Britons returning to GB after living abroad to bring with them their household workers, nannies, nurses, cooks, personal assistants and so on. Their staff could obtain a tourist visa or a visa that prohibited work except for the employer whom the person accompanied and who was designated by name in the immigrant worker's passport. The problem associated with this method was the complete dependence of domestic workers on employers whom they could not exchange for other employers if they wanted to remain in Great Britain legally.[76] This law was recently changed thanks to the advocacy of the Kalayaan organization.

---

a secretary and we found her some job – it was easy to find work very quickly – then my son came and then my other sister and so the same with others. In nine months everybody was here" (Anderson 2000, 31).

75 Heyzer et al. 1994.

76 Anderson 2000; Chang 2000, 139.

Newspaper advertisements also form an effective method.[77] Although for illegal immigrants it is a welcome option, its negative side is that it is wholly unregulated, meaning that it does not guarantee any security. In Berlin, for example, the sexualization of domestic workers is taken for granted to such a degree that domestic workers advertising their services in newspapers explicitly stress "No sex!"[78]

Informal networks are therefore the most frequent and the most reliable method for both recruiting domestic workers and finding domestic jobs, despite the presence of recruitment agencies. The degree of dependence and risk is considerable for both parties: an employer who allows a domestic worker into his/her intimate sphere risks ending up with low-quality service or some other type of abuse. A domestic worker entering an unregulated employment arrangement risks exploitation, abuse, non-payment and the like. Yet women who take domestic jobs are much more vulnerable than the employers and more dependent on them than vice versa, because their socio-economic situation is weaker and more uncertain than that of the employer.

The situation in selected EU capitals

There are no exhaustive empirical studies on domestic work in Europe. It is possible to find fragmented case studies focusing on individual world capitals or individual issues, mainly gender, migration and regulation.[79] Unlike the issues relating to immigrant domestic workers (i.e. the aspects of nationality and race), the issues affecting local women working as domestic workers (the aspects of social class and age) are completely unresearched.[80] This is not surprising, given that domestic work is a hidden social phenomenon on the edge of legal regulations, so the protagonists (workers themselves, recruitment agents and employers) do not want to

[77] A domestic worker in Spain says: "I found a job as an *interina,* and I was working for one man on his own and then I was working for a very rich couple. I have got all those jobs by put a job in *Primavera (Primerama),* the foreigners here use that a lot and it's good to put an advert in there, because then they call you. They called me and at the time you could take your choice. There were so many who called, more that you would want and you just ask and you listen to them and then you decided which job you wanted to go for" (Anderson 2000, 38).

[78] Ibid.

[79] Fauve-Chamoux 2004; Ehrenreich, Hochschild 2002; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001; Parrenas 2001; Chang 2000; Anderson 2000; Chin 1998; Schester 1998; Bakan et al. 1997; Heyzer et al. 1994; Thornton 1994; Sanjek et al. 1990; Rollins 1985; Cock 1980.

[80] Cancedda 2001; Ozyegin 2001; Gregson, Lowe 1994.

be exposed in any manner. The research study *Employment in Household Services*,[81] mainly focusing on the attempts to regulate this area of work in Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Great Britain seems to be the most extensive and to cover the largest part of Europe so far. Another extensive study entitled *Doing the Dirty Work*[82] places emphasis on the migration aspect of contemporary domestic work in Athens, Barcelona, Berlin, Bologna, London and Paris. Interestingly, there are no studies exploring the domestic work area in Eastern Europe. Reasons for this should be sought among the stereotypes and mistaken beliefs that, owing to greater poverty, the East European countries are mainly the source of domestic workers rather than their target countries. However, informal records suggest that the demand for domestic workers is on the rise in Eastern Europe, too.

Anderson has established variations in employment patterns across Europe. In Athens, Barcelona and Bologna, that is to say, in Southern European countries, the most frequent form of employment is the live-in arrangement. Since the late 1970s, illegal immigrants in Greece have been mainly Poles, Albanians and Filipinos. The method of entry is frequently a tourist or a student visa. The majority of domestic workers in Athens are immigrants without Greek citizenship, and without residence or work permits. Jobs such as help with housework and childcare and looking after family members who need nursing care are the only types of jobs available to immigrants in Greece, apart from prostitution, although many immigrant women are well educated and speak good English, some even another foreign language besides. The domestic workers whom Anderson met in Athens were from various regions, ranging from Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia to Latin America. As mentioned above, most are live-in child minders or nurses looking after the elderly or the sick, and they also perform other household tasks. One serious problem facing domestic workers in Athens is non-payment. The majority reported that they had one free day per week, although, infers Anderson, those not having a day off could not attend the interview. A domestic worker who becomes sick loses her job and is left without income and without a roof over her head. The employer does not feel any responsibility towards her. As Anderson reports, domestic workers in Athens frequently cope with psychological problems as a consequence of immigrant status, constant fear of the police, denied requests for asylum, uncertain em-

[81] *Employment in Household Services,* Cancedda 2004.

[82] *Doing the Dirty Work*, Anderson 2000.

ployment, hard work, social isolation and a humiliating attitude on the part of employers. Physical and sexual abuse is not rare, either.[83]

In Spain, there are several types of domestic work arrangements. Live-in workers are mainly immigrant women, but there is also a considerable number of domestic workers working for one employer only and living at their own homes, and workers working for several employers. Another category specifically mentioned are child minders and "family workers." The latter work several hours a day looking after old people; they are mainly local women paid by the social services. Immigration policy in Spain allows for less diversity within the area of domestic work than Greek immigration policy. Domestic workers mainly come from Morocco, the Philippines, the Dominican Republic and Peru. The Filipino group includes a considerable number of men who work mainly as gardeners, drivers and cleaners, often alongside their partners.[84]

As early as the 1960s, Italy reported an increase in the area of domestic work employment, especially among immigrants. The Catholic organization ACLI-COLF campaigned for the interests of domestic workers as early as the 1970s. Anderson holds that the very presence of such an organization of domestic workers means that they cannot be ignored by society despite the fact that the majority of them are immigrants. During the early 1970s, local women began to refuse live-in domestic work, which created a considerable demand for domestic help that was systematically met by immigrants. Until 1986, immigrant domestic workers could obtain work permits in Italy on the condition that they applied as live-in workers working for a known employer.[85] In 1995, there was a renewed attempt to regulate domestic work performed by immigrants in Italy. The Dini decree stipulated the deportation of illegal immigrants and a prison sentence of up to 6-year for employers hiring illegal immigrants. However, if the employer makes a statement that the person has been working in the household for four months and pays in advance social security taxes for him/her, the domestic worker may obtain residence and work permits. Thanks to this law, 220,000 immigrants in Italy obtained residence permits within one year.[86]

Anderson reports a much smaller number of live-in domestic workers in France and Germany compared to Southern European cities. Of

83 Anderson 2000, 49–56.

84 Ibid., 56–66.

85 Andall, Arena in Anderson 2000, 66.

86 Anderson 2000, 67.

those live-in domestic workers in Paris and Berlin, the majority are immigrants. A research study conducted in France in 1994 identified four social groups of women working as domestic workers. The largest group is composed of immigrant workers from Africa, for whom the public sector is virtually completely inaccessible, while in the private sector they mainly find jobs in old people's homes. These jobs are hard and low paid, and nurses are frequently the victims of racist abuse, so they believe that work in private households, where they take care only of household members, is radically easier.[87] In addition to immigrants, domestic workers also come from the ranks of women with low education, women older than 45, students and unemployed women who are included in the state subsidized employment programs. The group of local women working as domestic workers therefore includes both older and younger women, while the immigrant women for whom this is the only job opportunity are mainly middle aged women, in their late twenties to forties. The most frequent type is a live-out arrangement, while the majority of those having live-in arrangements are Filipino immigrants, many among them illegal residents. They report difficulties similar to those of their colleagues in Athens, Barcelona and Bologna: long working hours, work for friends and relatives of the employer without additional payment, sexual harassment, fake accusations of theft, no insurance in case of illness and so on.[88]

The most widespread form of domestic work in Berlin is cleaning with occasional childcare done by live-out workers. Thanks to the partial state subsidy awarded to mothers for childcare and to the well-organized childcare system, the demand for live-in workers primarily for the purpose of childcare is not as great as it is, for example, in Athens, Barcelona, Bologna or Paris. The main problem faced by the households in most parts of western Europe is care for children up to 3 years of age, since public kindergartens do not provide this service or the number of places in nurseries is limited. In Germany, much as in Great Britain, most families with both parents working resolve this problem by entrusting childcare to child minders who look after children in their own homes. Care for the sick and the elderly is also well-organized in Germany (compulsory insurance covers the costs of long-term care in an institution or at home), so the demand for domestic help and live-in workers has not been increasing. Persons wishing to provide childcare services in their homes

87 Croff in Anderson, 70.

88 Anderson 2000, 76.

must have, in addition to a permit, at least a decent apartment, while the standards in the area of care for the elderly require additional training. Because of these rules, these two segments of domestic work are inaccessible to illegal immigrants in Germany. Anderson reports that live-in domestic workers in Berlin are completely invisible; those few whom she met were from the former Soviet Union countries and East European countries. The workers interviewed thought that the practice of hiring domestic services in Berlin was relatively new (it first emerged only during the early 1990s) and has been gradually increasing.[89]

In Great Britain, paid domestic work has been receiving wide publicity as part of the strategy to reconcile work and private life that has been extensively covered by newspapers and journals, documentaries, interviews etc. Baby-sitters in particular were in the limelight along with the sensationalist stories about their inadequate treatment of children in their care. The findings of a research study on paid domestic work in Hampstead conduced by Cox dispelled the myth that domestic help is hired by cash-rich and time-poor people, and that domestic workers are cash-poor and time-rich people. Cox established that the buyers of domestic services are people with a lot of money and a lot of time, and that domestic workers are women who are already burdened by housework in their own homes. This means that time-rich and cash-rich people employ time-poor and cash-poor people. Cox estimates that low-paid domestic work is performed by the 10% of the poorest women who are already burdened by unpaid domestic work at home. Cox also established that in London a great deal of paid domestic work is accomplished by immigrants, while in other British towns the workers are poor local women.[90] Gregson and Lowe have established that in Great Britain the demand for paid domestic work comes primarily from two-career, middle class families, and especially from women in managerial positions. These households are experiencing a "reproductive crisis,"[91] which

89 Ibid., 78.

90 Cox in Anderson 2000, 87.

91 Romero uses the term "the housework dilemma" as a synonym for "the crisis of reproduction," describing it as an absence of public responsibility for domestic work, leading to a crisis among employed women: "Clearly, resolving the housework dilemma calls for more than the transformation of domestic service. As a society, we cannot continue to define reproductive labor as women's work. Cultural values and norms reinforcing equality must start at home with the simple act of picking up for ourselves. Beyond this, reproductive labor must be recognized as society's work, a responsibility that requires collective responses rather than private and individual solutions. The goal must be to develop strategies to allocate the social burdens of necessary reproductive labor

they resolve by hiring domestic workers. Their research has shown that in today's Great Britain between 30% and 40% of two-career couples hire paid domestic services; of these, 15% employ more than one person (a childminder and a housemaid). Approximately 40% of households with small children use childcare services.[92] Therefore, in Great Britain, paid domestic work is of vital importance for the daily reproductive labor in middle class households. Gregson and Lowe estimate that in Great Britain the greatest number of local child minders are young, unmarried women from the middle class, while cleaning is performed by older, married working-class women.[93] Accordingly, in Great Britain there is no close connection between paid domestic work, ethnicity and the feminization of migration typical of many European capitals. Paid domestic work is more structured by class and age. Nevertheless, according to the data provided by Kalayaan of London, domestic help is hired by at least 32 ethnic groups, while domestic workers come from 21 ethnic groups.[94] In addition, middle class families also hire au-pairs, who in many cases do housework in addition to caring for children.

Great Britain undoubtedly provides an example of good practice in the area of self-organization of domestic workers, particularly immigrant domestic workers. In 1979, the Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers (CFMW) was established, providing free advice and support. In 1984, a large number of Filipino women working as domestic workers in British households came to CFMW without any resources and documents telling of their experiences and reasons for leaving the households for which they worked: they were not paid for their work, were abused psychologically (scolded and shouted at) and physically (beaten, kicked, pulled by the hair); some were raped, and all were traumatized and frightened.[95] CFMW realized that they could not address these issues on a case-by-case basis, so they organized a series of meetings that clearly showed that immigrant paid domestic workers were in an extremely difficult position. They invited lawyers, researchers, union leaders and public decision-makers to cooperate. This gave rise to the Waling-Waling organiza-

in such a way that it does not fall disproportionally on the shoulders of any group." (Romero in Thornton Dill 1994, x, xi).

92 Gregson and Lowe 1994, 50.

93 Ibid., 124.

94 Ready 1996, 21.

95 Alhadeff 1998, 21.

tion,[96] initially operating illegally, which was intended to provide support to immigrant domestic workers when they found themselves in a "no-way-out" situation. The Kalayaan organization was established in 1987 in close collaboration with Waling-Waling. Its main purpose is to encourage and develop professional and political campaigns and lobbying for changes in labor legislation and immigration policies, which should provide regulation in the segment of domestic work, and immigrant work in particular. The two organizations cooperate closely with the Transport and General Workers Union, integrating in it their own members[97]

The case of Turkey

Ozyegin conducted research on paid domestic work in Turkey, where a large number of domestic workers are migrants moving from the countryside to urban centers. The majority among them are doorkeepers' wives.[98] A doorkeeper family lives in a ground floor or basement apartment in the apartment buildings of which it takes charge. These buildings housing middle- or upper middle-class residents are mainly found in Ankara and other urban centers. The doorkeeper's duties include the safeguarding of the building, maintenance and management of the heating system, rubbish disposal, shopping and distribution of fresh bread twice a day, occasionally also the transport of children to and from school and dog walking. "Basement women" are doorkeepers' wives. Their position enables them to have a monopoly over the paid domestic sector. Most of them provide domestic services for families living in the buildings of which their husbands are in charge. Usually, it is the husband who negotiates the scope of work and payment with the household. Also, in many cases, it is the husband who receives the money on behalf of his wife.[99] This is a special arrangement that, in a culture where women's work outside the home is considered shameful for married women and for the husband, enables men to have complete control over the paid work of their wives. Domestic workers in Turkey are literally confined within the two systems of power relations – the patriarchal and the social class

96 Waling is the name of a Filipino forest flower.

97 Ibid., 22.

98 The position of doorkeeper in apartments blocks in Turkish cities was introduced in the early 1960s, as part of a policy aimed at resolving the housing issues of the growing middle class by encouraging them to live in apartment blocks rather then family houses. These positions became mainly occupied by migrants from rural regions (Ozyegin 2001, 6).

99 Ozyegin 2001, 5–17.

system – and are therefore doubly subjected: to their husbands and to the middle class employer. On the other hand, since women in Turkey are mainly forbidden to work outside the home, the supply of domestic workers in large urban centers cannot meet the large demand, so these services are quite expensive

The key problems associated with paid domestic work

The research study *Employment in Household Services*[100] concentrates not only on paid domestic work done by immigrant female workers, but also on paid domestic work provided by local women. In the case of the latter, instead of the coincidence of citizenship, nationality/race and gender factors, it is possible to establish a specific combination of gender, social class and age factors. Cancedda has found that both immigrant and local domestic workers in Europe cope with many problems related to the quality of working conditions. According to the data obtained through interviews with domestic workers in Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Great Britain, the most positive aspects of this kind of work are the development of meaningful relations with people, communication, creativity and the opportunity to help someone. However, this is physically and psychologically stressful work. The most vulnerable group are self-employed workers, who are most isolated. Given the demanding nature of the job and the responsibility undertaken by domestic workers, the problem is low wages, because low wages lead to the long working hours that are necessary in order to earn enough money to cover the costs of living. The majority of paid domestic work is performed within the area of the black economy, so wages are not systematized and can vary greatly. Moreover, these wages do not include social, health and retirement contributions, so social security is not present within the paid domestic work segment. This area is also characterized by a large demand for flexible and atypical working hours, for example, part-time, long working hours, split shifts etc. Opportunities for promotion are low, since informal knowledge and experience are not worth much. These uncertain working conditions attract the most vulnerable groups – immigrants, long-term unemployed women, low-educated women, poor women, first-time job seekers etc.

[100] Cancedda 2004.

Viewed from the perspective of the reconciliation of work and private duties, says Cancedda, paid domestic work is not more problematic than other kinds of jobs.[101] Long and atypical working hours and low wages do represent an obstacle; on the other hand, flexibility of working hours and a degree of autonomy in organizing the work schedule, enjoyed at least by live-out workers, still make the reconciliation possible. However, viewed from the perspective of equal opportunity policies, it is problematic, in that this unregulated, uncertain and non-valued segment is dominated by women workers and the most vulnerable groups. The position of immigrant domestic workers is doubly strenuous: first, because immigration policies prevent them from obtaining residence and work permits, and second, because of the absence of regulation in this sector, which makes room for abuse on the part of employers. Immigration policies in European countries encourage and structurally enable the gray economy in the area of domestic help, and provide the black market with the labor force increasingly in demand among middle class European households. Reports of abuse, structurally enabled by such immigration policies, are alarming. Women find themselves completely dependent on the employer, while being treated as the "Other", and as someone predestined to perform the work held in the lowest esteem.

101 Cancedda 2001, 4.

SOCIAL ECONOMY: THE POSSIBILITY OF PROFESSIONALIZING DOMESTIC WORK

The puzzle of increasing unemployment in rich societies

The predicaments and paradoxes of capitalism create not only the gap between the rich and the poor parts of the world, but also gulfs between various social groups within rich countries. Poverty and social exclusion are realities for certain social groups within rich countries, as well. While the main feature of and the motive behind the decision of immigrants from poor countries to take domestic jobs is their not having citizenship in the host country, among the local population the main motive is their unemployment status.

The basic principle of capitalism is a constant expansion of production and consumption. While during the industrialization period production depended on people using and handling machines, in the era of automation intelligent machines such as computers and robots, nanotechnology and biotechnology are replacing human work within the area of production. Automation replaced the intensification of production through expanded employment and exploitation of a cheap workforce. In automated environments, profit is increasingly dependent on the effective organization and self-discipline of employees, and particularly on their being highly skilled. Moreover, employees are no longer expected to be only highly skilled, but also to continually pursue additional training courses. At the same time, automation caused the shedding of many highly skilled jobs, since new work- and time-saving technologies are less labor intensive. Efficient technology thus minimizes the costs of labor and maximizes productivity. Such a situation creates large structural unemployment and the marginalization of those who become unemployed. However, the capitalist system itself has caught itself in a trap – increased production calls for increased consumption, but the high unemployment rate comes with low purchasing power and impedes economic growth. As Rifkin says, this is a new structural reality that political leaders and economic agents are unwilling to face.[102]

[102] Rifkin 2004, XX.

