

THE VALUE OF DOMESTIC WORK

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ROLE OF EMPLOYER FAMILIES



The socio-economic impact of domestic work in countries of origin



Firmataria del C.C.N.L. sulla disciplina del rapporto di lavoro domestico

THE VALUE OF DOMESTIC WORK

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Dossier 11

The socio-economic impact of domestic work in countries of origin

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STUDI E RICERCHE SULL'ECONOMIA
DELL'IMMIGRAZIONE



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Introduction

by Lorenzo Gasparrini, Segretario Generale DOMINA



Domestic work is multicultural by definition and for several different occupations all over the world, it represents the first step towards integration in a new country of destination. As a matter of fact, domestic work creates a social reality characterized by the coexistence of at least two communities of different roots, customs, and culture, meeting within domestic walls. This encounter among distant cultures could be analysed on two different levels: a more patent one, or "on-site" and a latent one, or "off-site". The first level of analysis, the "on-site" one, that we have already previously addressed in the DOMINA research project, deals with what takes place in Italy today: the interaction between the worker and the family and the effects on the Italian economy. Therefore, let's refer to the relationship created between the employer and the domestic worker, together with all the difficulties arising from the language barrier, dietary habits, religion, daily routine, etc. On the other side, there are effects on the Italian economic system in terms of occupation and gross domestic product.

The second level of analysis, the latent one, addresses the relation of the domestic worker with his or her own family and country of origin. In this case too, as for the "on-site" level, there are consequences related to the human and economic aspects. Foreign domestic workers are mostly women who leave back at home parents, husbands, sons, and daughters, etc. This detachment has psychological consequences both for workers and relatives back at home. Furthermore, foreign workers land in Italy to improve their economic situation and to build the first steps for a better life in their countries of origin. This latter aspect, however, has been receiving attention only in the last years.

What are the effects produced by our sector in workers' country of origin? What is the point of view of Institutions of these Countries on their citizens' migratory phenomenon and on their entry in the Italian domestic work occupation? What are the social and anthropological repercussions of the detachment from affections and the culture of origin? In our research project on domestic work, the answers to these questions represent the basis to furtherly deepen the knowledge on the sector by broadening the analysis beyond national borders.



**THE VALUE OF DOMESTIC WORK
THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ROLE
OF EMPLOYER FAMILIES**

DOMINA research implemented by Fondazione Leone Moressa

DOSSIER 11

The socio-economic impact of domestic work in the origin countries

**FOREIGN
DOMESTIC
WORKERS**

INPS

632 K



**REMITTANCES
SENT FROM
ITALY**

WORLD BANK

6,2 B



**DOMESTIC WORKERS'
ESTIMATED
REMITTANCES**

ISTAT / WORLD BANK

1,4 B



ROMANIA
10,58 M inhabitants
-8,6% 2005-2018

Residents in Italy **1.100.091**
57,5% Women 63,6% Employ. rate
30% working in care services



UKRAINE
44,01 M inhabitants
-6,1% 2005-2018

Residents in Italy **237.047**
78,0% Women 67,3% Employ. rate
62% working in care services



PHILIPPINES
106,51 M inhabitants
+23,5% 2005-2018

Residents in Italy **167.850**
56,8% Women 70,3% Employ. rate
63% working in care services



MOLDAVIA
4,04 M inhabitants
-2,0% 2005-2018

Residents in Italy **131.814**
66,4% Women 67,0% Employ. rate
48% working in care services

DOMESTIC WORKERS' VULNERABILITY

BURNOUT

Contact with situations of suffering brings discomfort and self-deprecation. It causes emotional exhaustion and a feeling of failure.

ITALY SYNDROME

Anxiety and depression linked to a fracture of identity. Guilt and shame of motherhood.

WHITE ORPHANS

Psychological traumas for children left behind (usually without their mother). Unicef estimates **350 K only in Romania**

www.associazionedomina.it

Objectives and methodology

Domestic work in Italy has substantially grown in the last years also thanks to a strong inflow of immigrant workers. If by one hand, this phenomenon had a decisive impact on our country by satisfying the national demand for domestic assistance and care, it inevitably impacted countries of origin too, on several perspectives.

These are complex phenomena that generally lead to both positive and negative consequences. On the demographic point of view, for example, countries of origin undergo a significant loss of working age population, thus impacting the local economic system. In addition, in some contexts of the domestic work, the exodus mainly concerns women who leave their families in their homeland.

On the other side, clearly, the economic benefit arising from a different salary level allows these workers to send back home significant amounts of money in the form of remittances to support families' sustenance and partly to save for investments. As it will be presented shortly, remittances represent for many countries a significant share of their GDP.

From the social point of view, the risks related to a tiring occupation as the domestic caregiver one, and in particular the co-habitation, are considerable: starting from the *burn-out* syndrome, strong stress affecting operators undertaking activities in interpersonal relationships, to the so-called "Italy Syndrome", a form of depression caused by the new life context. Let's not forget the "white orphans" phenomenon, that is the issues regarding sons and daughters left in their homeland and bound to live without a parent.

In this dossier, four countries with the highest figure of domestic workers in Italy are analysed (Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, and the Philippines) by studying statistical data related to their presence in Italy, to the remittances contribute to countries of origin, and to the socio-economic dynamics.

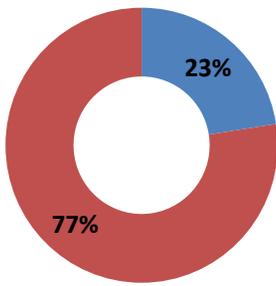
Lastly, the dossier presents some contributions provided by the Embassies in Italy of the countries object of this study, by associations of domestic workers and experts, able to offer hints for the quantitative analysis of the phenomenon and an overview of the main social issues of domestic workers in Italy.

The presence of foreign domestic workers in Italy

As is well known, domestic work is the sector with the highest incidence of foreign workers, being over 70% of the total. In particular, foreigners are the 77% of the family assistants (caregivers) and the 69% of domestic collaborators or housekeepers (*colf*). The following chart illustrates the 2017 details.

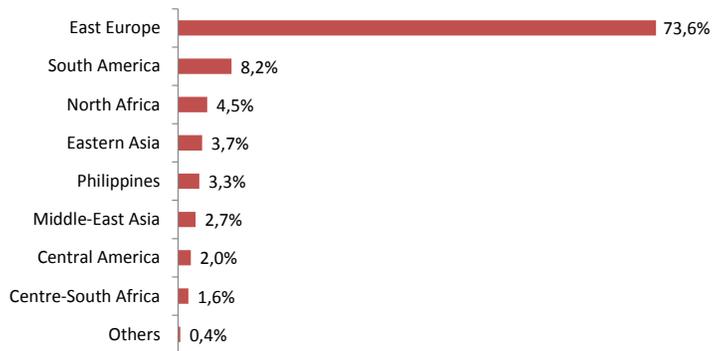
Foreign components in domestic work, by occupation and origin

Caregivers

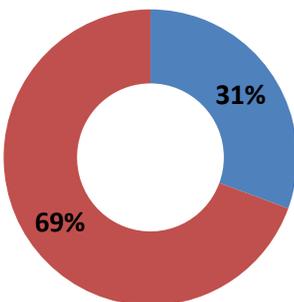


■ Italians ■ Foreigners

Foreigners

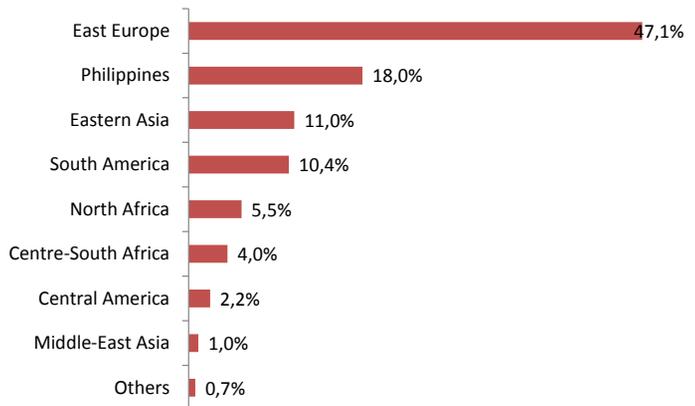


Housekeepers



■ Italians ■ Foreigners

Foreigners



Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on INPS data.

Among caregivers (*badanti*), the East European component is significantly the major one, representing 73,6% of the total. The remaining part is very fragmented without particular concentrations. Among housekeepers (*colf*), on the other hand, the situation is fairly less defined. Eastern Europe still represents the major component, but with a weaker incidence (47,1%). The Philippines component is also strong (18,0%) and significant are the Oriental Asia region parts (11,0%), and the South American ones (10,4%).

After having examined the differences between housekeepers and caregivers concerning countries of origin, let's elaborate some data on immigrant communities in Italy coming from some key-countries: Romania, Ukraine, Philippines, and Moldova. These are the four countries with the highest number of domestic workers in Italy. Therefore, it will be shown how relevant is the component of domestic work for each of these communities.

Romania is the most populous foreign community in Italy, being almost a fourth of the total of foreigners (23,1%). 57,5% of the Romanian community in Italy is composed of women, whereas the rate of employment (63,6%) is significantly higher compared to the average of foreigners. Ukraine is the fifth biggest community, with more than 230 thousand people. The Ukrainian female component is definitely the majority (78,0%), reflecting the fact that the domestic work (especially for caregivers) has a much more important role. The Philippines are the sixth immigrant community in Italy, with over 167 thousand people. In this case, the most significant data is the high rate of employment (79,3%). Lastly, Moldova is the ninth community (132 thousand people).

