

AGING IN EUROPE AND GERIATRIC CARE

M. Barbagallo, L. Dominguez, *DIBIMIS, University of Palermo, Palermo, Italy*

Europeans are living longer than ever, and this pattern is expected to continue. The increased life expectancy is a remarkable achievement, which however poses obvious challenges for health care and geriatric assistance. There is a progressive increase of older persons living alone and in need of assistance. European countries are handling these challenges with very different approaches. There are countries and regional differences in social policies and sanitary assistance, in providers of care, in quality of the assistance and in lodging costs. The long term care models are also very different (cash benefits, public provision of care services, or hybrid rather than pure models of care). The proportion of older institutionalized vs. those receiving care at home is changing differently among countries, as a result of specific policies, with some countries reducing their institutional care capacity to encourage community care, while others increasing nursing home care capacity.