In fact, such a situation could well be ideal – the human race has attained such a high level of automation that it can achieve high productivity without having to work hard for it. For the first time in history, says Gorz optimistically,[103] human work is no longer needed to secure basic goods, so all the politicians have to do is choose between shorter working hours, say, a 30-hour working week, and long lines of the unemployed. Shorter working hours would mean more people in employment, argues Rifkin.[104] In January 2000, French organizations with more than 20 employees limited the working week to 35 hours, and in January 2002, organizations with fewer than 20 employees followed suit. Workers continued to be paid the same as if they had been working 39 hours a week. In order to maintain a competitive edge despite the shorter working week and the same level of labor costs, the government reduced the social contributions paid by the employees. In addition, by subsidizing social taxes, the government actually subsidized every new job position. Although initially the employers expressed qualms, many later became enthusiastic, since with the reduction in the number of hours, employees became more flexible. In fact, both the employees and the trade unions in France have long resisted the flexibilization of working time, but the shorter working week made employees more ready to meet the employer's requirements for flexibility.[105]

Automation therefore caused changes in the status of labor and its meaning for human survival. However, these changes have not yet been apprehended in real life. We have not yet begun to seek answers to the question of how a modern society in which full employment is no longer economically needed nor possible should be organized. Instead, economists and politicians ponder how to engage as large a workforce as before the automation era, despite the fact that high productivity can be achieved with little labor investment. Work and employment therefore remain the key factors determining quality of life, even in circumstances

103 Gorz 1988.

104 Rifkin 2004, XXVIII.

105 For example, Samsonite workers agreed to work a 42-hour workweek in summer, when the demand for luggage is highest, in return for a 32-hour working week in winter, when the demand is lower. Of those polled in the evaluation of the experiment, 80% said that the quality of their lives improved with the shorter working week, that they felt rested and were more enthusiastic about work. Some of those polled complained that the shorter working week meant that they had to accomplish the same amount of work within a shorter time, and that this caused additional stress (ibid.). Rifkin, unfortunately, does not say how many new job positions were created as a result of this measure.

that theoretically make possible the production of goods sufficient for the entire population without special effort.

Rifkin and Gorz start from the thesis that automation freed man from the drudgery of monotonous, repetitive work and opened the door to the realm of leisure. Yet no matter how much we would like to believe that this is true, reality does not fully confirm this thesis. In somewhat simplified terms, modern working conditions created a class of long-term unemployed and hard-to-employ persons, whose low skills or other attributes (age, illness, gender, nationality, citizenship status etc.) are no longer needed or desired in automated work processes, so they are condemned to social exclusion. On the other hand, there has emerged a class of overemployed, highly skilled workers with high income, who work more than 50 hours a week and are exposed to correspondingly high stress. Women are in the minority in this class, because the unequal, gendered division of unpaid domestic labor leaves them more burdened with reproductive labor, so they have less time for paid work than men. Therefore, the EU debate about paid domestic work within the context of the labor market and higher competitiveness is in its essence a debate about the class of poor unemployed people and hard-to-employ people who make a basic living by providing various services for the class of prosperous, over-employed people. In other words, the point at issue is how to create jobs for hard-to-employ social groups. Jobs within production have been replaced by jobs within the domestic service sector and "various other services for everyday life" within the growing service sector.

The expanding sector of the informal economy, where the demand for domestic work has been increasing, is one of the solutions to which the armies of unemployed and hard-to-employ persons resort in the struggle for survival. Gorz, for example, is a staunch opponent of the increasing outsourcing of domestic work. In his opinion, it establishes a system in which modern servants are forced to undertake, in addition to their unpaid domestic labor, the domestic work of the privileged minority, and that for a low wage. Gorz holds that domestic help services are possible only in conditions of increasing social inequality in which one part of the population monopolizes well-paid social positions and forces the other part of the population into the servant position. If everyone worked less, adds Gorz, everyone could accomplish domestic work on their own, and everyone could make their living doing their work.[106] Although we do agree with Gorz's objections, it should be said that the reality of every-

[106] Gorz 1988, 156.

day life has not confirmed his projections that in modern automated societies everyone could work less and that this would create a more socially and economically balanced society. A modern information and knowledge society requires as much, if not more, work and constant processing, combining and interpretation of an ever larger amount of new information. This is an endless labor. As a result, working hours have actually been lengthening rather than shortening, creating the need for care services, child escort and transport services, food preparation and delivery services, cleaning services etc. Gorz's critique of paid domestic work and the creation of job places in the service sector also insufficiently takes into account the reality of the division of domestic labor between genders; even if everyone worked less, women would still carry the majority of unpaid work. Gorz offers no other recipe for altering the unfair division of domestic labor and the invisibility of domestic work apart from the overall rhetorical principle of "women's emancipation."[107] Moreover, he does not take into account the fact that under the given conditions, paid domestic work means certain, even if minimal, redistribution of income among the rich and the poor.

The double-edged sword of the social economy

Rifkin argues that the solution to the issue of the modern army of jobless and hard-to-employ people is the "third-sector" or the social economy that includes all formal and informal non-for-profit activities and whose goal is social cohesion rather than the accumulation of wealth.[108] He argues that modern societies should take two crucial steps to overcome the present predicaments of capitalism and make the transition to a "post-market" era.[109] In the first phase, he says, similar to Gorz, the dramatic increase in productivity caused by automation should be countered by a gradual shortening of working hours and an increase in salaries in order to ensure a certain degree of equality within the distribution of the results of technological progress. The reduction of full employment within the formal economy and reduced investment of the government in the public sector should lead to the second step, i.e. the establishment of a non-market economy within the third sector. Within the social economy,

[107] Ibid., 163.

[108] Rifkin 2004, XXXII, XXXIII.

[109] Ibid., 217.

people are supposed to realize their personal and social needs, test new roles and responsibilities and find new meanings and values.[110] Rifkin actually thinks that modern societies are at the crossroads. They have two options: either to choose massive unemployment at home caused by the replacement of human work by machine work and by the cheap workforce from poor countries, a choice which would jeopardize both the domestic economy and relative social peace, or to choose the shortening of the working week and consequently the lengthening of leisure time, which should lead to the flourishing of the social economy and social cohesion.[111]

However, the concept of social economy is not as unambiguously positive as Rifkin paints it. By proposing that the state investment in the public sector should be reduced, which amounts to the limitation of the welfare state, he implies that people will not engage in the third sector of their own free will, but because they will be forced to do so as a result of the elimination of public services, for example, in the areas of childcare, elder care, culture etc. The majority of these activities that are indispensable for everyday life are expected to be shifted to the area of self-organization and voluntary citizen work. Although Rifkin's version is fairly utopian, it does draw attention to the fact that the modern re-definition of the concept of work and the role of the state, and the removal of social programs in particular, lead to the establishment of new socio-economic strategies and reforms, among them the social economy or the establishment of the third sector.

The significance of the social economy lies primarily in its role as alleviator of excessively fast stratification and exclusion induced by neo-liberal economic mentality and organization. The social economy is expected to provide innovative initiatives that would alleviate these negative trends in social development through self-employment, social entrepreneurship, co-operatives etc.

Indeed, modern debate on the social economy and its social and economic role is rather complex. The main reason is the lack of a uniform definition, and another is the fact that the social economy involves not only a wide range of practices and traditions, but also various phenomena characterizing the era of fast social and economic changes. Although there is no single definition of the social economy, there is a consensus on at least two of its constitutive elements: that these are not-for-profit

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid., 247.

activities performed neither by the private nor by the public sector, and that the goal of such activities is the reduction of social exclusion of specific social groups.[112] Accordingly, the social economy covers self-help and co-operative projects, and its main goal is not profit earning but the building of social potential (e.g. employment and education for excluded social groups), recognition of hidden needs (e.g. better care for the environment, affordable childcare services), and the creation of completely new forms of employment. Molloy thinks that the initiatives for the social economy rest on the principles pertaining to basic human needs.[113] The indicators of its success focus on the benefits these activities bring to the local community: for example, the number of new jobs, the number of people included in voluntary projects, the benefits for producers and users, the possibility of generating income within the community and so on. The basic principles of the social economy are effective cooperation, interdependence and active participation of citizens in the beneficial social and economic environment of a local community.

The definitions and practical forms of the social economy differ from country to country. The EU standard definition says that the social economy consists of organizations and enterprises established by civil initiative that produce market or non-market based products and services with social objectives. These organizations are managed with respect for the democratic principle of active participation of members, employees and beneficiaries; they are based on the solidarity of their members, and profit is not shared among the founders. The social economy includes four main groups of organizations: cooperatives, foundations, mutuals and social enterprises.[114] There are approximately 900,000 social enterprises in the EU, which offer approximately 9,000,000 job positions and contribute 10% of GDP without taking into account the multiplication effect. If the latter is taken into account, the share of the social economy in the GDP would probably exceed 30%.[115]

112 Amin et al. 2002, VII.

113 Molloy in Amin et al. 2002, 1.

114 Kovač 2006, 15.

115 Ibid. There is a considerable number of institutions in Slovenia operating in this area, but they are not market-oriented nor economically productive. Their potential for employment is much lower than the EU average (0.37% of total employment in Slovenia compared to 4.9% of total employment on the international level). In addition, their contribution to the national gross product is 10 times lower than that in the EU. (Kovač 2006, 17).

The literature provides two parallel conceptions of the social economy. One can be defined as pragmatic/reformist interpretation. Social initiatives or social enterprises operating in the pragmatic/reformist manner are limited to a local social problem and to the active role of local residents in the search for a solution to the problem. The goal is to find a solution to specific local difficulties or problems facing specific social groups within a limited area.[116] The other conception draws on anarchist and Marxist traditions and attributes to the social economy the potential for profound social changes in capitalist society, for example, by organizing and networking the co-operatives that would be based on direct democracy, limited production and democratic distribution.[117] The current debates, particularly economic and political, place stress on the pragmatic/reformist conception as a way to alleviate poverty, social exclusion, unemployment and other problems facing modern societies. The possibility of inducing radical social changes through new social practices within the existing social order is brushed aside within the current instrumental use of the social economy. As long as the goal of the social economy is social integration, which incurs only low costs thanks to the not-for-profit orientation of the third sector, it is interesting for both politics and the economy. However, when it comes to more radical social changes, the social economy becomes inconvenient/utopian. As a result, the most attractive element of the social economy – the replacement of the profit-oriented approach with social responsibility and care for vulnerable social groups – becomes a masquerade. Working conditions in the social enterprise *Wrekin Care Co-operative* in Great Britain testify to this. This is one of the largest among many social enterprises offering homecare services. It employs 95 people working either full or part time. Contributions from the local community account for 25% of its income, and the other source of revenue comes from payments for their services, most of which are in one or another form of state subsidy for homecare that is transferred directly to the co-operative rather than to the local health administration. This type of organization did indeed create a considerable number of jobs, but staff turnover is quite high. These jobs are low-paid and uncertain. Workers are self-employed rather than employed in the co-operative itself, so they have to cover all the costs of labor including transport costs, which are quite high with this type of work. This type of employment does not carry with it the same level

116 Shragge et al. 2000, 2.

117 Ibid., 3.

of social security as that associated with employment in public or large private companies.[118]

Undoubtedly, the area of social enterprise also boasts a number of successful and more positive examples than those few mentioned above.[119] Yet it should be stressed that by confining vulnerable and excluded social groups to the third, not-for-profit sector with the aim of preserving social peace, mainstream economy and society are given the opportunity to continue to reproduce the current social relations, that is to say, to marginalize vulnerable social groups and perpetuate the current distribution of wealth and power. It is not improbable that the social economy will become the economy of the marginalized poor groups and women. Shragge and Fontan see a way out of this dark prospect and the political

118 Amin et al. 2004, 34.

119 We had an opportunity to learn about one such example in our neighborhood at the international conference The Social Economy: Problems, Opportunities, Challenges, organized by the Peace Institute within the framework of the EQUAL program in February 2006 in Ljubljana. This example does not come from the area of paid domestic work, but it still illustrates very well the positive aspects of the social economy. Graz has a football stadium that seats 15,000 football fans, many of whom drink beer. Beer was usually served in disposable plastic glasses. These plastic glasses strewn across the field caused many problems, since they had to be collected and removed after each game, which incurred expenses. The biggest problem was that these glasses were not suitable for serving beer. During a football match it is necessary to fill many glasses rapidly, but this was not possible because of the foam that formed on the beer. This reduced the sales of beer during matches. The municipality also had a problem. Residents of the area surrounding the stadium constantly complained about the streets being covered with plastic glasses. The solution was the replacement of disposable glasses with reusable glasses. The price of a glass of beer is 2.9 euros plus a 1 euro deposit for the glass, which is refunded when the user returns the glass. Now all glasses are returned, and the clean-up is no longer needed. However, since the glasses needed to be washed after the match, Oeko Service social enterprise undertook this job. The dish washer required in this case where thousands of glasses need to be washed is not a small expense, and Oeko Service could not afford it on its own. The money was contributed by the town of Graz, since this investment reduced the costs of cleaning after the matches. The benefits of this original and simple solution for all parties are as follows: the benefit for the public partner – the town of Graz – is that the residents of the area no longer complain and that it reduced the costs of street cleaning after football matches. The private partner can devote attention to the main line of business – the maximization of beer sales, made possible through the use of new glasses. Savings also arise from the lower costs of maintaining the cleanliness of the stadium and garbage disposal. The price paid for the washing of glasses is fixed, so the expenses are more predictable. The people appreciate their care for the environment, so the company's reputation has increased. The social partner, Oeko Service, obtained investment from the public partner; it earns income from the cleaning service and new job opportunities for the target group of long-term-unemployed persons. The hiring service made possible by the acquisition of the dish washer also created new jobs. Oeko Service competence therefore lies in networking, its contribution to the community, the provision of quality service and training and education of employees (Dolinar 2006).

abuse of the idea of social economy in greater emphasis on the tradition of utopian and radical vision within the concept of social economy.[120]

Nevertheless, there is some prospect for organizing and regulating paid domestic work within the area of the social economy. Social entrepreneurship assumes financial investment from the public sector and the activation of the private sector to implement market activities. Through financial investment on the part of the public sector, which should itself see the benefits of meeting the realistic needs of the local people and in employing hard-to-employ persons, quality job positions within paid domestic work seem more realistic. Leaving domestic work organization to commercial enterprises and market laws exclusively would definitely lead to poor working conditions for household workers, on the one hand, and to high prices for services, on the other, meaning that access to these services would be restricted to the wealthier class. The social economy also opens new possibilities for various forms of self-organization such as co-operatives, self-employment etc. that lead to the emancipation of hard-to-employ persons, whom the current system reproduces as passive victims.

Attempts within the EU to organize paid domestic work

The reasons behind the increasingly frequent attempts and growing effort to regulate paid domestic work within the EU are not the same as those boosting the demand for this type of service. The EU countries embarked on regulating domestic help not in order to relieve fully employed women from unpaid domestic work, but in order to create new job positions for hard-to-employ groups. The regulation of paid domestic work is a two-edged sword. On the one hand, it reaffirms the existing social relations by creating hard, poorly defined and low-paid jobs that are held in low social esteem and do not offer promotion options for marginalized social groups starting from weak social and economic positions. Since the majority of domestic workers within the black economy are women, regulation also contributes to the reproduction of domestic work as women's work, either paid or unpaid. On the other hand, it is not possible to ignore the increasing demand for domestic work and the fact that an army of unemployed, poor and immigrant women already work as domestic workers within the black economy, because for them that

120 Shragge at al. 2000, 8.

is the only means of survival in the current system. It is simply improbable that contemporary domestic workers could remain structurally completely invisible despite their large numbers. Although paid domestic work provides a comprehensive category of employees on the global scale, there are no international standards to regulate their salaries and working conditions. The exclusion of domestic work from the legal protection of labor and labor rights is in essence related to gender issues, since this type of work is understood as a natural extension of women's role in the family.[121] The working conditions of contemporary domestic workers and their social security are no one's concern.

European employment strategy increasingly turns to the creation of new job positions in the domestic sector, or, as they prefer to call it, *services for everyday life*. In the *European Strategy to Promote Local Development and Employment Initiatives,*[122] domestic help and childcare are listed as two of the 19 most labor and employment intensive areas (along with leisure time services, environmental protection services, improvement of living and working conditions etc.), while the document entitled *A Local Dimension for the European Employment Strategy*[123] identifies it as one of the four most promising areas as regards new job positions.[124] The study *Employment in Household Services* lists estimates by several EU countries of new job positions within household services: around 15,000 in Finlad, 20,000 in Denmark, as many as 200,000 in Germany, 477,000 in France and 12,000 in Portugal.[125] However, many have pointed out that these expectations are too optimistic – for several reasons.[126] Paid domestic work as full-time employment with all associated taxes raises the price of this service. Consequently, a domestic worker could be afforded only by the wealthy classes, which creates further inequalities, this time among the users of these services. Less wealthy people would continue to buy these services on the black market, which would be more competitive thanks to lower prices, but this, in turn, would make the position of domestic workers even worse. One of the key questions facing the governments in transforming unpaid domestic work into new

[121] Šadl 2004, 986.

[122] *European Strategy to Promote Local Development and Employment Initiatives,* 1995.

[123] *A Local Dimension for the European Employment Strategy*, 2000.

[124] Cancedda 2001, 5.

[125] Ibid., 14.

[126] E.g. Jaehrling 2004, 235.

jobs is how to transform latent demand for these services into actual purchasing power.

Stimulating the demand: France and Belgium

One method of stimulating the demand for paid domestic work and of encouraging employers in this area was put to the test in France in the early 1990s. Chèque Emploi Service (CES) was established in 1993 with the aim of simplifying the payment of wages and social security contributions for domestic workers. The condition was that the wage was not lower than the national minimum wage, and that it included a 10% annual holiday remuneration. Within this program, everyone was allowed to employ a domestic worker and pay for the service by a check payable through a local bank. The households benefited from a 50% tax rebate on the price of the check/voucher purchased. At the end of 1995, there were 250,000 users of this service registered, of these 160,000 were new. From the introduction of this service until 2002, there were 800,000 users registered, which amounts to 88,000 new jobs positions. The innovativeness of this approach lies primarily in encouraging the employers to legally hire and pay domestic workers.[127]

In Belgium, the *Check For Household Services* project, which is a kind of cash with a bank guarantee, was launched in January 2004. The user of the service pays for the domestic service using the check. The price of the check is 6.7 euros, its validity is 8 months and it is sold in 10-piece sets. The buyer is entitled to tax rebate amounting to 30% of the total purchase price. The users of services are private persons who have residence in Belgium. In order to be able to buy checks, they have to register with the Accord database. The registration is free. The employers providing domestic workers within this system are government certified professional/private cleaning services, agencies for temporary jobs, non-profit associations, health services, local labor offices, public centers for social protection, companies within the social sector and self-employed persons. They receive 21 euros per check. The difference between the sum paid by the user and the sum received by the employer is subsidized by the government as part of the program for creating new jobs.

