

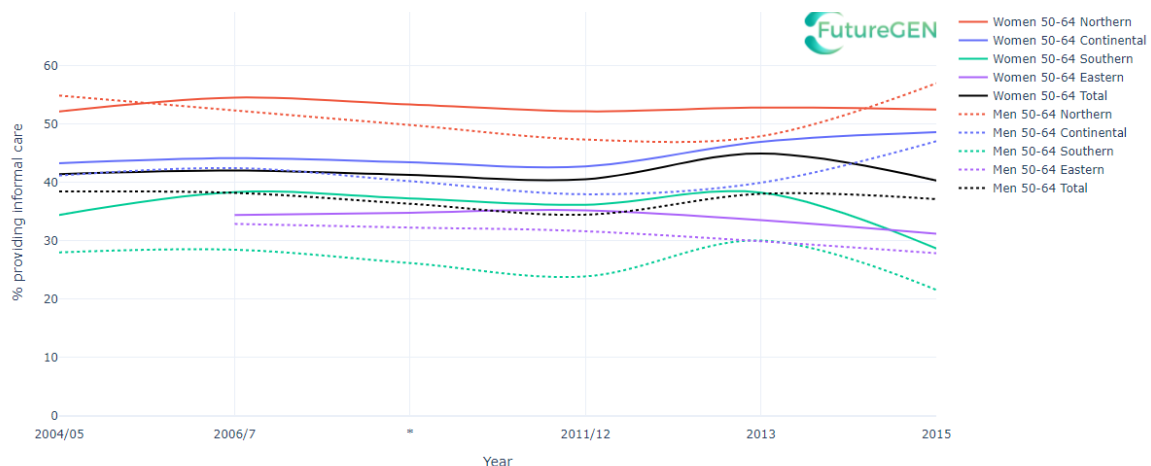
## DATA NAVIGATOR: Trends in Informal caregiving by gender & socio-economic status

**Informal Caregiving** is typically defined as unpaid care/help provided to older persons with a chronic illness, disability or other long-lasting health problem or care need by family, close relatives, friends or neighbours. Informal care captured by the Data Navigator includes receiving personal care (i.e. washing, getting out of bed, or dressing) provided by someone living inside or outside of the household, and/or household help by someone living outside the household.

The Data Navigator shows that significant gender inequalities exist in informal caregiving, with women predominantly providing informal care. The prevalence of informal caregiving is highest among women aged 50-64, followed by men in the same age category (Figure 1). Collectively across Europe and throughout the time period, over 40% of women and nearly 40% of men aged 50-64 provided informal care. This type of care tends to be intergenerational, meaning individuals caring for their parents/in-laws, or for their older relatives, and tends to take place at a time in one's life where the individual has other substantial responsibilities, like child-care and/or work.

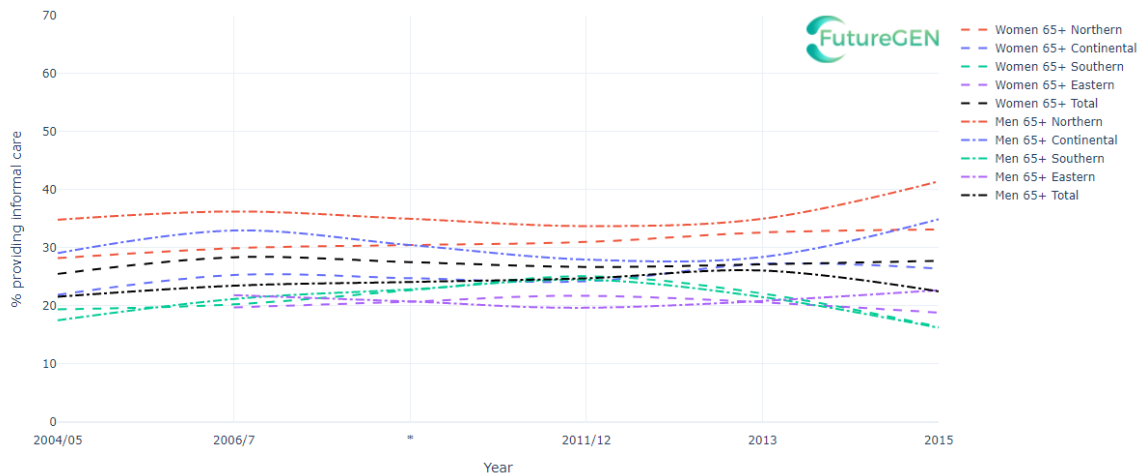
**Figure 1: Prevalence of informal caregiving by gender & care regime (Aged 50-64 years)**

