The possibility of using EHIS survey for the identification of sandwich generations

"Sandwich generation" is a term that denotes a generation whose members, at one stage of their life, take care of their descendants and their aging parents at the same time. The combination of the parental role and the informal care of elderly family members represents the squeeze of the life cycle, i.e. pressure from both younger and older family members, and has its own sociological, cultural, economic, demographic and numerous other dimensions. The goal of the research in this paper was to identify the "sandwich generation" in Serbia from a demographic perspective, using quantitative methods. In the absence of longitudinal and qualitative research, as the most reliable sources of data for the study of this social phenomenon, the examining whether the existing social statistics have data that can support research of this type, was the first step approaching the work. As the most suitable source of data, the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS) was chosen, which was carried out in 2019 in the organization of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and the Institute for Public Health "Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut". For the purposes of this work, a secondary analysis of data from EHIS was performed, and thus the research capacities of EHIS in this issue were examined and, at the same time, some methodological solutions were offered. The research was conducted on the basis of 975 cases from a sample of 13,178 respondents. The group of respondents was selected on the basis of questions about the provision of informal care, analysis of the structure of households to which they belong and the kinship relationship of household members, from which the parental role was also detected. Defining the demographic profile of this contingent of persons included determining the age-sex structure, marital and work status, level of education, but also the description of accompanying information - the frequency and duration of care provision. Statistical analysis of the data showed that a typical representative of the "sandwich generation" is a woman, aged 45-59, married, employed, with a medium level of education, and that she provides help to an older family member at least 10 hours a week.

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