

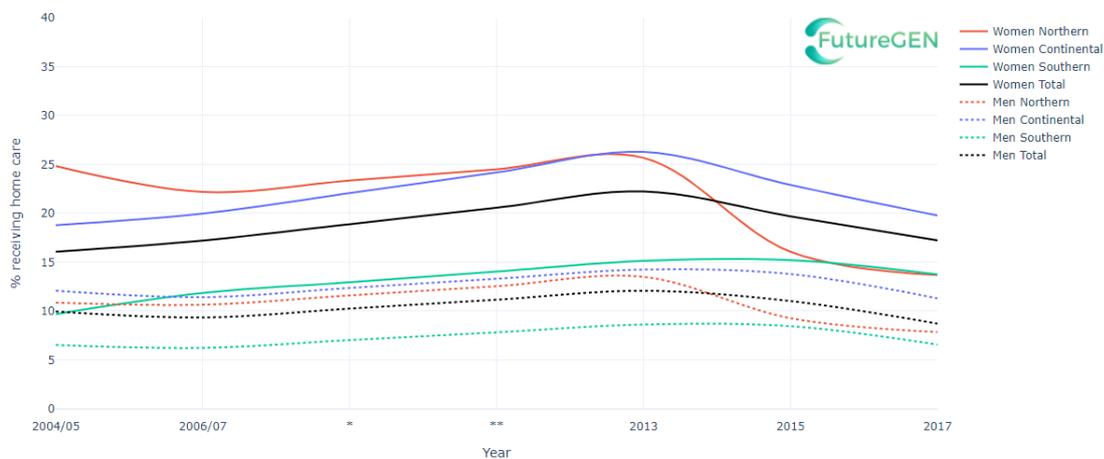
DATA NAVIGATOR: Trends in formal homecare use by gender and socio-economic status

Formal homecare refers to any professional or paid services provided in the care recipient's home due to a physical, mental, emotional or memory problem. This can include personal care (e.g. dressing, bathing), help with domestic tasks (e.g. cleaning, ironing), meals-on-wheels or help with other activities (e.g. preparing prescribed medication).

Women in all 3 regions were more likely to receive formal care services than men throughout the entire time frame (Figure 1). The largest proportion of women and men receiving formal home care services were mostly in Northern and Continental Europe. Conversely, the Southern region had the lowest proportion of men and women receiving formal care services, reflecting the low level of formal services available in this region. Between 2004 and 2013, the proportion of both women and men receiving formal care services in their home mostly increased across the regions, while from 2013 to 2017, the prevalence sharply decreased to levels on par with 2004.

Figure 1: Prevalence of formal homecare use by gender and region (65+)

Own calculations based on SHARE data release 7.0.0



In terms of socioeconomic status, a larger proportion of lower income women and men received formal care services compared to higher income women and men (Figure 2 and 3), likely due to the association of lower income with poorer health. The only case in which the opposite was seen was for men in the Southern region, where a larger proportion of higher income men received formal care services than lower income men. The income inequality (i.e. difference between the proportion of lower and higher income individuals) in receiving formal care services was largest in the Northern region for both men and women, and smallest in the Southern region. Also noteworthy was that the income inequality in the Southern region was reversed: a higher proportion of higher income individuals received formal care services compared to lower income individuals.

Figure 2: Prevalence of formal home care use among women by income status and region (65+)
Own calculations based on SHARE data release 7.0.0

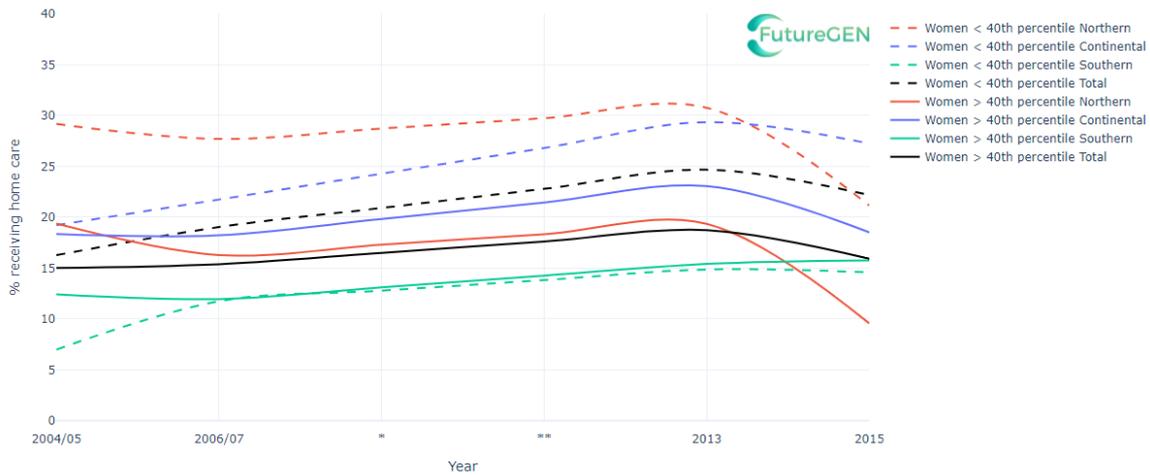


Figure 3: Prevalence of formal home care use among men by income status and region (65+)
Own calculations based on SHARE data release 7.0.0



The declining proportion of individuals receiving formal care in their homes since 2013 in Northern and Continental Europe raises cause for concern, particularly given that according to the Data Navigator, informal care receipt has also been largely decreasing. At the same time, certain groups (i.e. lower income men and women) have experienced a deterioration in functional ability (according to the Data Navigator ADL & IADL indicators), warranting the continued need for LTC services. Public policies should aim to ensure that there are adequate, affordable and high-quality homecare services available for older adults that require them, particularly in regions with low availability of formal care, such as Southern and Eastern Europe.

For more details, visit the Data Navigator:

<https://futuregen.euro.centre.org/data-navigator/>