The checks can be used for household services (cleaning, washing and ironing, occasional sewing and preparation of meals), or services per-

[127] Informal Economy et al., 2004.

formed outside the household (shopping and similar tasks, the transport of less mobile people, and "ironing"). Every hour worked by a registered worker can be paid by the check, which is valid only if it is dated and signed by all parties involved: the user of the service, the worker, and the employer.

The evaluation of the *Check for Household Services* model done in the last quarter of 2004 showed that the system created 15,077 new jobs and provided services for 120,000 people, and that both the buyers of services and the workers were satisfied. The average number of hours per user was 16.6 per month (4 hours per week). Almost three-quarters of users were women; slightly more than one-quarter of users were single persons; one third of them were older than 60, and one fourth were retired people. The users evaluated especially highly the social security of the worker, the legality of the system and the affordable price (€ 6,70 + 30 % tax relief). They expressed less satisfaction with the conditions of implementation of the services, employers' interventions in the case of problems, exchange of checks and information on certified organizations.

If this system were not available, one third of users would do the household work themselves, 30% would seek help on the black market, 19% would turn to the local labor office, and 16% would engage specialized private companies. The evaluation also revealed the profile and the motivation of domestic workers registered in this system. It is symptomatic that women prevailed among the workers; as many as 40% of them were between 40 and 50 years of age; 40% had low levels of education (maximum one year of secondary school completed). As to the nationality of workers, 87% were Belgian, 7% were EU citizens and 6% were citizens of non-EU countries. They worked 22.6 hours per week on average, and 18% received unemployment aid. Their motives for undertaking such work were social contacts, satisfaction with work, income, adjustable working hours and a way out of the black market.

The employers were not completely satisfied with the system because of some initial problems, for example, difficulties with finding suitable workers, especially pronounced in larger cities. Forty-two percent of employers paid out minimum wage, and 58% more than minimum wage. One fifth of the employers left it to the buyers of services to pay the costs of insurance, transport and material costs not related to work. Other benefits identified by the evaluators were the reduced cost of social security, reduced unemployment and a higher income from taxes.

The factors that hamper the regulation of paid domestic work and possible remedies

The low purchasing power of the majority of households that need domestic help is not the only obstacle confronted by European countries in the process of transforming unpaid domestic work into new job positions. A number of other factors inhibit this process: economic factors such as high labor costs and low wages; cultural factors such as the moral that everyone should do his/her own household work, and women especially so, the belief that paid domestic services are performed by people with poor education and from the margins of society, and uneasiness about the perceived servant-master relationship; political and administrative factors such as inadequate subsidizing of services through tax incentives, too few incentives for entrepreneurs, administrative obstacles in establishing a private company, the situation on the market, the social climate that encourages women to stay at home (e.g. by prolonging parental leave, care bonuses etc.) and inadequate regulation of the procedures for obtaining residence and work permits for immigrants; organizational factors include limited enterprise capacities to take advantage of market opportunities and establish an appropriate relation between work and care service, the gap between the private and the third sector, high labor costs caused by mobility associated with this type of work, insufficient experience on the part of managers of these services, unreadiness on the part of workers to be as flexible as this type of work requires, and disinterest on the part of entrepreneurs in investing in these services; professional obstacles include the lack of a professional definition of work (for example, some countries require that child minders and nurses providing care for old people should have higher education), the lack of interest in these jobs because of their unattractiveness, unsatisfactory educational opportunities, and the fact that care for old people, for example, is sometimes covered by volunteer work.[128]

The research study *Employment in Household Services* covering eight European countries identified a number of governmental measures aimed at ensuring conditions favorable to the creation of new jobs within the area of domestic work. These measures can be categorized into three groups: measures aimed at persons working in the domestic help sector; measures aimed at the buyers of domestic help services; and measures aimed at the organizers of paid domestic work, i.e. companies.

[128] Cancedda 2001, 14–16.

The first group of measures is primarily concerned with the promotion of employment in private households, with the target groups being hard-to-employ people, long-term unemployed persons, and women, primarily older women and immigrants,. The other focus of this group of measures is the regulation of payments for and qualifications required for this type of work. The measures targeted at the buyers of domestic services include the setting of quality standards, the encouragement of flexible services, provision of information on the services, subsidizing of service costs, tax rebates etc. These measures may be targeted at either the potential buyers of domestic services in general, or specific groups such as families with small children, large families, families with members who need care, poorer social classes that cannot afford such services unless subsidized and so on. The third group of measures aims to encourage and facilitate the establishment of companies that offer domestic services, by securing initial capital, granting tax relief and providing training for entrepreneurs in this sector.[129] One measure common to all countries covered by the *Employment in Household Services* study is the promotion of employment in this sector targeted at hard-to-employ persons.

Therefore, within European social policies, paid domestic work is an area of social reintegration of long-term unemployed and socially excluded persons. This could have a negative effect on the status and image of paid domestic work, as well as on the quality of services, especially so because the majority of countries do not provide systematic professional training for this type of employment; the reason is the absence of qualification and payment systems. New jobs and employment opportunities appear as a magical healing formula for many of the troubles hampering the EU: the integration of immigrants, the activation of aimless youths, the revitalization of a large number of retired people, the bridging of the growing gap between the rich and the poor, inclusion of excluded groups etc. Yet the question is how much attention is devoted to the quality of these job positions as part of these efforts towards social inclusion and integration. Low quality and low paid jobs actually only reproduce the marginalized position and exclusion of specific social groups, in particular long-term unemployed people, older women and immigrant women. Therefore, when striving to create new jobs within the domestic sector, it is necessary to devote special attention to the working conditions, including well-defined labor relations and related rights, work and working hours, education, adequate payment, protection at work etc. The examples delineated below are some attempts in this direction.

[129] Ibid., 26, 27.

Experiments in organizing paid domestic work

The experiment conducted in Finland in 1997 included subsidies for paid domestic work in the form of lower taxes for the buyers of these services and partial coverage of expenses for companies offering domestic services. If someone bought a service from a company, the tax rebate amounted to 60% of labor costs, including the tax on added value and employer's contributions. Tax relief granted to a household hiring a private person to perform domestic work was 30% of the domestic worker's wage plus 100% of paid contributions. This amounted to between 55.2% and 57.2% tax relief in total. Subsidized services included classic housework chores such as cleaning, cooking, clothes washing, ironing, plus care work and small repairs. Expectations were quite high – between 10,000 and 12,000 new jobs were anticipated. However, in 1998, only 208 new jobs were created through this scheme, and in 1999 less than 400. The tax relief option was used by fewer households than expected, i.e. 22,000 altogether. In April 1999, the government spent 17 million Finnish marks (app. 2,862,000 euros) on subsidies out of 200 million marks earmarked for the first two years of the project. The evaluation showed that the reasons for failure were the weakly developed private sector and the lack of knowledge about the real magnitude of the demand for domestic services. The evaluation conducted in 2003 showed a perceptible increase in the number of new job positions (between 5,340 and 6,730 new jobs), and also an increase in the number of households that took advantage of the tax relief option – 123,753 households altogether. Of these, only 27% purchased the classic domestic services, while 71% purchased small repair services. Households with annual incomes exceeding 40,000 euros were the most frequent buyers of domestic services; other buyers were public servants and managers in the economic sector, apartment and house owners and households with small children.[130]

The Austrian pilot project, *HomeService*, was launched in 1997/1998, by Sozial Global employing 127 people. In 1999, they were joined by *Vienna Employment Promotion Fund* (WAFF) and *Public Employment Service* (AMS) as part of the National Action Plan for Employment. Financing was provided by the Austrian government, the city of Vienna and the European Social Fund (ESF). The main goal was to create new jobs in the domestic services sector and to promote the reintegration of long-term-unemployed persons into the labor market, particularly women who per-

[130] The Swedish Economy 2005.

form care work and older people. *HomeService* offers domestic services such as cleaning, shopping, washing and ironing, childcare, care for household pets, gardening, maintenance of indoor plants, safeguarding of property and socialization. Clients who want to hire domestic help first contact the municipal office to explain their needs and discuss the desired service and rates. The rate charged depends on the client's financial situation, meaning that the difference between the client's payment and the price of the service is covered by the municipality. *HomeService's* opening hours are 6 am to 8 pm, seven days a week. A job with *HomeService* ensures social security and educational trainings. Evaluation has established that *HomeService* has replaced domestic services available on the gray market and that it also supplements the existing social care services, since it provides a range of services that are not covered by official social care. During the first year of this project, *HomeService* served more than 1,000 clients and employed more than 1,200 people from the hard-to-employ category. The 1998 evaluation showed positive aspects of this project, although it should be noted that jobs at *HomeServce* are dependent on the regular supply of public resources. The *HomeService* project was made possible by a joint initiative put forward by political actors on the national and local levels.[131]

The Danish pilot project *Home Service Scheme* was initially planned as a three-year project starting in 1994, but was so successful that it was extended to 2004. The main goals of the project were to become competitive with the gray economy sector, to stimulate the development of domestic services providers, and to create jobs for poorly-educated persons. In order to be included in this pilot scheme, the newly founded companies in this area had to register with the *Danish Commerce and Companies Agency (*DCCA). The domestic services included various types of work such as cleaning, small maintenance tasks and gardening. The government reimbursed 40% of labor costs, but not also material costs. The local authorities were authorized to supervise the companies included in this scheme and to check on their operation. If the company failed to observe the legal rules and collective agreements on commissions and working conditions, it was excluded from the pilot scheme. The evaluation made in 1996 showed that the pilot project created 6,000 new jobs. In 1997, a further 2,000 jobs were added, and by 2,000 this figure was 3,700 full-time jobs. In 1998, 3,506 companies registered with the pilot project; of those, 91% were companies with only one employee. In 1998, one in eight house-

131 Cancedda 2001, 32.

holds hired the services five times a year on average. Almost 90% of the users were very satisfied with both the company providing the services and the services themselves. In 2001, the new government reduced subsidies to the households, and the project was terminated in 2004.[132]

The Portugese *Marluz Ironing Business,* a provider of domestic help services, evolved from the program entitled *Local initiatives to employ hard-to-employ women*. *Marluz Ironing Business* is an example of a company established by a long-term-unemployed woman. The initiative came from a woman who returned from Brazil to Lisbon at the age of 40. Although she had a certificate confirming her knowledge of foreign languages, she could not obtain a job for quite a long time, so she joined the occupational education program for unemployed people older than 45 organized by *Cascais Centro de Emprego* (Employment Agency). The occupational education program lasted 4 months, 8 hours a day, and attendants received the national minimum wage and a meal bonus. On completing the course, she presented her program to the *Local initiatives to employ hard-to-employ women*. It envisaged a network of local services offering various technical repairs at the customer's premises, care for the elderly, childcare outside kindergarten hours, ironing and decorating services. The Employment Agency supported only part of the project, i.e. ironing and decorating services (e.g. curtain sewing). She received a state subsidy in 1998: 50% of it was a donation and 50% a loan. The ironing service employing 5 people could begin its operation. The wages were determined by the Employment Agency; the net monthly wage for ironing work was 60,000 escudos (app. 400 euros). In accordance with the directives of the *Local initiatives to employ hard-to-employ women*, on completing the trial period, employees sign an employment contract. The employees are entitled to social security and reimbursement for transport and meal costs. Part-time and full-time arrangements are available. Full-time employment involves a 40-hour work week with fixed working hours from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. This is an example of successful cooperation between long-term unemployed people and an employment agency that enabled and stimulated self-employment.

The Dutch *Melkert Plan* included a project launched in 1997 aimed at subsidizing the wages of workers employed by cleaning services to make them competitive with the gray market. In accordance with the *Regeling Schoonmaakdiensten Particularien,* every company that employed a long-term-unemployed person was entitled to a specific sum awarded as

[132] Informal Economy 2004; Sarti 2005, 77.

a subsidy. The government's subsidy covered the difference between the wage paid out by the company and the earnings of a worker providing the same services on the black market. The companies could therefore cover the costs of social security, health care, paid vacation and pension contributions. In 1997, there were only 250 new job positions created through this program compared to the 5,000 expected. In 1998 the program was enhanced. The cleaning service companies have more difficulties with finding employees than with finding clients. The problem is that they can employ only persons who have been registered as unemployed for more than one year. So even though many women would accept a job with the cleaning service, they do not qualify because they have been out of employment for less than one year.[133]

In 1989, the federal government in Germany introduced a tax relief scheme intended for households with domestic workers. The goal was to encourage contractual labor relations and regular employment of domestic workers. Until 1997, the tax relief scheme was restricted to households with at least two children under 10, or with a member needing nursing care. A voucher model, similar to the one used in France, was introduced with the aim of reducing the paperwork for the employers. In contrast to France, Germany subsidized through tax relief only jobs where the wages exceeded 630 German marks (325 euros). The reason was that wages lower than the said amount did not incur the payment of social contributions, meaning that they were already subsidized in a way. This led to only a minor number of employers taking advantage of the tax relief, since the experience showed, both in France and in Germany, that the majority of households cannot afford and do not want to purchase more than 3 to 4 hours of paid domestic work per week. Until 2000, the tax relief scheme created app. 40,000 new jobs, which is a figure much below the expectations.[134]

These mediocre experiences with the regulation of paid domestic work led Germany to launch further test projects during the 1990s, concentrating on the stimulation of companies, agencies and not-for-profit organizations towards employing domestic workers. One advantage of involving companies and agencies is that they are in a position to organize work in such a way that one worker serves several households, each for a few hours a week. In this way, they are able to meet the need for occasional domestic help, while domestic workers could still be in full or part-time

133 Informal Economy 2004.

134 Bittner and Weinkopf in Jaehrling 2004, 240.

employment. The government also assumed that the targeting of public resources at companies and agencies rather than private households would lead to better working conditions and would reduce abuses in this area of employment, since the companies are obliged to report and document their activities, while the private sphere cannot be supervised. A job with an agency or a company is also expected to ensure, sooner than one with a private household, an employment contract, health care and social security, protection at work, insurance in the case of accident at work, and to protect the worker from dismissal.

The evaluation study was conducted on a sample that included 87 such companies across Germany. The conclusion was that domestic workers were very satisfied with regular wages, including during sick leave and holidays. They valued the protection provided by the employer in the case of conflict with the household. But most of all they valued social security. The evaluation also showed that the price of these services with all associated bonuses included considerably exceeded that of paid domestic services on the black market, since the latter does not cover sick leave, vacation, travel expenses, education, social care and other costs. Despite government subsides, an hour of such a service in 1998 was app. 12 euros in western Germany, and 9 euros in eastern Germany, compared to 5 euros paid for domestic services on the black market.[135] There were between 1,000 and 2,000 new jobs created in this way. This figure is very low, not only compared to government projections but also compared to the actual extent of paid domestic work on the black market. In addition to these difficulties, they also became aware of a bottleneck on the side of domestic service providers. The companies had many difficulties with recruiting the target group of long-term unemployed people with low levels of education for this type of employment.[136] Yet, even with these drawbacks, the conclusion was that the professionalization of paid domestic work through companies and agencies was the best method of coping with the risks of new job creation in this field.[137]

These attempts to professionalize and regulate paid domestic work show that legalization, regulation, professionalization and democrati-

135 Ibid., 241.

136 Two reasons are given for such a state of affairs. First, tidying up and cleaning is physically strenuous work, meaning that a worker performing such tasks must be in good health and physically fit. Second, the assumption that this work is simple and does not require any skill, is wrong. Work in private households requires highly developed social skills and an affinity for working with people.

137 Jaehrling 2004, 244.

zation of paid domestic work require commitment, including financial subsidies, on the part of the government. And yet, even government commitment did not suffice to make these attempts fully successful – many are left with a bitter feeling that what this actually leads to is the establishment of a new, servant class. However, this class is already present, because the demand for paid domestic work has been increasing regardless of whether or not regulation is in place.[138] The complete elimination of paid domestic work would require fundamental systemic changes in the area of social distribution of resources and distribution of power among various social groups – turning a blind eye to this phenomenon will not solve the problem. Deregulation of this area is the reason for the absence of definition of working conditions, work tasks, working hours and wages. In such circumstances, the workers are discriminated against because they have no health care or social security and do not participate in the pension scheme. Both parties, the employer but primarily domestic workers, risk abuse. Viewed from this perspective, regulation of paid domestic work is necessary, but the emphasis must be on the creation of new, quality jobs. Regulation could lead to a greater visibility of domestic work in general, and especially to greater visibility for the domestic workers who already perform these tasks in numerous households across Europe.

[138] In Germany, for example, it is estimated that in 2002 there were 1.2 to 2.9 million informal jobs created within private households. In France, it is said that the past decade saw an "explosion of domestic help", and the estimates are that this kind of employment amounted to 538,390 jobs in 1999. In Italy, according to the Statistical Office data, there were 1,049,500 informal jobs in private households (Sarti 2005, 74).

II.
(Non)paid Domestic Work in Slovenia

Looking for a well-organized young family, vegs included, who needs cooking, washing, kitchen and bathroom cleaning services once or twice a week
Salomonov oglasnik, July 3, 2006, p. 164.

A younger, modest women ready to live in, wanted for help with housework and other tasks and child rearing.
Salomonov oglasnik, July 3, 2006, p. 161.