Summary picture: presence in Italy by nationality

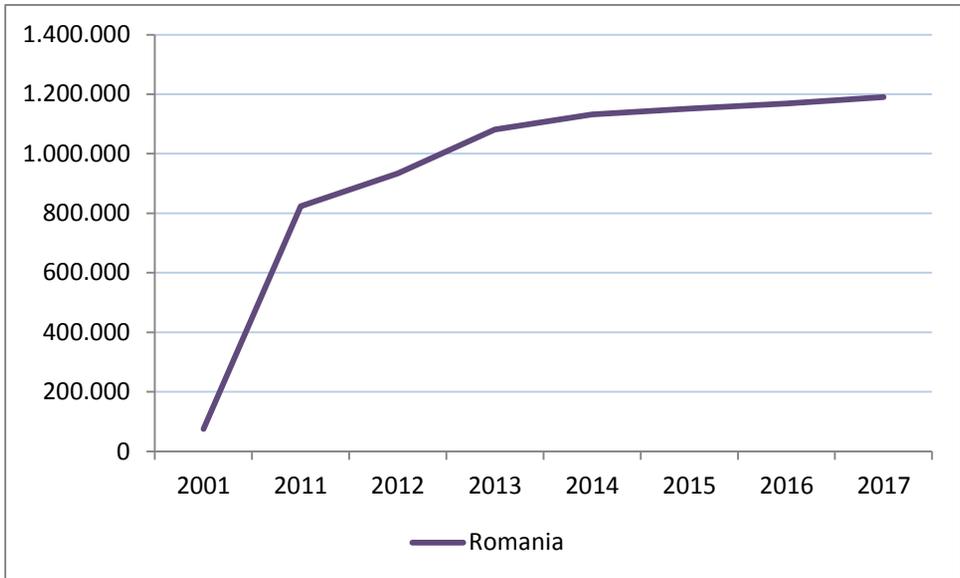
Indicators	Romania	Ukraine	Philippines	Moldova	Total foreigners
Residents 01.01.2018	1.190.091	237.047	167.859	131.814	5.144.440
% female	57,5%	78,0%	56,8%	66,4%	52,0%
% on tot. foreigners	23,1%	4,6%	3,3%	2,6%	100,0%
Employment rate ¹	63,6%	67,3%	79,3%	67,9%	60,6%
Employed in care services	30%	62%	63%	48%	29%

Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on Istat data.

¹ Employment rate of 15-64 y/o, 2017.

The workers of these communities are employed mostly in social and care services, in other words, in the domestic work; Ukraine and the Philippines are specialized in this kind of activities, with over 60% of people employed in this sector, as well as the 49% of Moldovan citizens. The presence in Romania is relevant but not prevailing (30%), considering that this nationality is mainly employed in the manufacturing and construction sector. The evolution of these communities can be better understood by observing the time series. Romania had less than 80 thousand people in Italy in 2001. After a constant but slow growth until 2007, it registered a real boom leading to the Romanian presence near to 1 million in 2011, almost three times compared to the four previous years. Indeed, the watershed is given by the entry of Romania in the EU (2007), a decisive factor for the intra-community migrations. In 2012 and 2013 the growth continued at full capacity (+30% in two years). Right in 2014, the Romanian community in Italy exceeded 1 million. From that moment onward, its growth has been less intense, reaching however 1 million and 190 thousand people by the end of 2017 (almost one-fourth of today's total foreigners in Italy).

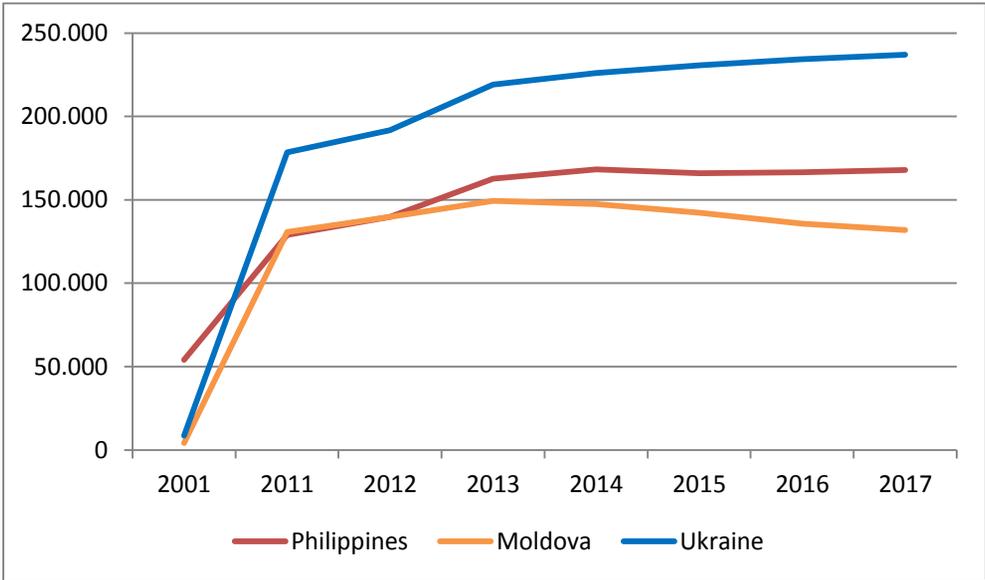
Time series analysis of the presence in Italy by nationality
(data accessed on 31/12)



Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on Istat data.

By observing the other three nationalities, Moldova and Ukraine also registered a steep growth in the first years of the 2000s until 2011. Ukraine, in particular, has grown from a population of 8 thousand people in 2001 to 200 thousand in 2012. In the last years, its presence kept constant, with a slight increase which brought the population over 230 thousand people from 2015. Moldova had a similar trend in the first year of the 2000s, stepping from 4 thousand people in 2001 to 130 thousand in 2011. After reaching a 149 thousand-people-peak in 2013, the Moldovan component suffered a slight decrease, going back to 131 thousand people by the end of 2017. The Philippines, on the other hand, registered a more linear trend: in 2001 Philippine immigrants were already 54 thousand. In 2007 the Philippine community in Italy reached 100 thousand people and in 2011 they were 129 thousand. From 2013 the trend was more or less constant, between the 160 and 170 thousand presence.

Time series analysis of the presence in Italy by nationality
(data accessed on 31/12)



Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on Istat data.

Let's now analyse for each of the four nationalities the major regional and national concentrations. Usually, as is to be expected, major concentrations are to be found in big cities (Rome, Milan); however, there are some exceptions: Naples and Campania, for example, register a strong presence of Ukrainian citizens; on the other hand, Veneto has a noticeable presence of Romanian and Moldovan, facilitated by the geographic position and being easily reachable by land from those countries.

For Romanians, the first three regions are Lazio, Lombardia, and Piemonte. At the province level, 15,5% of Romanians in Italy are located in Rome, followed by Turin (8,4%) and Milan (4,2%).

Concerning Ukrainians, the first three regions are Lombardia, Campania, and Emilia-Romagna. At the province level, the first area is Naples, with 9,8% of the total, followed by Rome (8,4%) and Milan (8,0%).

Distribution of foreign residence by geographic area (2018)

ROMANIA	V.A.	Distr %	UKRAINE	V.A.	Distr %
TOTAL	1.190.091	100,0%	TOTAL	237.047	100,0%
<i>First 5 Regions</i>			<i>First 5 Regions</i>		
Lazio	232.856	19,6%	Lombardia	53.360	22,5%
Lombardia	172.045	14,5%	Campania	43.415	18,3%
Piemonte	148.428	12,5%	Emilia-Romagna	32.520	13,7%
Veneto	122.751	10,3%	Lazio	24.464	10,3%
Emilia-Romagna	91.035	7,6%	Veneto	16.713	7,1%
<i>First 5 Provinces</i>			<i>First 5 Provinces</i>		
Roma	183.908	15,5%	Napoli	23.327	9,8%
Torino	100.279	8,4%	Roma	19.929	8,4%
Milano	49.867	4,2%	Milano	19.023	8,0%
Padova	31.892	2,7%	Salerno	8.339	3,5%
Verona	31.689	2,7%	Caserta	8.335	3,5%

Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on Istat data.

For Filipinos, the first three regions are Lombardia, Lazio, and Emilia-Romagna. At the province level, the concentration is the strongest in big cities: Milan (29,1%) and Rome (26,3%) alone register over half of Filipinos in Italy.

For Moldovans, the first three regions are Veneto, Emilia-Romagna, and Lombardia. The North-East European role is also noticeable at the province level: 9,5% of Moldovans in Italy is found in Rome, followed by Padua (7,8%) and Venice (6,3%).

Distribution of foreign residence by geographic area (2018)

PHILIPPINES	V.A.	Distr %	MOLDOVA	V.A.	Distr %
TOTAL	167.859	100,0%	TOTAL	131.814	100,0%
<i>First 5 Regions</i>			<i>First 5 Regions</i>		
Lombardia	58.412	34,8%	Veneto	34.284	26,0%
Lazio	46.282	27,6%	Emilia-Romagna	28.676	21,8%
Emilia-Romagna	14.416	8,6%	Lombardia	21.615	16,4%
Toscana	13.158	7,8%	Lazio	14.796	11,2%
Veneto	6.624	3,9%	Piemonte	9.227	7,0%
<i>First 5 Provinces</i>			<i>First 5 Provinces</i>		
Milano	48.889	29,1%	Roma	12.574	9,5%
Roma	44.097	26,3%	Padova	10.272	7,8%
Firenze	6.979	4,2%	Venezia	8.284	6,3%
Bologna	6.162	3,7%	Milano	6.971	5,3%
Torino	4.161	2,5%	Parma	6.945	5,3%

Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on Istat data.