Own calculations based on SHARE data release 7.0.0



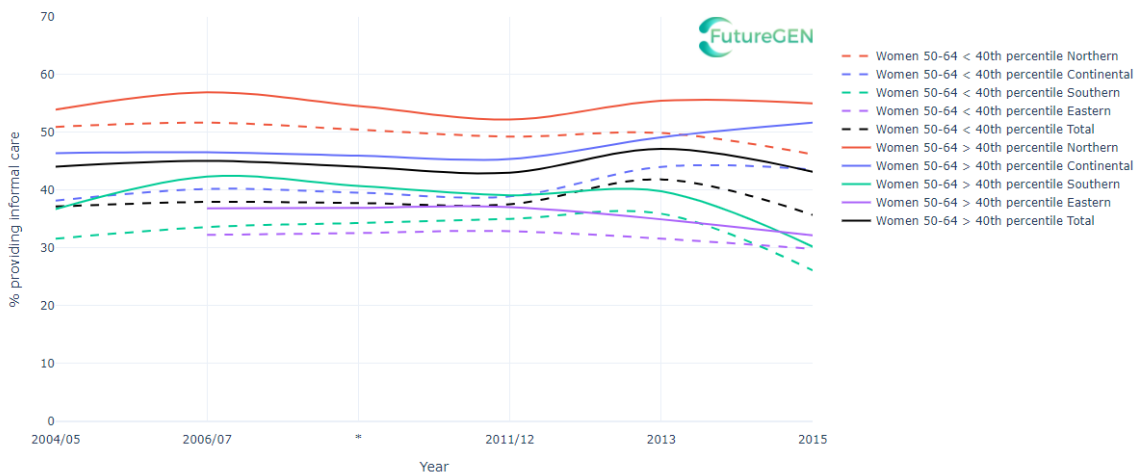
The exception to these gender inequalities is with men aged 65+ in the Northern and Continental region, where the prevalence of informal care is higher than for women aged 65+ (Figure 2). There are similarly very limited gender differences in the provision of informal care by men and women aged 65+ in the Eastern and Southern region. While surprising, this reflects the fact that informal care at this age tends to consist of spousal care, i.e. husbands and/or wives caring for their spouse. Furthermore, the prevalence of men providing care increased in some regions (i.e. Northern & Continental region) towards the end of the time frame, pointing to an increased uptake still in informal caregiving roles in these regions.

**Figure 2: Prevalence of informal caregiving by gender & care regime (Aged 65+ years)**  
Own calculations based on SHARE data release 7.0.0



From a socioeconomic point of view (Figure 3 shown for women), informal care is more prevalent among higher income individuals than those with lower income, both for men and women. This however, obscures the fact that informal caregiving by poorer individuals tends to be of higher intensity (i.e. tasks related to personal and bodily care).

**Figure 3: Prevalence of informal caregiving by gender, income & care regime (Aged 65+ years)**  
Own calculations based on SHARE data release 7.0.0



In light of these trends, public policies should therefore aim to continue encouraging the increased uptake of informal caregiving by men as a way to improve gender equality in this realm, thereby reducing the burden on women.

For more details, visit the Data Navigator:

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