In Part I we described several fundamental traits of traditional domestic work, and especially modern paid domestic work, with an emphasis on European countries. We described a paradoxical situation that arises from several factors: the view that domestic work is not work as a result of the perception of unpaid domestic work as woman's "labor of love"; the structural characteristics of the area of paid domestic work where gender, nationality/race, social and economic status and age factors coincide; the attempts to regulate paid domestic work with the aim of achieving social inclusion for hard-to-employ persons. But what is the situation in Slovenia? About what do we actually talk when we talk about paid domestic work in Slovenia? The SIPA project provided several anticipated, but also unexpected perspectives on the structure and dynamics of paid domestic work in Slovenia, although, as we already explained in the introduction, this was not the main goal of the project. Within middle-class households, we identified a pattern similar to that prevailing in Great Britain – occasional or regular childcare is entrusted to female students, whereby childcare is their only responsibility, while ironing and cleaning is mainly performed by older or middle aged women. Many among the latter are first or second generation immigrants from former Yugoslavia, either long-term unemployed persons or employed persons for whom domestic work is a source of additional income. Younger retired women also perform a good deal of childcare, looking after babies who are not in nurseries for various reasons. The working day of these child minders is frequently longer than 10 hours, and there is no control whatsoever of the quality of childcare provided. The combination of housework and childcare is rare, although present. We spoke to the manager of a housework service whose company has been successfully providing domestic services for 13 years now. The company employs five to seven domestic

workers and operates in accordance with market laws. The business is satisfactory, although the hourly rate is so high that domestic services can be afforded only by well-off families. Yet, less wealthy families also need domestic help, and the relief of the participants in our projects at being able to receive such help well illustrates how great their need is. We also encountered an example of a live-in domestic worker who was long-term unemployed. We obtained information on forced domestic labor in the countryside environment. One subject that we have only broached in this study is a special tradition that is passed down through generations and involves daily migration of domestic workers from the Primorska (coastal) region to the border towns in Italy. Our two-year exploration of the area of domestic work in Slovenia did not uncover any examples of illegal immigrants working as live-in domestic workers. Although we did not systematically look for such cases, it is still possible to assume that in this respect the area of informal domestic work in Slovenia differs from that in other European countries where this issue is a sore point, and it also reveals the higher level of modernization of working conditions in this area of Slovenia. The SIPA project clearly showed that two-career couples with children, and women in particular, have been experiencing a crisis of reproductive labor and that they form a large group of current or potential buyers of domestic services. As elsewhere in Europe, many users of domestic services in Slovenia are foreigners, single persons, particularly men, and older people who live alone or need help.

Apart from testing one of the possible methods of relieving women with small children from housework, the other main goal of the SIPA project was to test whether and under what conditions the domestic services now offered on the black market could be professionalized and transformed into regular and organized employment for long-term unemployed persons. Therefore, in this section dealing with paid domestic work in Slovenia and the results of the pilot project, we focus on the two target groups found on the Slovenian black market for domestic services: long-term unemployed women and employed women with small children. In order to obtain a better overview of domestic work in Slovenia, a more comprehensive study would be needed, one which would concentrate on the dynamics and structural characteristics of individual target groups on both the demand and supply sides.

FROM "ALEKSANDRINKE," "DIKLE" AND "ŠAVRINKE" TO HOUSEMAIDS

Although at first glance it may appear that Slovenia has no extensive experience of paid domestic work, historical records and ethnological studies testify that the opposite is true. During the 19th and the 20th centuries, Slovenia was, much as it is today, a source of domestic workers who served the households of richer neighboring and other European countries, and beyond. At the same time, rich social classes in Slovenia employed domestic workers, especially young women, for whom this was a welcome option and the only chance to move from the countryside to urban centers without getting married. Even in 1965, that is, after the Second World War, when paid domestic work was on the decline across Europe, and when the socialist regime labeled the hiring of domestic help as a bourgeois practice, there were 4,583 domestic workers in Slovenia organized within a trade union; of these, 1,049 lived in Ljubljana.[139]

Aleksandrinke

A massive emigration of women from the Goriška region to Egypt, where they worked as wet nurses and servants, began in the second half of the 19th century. It came in the wake of the opening of the Suez Canal in 1896, with the rising numbers of European entrepreneurs in Egypt, who mainly settled in Alexandria and Cairo. In 1990, dr. Karel Pečnik estimated that the number of Slovenian emigrants in Egypt was 5,300 in total; of those, an estimated 5,000 women were servants.[140] They worked as "maids of all work," chamber maids, cooks, child minders and wet nurses, with the last mentioned being the most esteemed and best paid. For single women, this was a life career, and they returned home only when they retired. Married women and mothers were in a different position. Much like modern immigrants from the third world, these women left behind them babies of a few months old to work for good wages in Egypt as wet nurses. The records, letters and the narrations of women

[139] Šuštar 1993, 17.

[140] Pečnik in Makuc 1993.

who worked in Egypt testify to their suffering and emotional split between work and home, as well as their sorrow at the separation from their children and husbands.[141] The reasons for emigration, which was mainly limited in time, were primarily economic. The money they sent to their families by post or through friends was intended to facilitate the survival of the family, education of children, construction of a house and the like. The majority of "aleksandrinke" returned home when they had earned the necessary money, but some remained in Egypt for several decades. Some were joined by their husbands and families, but this was quite rare. A more frequent practice was women taking with them their daughters, who found work there as servants after completing their education. The last cohort of women from the Goriška region who emigrated to the Nile valley were returning home during the decades following the Second World War, up to the 1960s and the early 1970s. The Slovenian society *Sloga* that operated between 1895 and 1898 in Alexandria (later renamed *Slovenska palma ob Nilu*/The Slovenian Palm By the Nile), founded Franja Josip's Asylum for servants without work. For a monthly membership fee of one crown, the Asylum provided accommodation and food at affordable prices, and a free medical examination and medicines if they fell ill. The Asylum also assisted them in finding work[142] and kept a blacklist of families who maltreated servants. The asylum was managed by Slovenian nuns, School Sisters of St. Francis. of Christ the King, who also undertook the responsibility of supervising the morals of younger and older women: they organized receptions on their arrival in Egypt, delivered women to families, provided the space for meetings and cultural life, organized church services in Slovene and so on.[143] Both the church and the secular authorities were concerned about the "moral" threat faced by Slovenian women abroad. The vicar of Bilje, for example, was shocked that "their physical and moral life was endangered and lost for the future,"[144] demanding a ban on the emigration of women.[145] Their care for the moral behavior of working emigrants was

[141] Makuc 1993, 90–91.

[142] The demand for "Les Goriciennes", as Slovene maids in Egypt were called, was very high. In January 1900, 210 families sought Slovene maids through the Asylum, while there were only 19 available (Makuc 1993).

[143] Testen 2004, 110.

[144] Barbič et al. 1999, 43.

[145] This attitude is evident from the two most popular poems on Slovene immigrant women in Egypt: the folk poem Lepa Vida (Beautiful Vida) and the poem by Anton Aškerc, Egipčanka (The Egyptian Woman). The latter tells the story of a young woman from

manifested through constant warnings by priests and lay writers about the temptations posed by foreign lands and single life that culminated in their near condemnation of the supposed immorality involved.

Slovenian domestic workers in Italy

During the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, emigration from the Goriška region to Egypt stopped. At about the same time, the women from this region began to work in bigger Italian towns. The number of Slovenian female servants in Trieste was so big that they organized the home of St. Nikola, and many more worked in Gorizia and Milan. Another group, called *šavrinke*, were women from the agricultural hinterlands of the coastal towns, who ever since the end of the 19th century have supplied Trieste with agricultural produce and traded in the Italian and Croatian areas of Istria. This practice has survived to the present day. During periods of poverty, this was an important, or even the only source of income for many families. At the same time, with the income so earned the women could enjoy greater economic independence. *Šavrinke* also trained their own children, especially daughters, to join the trade. With the social changes and economic development after the Second World War, women were given an opportunity to learn a trade and obtain a job at home, which almost eliminated this type of black market and the motives for migration in search of work. Nevertheless, even today many women from the Primorska region choose to work as domestic workers in Trieste, rather than seek employment in Slovenia.

An ethnological study[146] conducted in 1994 and 1996 in the village of Sv. Peter in Istria showed that at least one woman from every household worked or used to work in Trieste. This indicates that paid domestic work is an important factor in the present economic and social position of these women, within both the family and the wider community. Women working in Trieste are an important link between the rural and urban areas and cultural brokers between the countryside and the town, Slovenia and Italy, with their own villages representing tradition, and the town of Trieste across the state border standing for a new, urban, modern way of life. In the opinion of ethnologists, through this type of informal

---

the Goriška region who went to Egypt to serve as a maidservant and ended up in a harem, finally returning home to die. At the end of the song there is a warning to other women against such a destiny (Barbič et al. 1999, 43).

146 Orehovec 1997.

work across the border not only material goods but also some moral and social patterns encountered in Italian households are transferred to Slovenia. The varying degrees of border control in the past (this used to be the Yugoslavian border) compelled these migrant workers to develop various strategies for circumventing the rules in order to be able to cross the border whenever they wished and take with them whatever produce they wanted to sell in Italy. Over time they developed group identity and awareness that manifested itself as mutual assistance, but also as social control.[147]

The economic recession and the restructuring of the Slovenian economy following 1991, which led to the closing down of many factories and companies, again increased the importance of informal paid domestic work. In such circumstances, domestic work in Trieste represents an important option and a frequently adopted strategy for securing the means of life (particularly used by women with low levels of education or without occupational education). Thanks to the experience accumulated through work in Trieste and passed down from generation to generation, and to the networks of relatives in Trieste, Slovenian women were always able to find work within the informal service sector. Over the past twenty years, the assistance of relatives in Trieste ceased to be vital, because women established their own social networks, which enable them to have control over the informal "labor market" in Trieste. The women from this region today have a kind of monopoly over paid domestic work in Trieste. Owing to the war in Croatia during the 1990s and poor economic conditions, they have recently been facing ever greater competition from Croatian women. However, thanks to the continuity of their presence in Trieste, Slovenian women have earned the reputation of industrious workers, so despite greater competition they continue to have stable jobs.[148]

We conducted five interviews as part of the SIPA project with women who live near the Slovenia-Italy border and perform domestic services in Trieste. These interviews revealed a lively daily migration across the border, on the scale of several busloads plus private transport. These daily migrants are mainly women performing informal paid domestic work in Italy, consisting of a combination of childcare, cooking, shopping, tidying up, ironing and other domestic services. Men, too, work across the border, doing gardening and hard physical work.

147 Ibid., 117.

148 Ibid., 123.

Cvetka[149](1960, 4-year secondary school completed, two children, unemployed for 15 years); Cvetka has been working in Italy for 15 years, because the factory where she used to work closed down, and her husband has a low income. She says that there are two buses taking domestic workers from Kozina to Trieste, and two from Sežana to Trieste, and running on a daily basis. She did not have to wait long to get a job with a household in Trieste, thanks to her neighbor, but she did not like any of the three families she worked for. They exploited her, accused her of many things, were insolent and so on. Then her husband's nephew found a family with which she has now been working for six years. She leaves home every morning before seven and stops by the milk shop and bakery to buy fresh milk and bread. She has a coffee with the mistress of the house before she leaves for work (the mistress has a managerial position in an educational institution). Cvetka looks after two girls, one 2 and the other 4 years old. She communicates in Slovene with the mistress and children, but the husband speaks only Italian. She is on good terms with the mistress, but is a little bit afraid of the husband (an engineer), so she prefers to leave before he returns from work. Cvetka admits that she sometimes has a feeling that they look upon her as a "second-class" person, and that this situation is different from that when she was employed in the factory and was on a par with her colleagues. From time to time, they ask her to look after the children in the evening, when they go out. She cooks lunch for the whole family and sometimes brings home-made food with her (soup, compotes, mushrooms, lettuce from her garden, sweets etc.). She earns a little extra money by selling them goat milk, home grown plums, apples, and garden produce, all coming from their small farm. Cvetka was in full-time employment for around ten years. She explained that once she had children, paying for kindergarten was not worth her while, so she stayed at home and found a job on the black market. She receives social aid and has health insurance through her husband; she pays for the retirement scheme; school and kindergarten costs are subsidized, and her husbands is refunded a considerable amount of tax paid, because he supports three family members. In addition, her informal job earns 500 euros per month. Nevertheless, she feels financially dependent on her husband and would like to have a regular job, even for less money than she earns now.[150]

Jožica (1950, elementary school, two children, never had a regular job). She began to work for a family in Villa Opicina as a young woman, and later found work in Trieste. Her mother, too, was a housemaid and she used to help her from time to time, so she began working when still a child. Her father worked in Italy as well. Jožica says that almost all the women from her village work "down there". Her family has a farm, six head of cattle, and a vineyard. Her daughter has not completed her education and also works in Trieste. Jožica thinks that domestic work in Italy has always been more profitable than employment in Slovenia. She works for three households, and travels to Trieste three to four times a week. She arrives at the house between 7.30 and 9.00, works for four to six hours accomplishing various tasks, ranging from tidying up, cleaning and ironing to window cleaning. One household has a gentleman in a wheelchair, whom she takes out when the weather is fine. She takes her husband with her to do

[149] All names have been changed to ensure the anonymity of respondents.

[150] Sušnik 2006.

the gardening for one household. Her husband receives a separate payment for his work and is usually paid more than she is. She is paid in cash. She pays farmer insurance at home.[151]

The stories of contemporary home workers in Italian border towns all resemble each other. Either because of tradition or because of a scarcity of job opportunities at home, they all secured for themselves the means of survival on the informal market of domestic services in Italy. It contributes largely to their sense of autonomy and independence from their partners. It should be emphasized that Slovenian domestic workers in Italy are far from being in the same position as illegal immigrants in European countries. They are citizens of the EU, so they cross the border legally; they return to their home country and family every day, and most of them receive social support in Slovenia. The interviewees said that they would like to have a regular job in this area, but had qualms about working in their home region. Given the substantial demand for domestic services in Slovenian urban centers, this shows that this type of employment is fraught with prejudices and regarded as inferior work.

Maids in Ljubljana

An overview of the demography of the province of Kranjska and the profit-earning activities of women between the years 1880 and 1910 shows a number of registered maidservants who served various clerks, rentiers, house owners and other wealthy bourgeois and aristocratic households.[152] Between the two world wars, bourgeois families usually had one maidservant, who performed all the household tasks required, while wealthier families could afford two maidservants. Data on the number of household workers during the period following the First World War are discrepant and "illegally working" maidservants are not accounted for. One can observ a constant increase in their number from the mid 1920s to the Second World War. In the mid 1930s, at least one in four families in Ljubljana had a maidservant. Compared to the total number of maidservants working in the towns of what is today the Slovenian territory, slightly less than half of all maidservants worked in Ljubljana. After the Second World War their number decreased steadily, because employ-

[151] Ibid.

[152] Žnidaršič 2000, 120.

ment opportunities in other areas improved. An especially large decline in the number of maidservants was recorded in the 1970s.[153]

Maidservants were mainly single women. The main reason was that, as a rule, employers looked for single women, so servants, along with priests and teachers, belonged to a class committed to celibacy.[154] The young women who worked in Ljubljana households were mainly "maids of all work" or "general maids." The term maidservant (*služkinja* in Slovene) was a predominant term until the Second World War, used by both common people and maidservants themselves. In its wider meaning, this term denotes "all persons ... who perform work in the household of the employer for a reward. This group includes cooks, chambermaids, maids doing all housework, cleaners, washers, assistant workers, child minders, educators, tailors, wet nurses, and all other persons working predominantly for the household regardless of whether they work on a regular or periodic basis."[155]

The stratification in rural areas, which gathered pace in the 15th and 16th centuries, produced a whole array of small farmers, and even more cottagers and lodgers. The two last mentioned groups in particular represented what came to be known as the "peasant proletariat," who were the main "suppliers" of peasant, semi-peasant and urban jobs. It was mainly the children of small farmers who hired themselves out for these jobs, but they were occasionally joined by the children of mid-sized and large farmers. This was the situation that prevailed until the Second World War. The majority of maidservants came from peasant regions, but a certain number came from working-class families, as well. The economic crisis in the 1930s altered this balance, since the maidservants from villages were joined by a large number of unemployed women of various occupations: tailors, embroiderers, typewriters, factory workers, and widows and divorcees. Nevertheless, "peasant" maidservants remained the largest group. The motives for taking servant jobs were mainly economic in nature. Virtually all children of countryside cottagers and lodgers had to start working early as shepherds, dry nurses and the like. Usually, parents accorded better care to their sons, who stayed at home or were sent to study or to learn a trade. By contrast, young women had little choice, so right up to the Second World War those who remained in the home region hired themselves out as maids of all work,

153 Testen 2004, 79.

154 Ibid., 69.

155 Žagar 1986, 19.

worked in factories, or as maidservants in bourgeois households. They especially cherished jobs in urban centers, because they imagined that town jobs were easier, cleaner, and better paid.

There were three main methods of job searching: newspaper advertisements, employment agents, and word of mouth or recommendations. Newspaper advertisements were the most rarely used and the least successful method. During the pre-war period, the families that posted advertisements had a habit of listing in detail their wishes regarding the knowledge, character and age of the desired maidservant as well as the type of work she was expected to do. Between the two world wars, these advertisements were carried by the newspapers *Slovenec*, *Jutro*, *Slovenski narod*, and to a lesser extent by *Ženski svet*, *Kmetovalec* and *Bogoljub*. The maidservants' paper, *Gospodinjska pomočnica*, did not contain many advertisements.[156] After the Second World War, the role of the newspapers somewhat increased, because this type of job was no longer secured through employment agencies.

Employment agencies were the second most popular choice. *Mestna posredovalnica* (Town Agency) began to operate in 1900, arranging jobs and accommodation in Ljubljana, but maidservants and housewives preferred private job agencies. There was a large number of these, thanks to the high profits they earned.[157] Quite often, maidservants without jobs could be found sitting in the waiting room of employment agencies, waiting for a chance to be chosen by a housewife. Both the certificates and the appearance of a candidate played an important role in choosing a maidservant, but the final decision was made only after a trial period of a few days. Between the two wars, there were also social job agencies operating in Ljubljana,[158] to which were added government offices after the second world war. State employment offices, or the Public Labor Exchange as they were called from 1927, offered their services free of charge, but they did not enjoy much trust among the people.

Word of mouth and recommendations from acquaintances, friends and relatives were the most frequent and the most successful method of

156 Žagar 1986, 23.

157 Ibid., 24

158 In 1923, Poselska zveza opened an employment agency for maidservants at Stari trg 2. In 1928 they moved to the premises of Delavska zbornica (Workers Chamber) at Miklošičeva 22. From 1932 the Zveza gospodinjskih pomočnic (Association of Maidservants) also performed job agency activities at Šelenburgova street 7, and later at Wolfova street 10 (ibid.).

finding a job or a maidservant, much as they still are today.[159] In many cases, the first job in the town was found with the help of a relative or an acquaintance who already worked as a maidservant and was an example for other young women. Recommendations from housewives were helpful when seeking a second or a third job, and these frequently secured a more favorable position.