Demographic dynamics in countries of origin

Once having analysed the immigrant communities in Italy, let's focus on some demographic and economic characteristics of the population in their respective countries of origin.

Romania counts a population of 19,58 million. In the 2005-2018 period, it registered a decrease of -8,6%. Also, the net migration balance for the 2005-2015 period is negative: the gap between entries and departures is less than a million. At the economic level, on the contrary, Romania is growing: in 2016 the GDP has registered an increase of +4,8%.

Ukraine counts a population of 44,01 million, also showing a decrease in the 2005-2018 period (-6,1%). The net migration balance (2005-2015) is not particularly active: +70 thousand. In 2016 the GDP registered an increase of +2,3%.

The Philippines counts a population of 106,51 million, strongly growing from 2005 to 2018 (+23,5%), even considering a negative migration balance of over 2 million people. In this case, it is evident that the solid birth rate makes up for the outgoing migratory flows. For the Philippines too, the GDP trend in 2016 was positive, accounting for +6,9%.

Lastly, Moldova registers barely 4,04 million of inhabitants. From 2005 to 2018, the population has decreased (-2,9%). In this case, the negative migration balance weighs noticeably (-57 thousand). Moldova too has a positive GDP trend in 2016 (+4,3%).

Summary picture: the main countries of origin of domestic workers in Italy

Countries	Pop. 2018 (millions)	% increase 2005-2018	Net migration 2005-2015 (thousands)	GDP growth (2016)
Romania	19,58	-8,6%	-1.075	+4,8%
Ukraine	44,01	-6,1%	+70	+2,3%
Philippines	106,51	+23,5%	-2.150	+6,9%
Moldova	4,04	-2,9%	-57	+4,3%

Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on United Nations data²

² The 2018 population is the average one estimated by United Nations. <http://data.un.org/en/index.html>

Remittances to countries of origin

Let's now examine the economic contribution sent to countries of origin as remittances, thus flows of money sent through banking or postal channels, or money transfer services.

According to the World Bank³, the global volume of remittances in 2017 exceeded 500 billion euros, representing in many cases one of the main voices of trade balances of the aforementioned countries. Being savings of citizens who have emigrated abroad, remittances mainly concern developing countries.

Among the countries examined, in 2017, Romania has received slightly less than 4 billion euros, equivalent to 2,2% of the GDP. Remittances coming from Italy represent almost 19% of those received altogether.

In 2017 Ukraine received a little less than 11 billion euros, almost equivalent to 12% of GDP. In this case, the amount received from Italy represented barely 1,44% of the total.

The Philippines are among the countries with the highest volume of remittances (29,1 billion euros), equal to 8,56% of GDP. Here too, the "Italian" share is barely 1% of the total. Lastly, in Moldova, although having the lowest volume among all countries (1,5 billion), remittances have the highest incidence on GDP: over one-fifth (21,03%).

Volume of remittances received from each beneficiary country (2017)

Countries	Received remittances (B Euro)	Rate Remittances/GDP	% Remittances from Italy on total rem.
Romania	3,8	2,20%	18,78%
Ukraine	10,8	11,95%	1,44%
Philippines	29,1	8,56%	1,13%
Moldova	1,5	21,03%	5,97%
Sum 4 countries	45,2	7,41%*	2,85%
Total (world)	514,9	0,74%*	1,00%

* Average value

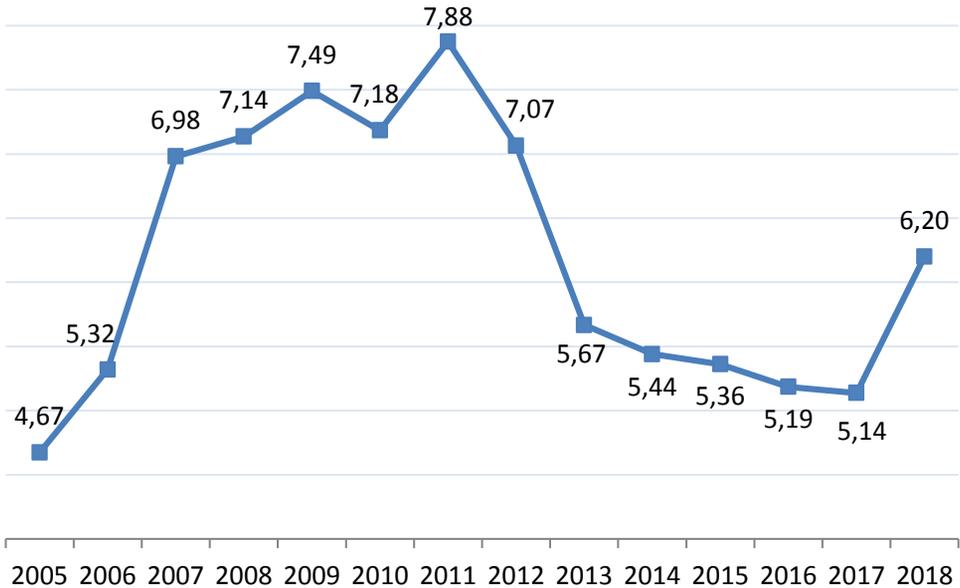
Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on World Bank data.

³ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/migrationremittancesdiasporaissues/brief/migration-remittances-data>

As for all countries with strong immigration, Italy sees a strong flow of outgoing remittances too, evidently supported by the solid presence of foreign domestic workers. The data provided by Banca d'Italia on remittances sent in 2018 clarify the situation and the financial behaviour of foreigners in Italy. After the market collapse in 2013 and some years of steady stabilization, in the last year, the volume of remittances has registered a sudden and steep increase (+20,7%), reaching 6,2 billion of euros. This value is with little doubt related to the economic and employment recovery; however, it also should be considered differently according to each of the immigrant community.

Therefore, the ratio between remittances and GDP increases too, reaching after five years the 0,35%.

Times series analysis of remittances from Italy⁴. (in billions of euros)



Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on Banca d'Italia data.

⁴ Monetary values are revalued to 2018 using the consumer price index for families of workers and employees without tobaccos (FOI), published on the *Gazzetta Ufficiale* (Official Journal) pursuant to art. 81 of the law of July 27, 1978, n. 392.

However, how many of these remittances leaving Italy are to be considered sent from domestic workers? Indeed, there is no clear data, since remittances are a flow of money sent from any person in Italy, without any distinction on occupation or social situation. Nevertheless, starting from the incidence of domestic workers on the total of workers for each nationality, it can be estimated the amount of remittances attributable to housekeepers (*colf*) and caregivers.

Therefore, it can be estimated that the volume of remittances sent from domestic workers in Italy is equal to 1,4 billion of euros, that is the 23% of the total remittances (6,2 billion of euros).

Going down with this line of reasoning, it can be stated that the 632 thousand (regular) foreign domestic workers pay about 2 thousand euro per capita.

Moreover, it is a conservative estimate that does not take into account either of the informal sending channels, often used especially by workers coming from other European countries (let's think of coaches or vans traveling every day to Romania, Ukraine or Moldova, through which workers can bring money); nor the fact that irregular workers can send home their savings too.

Estimate of domestic workers' remittances. 2018



Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on Banca d'Italia data.

The country of destination should be furtherly analysed to better understand the annual trend of remittances. In 2018, Romania is, after Bangladesh, the second destination country for remittances sent from Italy, with a rather steady trend: +0,3% in the last year and -14,3% in the last six years. The per capita value of remittances is obtained by comparing the volume of remittances with the number of residents in Italy⁵. On average, each immigrant in Italy has sent slightly more than 1.200 euros throughout 2018 (about 100 euros per month). This value increases to 223,96 euros per month for the Philippines and decreases to a minimum of 50,29 euros for Romania.

Concerning the estimate of remittances sent by domestic workers, the overall major value is to be traced back to the Philippines (255 million), equal to 57% of all the remittances to the country. The same incidence (57%) for Ukraine too; the country received altogether 173 million, of which 99 from domestic workers alone. The Romanian domestic workers sent to their homeland 184 million, equal to 26% of the total of remittances received by the country. Lastly, 109 million has been sent to Moldova, of which 41 from domestic workers (37%).

Top 20 countries for remittances sent from Italy

1. Bangladesh	11. Ukraine
2. Romania	12. Ecuador
3. Philippines	13. Albania
4. Pakistan	14. Dominicana Rep.
5. Senegal	15. Moldova
6. India	16. Brazil
7. Morocco	17. Ivory Coast
8. Sri Lanka	18. Colombia
9. Perù	19. Nigeria
10. Georgia	20. Ghana

Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on Banca d'Italia data.

⁵ Here, it is assumed that all remittances to a certain country are sent by citizens of the same nationality residing in Italy. All residents are considered, with no distinction of age, gender, employment situation.

Estimate of domestic workers' remittances (main countries)

Countries	Remittances 2018 (M Euro)	% increase 2012/18	% increase 2017/18	Domestic workers' remitt. - ESTIMATED (M Euro)
Romania (2 [^])	718,23	-14,3%	+0,3%	184,00
Ukraine (11 [^])	172,82	+9,4%	+11,2%	99,00
Philippines (3 [^])	451,13	+18,9%	+37,0%	255,00
Moldova (15 [^])	109,45	+41,1%	+26,2%	41,00
Sum 4 countries	1.451,63	-0,1%	+12,7%	579,00
Total (world)	6.200,98	-12,2%	+20,7%	1.400,00

(Annual values revalued to 2018 accordingly to the FOI index)

In brackets the countries' ranking for remittances sent from Italy.

Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on Banca d'Italia data.

Per capita remittances

Countries	Residents 01.01.2018	Pro-capite per year (Euro)	Pro-capite per month (Euro)
Romania	1.190.091	603,51	50,29
Ukraine	237.047	729,05	60,75
Philippines	167.859	2.687,52	223,96
Moldova	131.814	830,35	69,20
Sum 4 countries	1.726.811	840,64	70,05
Total (world)	5.144.440	1.205,37	100,45

Elaborations by Leone Moressa Foundation on Banca d'Italia data.

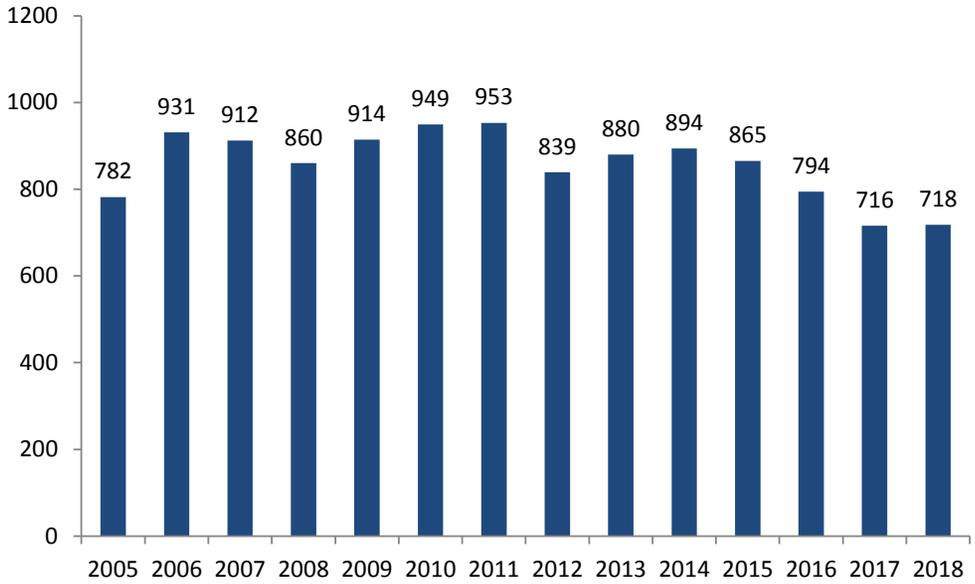
By observing the time series analysis, Romania has a fluctuating trend, but it stabilized between 700 and 950 million per year. The highest peak has been reached between the year 2010 and 2011, followed by a progressive decline.

Ukraine has been showing a more changeable trend: growing until 2011 when remittances reached 177 million euros. Subsequently, they declined until 2015 (126 million); but they have been increasing again since then.

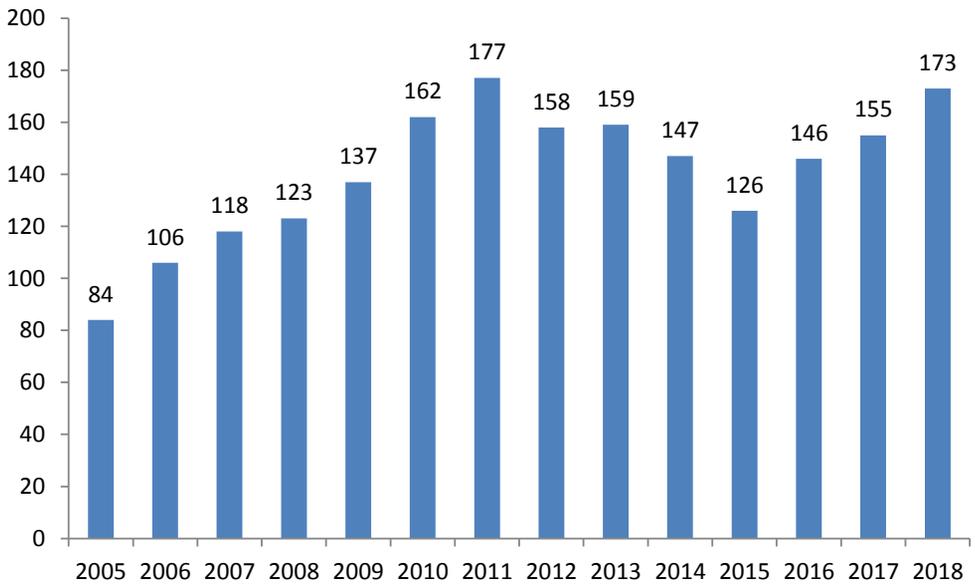
On the contrary, the Philippines registered a steady growth between 2005 and 2008, when remittances exceeded 1 billion euros. From that moment onward, it has been registered a noticeable decline, leading remittances to fall to 400 million in 2012. For six years a rather stable volume has been assessed, between 300 and 400 million. In the last year, there has been a significant rise, reaching 400 million once again.

Lastly, in Moldova remittances represent about one-fifth of GDP. Here too, the trend is rather fluctuating and in 2018 it reached the highest peak of over 100 million.

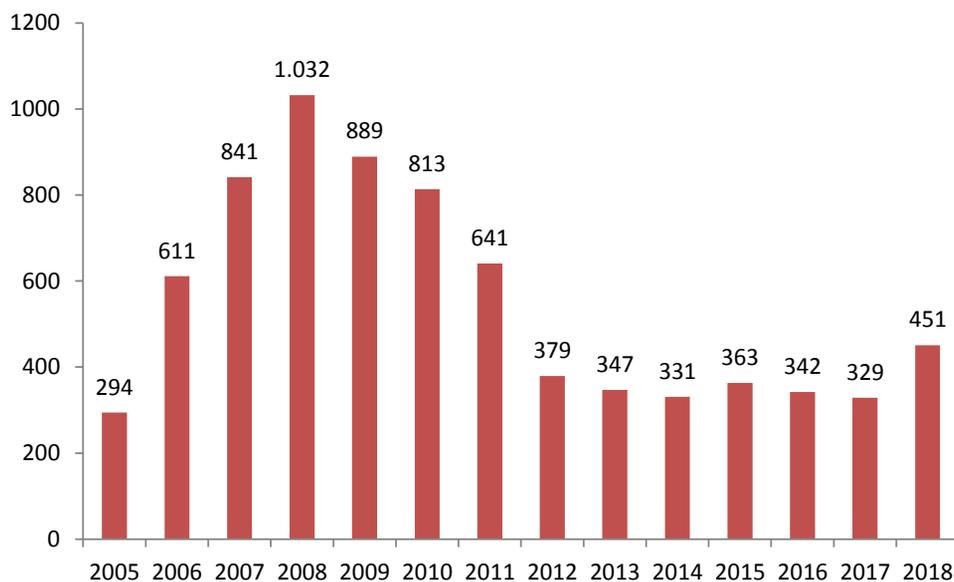
ROMANIA (2005-2018 Values in Millions of Euros)



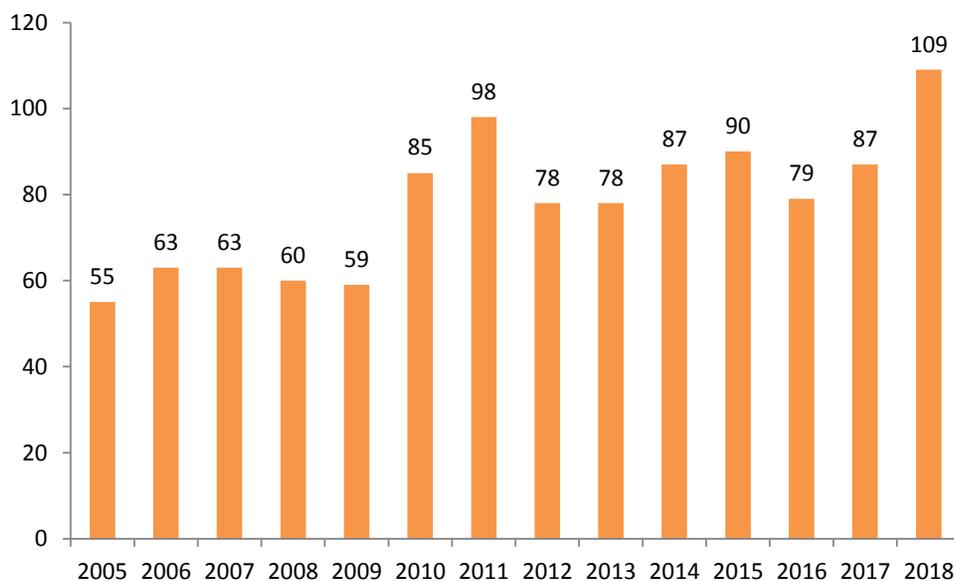
UKRAINE (2005-2018 Values in Millions of Euros)



PHILIPPINES (2005-2018 Values in Millions of Euros)



MOLDOVA (2005-2018 Values in Millions of Euros)



(Annual values revalued to 2018 accordingly to FOI index)

Elaboration of Leone Moressa Foundation on Banca d'Italia data.

The point of view of institutions of countries of origin

Interview with the Ambassador of Romania

S.E. George Bologan

The Romanian community is the largest one in Italy with about 1,2 million of resident citizens. There is a strong presence of workers in the domestic sector; as a matter of fact, the first two occupations are related to the assistance and the domestic work. These workers carry out a crucial job for Italian families; based on your knowledge, can you develop a sketch of the domestic workers of your community (gender, qualification, family composition)?

