



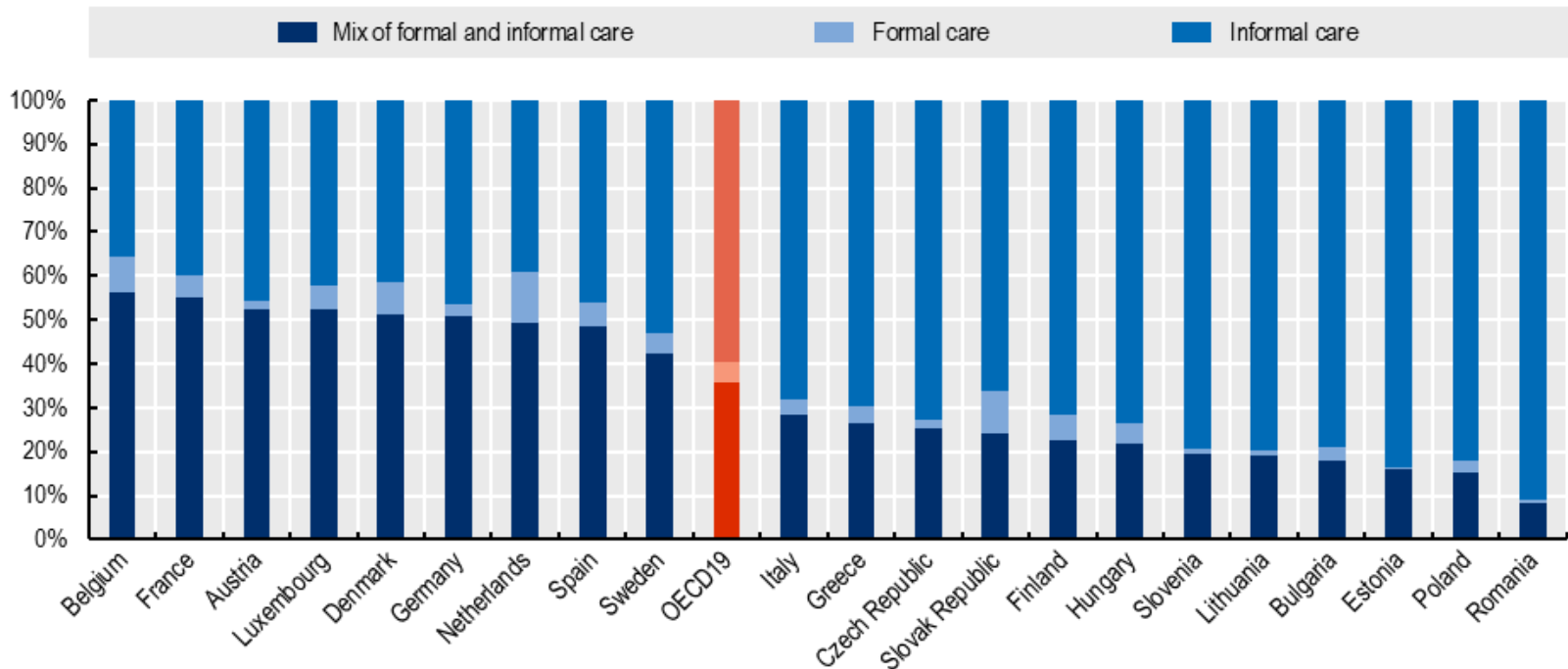
POLICIES TO SUPPORT INFORMAL CAREGIVERS

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Informal/family carers make a substantial contribution to societies

- They provide the bulk of care
- The extent on which countries decide - explicitly or not - to rely on informal caregivers is a key feature of their LTC systems





Making caregiving a choice without constraints

- 1 Identifying carers: definition and needs assessment
- 2 Helping carers combine care and work
- 3 Compensating and recognising carers
- 4 Improving carer's physical and mental well-being



Definitions and identification of carers across countries

- Only 20% of EU countries have a legal definition but others have formal/ad-hoc definitions
- Criteria to target informal carers for support varies:
 - They often focus on the close bond
 - Or intense care
- Need assessments are very uncommon



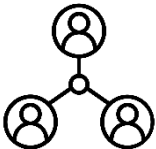
Helping family carers to keep their job and develop a career



Care leave and flexible work

- About two-thirds of OECD and EU countries (22 countries with available data) provide paid or unpaid leave to care for a family member
- Leave duration varies greatly across countries
- Paid leave often restricted
- Flexible work effective in attenuating a reduction in working hours associated with caring but statutory rights less widespread than for parents

Need for wider initiatives potentially through collective bargaining



- Raise awareness and provide care-friendly environment (e.g. 250 employers labelled “employers for carers” in the UK)
- Recognition of acquired skills and skill development e.g. Irish “ Career skills programme”
- Pension credits not available in all countries



Providing family carers with cash benefits and social security

- 2/3 of countries provide direct cash benefits
- One-third of countries have cash benefits for the care recipient that can be formally used to compensate family carers
- 1/3 of countries do not provide social security coverage tied to the cash benefit, and if countries do, it is often tied to specific strict conditions
- Challenging trade-off between compensation and trapping carers
- Concerns about regulation and “grey/informal” market





Introducing support services for family caregivers can equip them better



Developing access to information, counselling, training

- Training and counselling typically depends heavily on the voluntary sector
- Psychosocial interventions and counselling reduce caregiver stress and improve care quality



Respite care

- Improvement but still uneven provision and financing across countries
- Low rates of uptake due to low compensation, low availability of services and organisational challenges
- Need more flexible services e.g. emergency and overnight respite less widely available



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