The demand for maidservants used to increase in late autumn and winter; during late spring and summer, the demand was lower, and so was the number of employed maidservants. The reason was that the employers wanted to avoid paying the contributions for maidservants during vacations. Labor arrangements for maidservant jobs were made in person. The first interview with the maidservant was decisive in negotiating the duties, the working conditions and the wages. Before the First World War, young women began to work as maidservants immediately after completing compulsory education, or when they stopped working as shepherdesses or dry nurses, usually at the age of fourteen or fifteen. Later, the average age rose to 18 or 20. The reasons that could lead to the termination of a maidservant job varied. The maidservants themselves most frequently quit jobs because the work was too strenuous, or they were mistreated, or the mistress had a lofty attitude, or because they were not paid regularly, or the diet was lacking or miserable, or because the employer moved or died. Sometimes, the reason for quitting was that she could not integrate with the household, or she got another, better opportunity, or married. Housewives dismissed maidservants when they reached an advanced age, or because their own children had grown up, or because the maidservant fell ill or became pregnant; sometimes the reason was theft, laziness, strolling around till late at night or a quarrelsome character. After the Second World War, the same as during the economic crisis, a frequent reason for dismissing a maidservant was the employer's unfavorable financial state. The notice period was fourteen days, but it was mainly ignored in practice.[160]

Hard labor and too little rest led to early frailty – women between 40 and 50 years of age could no longer endure strenuous work and could

159 "Agreements were made in person; sometimes job agents were involved, similar to how farming job matters were agreed. Usually, these were peasant women who sold produce on the food market, 'egg-ladies,' 'dairy-ladies,' and others who were familiar with the circumstances in their local area and in the town and were a source of information for both maidservants and the employers. Until the Second World War, similar sources of information were village priests whom people trusted even more." (Ibid.)

160 Ibid., 26.

obtain a work engagement only with difficulty. They survived on their savings and earned some extra money working as daily helpers, but this was a low paid job. Some rented rooms or apartments, cooked food for students and the like. During the economic crisis many unemployed women of various professions sought daily helper jobs, so aged maidservants were left without income. A certain number of these returned to their home regions, but the majority ended in hospices, almshouses and refuges for servants. The old age pension stipulated by law began to be paid out only after the Second World War. Maidservants were entitled to annuities if they could prove that they had a sufficient number of years in employment. Daily helpers were in the most difficult position, because they had to find witnesses to testify that their working day had not been shorter than 8 hours.[161]

After the Second World War, the maidservant job all but disappeared. Young women from rural regions who were still willing to undertake these jobs, because it was their only chance to get away from the countryside, considered the maidservant job (or the "household helper" job as it was termed during socialism), as a transitional phase and a springboard to better jobs.

The organizing of household workers and regulation of their working conditions

Much as with present household workers, the maidservants who worked between the two world wars had poor legal protection. Their circumstances were much exacerbated by the fact that, until the Second World War and for some time following it, maidservants were not united within an organization; they were scattered across a number of households, so it was not possible to set uniform working conditions standards and labor relations based on a collective agreement. Accordingly, the Workers Chamber and the Union of Domestic and Household Workers[162] did not have power to implement measures that could have improved their situation, and their role was reduced to mediating in conflicts between maidservants and employers. In practice, labor relations were determined by the specific circumstances and character traits of both parties involved. It should also be noted that household workers themselves did not show serious interest in establishing trade associations or organizations, nei-

[161] Testen 2004, 91.

[162] Established in 1941.

ther between the two world wars nor after 1945. The first associations were founded with the purpose of providing assistance to old, feeble and unemployed domestic workers. Such were *Zavod sv. Marte* and *Društvo Zavod sv. Marte* established in 1905 in Ljubljana. In the Kingdom of Yugoslavia there were three politically tainted expert organizations: *Poselska zveza* that evolved from the association of maidservants was part of the Yugoslav Christian Socialist Professional Alliance; *Zveza gospodinjskih pomočnic* did not predicate its membership on party affiliation and published the bulletin *Gospodinjska pomočnica*. Both organizations were members of the Workers Chamber. *Organizacija hišnih poslov*, the third such organization, operated under the auspices of the *Zveza delavskih žena in deklet (The Association of Working Women)*. Following the Italian occupation in 1941, the *Sindikat hišno gospodinjskih poslov* (Union Of Household Servants) for the Ljubljana district was established in 1941.[163] The new forms of unions that emerged in Yugoslavia led to the establishment of a union of household helpers *Zveza gospodinjskih pomočnic* (The Association of Household Helpers) in the spring of 1945; its members included cooks, chambermaids, drivers and daily helpers. One decade later, the constant decline in membership led to its integration with the Union of Communal Workers and Craftsmen.

In 1959, the labor relations law regulating the status of household helpers and daily helpers[164] was adopted. According to this law, household work included cooking, tidying up, cleaning, washing, ironing, clothes mending and childcare. It also stipulated a compulsory initial medical examination followed by periodic checkups, as well as professional training for household helpers. They were entitled to one month of medical care on the employer's premises in case of illness. The law further stipulated the method of agreeing employment relations (oral or written), the minimum age limit (15 years), 8 or 9 hours of rest, two days off per week and an annual vacation whose length depended on the duration of employment. It also included a provision stipulating the termination of employment – a household helper could terminate job without prior notice if the employer failed to pay her wages on a regular basis, did not provide adequate food or living quarters, mistreated her or forced her into acts that were against her will. The 1946 law on social insurance conferred upon household helpers the right to government sponsored social insurance in the case of illness, pregnancy, a work accident, debility, old age

163 Šuštar 1993, 15.

164 Ur. l. LRS, št. 38, 1959.

and death. Another article of this law stipulated compulsory insurance for persons working "in the service of private persons." Guidelines were issued, as well as a decree and a resolution determining the amount of the contribution for the social insurance of household helpers.[165]

Since the 1960s, the issues related to domestic workers have figured less and less in the trade union activities and in legislation. Over the past decades, working methods in this area changed radically. The legislation mentioned earlier addressed the status of live-in domestic workers. Yet the greatest number of domestic workers in Slovenia today are live-out workers who work for several households, a few hours a week in each. In this type of organization, individual users of these services cannot be the employers, so either domestic workers need to have a self-employment option, or job agencies should be in place to take care of their employment status. In the case of live-in workers, an individual household could be the employer and the payer of social contributions for the worker, and the same principle could be applied to live-out workers who work full time in one household (however, we do not have an estimate of the number of live-in workers in Slovenia). Furthermore, there should also be established a mechanism of control, given that even when appropriate legislation was in place, there were reports that households did not register their domestic helpers with the social insurance organization nor pay contributions for them, and that they were dismissing them without notice and especially when they fell pregnant.[166]

165 Ur. L. FLRJ, št. 56, 1947, Navodilo o določanju osnove za podpore in socialno zavarovanje pri hišnem pomočniškem osebju (Guidelines on determining the basis for aid and social insurance for the household helper staff); Ur. L. FLRJ, št. 29, 1952, Odločba o stopnji in osnovi za socialno zavarovanje gospodinjskih pomočnic in vajencev pri zasebnih delodajalcih (The Provision on the level and basis for social insurance contributions for household helpers and apprentices with private employers); Ur. l. FLRJ, št. 8, 1956, Sklep o določitvi pavšalnega prispevka za socialno zavarovanje gospodinjskih pomočnic (The Resolution on the determination of the flat contribution for the social insurance of household helpers).

166 Šuštar 1993, 20.

DOMESTIC PAID WORK AS EMPLOYMENT: LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED WOMEN AS A SEGMENT OF THE CONTEMPORARY, INFORMAL DOMESTIC WORKERS GROUP

The structure of the long-term unemployed women group in Slovenia

Contemporary informal household workers in Slovenia belong to various social groups. Many are younger retired women, employed working class women, unemployed women who never sought a regular job, and students. What they have in common is that, for them, household work is not a means of survival, but a source of extra income that to a certain extent may enhance their economic situation and quality of life. However, a large number of contemporary household workers are long-term unemployed women for whom this work is the only means of survival.[167]

The Employment Service of Slovenia distinguishes between younger and older long-term unemployed women, because the reasons for their difficulties with finding a job can be different. One trait shared by the two groups is poor education. In addition to the lack of job skills, other most frequent reasons that place younger women in the hard-to-employ category are childcare-related requirements (they look primarily for jobs involving only morning shifts, rather an exception than a rule in the low-education job category) or they are the victims of discriminatory

[167] According to the Employment Service criteria, a long-term unemployed person is a person who has been out of employment for 12 months within the period of the last 18 months, or, in case of persons younger than 25, for 6 months within the last 8 months. According to the Employment Service data, at the end of October 2006, there were 81,302 unemployed persons registered with the Service, of these 44,938 women. The long-term-unemployed group comprised 40,955 persons, of these 22,696 were women. Approximately 12,000 were older than 40, and approximately 8,000 were between 18 and 40. Approximately 10,000 thousand long-term unemployed women had level I education, and only around 1,500 had IV or V educational level. Nearly 10,000 long-term-unemployed women in Slovenia have less than 5 years employment. The greatest number of long-term-unemployed women are registered with the Employment Service local branches in Ljubljana, Maribor, Celje and Murska Sobota. According to the Employment Service data, the group of long-term-unemployed women includes 250 foreigners, with the majority of these coming from ex-Yugoslav countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular (Employment Service of Slovenia, 2006).

employment patterns (employers fear maternity leaves and frequent absence from work). The most frequent obstacles faced by older long-term unemployed women are as follows: unrealistically high aspirations, because a person had a job in the past for which she had no adequate education; inability to perform physically demanding jobs because the worker has chronic health problems as a consequence of physical strain at previous long-term jobs (but she cannot be classified as a disabled person according to the valid criteria); no previous regular job and a complete absence of work experience, which may be a consequence of the latent lack of motivation to undertake a job. According to the Employment Service experts, a certain number of long-term unemployed women have not adjusted to new circumstances on the labor market, are inflexible, passive, fear the burden associated with a job and have doubts as to whether they will be able to fulfill the expectations.[168]

On the basis of the data collected, we could not establish how many of the long-term unemployed women are first or second generation immigrants from ex-Yugoslav republics. There is no doubt that gender and socio-economic position are the two main structural factors shaping the segment of informal paid domestic work in Slovenia. The lack of data on the nationality of the long-term unemployed women, who make up the largest group of domestic workers within the black economy, prevents us from concluding, at least within the framework of the SIPA project, that the third structural factor is nationality, as it is in many EU countires. In seeking to hear the life stories of some of these women, we conducted interviews with two log-term unemployed domestic workers included in the SIPA pilot project. These were immigrants from Bosnia who have experienced various life temptations.

> Ana was born in Srbec in Bosnia-Herzegovina into a family with six children. Her father died when she was four, so all the children began to work at an early age. When she was thirteen she went to Germany for two months to take care of a child during the summer holidays. That was her first experience of a foreign country. A year later she completed elementary schooling and went to Ljubljana to her sister. She married in Ljubljana, changed many jobs ranging from a cleaning job in a school and a knitter job in a factory to a teacher's assistant position in a kindergarten, a job with a real estate agency and a painting job. Most of the time, she held two jobs. "For example, when I worked in the kindergarten twenty, or rather, fifteen years ago, I first went to clean the sports hall Krim at three in the morning, worked there until ten and then went to the kindergarten in Zvonarska street where I worked until four ... I'm very good at organizing things. I get up in the morning, say, one hour earlier, I live by myself, and I make a

[168] ZRSZ 2006a.

plan of the activities for that day. Of course, something may come in between, but in principle I make a plan, and I manage to stick to that plan, including lunch at home, and dinner if necessary, all that. But, of course, that means that once I get up, I work, I don't sleep. On top of that, my husband now has a serious psychological disturbance, and I have to deal with it, too. For example, last year he was 10 days in a coma after head surgery following his fall, but I still went to school, and attended lessons, and went to work." Over the past three years, since she has been registered with the Employment Service, she has completed vocational training in the construction field, namely house painting.[169]

Eva was also born in Srbec, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, into a family with two children. After completing elementary school, she married a man from the neighboring village and had a daughter when she was seventeen. She worked on the farm. She soon divorced because of domestic violence and moved to live with her brother in Ljubljana, leaving her daughter with her husband's family. She met her present husband in Ljubljana. She worked as a nurse in a maternity hospital. The following is what she said about immigration from former Yugoslav republics to Slovenia: "They (her co-workers, M.H.) were sent to Ljubljana by their Employment Service, because they needed nurses here and they didn't need them there. And they came here through the Service, because it was one Yugoslavia. And they were not satisfied; not that they were not satisfied with their work, but they were young, they left their families behind, boyfriends, they left all down there. It was hard for them in the beginning, that they, not because of work, but because they had to take that job, the same as I now have to take a job through the Service... But I know that a lot of workers, that was one Yugoslavia, and they needed workers here. So they sent them here. I was satisfied when I came here, I really mean that." In 1991, Eva followed her husband who moved to Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia where he got a job. She and her son lived there for seven years. After returning to Ljubljana, she had various jobs ranging from sales assistant to cleaner, but all were fixed-term jobs.[170]

These two stories testify to the fact that the group of long-term unemployed women includes many immigrants and that this group is very heterogeneous, so it is not possible to make generalizations about passivity, uninventivness and the victim stance. A better approach would be to concentrate on specific difficulties experienced by long-term unemployed women. Exhaustion as a result of the long years of hard physical work, the age limit of 45 treated by the employers as a limit beyond which they do not even want to consider an applicant, duties at home such as care for a sick family member, childcare etc. – none of this has yet been perceived sufficiently as a political problem, but merely as a personal problem.

169 Hrženjak, Humer 2006.

170 Ibid.

Majda Hrženjak

The stories of contemporary informal household workers

As part of the SIPA project, we conducted three focus groups at the local Employment Service office in Ljubljana. The groups consisted of long-term unemployed women. It should be emphasized that the number of long-term unemployed women is clearly growing in Slovenia as well as elsewhere in Europe, and that jobs accessible for this group are in short supply. Our purpose in conducting the focus groups was to find out whether the target group of long-term unemployed women were truly interested in regular jobs within the domestic services sector and which negative and positive sides they associated with that kind of work. It turned out that many among the long-term unemployed women already worked as domestic workers within the gray economy sector. For them, it has been a way out of financial crisis. Accordingly, although it was not quite planned, we heard the stories of several informal household workers in Ljubljana, which enabled us to obtain a better overview of the developments within the black economy.

> Veronika has been registered with the Employment Service since 1991. She worked as a domestic worker for people employed at the US embassy, and was very surprised to find them honest and friendly people. She indeed mentioned that they left around money in order to test her and see if they could trust her, but the only real problem with that job was the fact that they had to move to another country after two and a half years, and she was not prepared to follow them to Germany. Their recommendations got her another job with a Slovenian family, but they did not pay enough. When in 2006 she found herself without work and income, she asked a local shop owner if he knew someone who was looking for domestic help. It took only half an hour to make all the arrangements. The family had two surgeries; her workday was to be 8 hours long; on Saturdays they needed a little help now and then, and Sundays were to be off days. The monthly wage was approx. 625 euros in cash. However, she ended up as a "maid of all work" as she put it. She tidied up the house and the surgeries, washed, looked after a 14-month old baby, cooked separate meals for the child, the family and their dog, and so forth. Her work day sometimes extended to 10 or 11 hours, and she also had to work on Sundays. In the three weeks she persisted with that household, she lost 6 kilos.

Barbara reported that she did not have experience of informal work in a household, but her mother had performed household jobs in addition to her regular job for 20 years. Even now, at an advanced age, she retains one customer. Barbara said that her mother used to work for many employers, but she is extremely exhausted. She performed all types of

work, including ironing, cooking, gardening and childcare. At the same time, Barbara had a nurse who lived with the family, looked after the children and helped in the kitchen in exchange for free accommodation. Barbara's friend, who doesn't have a job, also earns a living by working as a domestic worker. Since the father of the family for which she works travels frequently, she is asked to iron shirts for him on Sunday nights. Her workday varies, from two hours a day to 10 or even 12 hours. She works weekends and holidays as well. She gets 3.8 euros per hour plus 40 cents for petrol. Barbara's observation was that, given such working conditions, a woman cannot have her own family, since she has to be 100% available to the household for which she works.

Finally, below is the story of Lidija, who earns her living as a live-in household worker. She was forced to take this job when she found herself in crisis following an illness and the resulting loss of her job.

> Lidija has been registered with the Employment Service for one and a half years. She had worked for six years as a cleaner for a private cleaning service when she fell ill and had to have a surgery. Her limited-term contract expired while she was on sick leave, and her employer refused to extend it. She has now recovered and has been looking steadily for work. However, the first question from every prospective employer is why she lost her job, and as soon as they learn that she was seriously ill, the job interview is over. At the moment, she receives social aid amounting to 150 euros; she pays 29 euros per month for social insurance and 59 euros pension contribution. She has a rich experience of household cleaning jobs, some of it bad, some good. Some households paid well, others cheated her, and some "exploited her to the last drop." Her rates are 5 to 5.5 euros per hour for ironing, window cleaning and general cleaning, and from 3.3 to 4.2 euros for tidying up. She especially likes to do master cleaning and has become known for it. Usually, the family leaves her the keys on Fridays, when they go away for the weekend, and collect them from the post-box or at the neighbors' on Sundays when they return to the clean apartment. Lidija lost her tenant right in the process of denationalization, so she has been working for an older, quite ill gentleman who has an alcohol problem in exchange for free accommodation and food. She looks after him day and night. Her concluding thought was: "My dears, I'll never get another regular job."

Despite a considerable modernization of paid domestic work in Slovenia, all traits characteristic of domestic work in western Europe are also found in Slovenia. Informality and deregulation of this area has two sides to it. On the one hand, it has its advantages because the workday can be adjusted to personal needs and physical abilities, there is little or no supervision, earnings are good, and social contributions are paid while taxes are evaded. On the other hand, deregulation leads to various forms of exploitation and abuse and sometimes to low wages or even

non-payment of wages; workdays may be long and extend to weekends, holidays and overnight; some people require live-in arrangements; there are cases of forced work and so forth.[171]

[171] There has been one example of forced work recorded in the area of domestic work in Slovenia. In 2006, Društvo Ključ (Center for Combating Trafficking in People) dealt with the first known example of a foreign servant working for a household in Slovenia. People at Ključ are convinced that this is not the sole example, though. According to information (unofficial and unverified), there are many examples of forced work in rural households, with workers being obtained through fake marriages. The example mentioned above was also a case of fake marriage. The person ended in the household of the organizer, or the agent. Her passport was confiscated and contacts with the outer world limited. She never lived with her supposed husband. Similarly, according to the informal sources of information, some seasonal workers (picking strawberries, harvesting hops) remain in Slovenia after the end of work, living in households and on farms and working as servants without legal status.