Italy hosts the largest Romanian community abroad, with 1.190.091 well-integrated Romanian resident citizens and over 14.000 capital companies, more than 11.000 partnerships and over 49.300 sole proprietorships contributing to the Italian GDP in a brittle economic period. There are compatriots teaching in Italian universities, other taking care of children or elders, standing in for children and becoming part of the assisted families. Furthermore, many of them work in the research field, in the sanitary sector, in the building or agriculture industry.

About 157.000 Romanian pupils and students study in Italian schools and universities, representing the most significant foreign presence in the Italian education institutions. **The excellent integration of Romanian citizens in Italy has nowadays been acknowledged on several levels and it constitutes a crucial bridge for our bilateral relationships.**

In the past years, a lot of work has been carried out with appreciable results for the integration and the image of our country in Italy; however, this does not preclude us from saying that we still need to work together to enhance our mutual understanding and to strengthen the relationship among our people.

Unfortunately, we do not have reliable data and studies showing accurately the situation of Romanian citizens undertaking this job, so important for Italian families. From what we know, the majority are women, with different qualifications. The majority of Romanian workers taking care of children and elders are not accompanied in Italy by members of their families.

In your opinion, what are the main issues that trouble the community?

Sadly, labour migration is often accompanied by several risks, like workers' rights violations or the risk for them to become victims of abuse and exploitation.

This is the reason why, before taking the decision to work abroad, it is fundamental to gather information, to get to know and be aware of your own rights and duties. In this context, we would like to briefly mention the **excellent Romanian-Italian bilateral relationships** also confirmed in the broad field of work and social affairs, ties that **aim also to the protection of honest workers and employers' rights**. Currently, the **cooperation Protocol signed in 2012 between the ministries of labour of the two countries is in force**. **Furthermore, at present, the competent bodies are working on a document over the bilateral cooperation on the labour inspection field**. The two states' public employment services, through the EURES offices, EURES Romania, and EURES Italy respectively are maintaining solid cooperation relationships.

Moreover, recently, the Romanian law concerning the regulation over the protection of workers working abroad has been revised. The Romanian authorities (the Ministry for Romanians Abroad in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of the Interior) have organized and keep coordinating, at the national level and with the support of diplomatic representations, a series of **information initiatives and awareness-raising campaigns**, especially in a moment with a considerable the attention given to the protection of Romanians working abroad.

Therefore, we would like to mention the "Learn at home to be safe in the world!" national campaign, designed in order to inform Romanian citizens about the risks stemming from the decision of looking for a job, carrying out their studies or moving abroad.

Such activities are integrated into the constant efforts of the competent Romanians bodies (Ministry of Labour and Social Justice, National Agency for Labour Employment, territorial labour inspectors, etc.) **to increase the level of awareness concerning the existing risks, their rights, and duties related to the decision to work abroad**.

Usually, we deal with people who work in Italy with the purpose to help families in their homeland by sending back remittances. In your opinion, to what extent are these remittances important for Romania? Is their economic impact fated to grow or decline?

The impact of remittances is important, but to a lesser extent compared to the past, considering the salary and pensions rise registered in Romania.

Besides, **Romanian economy continues to have promising perspectives of growth** and would we like to underline the opportunities that our country offers in the fields of the digital industry, bio-industry and agricultural industry.

In the last years, the Romanian community in Italy has kept growing, not to mention how many people obtain the Italian citizenship. Do you believe that the Romanian community is mainly constituted by people planning to return to their homeland once having reached their economic goal, or perhaps of people who wish to move to Italy permanently? What perspectives do you see for the Romanian community in Italy?

The about 1,2 million Romanians that, as confirmed by official data, reside in Italy, share both the common wish to show their own potential and their love for Romania - the latter also proven by the high number of applications to cultural and educational programmes that strengthen the ties with our country, the cultural, linguistic, and religious identity.

Many of them have left with the intention of coming back home and the several initiatives coordinated by the Romanian Government are designed to facilitate their return and to offer them opportunities in their homeland through which they can valorise the experiences acquired during their stay abroad.

At the same time, **the presence of Romanian citizens in Italy, the growth of their entrepreneurial activities and the high number of mixed Italian-Romanian families mirror a solid level of integration** and the social dialogue existing between our societies.

Interview with the Ambassador of Ukraine

S.E. Yevhen Perelygin

The Ukrainian community in Italy is the fifth populous one; there are 237 thousand Ukrainian citizens, the majority of whom are women (78%). Ukrainian workers are mainly involved in the domestic work field, more and more crucial for Italian families. With your expertise, you can you develop a sketch of the domestic workers of your community?

In this sector, we have mainly workers between 30 and 60 years old, mainly women. **Most have a high school diploma or are graduates**; many of them are nurses, social workers, economists. They are usually married and have children to look after.

In your opinion, what are the main issues that trouble the community? Do you believe that the concentration of workers without a regular permit and therefore the incidence of the irregular work phenomenon in your community is relevant?

Issues are mainly related to the type of occupation. The majority of Ukrainian workers deal with domestic work. Without knowing the legislative Italian system there is a high risk for irregular work to increase. To face such a phenomenon, we are working with the Authorities and Patronages to improve the formation of our community. Especially because a person will be led to choose the regular sector only by knowing the advantages and social benefits that it entails.

Usually, we deal with people who work in Italy with the purpose to help families in their homeland by sending back remittances. In your opinion, to what extent are these remittances important for Ukraine? Is their economic impact fated to grow or decline?

These remittances are important for the family members of the person working in Italy, although **they do not have any impact on the economy of the country in the short term**. In the immediate, they hold social importance since they enable people to start an activity or to build a house; **these changes can produce a positive impact on the Ukrainian economy in the long run.**

The latest data on residence permits show a decrease in residence permits, even if the first reason for requesting permission remains work. Do you think that the community is mainly composed of citizens who will return to their country of origin once they reach an economic goal, or of people who intend to move permanently to Italy through family reunions?

For the Ukrainian community, the main reason to reside in Italy has always been the employment one and this is confirmed by the high incidence of work residence permits requested. However, in the last years, **the trend has changed; the number of people asking to enter for family reason is increasing** and therefore also the number of people moving to Italy with their families. In addition, the number of young Ukrainians applying to university, starting businesses, and buying properties is growing, all this showing the rising integration in the territory.

From 2012, the presence of Ukrainian citizens in Italy has been growing. In your opinion, considering such a trend, what are the perspectives for the Ukrainian community in Italy?

Our community has always had the particular characteristic to easily integrate. Italy has always been a country loved by Ukrainians; it fascinates our citizens with its art, food, fashion, as well as with its lifestyle.

Interview with the ambassador of the Philippines

S.E. Domingo P. Nolasco

The Philippine Community in Italy is the sixth biggest community. There are 168.000 Filipino in Italy with a female predominance (57%). The majority of the population is between 15 and 64 years (78.5%). Therefore, this community arrived in Italy mostly to work and its rate of employment is among the highest (80,6%). Almost all Filipinos work in the services sector and mainly as caregivers and domestic helpers. Most of the Filipino work as domestic helpers in a sector that is increasingly critical for Italian families.

According to your knowledge could you trace an identikit of these workers (gender, age, educational qualifications, family composition)?

According to the ISTAT Report on Non-EU citizens (2017-2018) released in November 2018, 57.3% of registered Filipinos in Italy are women, while 20.5% are minors. In terms of family composition, the majority of which are Filipinos that live by themselves (37.1% "famiglie unipersonali") and Filipino couples with children (30.9% - "coppie con figli").

In terms of education, according to the Report on the Filipino Community in Italy 2018 released by the Italian Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, 40% of Filipinos in Italy in 2017 have finished a secondary school diploma and 10% have university degrees.

According to you, what are the issues that afflict the most the community? Do you believe there is a high number of undocumented workers and therefore of black market labor in your community?

The Embassy believes that one of the main problems of overseas Filipinos in Italy is the language barrier to integration. This includes those that are looking for employment and for the youth that need to go into the Italian school system.

Concrete data on undocumented overseas Filipinos workers in Italy is not available. But based on the Embassy's experience, we believe that their numbers are small compared to registered Filipinos and dual citizens.

Often there are people that work in Italy in order to support their families in the Philippines though their remittances. How much do you think these remittances are important for the Philippines? Do you expect for the future that the economic impact of the remittances will be increasing or decreasing?

In general, remittances of overseas Filipinos from all over the world are important to the Philippine economy because it strengthens the country's balance of payments and supports domestic consumption, which drives the growing Philippine economy.

In terms of remittances from Italy to the Philippines, data from the Philippine Central Bank (Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas), remittances from Italy account for only about a 1% share of the total remittances to the Philippines from around the world and a 7% share from Europe. The general trend of remittances from Italy to the Philippines over the years has been downward, decreasing from USD 550.5 million in 2010 to USD 286.3 million in 2018.

Last data on Permits to Stay reported a decrease of residence permits, although the first reason of stay is for work (54%) and also the requests for family reunion are not few (40%). Do you think the community is mainly composed of citizens that will return to the country of origin once they have reached their economic goal or by citizens that are planning to settle in Italy for good though their family reunion?

The Embassy has taken note that Filipino migration into Italy has shifted over the years from being work-related to family-reunification. In 2010, 68% of Filipino migrant inflows in Italy were for the purpose of work according to ISTAT data. By 2017, this has largely shifted, with 88% of new arrivals being motivated by family reunification while only 4% was labor-related. This would mean that overseas Filipinos in Italy are likely settling in the country for the medium- or long-term since families, instead of workers, are migrating. The family reunification program of Italy also gives priority to dependents, and therefore most likely to minors.

The implication is that second and third generation Filipino-Italians may become a significant part of Italian demography in the long-term. This would strengthen Philippine-Italian people-to-people ties, especially if Filipino-Italians start to deepen its participation in the social, economic, and political spheres of Italian society.

In recent years, the presence of Filipino citizens has been fluctuating: it reached its peak in 2015 (168,000) and afterward began to decline until last year when it started increasing again. In light of these developments and in accordance with your knowledge what are the Filipino community's perspectives in Italy?

From 2010 to 2015, the number of Filipinos with residency permits increased steadily from about 123,584 to 168,239, according to ISTAT data. From 2015, growth started to trend slightly downward with 167,859 Filipinos registered in 2018.

We believe that the slight downturn can be ascribed to two factors, which is the slowdown of arrivals and the growing number of Filipinos acquiring Italian citizenship.

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Interview with the President of AssoMoldave⁶

Tatiana Nogailic

In your opinion, how are the migration flows from Moldova to Italy changing? Do you believe that the concentration of workers without a regular permit and therefore the incidence of the irregular work phenomenon in your community is relevant?

Today, in Europe and particularly in Italy, we are witnessing a migratory “wave” of Moldovan immigrants. This immigration is caused by the Moldovan banking fraud scandal and the consequent 50% devaluation of the currency and exemption from the entry visa requirement. There is probably a high incidence of Moldovan citizens without residence permit; a lot of them enter with a travel visa, but once the 90 days expire, they keep residing in the country by working in the irregular labour market. The lack of an amnesty and the willingness of Italian families to keep costs down after the economic crisis, led this phenomenon to spread. As a matter of fact, **one of the reasons for the declining of the registered permits in the last years is related to the strong presence of irregulars**. There are then other aspects as the increased rate of Italian citizenships granted, the immigration to other countries with better economic perspectives, and the repatriation of elders going back to their country of origin.

In your opinion, to what extent are these remittances important for Moldova? Is their economic impact fated to grow or decline?

The official data of Moldova in 2018 place Italy as the second country for sent remittances, after Israel. Nonetheless, **data is underestimated as the majority of remittances takes place with coaches transporting irregularly people and goods across the two countries**. This phenomenon is due to the lack of trust to the Moldovan bank system after the collapse of URSS that caused the population’s savings loss; consequently, still today, Moldovans prefer to use informal and less safe ways to send their remittances home. Remittances sent home are crucial for the survival of many families; not only remittances but food parcels too. Many villages are inhabited only by elders and children in their care. In these villages, the local economy no longer exists, therefore shops and goods available are fewer and fewer. Once, they used to survive thanks to work, but today workers are scarce. In these

⁶ <http://assomoldaveroma.blogspot.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/AssoMoldave/>

cities, they prefer to receive from Italy food rather than money, as it would not be spent easily. In conclusion, the Moldovan emigration has no economic factor; it is rather an emigration for survival. In my opinion, these remittances are fated to diminish accordingly to the increased number of family reunions, as children reconnect with their parents. In conclusion, the economic impact of remittances is a phenomenon of survival but the local economy does not benefit from them.

In your opinion, what are the perspectives of the Moldovan community in Italy?

The current political situation, as for all ex-soviet republics, does not allow repatriation. **The diminishing number of permits is also due to the fact that those who could migrate have already done so.** Repatriating is not always easy; the migrant coming back home is seen as a rich man from whom the villagers expect only generosity; when this does not happen, he or she is subject to disdain. Family reunions are meant to increase, thus accelerating the depopulation of villages. These reunifications must be accompanied by the greater freedom of those who deal with domestic care to favour and ease the integration of their reunited children. In particular, the second generations will attain the goal that Moldovan emigrants have vainly pursued throughout their lives. It should also be emphasized that the second generation of Moldovans freed from the influences of Soviet culture will finally be able to compete equally with Italians in the market competition.

Interview with the President of

ADRI - Associazione Donne Romene in Italia⁷ (Romanian Women in Italy Association)

Silvia Dumitrache

According to your experiences at the Municipality of Milan, at the *Sportello Donne – Mamme a distanza* (Women's shelter – "Mothers at distance") and your connections with the Romanian community, in your opinion, what are the main issues that trouble the community?

Thanks to the activities of the Association, I am in contact with several Romanian domestic workers (women) in Italy; most of them have a high school leave, and usually a degree. These people could not support their family in Romania and therefore have decided to come and work in Italy. **When they arrive in Italy, most of them speak no Italian and are not familiar with the Italian legislation, leading them through situations of hardship**, in addition to the suffering caused by the separation from their families and children. **A more complete and clearer information and professional trainings are needed before leaving for Italy**; the improvement of knowledge concerning rights and duties of the National Collective Bargaining Agreement (CCNL) would make workers more aware of their job and less exploitable. There are also other issues linked to the cohabitation, stemming from communication, cultural differences, and linguistic problems. Not being able to cook Italian dishes or to use certain appliances could become a source of conflicts resulting in insults, but also to more serious violence towards the worker. Some of these violent behaviours are perhaps unintentional, as perpetrated by an assisted person already aggressive due to his or her disease (as for Alzheimer) but it remains a risky situation for workers. **In many cases, caregivers carry out stressful and dangerous jobs**, with a too high "toll" for their health. Only a few caregivers turn to a doctor, even though they suffer from insomnia, anxiety or depression. **The absence of national controls leaves too much room for labour exploitation**, abuse, and ill-treatment by their employers.

Considering your last statements, do you believe that the concentration of workers without a regular permit and therefore the incidence of the irregular work phenomenon in your community is relevant?

⁷ ADRI - <https://adriassociazione.wordpress.com/>

Indeed, the irregular work phenomenon is quite widespread (Censis), about 6 hours of work out of 10 have no social security coverage, outside the realm of rules, safeguards, and guarantees provided by law. Sometimes, workers prefer to work irregularly for higher retributions, underestimating risks and consequences this entail: the lack of sanitary insurance, the payment of the social security contributions, the lack of protection, rights, and sanctions foreseen by the law. They work irregularly, at a high pace, without leave permits, nor free Saturdays nor Sundays, sleep deprived and with no longer a private life and the possibility to socialize, far from their families and their country; all this **leads these people in conditions of fragility and vulnerability**. In order to face such an issue, a government programme to welcome and solidly train these people is needed. INPS decided to initiate a awareness-rising and information campaigns focusing on employers, by using means of communication like bread bags or napkins of the fast food shop. The message to convey is a correct behaviour for those who employ these domestic workers, immigrants and local, to prevent future workers from facing situations of extreme precariousness, with a very low pension due to tax evasion.⁸ **Legislative action is needed**, for example, as domestic work is not among the several incentives for the new recruitments like the South bonus (*bonus Sud*) and is not included in the new legislation on the traceability of salaries. **All these anomalies make this sector a breeding ground for illicit practices.**

In the last years, the Romanian community in Italy has kept growing, not to mention how many of them obtain the Italian citizenship. In your opinion, what are the perspectives of the Romanian community in Italy?

There are over 1,2 million Romanian citizens in Italy (2 million according to unofficial sources). **Many arrive with the intention of going back to their country of origin, but only a few of them do so.** If they lose their job in Italy, they try to move to another EU country, waiting for the right moment to repatriate. "The trade exchange between Italy and Romania amounts to about 15 billion euros. According to Unioncamere and Cerved data, in 2017, more than 24.000 corporates and partnerships constituted by Romanian citizens and 49.317 sole-proprietorships were registered in the Italian Business register."⁹ **If the possibilities for**

⁸ <https://www.inps.it/nuovoportaleinps/default.aspx?itemdir=47824>

⁹ https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/mondo/2018-10-15/italia-romania-2018-anno-record-interscambio-194656.shtml?uuid=AEJXQdNG&refresh_ce=1

social and political integration for Romanian were to increase, the Romanian community in Italy would become stronger and more lasting.

Focus: social and anthropological aspects

The occupation of a family assistant is a consuming job and it often entails severe levels of psychophysical discomfort and work commitment. Many domestic workers (mainly women) live in the same house with the assisted person and work without respecting rest periods, with the high risk of suffering from the **burnout syndrome**: a kind of stress afflicting several workers and professionals dealing with interpersonal relations activities. Often, workers are left alone to care for elders and they feel even lonelier because of the separation from their families. A further issue concerning domestic workers is the “**white orphans**” phenomenon, that is, children left to the care of one parent, or grandparents or in orphanages in the country of origin. According to Unicef data, there could be at least 350 thousand “white orphans” in Romania, 100 thousand in Moldova. If by one hand, we have children left home alone, on the other, there are female workers struck by the **Italian syndrome**, a kind of depression for all what they go through in the country.

Domestic work is more and more crucial to Italian families, but all these aspects related to domestic work are not always valued. **We collected a few opinions regarding these issues.**

Maria Grazia Vergari

Psychotherapist, lecturer at the Pontifical Faculty of Educational Sciences "Auxilium" of Roma.

The “care” of the caregiver. Difficulties and support of domestic workers

Domestic work is today one of the most tiresome and consuming jobs. If we especially consider the elderly care, the caregiver risks to become “a second victim of the disease” as the worker’s involvement in the caregiving activity is so high to put her or him under excessive stress. Among the main difficulties: being sleep deprived, difficulties in communicating with the family that usually delegates unduly, nervousness, tiredness, lack of appetite, insomnia, sometimes situations of hospitality with little regard for the primary needs of the family assistant (food, rest ...). In addition, there are concerns for the families left in the country of origin.