THE CRISIS OF REPRODUCTIVE LABOR IN TWO-CAREER FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN AND SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

Women in Slovenia between paid and unpaid work

Slovenia is considered to be a country in which private and professional duties are well integrated, at least on the level of the relevant policies. One European research study described Slovenia as the "Sweden of the south,"[172] thanks to the extensive and affordable network of subsidized quality kindergartens, long, paid maternity and parental leaves, tax relief for families with children and recent systematic promotion of active fatherhood and father's leave. All of these are forms of public support for the reconciliation of professional and private life among the active population which is burdened by social reproduction within the private and the public sphere. Accordingly, the employment rate for women in Slovenia in full-time employment is one of the highest in Europe. In 2004, women accounted for 45.9% of the active working population. Only 11% of women had part-time jobs in 2004, compared to 7.9% men.[173] .

On the one hand, these figures indicate that, compared to many other EU countries, in Slovenia the guaranteed level of reconciliation of professional and private life is quite high. However, if we take into account certain other figures, the image changes somewhat. In Slovenia, it is mainly women who take leave to look after or nurse children. In 2003, only 2.3% of fathers took nursing leaves.[174] The findings of the research study "Parents between work and the family" show that only 3-4% of parents work part-time after concluding a childcare leave, but women account for as much as 90% of this group.[175] Data on nursing leaves, taken to provide nursing care either for children, or for old people, or for other family members, indicate that this burden is mainly shouldered by women,

[172] Van der Lippe 2006.

[173] CEDAW 2006.

[174] Rener et al. 2005.

[175] Kanjuo Mrčela et al. 2005.

since women are absent from work for nursing reasons six times more often than men.[176] Given the population aging trend, it may be expected that a great deal of care for older people will be shifted to the family, and that the workload borne by women will accordingly increase.

The majority of active working women in Slovenia are in full-time employment (rather than, for example, part-time employment, or interrupting their careers for extended periods to care for children, as is a frequent practice in many EU countries), but the division of domestic labor remains asymmetrical. This means that Slovenian women (and women in other new EU states) are clearly more burdened than women in old EU member states, who have more options for choosing a part-time job or remaining at home. Slovenian women, including those with children, work full-time, the same as men. The growing intensity of work, uncertainty of employment and society's evidently higher esteem for professional life compared to private life, which is a feature that in the new EU member states has been introduced with the transition to capitalism, placed additional burden on both men and women. Yet, since women carry a greater burden of domestic work than men, their situation in the new social circumstances is particularly unenviable.[177]

As already mentioned, a number of EU countries pursue social economy policies encouraging the development of various support services for households (e.g. help with housework, childcare and care for family members who need nursing etc.). These services have dual effect: they remove the pressures and the burden of reconciling work and private duties from the shoulders of family members, women in particular, and they create new jobs for hard-to-employ groups and primarily long-term unemployed people with low levels of education. The effort includes the establishment of professional agencies that transform the domestic work potential into regular jobs and bring together the seekers of domestic jobs and the households that want to buy these services. These accompanying policies also enable access to support services (primarily) to households in greater need of these services (e.g. families with young children, single-parent families, large families, poor families, families caring for an additional member who needs nursing etc.).

176 The analysis of the state of affairs 2005, 7.

177 Rudd 2000; Pascall et al. 2000; Šadl 2006. According to Eurostat data, between 1998 and 2002, the number of hours men in Slovenia spent at the workplace equaled the European average (41.8 hours in Slovenia compared to 41.3 hours in Europe). Women, on the other hand, spent at workplace almost one working day more on average than women in Europe (39.4 hours in Slovenia compared to 33.4 hours in Europe) (Eurostat 2004).

The empirical research study conducted in households with small children

Within the SIPA project, we conducted two empirical studies aimed at establishing to what extent women with small children are interested in buying domestic services and to what extent the target group comprising long-term unemployed women is interested in jobs in this area. The study covered 300 households in Ljubljana and 100 households in Maribor. In addition to demographic data, circumstances in the workplace, division of domestic labor between partners, assistance provided by social networks etc., we primarily sought to establish how much and what kinds of domestic help these households with small children needed, and how much they were willing to pay for it.[178] The other sample included 100 unemployed women with low levels of education living within the area of the Employment Service Ljubljana office. We asked them under what conditions they would be willing to work as domestic workers. Both samples were drawn from the respondents who took part in the interviews, so it is not possible to speak of random or representative samples. Hence the results of the two studies (and of the pilot project described below) cannot be generalized to the whole population of Slovenian households with small children and long term unemployed women, but can still be a good indicator of a potential empirical situation.

Fifty-five percent of female respondents living in households with small children said that they shared domestic duties with their partner. However, when we proceeded to the question focusing on their perception of

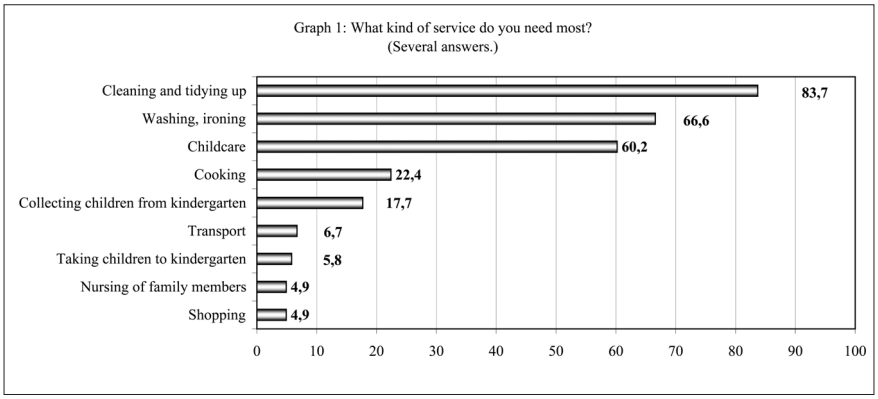
[178] Of the women living in households with small children included in our survey, one third were between 26 and 30 years of age, slightly more than one third were between 31 and 35 years of age, 22% were older than 35, and 8.8% were under 25. Most of the women, 56.8%, had one child, 35% had two children, and 7.8% had three children. We interviewed/polled almost half the women whose youngest child was one year old or younger, 18.3% of women with a child up to 2, 13% with a 3-year old child, 11% with a 4-year old child, 7.8% with a the 5-year old child, and 1% with a 6-year old child. Of these respondents, 2% had completed elementary school or less, 16.3% had completed a 2- or 3-year technical school, 37.5% a 4-year secondary or grammar school, 12.9% had a high or higher school diploma, 22.3% had a university degree, and 7.7% had a master's or doctoral degree. Slightly less than one half of respondents pursued further educational courses of their own will or at the behest of an employer; one third would not like to attend further educational courses, and 16% do not attend educational courses but would like to. 90.1% of respondents were in full-time employment, 6.5% in part time employment, 0.6% worked by contract, and 2.8% were self-employed. 16.8% respondents refused to reveal the amount of their income; 3% were in the low-income category (less than 100,000 tolars); 36% were in the modest-income category (100,000 to 200,000 tolars), 28% had between 200,000 and 300,000 tolars income, and 15% had income greater 300,000 tolars.

the division of labor, it turned out that as many as 60.1% of respondents thought that their partners worked less than themselves, and only slightly more than one third (34.2%) stated that the work was equally divided between herself and the partner.

The support provided by social networks is mainly limited to parental support. Parents help with domestic work in 37.5% of households and with childcare in 78.5% of households with small children. These figures are quite high, but it is necessary to shed some light on them from another point of view, as well. On average, parents provide 16 hours of help with domestic work, and 27.5 hours of childcare a month, which amounts to 30 minutes and 1 hour a day respectively.

Seventeen percent of respondents stated that they were already hiring domestic services; most of these were women in managerial positions, educated women and women still involved in the process of education. The largest percent, 66.2%, hired domestic workers for occasional cleaning; 42.6% occasionally hired child minders, a further 11.8% hired child minders on a daily basis, and 2.9% hired daily domestic help. The average hourly rate for cleaning services is 5 euros, and for childcare it is 3.3 euros. The minimum hourly rate for a cleaning service is 2 euros, and for childcare it is 2.3 euros. The maximum hourly rate for cleaning is 6.7 euros, and for childcare 5 euros. Among the households surveyed, 26.5% hired young women without employment as domestic workers, 19.1% hired older women, 16.2% a retired person, and 7.4% hired help through an agency. Women from approximately 80% of households thought that they would need domestic help, and in most cases the reason stated was a career, education or obtaining more leisure time for themselves.

83.7% of women would need occasional cleaning and tidying up services, followed by ironing and washing (66.6%) and childcare (60.2%). Other services mentioned were cooking (22.4%), fetching children from kindergarten (17.7%) and assorted other tasks.

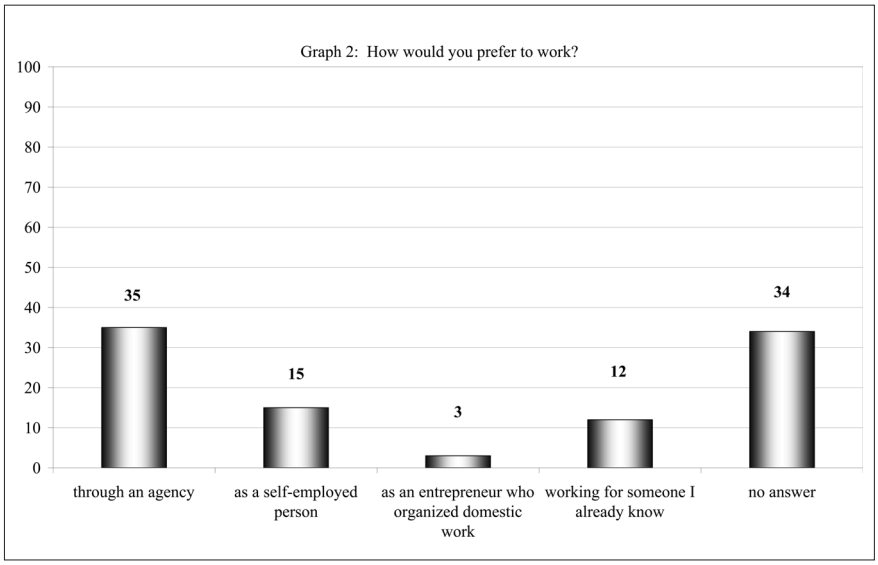


The majority of respondents stated that they would readily hire a domestic helper recommended by a friend, a co-worker or a neighbor (78.2%). Forty-one percent of respondents said that they appreciated good manners in domestic workers, 35.8% would give priority to a female helper and 26.5% to a certified child minder. One fifth of respondents said that they did not care whether or not the person was a Slovene, and one fifth would like to hire a helper through an agency specializing in these services.

The empirical study of long-term unemployed women

The research study that covered long-term unemployed women[179] showed that 64% of them would accept employment in this area for a respectable payment, primarily younger women with elementary school and technical education. Agency provided jobs are preferred by 35% of women, while 15% would opt for self-employment status; 12% of respondents would work for someone they already know, and only 3% would choose to be entrepreneurs themselves and organize domestic work.

[179] Three-quarters of the women in the sample were between 46 and 60 years of age, and one-quarter were 31 to 45. One half of respondents had elementary school, 29% had completed technical school, 15% had completed secondary school or grammar school, and 3% higher education or college. The majority of respondents were workers (28%); saleswomen accounted for 14%, tailors for 6% and cleaners for 5% of the sample. Slightly less than one-third of respondents had been without employment for less than 6 months, and slightly more than one third for more than two years.



Half of respondents said that they were flexible as regards the part of the day, shorter working hours, unplanned work etc., while 39% would not be ready to accept such an arrangement. Sixty-eight percent would work only for one or two households several hours in a row, while 15% would work for more households, a few hours in each. Sixty-three percent would be willing to attend a shorter period of free training, if this were a precondition for obtaining a job. One fourth would decline this.

The two research studies indicated that, despite apparent changes in the traditional pattern of the division of labor in the private sphere, the asymmetrical division of domestic work still predominates, and one consequence is the unequal status of women on the labor market. In Slovenia, as elsewhere, women spend more time on domestic work than men and consequently spend less time at the workplace than men.[180] There is an obvious disparity between the trendy, socially desirable and expected equal division of domestic labor and the reality of life. A great number of women with small children assess that unpaid domestic work represents an obstacle to their career and gaining of recognition. It is primarily parents who help with domestic work in households with small children (mainly with childcare), although changing patterns of time allocation among older people and the geographical distance between parents and

[180] The working week of the respondents in the SIPA sample was 40 hours long on average, compared to the 46 hours worked by their husbands. The longest working week reported was 70 hours for women and 85 hours for their husbands.

children who live in urban centers make this help limited. Therefore, almost all households with small children stated that they needed domestic services. It would enable women primarily to obtain a little bit of extra time that they could devote to a career, education, or children, and they are ready to set aside money for it. The results therefore show that on both the demand and the supply side there is a need for professionalization and organization of reasonably priced domestic services.

TEST ORGANIZATION OF PAID DOMESTIC WORK AS REGULAR EMPLOYMENT

The logistics of the pilot project

In order to test in practice the idea about paid domestic work as a source of new jobs for long-term unemployed women and as a means towards unburdening, at least in part, families with small children, which in our opinion belong to the social segment most burdened by reproduction, the SIPA project conducted a six-month pilot project financed from the EQUAL Initiative funds. During the project, 30 Ljubljana households with small children[181] received domestic help free of charge; domestic services were provided by five household workers.

The organizational approach involved the voucher system and coordination undertaken by *Centerkontura* company; our goal was to engage domestic workers who would provide services on a regular basis and to ensure a relatively steady time schedule. The households received vouchers, or coupons, at the beginning of the pilot project. One coupon corresponded to one hour of domestic work, so the households received 15 coupons for each month. On completing the work, the domestic worker received the appropriate number of coupons, which she handed to the coordinator at the end of the month. The coupons enabled the keeping of a record of hours worked by households and by individual workers. Coordination of activities involved the definition of time schedules and changes thereof, substitution for an absent worker or substitution in the case of dissatisfaction, mediation in case of conflicts etc. Although a great deal of negotiation was done in person by the worker and the household members, coordination established an important sense of security and trust, and it also made possible the supervision and organization. While

[181] The households that received domestic help were drawn at the Peace Institute from the sample that participated in the empirical study mentioned above and expressed willingness to collaborate in this pilot project. Initially, 30 households were included. During the project, 4 households terminated collaboration in the project, and 6 new ones were added. At the end of the project, in October 2006, there were 32 households receiving domestic help, meaning 2 more than planned. The pilot project lasted from April 15, 2006 to October 15, 2006.

we predicted that the regular presence of a worker would be a desired feature, we did not expect that a fixed time schedule would prove even more important. At any rate, fixed working time facilitates the organization of paid domestic work because the working hours are more predictable. The tool that proved vital in harmonizing the work-scheduling requirements of all three parties (households, domestic workers and coordinator) was the cell phone, and especially the text messaging option.

Recruitment of domestic workers and the progress of the pilot project

Cenetrkontura, the company that undertook the implementation and coordination of the project, employed 5 domestic workers for the limited period of 6 months. Four were in full-time employment, and one in part-time employment. Their net monthly income was 106,000 Slovenian tolars (approx. €442), plus transport and meal allowances.[182] The employment agreement stipulated limited-term employment lasting 6 months, 5 hours of effective work per day, compulsory attendance at meetings, no vacation leave during the 6-month period, and flexible working time.

Although the survey among 100 long-term unemployed women indicated that 64 of them would be prepared to accept employment as domestic workers, we encountered many difficulties when we began to recruit workers for the pilot project. Since the goal was to employ persons from the target group of long-term unemployed women, we initially tried to engage households and women from the group of job seekers who participated in the survey. When we presented to them the employment opportunity within the pilot project, 11 women expressed interest, but only 6 of these attended the related training organized by the *Sezam* association. The coordinator of the pilot project selected three persons from among the seminar participants based on the interviews and personnel policy principles. Since we needed 5 employees for the project, we asked consultants working for the Ljubljana office of the Employment Service of Slovenia to direct long-term unemployed women to the project coordinator. In addition, we used the database of the *Centerkontura* organization and of the *Sklad dela Ljubljane*. Initially, *Centerkontura* was able to recruit only three women, so there were only three domestic workers participating in the project during the first two months. We managed to

[182] The average net salary amounted to €780 and the minimum one €261 in December 2006 in Slovenia.

find a fourth employee only two months later, and the fifth, who worked part-time, four months later.

The most frequently stated reasons for refusing the job included the short duration of the employment (six months or less), flexible working hours (including Saturdays and Sundays), unacceptable type of work (tidying up others' households, work for several households in the same day, disreputable job), apprehensions regarding the associated responsibilities (having the key to the household, the likelihood of breaking or destroying something, the danger of accidents, injuries to children or similar risks), physical strain (stated by persons with medical problems), other arrangements (within the gray economy sector) during the summer months, or an already fixed time for summer vacation, no one to look after their own children, participation in an ongoing training scheme or waiting to be included in training organized by the Employment Service, and hoping to obtain a promised job elsewhere.[183] Despite this partial failure of the pilot project in the stage involving recruitment, it is not possible to conclude that there is no interest in domestic work on the part of long-term unemployed persons. Many of the reasons for declining our job offer are understandable and arise from the conception and organization of the project. First, the term of the project was too short, because a person re-registering with the Employment Service after being six months in employment is not entitled to unemployment allowances. Second, as it turned out later, our demand for flexible working hours was not quite realistic, since a large portion of domestic work could be organized within the time frame of regular working hours, and this was a feature seen as extremely unattractive by prospective workers. In addition to the limited term of employment and flexible working hours, other factors that contributed to lower response rates were the inadequate manner in which we approached the recruiting of long-term unemployed women (a random instead of a targeted group) and insufficient emphasis placed on training that would include elements of psycho-social integration for long-term unemployed persons. In our opinion, the interest would have been greater had some components of the project been different, our selection more targeted (e.g. a focus on long-term unemployed women who already work as domestic workers within the gray sector and would like to have regular employment), and had we been able to offer a one-year job with predictable working hours and more comprehensive training beforehand.

183 Kraljič Černe 2006.

The difficulties with recruiting participants were later coupled with sick leaves and vacations in households (although this also enabled the domestic workers to have shorter vacations). For these reasons, the average number of hours per month was below 15 per household, while workers worked somewhat more than 5 effective hours per day. The realization of the project in terms of working hours was approximately 2/3 – there were 2700 hours of domestic work anticipated within the period of six months, compared to 1813 hours actually worked.