The management of sick elders and complicated family situations can lead to excessive stress conditions up to possible burnout situations with consequent repercussions on the health of the family assistant and the elderly person him/herself. The **burnout** is a concept referring to

one of the main risks of the caregiving occupation. **It is a condition of discomfort, uneasiness, impotence, suffering, generated by emotional stress and caused by constant contact with situations of suffering; it is manifested through emotional exhaustion, a feeling of lack of personal fulfilment and depersonalisation of one's work.** The caregivers' burnout manifests from emotional resources, as they end up being alienated and emptied from their own job. Sometimes, a behaviour of denial (depersonalisation) towards the assisted ones can prevail (rude answers, negative behaviours toward the assisted one). Often, all this is accompanied by a feeling of inadequacy, lack of self-esteem and a feeling of failure in one's work. Usually, those who face burnout are fundamentally generous, selfless people really willing to help others; however, under particularly stressful conditions and in the absence of a real acknowledgement of their work by the assisted person and the family, they fail to elaborate the frustration that derives from it; and by not taking care of their own needs, they end up falling into a state of depression, dissatisfaction, tension, anxiety, with the desire to leave work.

Under conditions of stress, these people develop the following somatic symptoms: fatigue, frequent headaches and gastro-intestinal disorders, shortness of breath, and psychosomatic phenomena (ulcers, back pain, tachycardia, nausea), decreased immune defences, sleep disturbed by negative thoughts and nightmares, and increased propensity to accidents.

In addition, psychological symptoms appear too: feelings of guilt towards the elderly, or towards their abandoned family, feelings of failure, resentment, and cynicism towards the assisted person, aggression, suspicion, paranoia, mood instability. As a result, depressive feelings, resistance to care work and little contact with one's own needs are found. Sometimes, this complex situation can lead to drug or alcohol abuse or even gambling addiction.

These symptoms are often accentuated by the distance of family members and the concern for children, for the husband, and sometimes for their sick parents.

Furthermore, there is a lack of a social network of support (friends, relatives...) who can "nourish" the worker completely consumed by the caregiving job.

Often, many caregivers coming from Eastern Europe go back home. In recent years, we have witnessed a psycho-social phenomenon that affects many of the family assistants who have returned from Italy: the **Italian syndrome**. This is a phenomenon that affects caregivers (especially Romanian, Moldovan, and Ukrainian) who have assisted elderly people in Italy, who have stayed close to those who could barely pay them, or in situations of difficult cohabitation

that they have caused them to fall ill. The anxiogenic and depressive states presented by these women appear to be linked to a profound fracture of identity, accompanied by a weakening sense of motherhood, feeling of guilt and shame. In the Socola clinic in Romania, this disorder has been addressed to. In milder cases, anxiogenic states, identity disorders, eating and sleep disorders, somatoform and dissociative disorders have been registered. In the most serious cases, the patients presented psychotic behaviours, obsessive-compulsive disorders, paranoid and schizoid disorders and depressions; these, in the most severe forms, can lead to suicide.

Children are those paying the consequences of such a phenomenon, especially the so-called “**white orphans**”. Millions of people from the East (this phenomenon is particularly widespread in Romania) work abroad trying to ensure a better life to their family members. Many of them leave children behind, in the care of grandparents, relatives, or even neighbours. By now, this has become a social phenomenon, with severe psychological implications. The psychological and emotional consequences of being deprived of the parents’ attentions are a high price paid by minors of families implied in the migration process. Often, calls, parcels, money earned with huge sacrifices cannot fill the emptiness left back at home. The lack of care and supervision of parents can undermine the minor’s health condition, as he or she does not longer eat regularly, worsens his or her school attainments, and starts, especially among teens, hanging out with people of bad influence. From the psychological point of view, consequences can range from a disposition to depression to the most extreme cases of suicide. Even for children who follow their parents in the host country, the adaptation process is long and not always easy.

The rights protection of children involved in migration processes is complex and can only be realized through an approach that combines the local level with the national and European level. **The first step in this direction is the analysis of their living conditions and the identification of good practices to reduce their vulnerability.**

What are the best courses of action?

Examining this phenomenon as individual sufferings would not be appropriate. We should look at the burnout and the Italian syndromes as a measure of social and economic planning inadequacy, as we risk to lose the concept of what these people, who are now called “professional caregivers”, really need.

- **Care work must not be improvised.** There is a need to increase or acquire new skills. For the family assistant, it is important to have a place where to develop one's own experiences, confront oneself with other professionals, to counteract the process of burnout and isolation;
- **There is the need to improve the psycho-social support service offer for domestic workers,** as well as supervision and guide services for their work: a form of support that represents, at the same time, a reference point for them and a measure of discomfort and emerging difficulties;
- **To ease the access to goods, to leisure time activities, to social gathering places,** not enclosed nor ghettoized, to facilitate the integration and ease the care burden;
- **To ease the transnational communication with family members back at home,** through simpler access to technologies;
- **To offer spaces for sharing by building support and sharing groups** among migrants brought together by the same experience;
- **To create experiences of parent training and consulting services for parents** (both for migrants and for those back at home taking care of children);
- **To create ties with the Italian care work contexts** (universities, hospitals, etc.) and to offer the expertise of paediatricians, child neuropsychiatrists, and psychologists able to treat children in the countries of origin;
- **To design the creation of small family houses** (with the localities' synergies) where to reconnect with the "white orphans" in a familial context, not in hospitals.

Tatiana Nogaïlic,
"AssoMoldave" Association, Cultural Mediator and Sociologist.

The most alarming phenomenon for domestic workers is the **abandonment of their children in the country of origin**. According to UNICEF data, in 2006, in Moldova 94 thousand children had at least one parent abroad; in 2013, this figure exceeded 150 thousand cases. Today, according to the Moldovan Ministry of Labour and of Family data, there are 32 thousand cases of children with both parents abroad. Most of them are between two and nine years old and are living an emotional trauma with repercussions on their physical and mental growth. **There is now a generation of Moldovan without family afflicted by the abandonment syndrome**, which might possibly result in suicide. Children (also called "*social orphans*" in the Rep. of Moldova, "*white orphans*" in Romania, and the "*leftbehind*" in Ukraine) supported by other relatives in the country of origin, often, have scarce school attainments and deviant behaviours at schools and in society. In the worst situations, they can be victims of criminal influences who use and involve them in the management of drugs activities and gambling, but also imply them in the commercialization in the world of paedophilia. In addition, according to the Moldovan Ministry of Health and the "Mother and Child" Institute, there is the phenomenon of "*teenage mothers*" which is constantly spreading. Even if children follow their parents abroad, there are issues related to the social integration of parents. In Sweden, this complex of symptoms is called "resignation syndrome". **The most difficult problem that a foreign migrant child has to face is to find a balance between the two cultures he belongs to**. On the one hand, the reference culture of one's parents that must be respected and observed; on the other, the continuous solicitations of the new culture which impose a fast learning for an even faster social integration.

Children left at home are not the only issue hindering the occupation of a domestic worker, but also the **solitude at work stemming from the static co-habitation with the assisted person**. On this topic, the Parliamentary Commission of Ukraine for Foreign Affairs has stated: "*those women who work in Italy develop often the so-called "Italian syndrome" characterised by agoraphobia, aggression and other states of mental disturbance*".

The particular work conditions of caregivers are not characterised by those socialization processes that are identified, on the contrary, in foreign workers employed in factories, on construction sites or in other sectors. In fact, in these cases, "class" relationships are established among colleagues, who build a common culture, a shared feeling of belonging. Work creates culture, constitutes social networks that share the same values and the same

activities, leading workers to become aware of their social role. This lack of integration is confirmed despite domestic work allows for a stronger possibility of socialization; as a matter of fact, while living with an Italian family, one comes to fully understand the culture of the host country.

Furthermore, these women develop a strong feeling of guilt as they leave their children behind, who in turn feel guilty because their mother left to guarantee them the possibility to study, clothes, and a home. Among other things, in these conditions, it is difficult for families to remain united, even after returning home. Many of these workers live in Italy in a situation of strong discrimination, usually caused by the instrumentalized news of mass media. **These are all factors that impacts on the health condition of immigrant.** The lack of information, the weak prevention and even more fragile lifestyle cause foreigners to be more at risk of illnesses, especially cancer diseases. Oncologists raised the alarm: *"we have observed that immigrants sick with cancers come to hospitals already at an advanced stage of the disease, thus the treatment becomes more difficult"*.

Silvia Dumitrache **ADRI – Romanian Women in Italy Association¹⁰**

Women leaving from Romania are mothers; most of them manage to meet their children only once or twice a year and their children often feel abandoned.

Out of 5 million children in Romania, 750.000 lived the experience of having one parent working abroad; 250.000 - 300.000 children had at least one parent working abroad¹¹. Children at a distance, the "white orphans", grow up with fathers, grandmothers, aunts, neighbours or even alone. According to UNICEF, there are at least 350,000 white orphans in Romania and often they end up being depressed, suffering violence and abuse in the family, developing drug or alcohol addiction, dropping out of school or adopting deviant behaviours. In the worst-case scenario, they take their own life because of the distance from their mother. The exact number of abandoned children is unknown.

Romania is the first country for the minor mothers' incidence, many of them are together with their mother to work abroad; five out of ten mothers under 18 years old have never turned to a gynaecologist.