The participating workers kept a diary recording the tasks accomplished, and analysis of these records revealed the types of work that were most frequently required. The list is topped by vacuum cleaning, cleaning of the bathroom, ironing, dusting, kitchen cleaning, washing up, window cleaning, garbage disposal and washing of clothes. In addition to these most frequent tasks, there was also cooking, garbage sorting, and shopping for the household. There was a lot of floor cleaning, clothes hanging, collecting and putting away, wardrobe and door cleaning, terrace and balcony cleaning, oven and cooker cleaning, general kitchen cleaning including the cleaning of the fridge, cleaning of the Venetian blinds, central heaters, blinds and sofas, carpets, and garden sets. There was a bit of escorting, superintending and playing with children. It is evident from the diaries that the majority of duties were repetitive cleaning tasks, meaning labor intensive activities that are the most physically strenuous and the most time-consuming category of reproductive labor. It should be stressed, however, that the evaluation of the pilot project showed that household workers perceive master cleaning as physically harder work that should be evaluated separately and that requires a special organization of work activities.

The domestic work in this project was not limited only to household chores but also included attendance of and escorting children. This segment also showed that the duration of the project was too short, since six months is too short a period for establishing the mutual trust that would make possible children-related activities. However, the evaluation of the project also showed that the households with small children needed relief from housework primarily in order to be able to spend more time with children.

The greatest part of domestic work was accomplished between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Only 9% of hours were worked after 4 p.m. or at night. No work was required during weekends and holidays. The pilot project revealed that the households wished not only for steady workers but also for fixed time schedules, as a rule during the morning hours. By including the option of an afternoon shift once or twice a month (e.g. to take care of

children or escort them), the job of domestic workers could be organized within a predictable and orderly time schedule.

Evaluation of the pilot project

In evaluating the project, we employed two approaches: quantitative, using the questionnaire, and qualitative, involving focus groups composed of the majority of households and participating domestic workers. The quantitative evaluation showed that the participating households assessed the project and the idea of affordable domestic services as very positive. The majority (80%) said that their expectations were fulfilled. The problems mentioned included the lack of flexibility as a result of the small number of participating workers. On the other hand, 86.7% of households stated that they found the most suitable type of arrangement to be a fixed one, meaning regular day and time schedules. This is to say that the flexibility mentioned above did not relate as much to flexible schedules as to the situations when a worker needed to be replaced. Although they stated that the most desirable was an arrangement with one steady worker, as many as 76.7% would accept another person if the regular worker was not available. This figure indicates a substantial confidence in domestic workers. As many as 60% of participating households entrusted the keys to their apartments to the worker, while 66.7% stated that they did not feel uneasy about the worker entering their intimate sphere. Yet it should also be noted that this trust expressed by the household members caused a lot of anxiety among the workers. Some among them felt quite uneasy when they were given the key to the apartment, while others felt uneasy about entering a bedroom or similar space. Asked what they would propose to improve the system adopted in this project, the household members suggested the regularity of employment (53.3%), a greater choice of work schedules (43.3%) and more hours of work per month (36.7%). Some households expected that they would be offered transport for children to and from kindergarten, which suggests that the households with small children need a wider range of domestic services than merely household work.[184] Trust is an important element

[184] The following is what one respondent said about her experience of childcare: "*Early in the project, when I had an urgent task, I told her to take the baby out for an hour. I told her that I had trust in her, and she was very pleased. She said that I was the first to entrust her with a child, and that she liked it very much.*" Uroš also had a similar situation: "*For example, during one visit my daughter was ill and someone had to take my son to the kindergarten. The lady took him, and later while she was cleaning, I took the girl to the doctor.*" In the case of Polona, the domestic worker was exclusively engaged

of the employer-worker relationship. Once mutual confidence was established, domestic workers were also entrusted with childcare for short periods in the afternoon or at night. Had the pilot project lasted one year, occasional childcare would have been required more frequently. The idea of combined services including domestic work and childcare was assessed as good in principle, but it was pointed out that such a combination would be possible only after a certain period of time, once the feeling of confidence has been established. Both the households and the workers emphasized that child minding cannot be simultaneous with other household duties – it is one or the other, and by no means both at once. Since the participating households showed an interest in, a need for and a readiness to entrust children to the care of domestic workers for short periods of time, in shaping the training it is necessary to anticipate this type of service, which in Slovenia is of very high quality.

The participating households thought that our coordination was necessary, because it created a sense of security and organization, and made possible the negotiation of various arrangements and substitutions. Any such coordination needs to be professional, impersonal and flexible.

Of the five domestic workers participating in the pilot project, only one had imagined paid domestic work as experienced within this project. She explained it by the 15 years of experience in this field. Other workers said that they imagined it would involve light physical labor, but it turned out that domestic work was physically strenuous; master cleaning tasks much contributed to this impression. The difference in the perception of the pilot project between the workers and households lies primarily in their different perception of the content of work and the quality of the relationship. The household members held that the tasks performed by domestic workers were mainly everyday household tasks, but domestic workers had the impression that they primarily did master cleaning. Sixty-six percent of households thought that they had established a pleasant relationship with the domestic workers. However, in focus groups discussions, workers frequently spoke of exploitative attitudes, although some said that they were well accepted within the household. There is certainly a link between the relationship that develops in the household and the type of work a domestic worker performs. Focus group interviews revealed that the feeling of being exploited was mainly linked with master

as a child minder: "*She took care of Tina only. We live in a bed-sitter, and while she looked after Tina I had the opportunity, for the first time since Tina's birth, to tidy up the apartment thoroughly. That cannot be done by someone else. Tina is very mistrustful of people, but she immediately accepted her.*"

cleaning tasks, since the workers expected lighter work. A precise definition of domestic worker's tasks beforehand would definitely reduce such misunderstandings.

Some domestic workers established friendly relationships during the term of the project, and assessed these as the element that most contribute to satisfaction with work.[185] The quality of a domestic worker's job largely depends on the culture of the household and on the relationship that develops. Three workers said that the attitude of the household was respectful, one said that the attitude was humiliating, and one that their behavior was mixed.

The domestic workers stated that a serious problem for them was transport from one household to another that took from 30 minutes to more than one hour a day. Only one worker used her own car for transport. Three workers were satisfied with the job and the wage, while two were not (the reasons were hard physical labor, poor communication with the project coordinator, transport from one household to another, and the social dimension of this type of work, which the participant expressed as "getting to know the people and their requirements quickly within a short time.") Nevertheless, all participants thought that the idea about turning paid domestic work into a regular job was a good one. All five long-term-unemployed participants stated on ending the pilot project that they would accept a domestic worker job if it involved regular employment including social security and pension insurance.

They further stated that their decision to take part in the pilot project was motivated primarily by financial reasons and by the need for communication, socialization and other activities associated with employment. They identified three main problems with the organization of the pilot project: the insufficient number of domestic workers compared to the number of participating households; the geographical dispersion

[185] Asked about the relationship they established with the domestic worker, one respondent said: "*A friendly attitude. More than once I told her, 'Now take a cigarette break', because Ana had back problem and I did not want her to strain too much. We had quite a friendly relationship. She has a grandson the same age as my son, so we talked a lot about it...*" One domestic worker thus described her positive experience: "*I am really surprised; today, for example, I got cake, coffee and a juice. They really accept you like that, I mean, they wait for you. Interesting.*" The other added: "*That makes you willing to work, motivates you.*" Another domestic worker had a different experience: "*During the first week it was really hard, and you also look a lot into yourself, thinking, what was that? W was it all right? It's strange when you begin, do you believe me? You come to a family, you don't know where to look for the vacuum cleaner, where everything is. I don't know, and at this lady's, when I arrived they said 'the cleaner has arrived.' I told them, 'listen, I'm not a cleaner.' It was hard for me there sometimes.*"

of households; and scheduling-related problems when there was a few hours gap between work in individual households. As to the positive sides of this work, the most often emphasized were good relationships with the household members and their respect for their work.

The monthly wage was paid even if the worker was on sick leave or on vacation. We did not develop a reward scheme, but it turned out that it was very important with this type of work and could be a motivating factor. Domestic worker's income should therefore be composed of a fixed, basic amount and a variable part that would be determined on the basis of the quality of work, the extent of the work actually accomplished, the type of work, work schedule, flexibility, mobility and other such factors.

Paid domestic work and the position of women in the workplace

It is interesting that more than a half the participating households stated that they already had used, or still used, domestic services offered on the informal market, or that they had already considered that idea.[186] The six-month experience of domestic help changed their perception of the meaning and the actual amount of time they spend on household tasks. Their conclusion was that domestic help affected the quality of their life by giving them several more hours a week to spend on job tasks or education, or with children, or to devote to themselves. They also stated that domestic work was more vital than childcare, since it enabled them to spend more time with children. It should be noted that only one among the women interviewed said that she spent the extra time so obtained on job tasks and education. The majority of women assessed that they would need domestic help, and especially childcare services, on a daily basis if it were to seriously influence their position in the workplace. This means that occasional household help (e.g. cleaning service once a week or occasional childcare) cannot sufficiently unburden women (with small children) so as to have a positive effect on their position in the labor market. The benefit of occasional help is primarily manifested as an improvement in the quality of relationships and private life. In order to improve

[186] One respondent said: "*I have three children, so we already have a lady who helps - usually once a week. That seems to be quite necessary, if you have a family and a job on top of that. My husband also helps; we share work, so usually I undertake certain tasks and he others, but there is always something left undone, so I think that a third person must be there for general help once a week ... We used to pay 5 euros, now we pay 6.3 euros per hour.*" Another respondent said: "*We used to hire students who came to tidy up once a week or once a fortnight. We were satisfied, including with the price.*"

their competitiveness on the labor market, women (at least those with small children), would need nothing short of a live-in domestic worker or an extremely flexible domestic worker who would be prepared to work some hours in the morning, some in the afternoon and some during the weekend. In modern circumstances, this is feasible only in exceptional situations, because of the high prices associated with this type of work and primarily because of the modernization of paid domestic work, or in other words, the fact that it is practically impossible to find a domestic worker who would be prepared to meet such requirements. The organization of such a service would be very demanding logistically, and above all, such working conditions would be very difficult. As a consequence, the competitiveness and equality of women on the labor market continue to depend on the equal division of labor between partners in the private sphere, and on the social responsibility of employers when it comes to enabling the reconciliation of work and private life.

The pilot project and its evaluation showed that domestic work as a full time job is physically strenuous work that is made even more difficult because the worker has to travel from one household to another and especially if there is a time gap between two jobs. When considering the organization of quality employment for hard-to-employ persons it is necessary to take into account the fact that, owing to the physical strain and the time needed to travel from one workplace to another, domestic workers should not work more than 5-6 effective hours a day. Furthermore, it is necessary to define accurately the tasks that paid domestic work includes and to exclude hard physical labor from this definition. Work within someone's private sphere or the intimate area of a household requires a special kind of adaptability, communication skills and other social skills. Education of prospective domestic workers should therefore be an important part of the recruitment process. Another psychologically demanding aspect is the isolation that frequently accompanies work in individual households. The coordinator or the employer should organize regular meetings to enable domestic workers to have regular communication with their fellow workers, to socialize, exchange experiences, reflect on them and receive emotional support.

On the part of domestic help users (households with small children and both partners working), the pilot project showed that they indeed needed help with domestic work and that they were prepared to set aside money for it. They placed emphasis on the necessity of a domestic services agency that should be professional and adaptable, and that should ensure the continuity, safety and quality of service. Undoubtedly,

the majority of households cannot afford to pay the price for the hourly rate of a domestic worker in regular employment. They stated that they would be willing to pay 4.6 euros on average for the type of help they received free of charge through this project. However, the cost of one hour of domestic work in this project was somewhat more than 10 euros. The conclusion is clear – such a project could be put into practice only with the state's financial support

Subsidizing the providers of services such as domestic work is nothing new in Slovenia. Centers for social work and some other actors (social enterprises) have been offering domestic help services as part of social care through public work mechanisms engaging various target groups of hard-to-employ persons. This is an important element of social policy, but restricted to social care for elderly and disabled people, in an effort to replace institutional protection. The standards in this case require that the employee be a nurse, housewife or nurse-attendant.[187] The social care program could be taken as a model for the regulation of domestic paid work, particularly in the part involving the subsidizing of new jobs for the long-term-unemployed, adaptation to the methods of recruitment, education and employment of these persons, which is long established in this field, and coordination of the range and implementation of services through agencies or public companies. It would not be an imitation of the social care model, but a rational modification.[188]

[187] Sušnik 2006a.

[188] The Zavod Racio and Centerkontura have already conducted studies and pilot projects in the field of social care and family service. Their conclusion was that support (from actors on the national, local and regional levels) for non-governmental and private providers of social care services was not encouraging, given the firmly established reputation of the public sector. In 2004, at a panel discussion, "Reducing the burden of household work and carework borne by families and new employment opportunities in this field," several key problems were identified, for example, high cost, the lack of motivation among illegal providers to be included in the legal system, and difficulties with establishing regular and flexible forms of employment accompanied with suitable professional and financial control. Between 2000 and 2003, a Phare project "Social care – an employment opportunity" was conducted in the Savinjska region. The conclusion was that the biggest problem with this type of activity was the financial contributions of the users. There are several reasons for this, ranging from low financial power of the users, low awareness about the complexity of the organization or such services, to the traditional perception that women should do this work for free and illegal supply of these services through the informal market that evades professional or financial control. The panel "Social care – helping a fellow human being and creating employment opportunities" also identified as the main problem the expectation that this service would be poorly paid and that the income it brought in would be correspondingly low. (Arlič 2005).

CONCLUSION: PAID DOMESTIC WORK – THE SAME AS ANY OTHER JOB?

The demand for paid domestic services in Europe has been increasing, along with the supply of these services provided by various socially marginalized groups of women. These include (illegal) immigrants, long-term-unemployed women, younger retired women, first-time job seekers, employees with low incomes and so forth. The most problematic aspects of paid domestic work are a result of the globalization and feminization of reproductive labor and of inadequate immigration policies affecting immigrants from the poor parts of the world. The most vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and violence are live-in domestic workers (studies suggest that in Europe illegal immigrants make up the majority of this group). Modern working conditions in households can be said to follow a traditional model of paid domestic work that has certain traits of the total institution. Working conditions are extremely difficult, and its main traits are social isolation, dependence on the employer, full availability and the paternalistic or maternalistic attitude of the employer towards the domestic worker. On the other hand, the conclusion that owing to the crisis of reproduction experienced by two-career couples with small children and people in need of nursing care, the demand for these services is increasing steadily, is a cause for alarm and calls for regulation in this area. No less pressing seems to be the regulation and professionalization of paid domestic work, which indeed has been modernized to some extent, given that the prevailing model is a live-out arrangement whereby a domestic worker provides services for several households. However, this work is still part of the grey market.

Regulation would ensure organized working conditions, rights arising from labor relations, and social security. It would also increase the accessibility of domestic services, and open a new channel for the creation of jobs for hard-to-employ persons. For the time being, regulation of paid domestic work, in the EU at least, is part of social and employment policies. Work for all, or jobs for all, appears to be the main principle of social inclusion for those groups that were forced to the margins of society owing to various personal circumstances, or the political situation such

as unemployment, or low levels of education, poverty, advanced age, illness, citizenship status etc.

Modern trends on the labor market include the intensification of work and the emerging of a culture of long working hours. Consequently, intimate life is increasingly subordinated to work. This creates a difficult situation, particularly for those whose duties include childcare, care for the elderly or for sick family members. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly difficult to create new jobs for those social groups which are increasingly excluded from the labor market in an ever more radical way, because their work efficiency falls short of the maximum expected. These are people with low levels of education, older people, first-time job seekers, younger women without children or women with small children. To be honest, the regulation of paid domestic work is rather a symptom of the predicament faced by the capitalist system than a solution to it. Even so, in the circumstances dictated by the existing system, regulation could improve the quality of life and socio-economic position of long-term-unemployed persons and households with small children.

Owing to social, economic and demographic changes, the need for domestic services has been on the rise, in Slovenia as well as elsewhere. Hiring a domestic worker is not a status symbol but a need generated by the crisis of reproductive labor in households with small children. At the moment, these services are mainly bought and sold on the black market, bringing considerable risks to both sides involved. In addition, for the households the fact that they have to buy domestic services on the black market means that the price is high and that the services are less accessible. As a result, in most cases the need for domestic work cannot be satisfied. For domestic workers themselves, this state of affairs means undefined working conditions, absence of social security and complete social invisibility. At the same time, this specific combination of factors leads to the invisibility of reproductive labor as socially important labor that is a burden particularly for certain segments of society.

The SIPA project was limited to household services and occasional childcare, and to the two target groups, i.e. households with small children, which, being already overburdened, buy domestic services on the black market, and long-term-unemployed women for whom the area of informal, paid domestic work already represents a source of the means of existence. Regulation and subsidies could transform this area into a potential source of new jobs and standardized working conditions, which would increase the accessibility of these services for people who need them. In Slovenia, homecare provided to older and disabled people

has already been organized to meet the needs of specific social groups. However, the need for employment among the groups of hard-to-employ persons and the needs of older and ill people have not been met in an institutionally organized manner.

The dilemmas arising from the attempts to regulate paid domestic work are many. Should professionalization of paid domestic work be effected through occupational qualifications that exact time-consuming procedures, an elaborate system of education, of promotion, etc? Or should it be the large scale creation of new, unskilled job positions? Should specialized or integrated services be offered? How can the male population become involved, and how can the defeminization of this work area be achieved? What measures should be adopted to support supply and demand? How should the supply on the black market be countered? The conclusions arising from the pilot project within the SIPA Development Partnership can contribute some recommendations to the consideration of the regulation of paid domestic work in Slovenia.

- The creation of new jobs through subsidies that would amount to approximately 50% of the gross wage of a domestic worker and of coordination and education costs would reduce the price of these services, make them more accessible, and would also create regular, organized labor relations for domestic workers. The subsidy would enable the survival of public companies that carry out recruitment, education, and employment and the market promotion of these services.
- The wages of domestic workers should be attractive, otherwise they would not be competitive with earnings on the black market. At the same time, they should remain within certain limits in order to keep the prices down and make domestic services accessible to a wider circle of users, not only wealthy social classes. Having this in mind, it is recommendable to consider selective subsidies on the side of the demand (e.g. within the framework of family policies).
- The domestic work services should be defined accurately, including their content, working hours and rates. Both specific services (e.g. master cleaning) and integral services (e.g. shopping, cooking, escorting of children) can be offered.
- The quality of workplace is the most important element when creating new jobs within the service sector. Since domestic work involves harder physical labor, and since domestic workers are mainly long-term-unemployed women, frequently at an advanced age, effective work should be limited to 5 or 6 hours a day; the time used for transport from one workplace to another should be considered part of working hours.

- Since this segment anticipates work with hard-to-employ persons, education should include motivation for work, the elements of psychosocial integration, and special stress should be placed on knowledge of the worker's rights and methods to implement them. It should also devote attention to work/socializing with children.
- Coordination must be professional, accessible, flexible and must be based on modern communication technologies. Both domestic workers and household members should have a feeling of confidence and organization. It should comprise mediation in conflict situations, advocacy, help with networking, self-organization etc. It should enable self-organization of domestic workers in the form of cooperatives and self-employment. It should aspire towards the standardization of paid domestic work, towards quality working condition and de-feminization of this area.

The perception that reproductive labor is not labor leads to the invisibility of contemporary domestic workers, which is especially problematic when we know that this invisible work is performed under informal conditions primarily by those groups of women who are already socially excluded in one way or another. This means that a vast amount of reproductive labor is performed on a daily basis without incurring costs for the system as a whole. Therefore, we could also start from an inverse viewpoint and say that the invisibility of contemporary domestic workers enables and reproduces the invisibility of domestic work and of the primary role that the routine, daily performance of this work has for the reproduction of the system. The overburden caused by (non)paid reproductive labor cannot be considered only as women's private problem, but must be regarded as a public issue. In order to avoid a situation in which the burden of reproductive labor is borne by certain social groups only, the government must encourage gender equality within the private sphere and social responsibility among employers, so that they provide working conditions that enable the reconciliation of work and private life; and last but not least, it should stimulate the development of organized and accessible public services providing domestic work. The more that the recognition and ensuring of basic social and labor rights and the definition of the working conditions for current domestic workers are mandate, the better.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alhadeff, G. 1998. The Origins and Development of Waling-Waling (Overseas Domestic Workers Organisation). In: Rights for Migrant Domestic Workers. Conference Papers, p. 21, available at http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/kalayaan/lh_euro_2.htm (last accessed on July 3, 2006).

Amin, A., Cameron, A., Hudson, R. 2002. *Placing the Social Economy*. London, New York: Routledge

Anderson, B., Ruhs, M., Rogaly, B., Spencer, S. 2006. Fair Enough? Central and East European Migrants in Low-Wage Employment in the UK. Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Anderson, B. 2002. "Just Another Job? The Commodification of Domestic Labour". In: Ehrenreich, B., Hochschild Russell, A. (eds.). *Global Women. Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy*. London: Granta Books, pp. 104–115.

———. 2000. *Doing the Dirty Work? The Global Politics of Domestic Labour*. London: Zed Books.

Anti-Slavery International. 2006. Trafficking in Women Forced Labour and Domestic Work in the Context of the Middle East and Gulf Region. Working Paper.

Ariès, Ph. 1990. *Otrok in družinsko življenje v starem režimu* (Livre L'enfant Et La Vie Familiale Sous L'ancien Regime). Ljubljana: Studia humanitatis.

Arlič, F. 2005. Izkušnje organizacije Racio Social na področju vsebin, s katerimi se ukvarja RP SIPA in poročilo z okrogle mize "Socialna oskrba – pomoč bližnjemu in možnost zaposlitve" (The experience of Racio Social in the area that is the subject of interest of the RP SIPA and the report on the panel discussion "Social care – helping a fellow human being and creating job opportunities"). RP SIPA internal documents. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.

Bakan B., Stasiulis, D. (ed.). 1997. *Not One of the Family. Foreign Domestic Workers in Canada*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press.

Barbič, A., Brezigar, M. 1999. "Občasne migracije podeželskih žena na Goriškem: gospodinjsko delo v tujini – nuja in priložnost nekoč in danes." (Occasional migration of women from the Goriška region: domestic work abroad – a ne-

cessity and an opportunity in the past and in the present). *Glasnik slovenskega etnološkega društva*, Ljubljana, Vol. 39, No. 3–4, pp. 39–48.

Benston, M. 1995 (1969). "The Political Economy of Women's Liberation". In: Mallos 1995, pp. 100–109.

Cancedda, A. 2001. *Employment in Household Services*. Dublin: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

Casares, A. M. 2004. "Domestic Service in Spain. Legislation, Gender and Social Practice". In: Fauve-Chamoux 2004, pp. 189–211.

Chang, G. 2000. *Disposable Domestics: Immigrant Women Workers in the Global Economy*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: South End Press.

Chin, C. B. N. 1998. *In Service and Servitude. Foreign Female Domestic Workers and the Malaysian "Modernity" Project*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Cock, J. 1980. *Maids and Madams: A Study in the Politics of Exploitation*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Četrto periodično poročilo o uresničevanju Konvencije o odpravi vseh oblik diskriminacije žensk (The fourth periodical report on the implementation of The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women 2006). Ljubljana: Equal Opportunities Office.

Dolinar, A. 2006. Building of Regional Networks Between Public, Social and Private Partners – an Example of Problem Resolution Related to Waste Elimination in Graz. In: EQUAL Trans-national Conference: "Social Economy: Problems, Opportunities, Challenges". RP SIPA internal documents. Ljubljana: Peace Institute, pp. 54–57.

Dubert, I. 2004. "Agricultural Work, Social Structure and Labour Markets of the Rural Domestic Service in Galicia in the Mid-Eighteenth Century". In: Fauve-Chamoux 2004, pp. 113–126.

Ehrenreich, B., Hochschild Russell, A. (eds.). 2002. *Global Women: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy*. London: Granta Books.

Evaluation of Finland's System of Tax Reduction for Household services. Public Finances. In: The Swedish Economy. January 2005. Available at www.highbeam.com/library/doc3asp?DOCID=1G1:131905787&num=9&ctrllnf (last accessed on July 17, 2006).

Fauve-Chamoux, A. (ed.). 2004. *Domestic Service and the Formation of European Identity. Understanding the Globalization of Domestic Work, 16th-21st Centuries*. Bern: Peter Lang.

Federici, S. 1995 (1975). "Wages against Housework". In: Mallos 1995, pp. 187–194.

Fish, J. N. 2006. *Domestic Democracy. At Home in South Africa*. London, New York: Routledge.

Gorz, A. 1994. *Capitalism, Socialism, Ecology*. London, New York: Verso.

——. 1988. *Critique of Economic Reason*. London, New York: Verso.

Gregson, N., Lowe, M. 1994. *Servicing the Middle Classes: Class, Gender and Waged Domestic Labour in Contemporary Britain*. London, New York: Routledge.

Hantzaroula, P. 2004. "The Dynamics of the Mistress-Servant Relationship". In: Fauve-Chamoux 2004, pp. 379–411.

Hall, C. 1980 (1973). "The History of the Housewife". In: Mallos 1995, pp. 34–59.

Henshall, M. J. (ed.). 1999. *Gender, Migration and Domestic Service*. London, New York: Routledge.

Heyzer, N., Lycklama à Nijeholt, G., Weerakoon N. (eds.). 1994. *The Trade in Domestic Workers: Causes, Mechanisms and Consequences of International Migration*. Kuala Lumpur: Asian and Pacific Development Centre & London, New Jersey: Zed Books.

Hochschild, A. R. 2003 (1989). *The Second Shift*. New York: Penguin Books.

Højgaard, L. 1998. "Workplace Culture, Family-Supportive Policies and Gender Differences". In: Drew, E. et al. (eds.). *Women, Work and the Family in Europe*. London and New York: Routledge, str. 140-149.

Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. 2001. *Doméstica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.

How Europeans Spend Their Time: Everyday Life of Women and Men (Data 1998–2002). 2004. Eurostat.

Hrženjak, M., Maratou-Alipranti, L., Meier, P., Nikolaou, A., Tertinegg, K. 2005. *Frame Description and Critical Analysis: Gender Inequality and Family Policy*. Vienna: IWM. Available at www.mageeq.net.

Hrženjak, M., Humer, Ž. 2006. Intervju: Življenjski zgodbi dveh gospodinjskih delavk (An interview. The life stories of two domestic workers). RP SIPA internal documents. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.

Informal Economy: Small Businesses in the Informal Economy and Making the Transition to the Formal Economy. 2004. UK: Small Business Council. Available at http://www.sbs.gov.uk/SBS_Gov_files/sbc/informaleconomy.pdf

Jaehrling, K. 2004. "Political Reforms in the Domestic Service Sector – Aims and Impacts". In: Fauve-Chamoux 2004, pp. 235–246.

Kanjuo Mrčela, A. 2005. Starši med delom in družino. Končno poročilo (Parents between work and the family. Final report). Ljubljana: Equal Opportunities Office, Faculty of Social Sciences.

Katzman, D. J. 1978. *Seven Days a Week*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kovač, Z. 2006. Social Economy: A Pillar of the Lisbon Strategy? In: EQUAL Transnational Conference: "Social Economy: Problems, Opportunities, Challenges". RP SIPA internal documents. Ljubljana: Peace Institute, pp. 15–28.

Kozmik, V., Neubauer, V. (eds.). 1995. Skladnost družinskega in poklicnega življenja (The harmony of the family and professional lives). Ljubljana: Equal Opportunities Office.

Kraljič Černe, N. 2006. Poročilo – Sistem pomoči na domu (The system of domestic help). RP SIPA internal documents. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.

Landes, J. 1995 (1975). "Wages for Housework: Political and Theoretical Considerations". In: Mallos 1995, pp. 195–205.

Lundh, C. 2004. "Life-Cycle Servants in Nineteenth Century Sweden: Norms and Practice". In: Fauve-Chamoux 2004, pp. 71–86.

Lutz, H., Schwalgin, S. 2003. "Living in the Twilight Zone: Illegalised Migrant Domestic Workers in Germany". In: Domestic Service, a Factor of Social Revival in Europe, 4. Seminar of the Servant Thematic Network "The Socio-economic Role of Domestic Service as a Factor of European Identity", Essex. Available at www.servantproject.com/abstractEssex.htm (last accessed on July 3, 2006).

Makuc, D. 1993. *Aleksandrinke*. Gorica: Goriška Mohorjeva družba.

Mallos, E. (ed.). 1995 (1980). *The Politics of Housework*. Cheltenham: New Clarion Press.

Meier, P., Lombardo, E., Bustelo, M., Pantelidiu Maloutas, M. 2005. "Gender Mainstreaming and the Benchmarking Fallacy of Women in Political Decision-Making". *The Greek Review of Social Research* 117 (B' 2005), pp. 35–62.

Moore, L. H. 1988. *Feminism and Anthropology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Morton, P. 1995 (1970). "Women's Work is Never Done". In: Mallos 1995, pp. 110–134.

Nagata, M.-L. 2003. Scientific Report on Domestic Service, a Factor of Social Revival in Europe, 4. Seminar of the Servant Thematic Network "The Socio-economic Role of Domestic Service as a Factor of European Identity", Essex. Available at www.servantproject.com/reportEssex.htm (last accessed on July 3, 2006).

Oakley, A. 2000 (1974). *Gospodinja* (Housewife). Ljubljana: Založba/*cf..

——. 1974. *The Sociology of Housework*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Orehovec, M. 1997. "Delo Istrank v Trstu" (The Work Of Istrian Women in Trieste). *Etnolog,* No. 58, pp. 115–129.

Ozyegin, G. 2001. *Untidy Gender: Domestic Service in Turkey*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Parrenas, S. R. 2002. *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration, and Domestic Work*. California: Stanford University Press.

Pascal, G., Manning, N. 2000. "Gender and Social Policy: Comparing Welfare States in Central and Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union". *Journal of European Social Policy*, No. 10 (3), pp. 240–266.

Podlaga za Predlog Resolucije o nacionalnem programu za enake možnosti žensk in moških (2005-2013) (The basis of the Proposal for the Resolution on the Equal Opportunities National Program). 2005. Available at http://www.uem-rs.si/slo/NPZEMZM_analiza.pdf (last accessed on May 12, 2005).

Ready, P. 1996. Overseas Domestic Workers in the United Kingdom. In: Brussels Conference Papers, Round Table, pp. 21. Available at http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/kalayaan/lh_news_2_2.htm (last accessed on July 3, 2006).

Rener, T. 2000. "O delu 'iz ljubezni'" (On the "labor of love"). In: Oakley 2000, pp. 279–298.

Rener, T., Švab, A., Žakelj, T., Humer, Ž. 2005. Perspektive novega očetovstva v Sloveniji: vpliv očetovskega dopusta na aktivno očetovstvo. Končno poročilo (The prospects for new fatherhood in Slovenia: the influence of paternal leave on active fatherhood. Final report). Ljubljana: Equal Opportunities Office, Faculty of Social Sciences.

Report on Equality Between Women and Men. 2006. Brussels: EU Commission. Available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/emplweb/news/news_en.cfm?id=129 (last accessed on March 4, 2006).

Rifkin, J. 2004 (1994). *The End of Work. The Decline of the Global Labour Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era*. New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin.

Rollins, J. 1985. *Between Women. Domestics and their Employers*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Rudd, C. E. 2000. "Reconceptualizing Gender in Postsocialist Transformation". *Gender and Society*, Vol. 14, No. 4, pp. 517–539.

Sanjek, R., Colen, S. (eds.). 1990. *At Work in Homes: Household Workers in World Perspective*. Washington: American Anthropological Association.

Sarti, R. 2005. Domestic Service and European Identity. Final report. Bologna. Available at www.uniurb.it/scipol/drs_servant_project_conclusion (last accessed on March 20, 2007).

——. 2002. Scientific Report on Domestic Service and the Emergence of a New Conception of Labour in Europe, 2. Seminar of the Servant Thematic Network "The Socio-economic Role of Domestic Service as a Factor of European Identity", Oslo. Available at www.servantproject.com/reportOslo.htm (last accessed on July 3, 2006).

Schecter, T. 1998. *Race, Class, Women and the State: The Case of Domestic Labour*. Montreal, New York, London: Black Rose Books.

Shragge, E., Fontan, J. M. 2000. *Social Economy: International Debates and Perspectives*. Montreal, New York, London: Black Rose Books.

Skřivánková, K. 2006. Trafficking for Forced Labour. UK Country Report. Anti-Slavery International.

Sogner, S. 2004. "The Legal Status of Servants in Norway from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century". In: Fauve-Chamoux 2004, pp. 175–188.

Stratigaki, M. 2004. The Cooptation of Gender Concepts in EU Policies: The Case of "Reconciliation of Work and Family". *Social Politics*, Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Sušnik, M. 2006. Intervjuji z ženskami, ki opravljajo gospodinjska dela in druženje z otroki v Italiji (večinoma v Trstu) (Interviews with women who work as domestic workers and child minders in Italy (mainly in Trieste)). RP SIPA internal documents. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.

——. 2006a. Analiza in evalvacija obstoječega sistema pomoči na domu v Sloveniji (The analysis and evaluation of the current system of domestic help in Slovenia). RP SIPA internal documents. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.

Šuštar, L. 1993. "Gospodinjske pomočnice v prvem desetletju socialističnega obdobja" (Household helpers in the first decade of the socialist era). *Kronika,* No. 1 (1993), pp. 15–22.

Šadl, Z. 2004. "Najete gospodinje in nadomestne matere. Naraščanje plačanega družinskega dela in reprodukcija družbene neenakosti" (Hired housewives and substitute mothers. The increase in paid domestic work and the reproduction of social inequalities). *Teorija in praksa*, Vol. 41, No. 5–6, pp. 979–991.

——. 2006. "Plačano gospodinjsko delo v Sloveniji" (Paid domestic work in Slovenia). *Družboslovne razprave*, XXII, 53, pp. 33–54.

Švab, A. 2001. *Družina: od modernosti k postmodernosti (*The Family. From Modernity to Post-Modernity*)*. Ljubljana: Znanstveno in publicistično središče.

Testen, P. 2004. Ženske, delo in družina: filozofski in zgodovinski vidiki (služkinje, "dikle", hišne pomočnice) (Women, work and the family: philosophical and historical aspects). Diploma thesis. Ljubljana: The Faculty of Arts.

Tijdens, K., Van der Lippe, T., De Ruijter. 2003. Working Women's Choices for Domestic Help. The Effects of Financial and Time Resources. AIAS Working Paper, Utrecht University.

Thornton, D. B. 1994. Across the Boundaries of Race and Class: an Exploration of Work and Family among Black Female Domestic Servants. New York, London: Garland Publishing.

UNIFEM. 2002. Empowering Women Migrant Workers in Asia: A Briefing Kit. Available at http://www.unifem.org/resources/item_detail.php?ProductID=47 (last accessed on August 13, 2006).

Van der Lippe, T., Jager, A., Kops, Y. 2006. "Combination Pressure: the Work Family Balance in European Countries". *Acta Sociologica*, No. 49, pp. 303–319. Available at http://asj.sagepub.com/cgi/content/refs/49/3/303.

Van der Lippe, T., Tijdens, K., De Ruijter, E. 2004. "Outsourcing of Domestic Tasks and Time-saving Effects". *Journal of Family Issues*, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 216–240.

Verginella, M. 2006. *Ženska obrobja (*Female Margins*)*. Ljubljana: Delta.

The Employment Service of Slovenia. 2006. Statistični pregled skupine dolgotrajno brezposelnih žensk (Statistical review of the long-term-unemployed women group). RP SIPA internal documents. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.

The Employment Service of Slovenia. 2006a. Mnenja in izkušnje svetovalk pri delu s skupino dolgotrajno brezposelnih žensk (Opinions and experience of consultants on work with the long-term-unemployed women group). RP SIPA internal documents. Ljubljana: Peace Institute.

Žagar, J. 1986. "Služkinje v Ljubljani" (Housemaids in Ljubljana). *Traditiones* 15, pp. 19–49.

Žnidaršič, Ž. S. 2000. *Ora et labora – in molči, ženska!: pregled demografije dežele Kranjske in pridobitnost žensk v desetletjih 1880–1910 (Ora et labora – And Keep Silent, Woman! An Overview of the Demography of the Province of Kranjska and Profit-Earning Activities of Women During the Period 1880–1910)* . Ljubljana: Založba/*cf.*.

Walby, S. 1997. *Gender Transformations*. London, New York: Routledge.

Webster, J. 2005. Changing European Gender Relations: The Findings of Recent Social Research and Their Implications for Gender Equality Policy. Policy Synthesis Report to the European Commission. Brussels: DG-Research.

Widding Isaksen, L. 2004. "Gender, Care and Globalization as Seen from Norway". In: Fauve-Chamoux 2004, pp. 455–469.

Williams, J. 2000. *Unbending Gender. Why Family and Work Conflict and What to Do About It*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

INDEX