These issues are not well known as in Romania, especially in rural areas, the presence of social workers is not enough, sometimes it is totally non-existent. Parenting is not even a thing. There is a lack of prevention, but also of support of families at a distance. Both the host country and the country of origin must show their commitment in order to reduce the enormous discomfort in which many transnational families live.

The phenomenon of white orphans is added to the "**Italian syndrome**", which is a form of severe depression, insidious, widespread among many women domestic workers repatriated, which jeopardises their life and has an impact on children left at home. At the Socola Psychiatric Institute in Iasi, hospitalized caregivers are more than 200 a year. Depressed, sleepless, suicidal aspirants.

A third of hospitalized patients attempts suicide at least once, and often succeeds. «More than a disease, the "Italian syndrome" is a medico-social phenomenon », explains Petronela Nechita, the Chief Psychiatrist at Iasi Clinic: «There is a prolonged lack of sleep, separation

¹⁰ ADRI - <https://adriassociazione.wordpress.com/>

¹¹ The Interinstitutional Working Group Report to the Presidential Administration, 2018 https://www.presidency.ro/files/userfiles/Raportul_Grupului_de_lucru_Interinstitutional_dedicat_situatiei_copiilor_cu_prini_plecai_la_munc_in_strintate.pdf

from the family, the delegation of motherhood to grandparents, husbands, neighbours ... We have a lot of cases.

The situation got worse when Romanian women from Southern Italy, where they worked in fields and had poorer salaries, moved to assist elders in the North of the country: among our patients, there are mainly those who refused to respects rest periods only to earn more and were consumed by the exhausting pace of work.

Nobody can take care alone of a senile person or a non-self-sufficient patient: 24 hours a day, without a single break. Not to mention the mental burden of what has been left behind. You and me, we would fall ill, too »¹².

¹² Italian syndrome, in the clinic of our caregivers (*Sindrome Italia, nella clinica delle nostre badanti*) - Corriere della Sera, 8 aprile 2019; <https://www.corriere.it/elezioni-europee/100giorni/romania/>

Conclusions

By Massimo De Luca, Lawyer and Director of the DOMINA National Monitoring Centre on Domestic Work.

What are the consequences of domestic work in countries of origin? This is the fundamental question and main theme of the current chapter of the DOMINA research project. As we have seen, there are both economic and social effects entailed in this sector.

Firstly, there is the fluctuating economic aspect. As confirmed by the results of our analysis, there are many intervening factors: the influence on the economic situation in the country of origin, being or not part of the European Union, the demographic growth, the situation of local governments, etc. The four examined countries (Romania, Ukraine, Philippines, and Moldova), chosen as the main countries of origin of domestic workers, present very different situations. Nevertheless, it is still possible to trace a common trend: the growth in the volume of remittances that occurred in 2018 for all four countries.

Another interesting point is the amount of such remittances. The value is of about 50,00 and 70,00 euro per month, except for Filipinos who result to be the thriftiest ones, sending back home 220,00 euros per month. However, these sums are underestimated. The actual amount might be higher than what declared as many domestic workers tend to send money personally or by relatives or people of trust who go back to the country of origin for the vacation or to visit their families. As stated by the experts interviewed in this Dossier, the reasons behind such a choice are various. In some cases, as for Moldova, there is no trust in the banking system of the country. For many irregular workers, sending money back home is the "safest" way to prevent being found out in case of checks on bank accounts. In other cases, money does not turn out to be the most useful resource in the workers' country of origin; on the opposite, food, clothes or other basic goods are often sent to far away families as necessary sustenance and basic needs. These goods are not sent but transported by people on private cars, coaches, buses, etc. For example, from Rome, there are many minivans that during the weekends leave from Anagnina subway station, one of the main junctions of the capital, for the Eastern European countries. Due to these "informal means", it is very difficult to quantify the total value of remittances sent home by domestic workers.

Another common trend to the four countries emerging from the analysis concerns the reasons pushing people to migrate to our country. As a matter of fact, even if employment

remains the first reason for applying for a residence permit, in recent years, the number of people migrating for family reunification has increased, thus a sign that many intend to stay in Italy for a medium-long term.

From the point of view of Institutions of workers' countries of origin, the migratory phenomenon has also some positive aspects, especially considering the integration of immigrant citizens in Italy; however, there are still concerns about illegal facets. On the one hand, there are many people who obtained the dual citizenship, there is a high number of mixed marriages, immigrant students from these countries have increased both in schools and universities, and entrepreneurial activities realized by immigrants are also more widespread. On the other hand, there are strong reservations about the lack of regularity. Many immigrants leave their country without being familiar with the Italian legislation; Moldovans, for example, enter with a travel visa and then overstay illegally. This stirs up the irregular component in the domestic work sector; the share of workers without an INPS registered contract is about 60%. Illegal work is a danger both for the employer family and the worker. In this way, both actors are not protected and exposed respectively to risks of controversy and exploitation. With consequences on the financial level, on health and interpersonal relationships.

Besides the economic sphere, we have also assessed how the domestic work sector influences the emotional sphere. The social and anthropological implications caused by the departure from the country of origin are not exactly sweetness and light the whole time. The distance from familial affections and from one's cultural background, as previously presented, in the long term can stir up various syndromes both in workers and in family members: "burnout", abandonment, the Italian syndrome, suicide, etc.

Let's not forget the positive experiences. In fact, there are also many happy endings thanks to family reunifications, to repatriation with better social status due to savings earned, and to the realization of a new life in our country (like opening a new business and mixed marriages). The positive experiences also include the role played by the family, which in its reception function is now the cornerstone of integration for thousands of foreign workers. The employer family represents the initial approach with the Italian language and with our country's dynamics. Therefore, from an initial disadvantaged situation, foreign workers can attain positive and unexpected results also thanks to the interaction with the family. It can be stated that domestic work can be an opportunity for human resilience to develop. In fact,

although they start from difficult conditions, domestic workers can face them and create for themselves and for their relatives a brighter future.

It is clear, however, that the negative effects weigh heavily on the social balance. Therefore, in this sense, trade associations and institutions have, as suggested in the interviews of the Dossier, the task of building a network of relationships and support. To this end, it would be necessary to strengthen the offer of psycho-social support service meant for domestic workers, supervision services and forms of assistance in order to create, at the same time, a point of reference for them and a litmus test of discomfort and emerging difficulties.

Regarding the social aspect, cooperation is the key to contain negative outcomes in Italy and in the workers' countries of origin. Firstly, I would suggest a collaboration between institutions and associations to tackle the illegal labour market. Our experience in the field teaches us that when relationships happens with regularity, the incidence of burnout cases is lower. Thanks to the observation of rest periods (clearly provided by the contractual institutions), workers have greater chances of psycho-physical recovery and more time for forms of interaction and aggregation outside the domestic environment. Nevertheless, regular employment relationships normalize the tax and pension situation, guaranteeing a measurable income towards the countries of origin. Workers with a regular contract can count on the severance pay (or *TFR*) needed to return home and on contributions paid as a resource to be used for old age in their own country.

Another crucial cooperation ground is the one to be developed between the employer family and the worker: to allow for private spaces and enhanced transnational interaction with the distant family members, by providing, when possible, means of digital communication (pc, wi-fi, mobile phones, etc.).

The picture offered by this Dossier's analysis and by the interviews suggests a complex situation from the social point of view that cannot be solved in the short term; it calls for precautionary measures and strategies on the long term to curtails the negative issues.

Most probably, because of its atypical features, domestic work is often overlooked but, as confirmed by the study on the impacts on countries of origin of domestic workers and caregivers employed in Italy, the economic and social consequences stemmed from this sector should not be underestimated.

THE VALUE OF DOMESTIC WORK

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ROLE OF EMPLOYER FAMILIES

DOMINA Research

National Association of Domestic Work Employer Families Carried out by Leone Moressa Foundation

- DOSSIER 1.** Profile of the domestic work employer in Italy.
Dimensions of the phenomenon, population trends, economic and social impacts.
- DOSSIER 2.** The National Collective Bargaining Agreement on domestic work and its future prospects.
- DOSSIER 3.** The socio-economic impact of domestic work on the family.
- DOSSIER 4.** Domestic work policies concerning the ILO Convention n.189/2011. The Italian situation and the international comparison.
- DOSSIER 5.** Welfare policies in support of employers' households: European comparison.
- DOSSIER 6.** Care economy: domestic employers as economic actors.
- DOSSIER 7.** Criminal offences in domestic work.
- DOSSIER 8.** Domestic work and disability.
- DOSSIER 9.** Domestic work in Italy: regional deepening.
- DOSSIER 10.** Disputes in domestic work: the balance between legality and necessity.
- DOSSIER 11.** The socio-economic impact of domestic work in countries of origin.

THE VALUE OF DOMESTIC WORK

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ROLE OF EMPLOYER FAMILIES

Dossier 11

The socio-economic impact of domestic work in countries of origin



Firmataria del C.C.N.L. sulla disciplina del rapporto di lavoro domestico

DOMINA - National association of domestic work employer families, signatory of the National Collective Bargaining Agreement on the discipline of the domestic employment relationship. Safeguarding and assisting Italian families who, by taking on a domestic collaborator or a family assistant, become employers.

The Association is active throughout the country with its Operational Points in support of domestic work employers



NATIONAL MONITORING CENTRE ON DOMESTIC WORK – DOMINA Monitoring Centre is a research and data collection hub to observe and study activities, phenomena and trends of the domestic work sector, at the national and local level. The Centre publish each year a "ANNUAL REPORT ON DOMESTIC WORK".

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