

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education
Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937
Document name: **Observation Report Guidelines - Italy**
Partner: Università Popolare di Firenze (U.P.F.)
Author: Antonietta Muccio

Employment and Women on the 21st century in Europe: From Household economy to SME economy (Small and Medium enterprises) – MUPYME Project

Guidelines for drafting the participant observation report

As agreed, once the observation is completed it shall be displayed on a report that summarizes the observation action together with other data; both describe what we call the *Professiograph* of the household work. The data, the cold figures, should be discussed by the analyst by making a critical interpretation. We will note possible answers in brackets, but the observer/commentator's reflections are especially interesting.

We remind you that every partner of the project should draft a report for each of the 5 observations that should be made. Afterwards, they will write a summary report for which drafting we will provide an appropriate guide.

VALENTINA



Reviewed by: Antonietta Muccio

Code: 20160523_MU_O3_UPF_1



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1.- Identification

Descriptive data related to:

- **Name** Valentina
- **Place** Quarrata (PT)
- **Analyst name** Antonietta Muccio
- **Approximate time of the observation** 2 hours

2.- Context

Other data that may be useful for analysing the space where the observation takes place

- **Type of town (population size)**

Quarrata is an Italian municipality with 25.846 inhabitants in the province of Pistoia (Tuscany). It is between Prato and Pistoia, at the bottom of the Montalbano and covers about 46 Square Km. It's few km from the centers of Pistoia and Firenze.

- **Economy of the site (agricultural, industrial, commercial, services)**

Quarrata is well known in Tuscany as “Town of Furniture” for the huge amount of small and medium companies manufacturing and selling furniture, in various styles, from Renaissance to Modern, all of them with a typical filling. Furthermore many nurseries are in the site, because the whole of Pistoia Province is a large producer of plants.

- **Economy in the area (growing economy, crisis; emerging economy)**

In recent years Quarrata too was facing the economical crisis, especially because of the entry on the Market of big distributors of furnitures and articles of interior design produced by the industry, and, therefore, less costly.

- **Referential cultural environment (urban, rural, intermediate)**

The environment is in half rural and half urban.

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3.- Profile

Information for the correct understanding of the selected woman as the subject of study

- **Age** 42
- **Educational level (certified)**
Degree in Science of Education
- **Income level or estimated social class (low, middle, high)**
Middle
- **Type of household (members of the family)**
Her family is composed of 4: husband, wife and two daughters (9 and 15 years old)
- **Work experience outside the household**
Till few months ago she has worked for an association as a professional educator. She has been working ten years in the same subject, becoming experienced in her job.

4.- Subject assessment

Informal data that may help to understand the work performance inside the household

- **Where and how did she learn to perform the household?**

She is self-taught in household. Her expertise is coming from the experience she earned living alone as a University student. Recently by watching videos and reading articles published on socials with the help of new technologies she is learning new methods of taking care of the house.

- **How many years has she been working in the household economy?**

Only for few months as a full time housekeeper, after leaving her work out of home. She used to do homework, though, also before, in her free time. She notices that nowadays, having more time, she is less stressed when she does the housework, and surely tolerates more the mess left by the members of the family.

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- **What does she consider to be the most and the least difficult task?**

Chores she doesn't like: to dust and all the duties requiring meticulousness and precision, such as to clean silverware, to exchange winter wardrobe for summer, to do gardening, to clean the car.

Chores she likes: to cook, to iron

- **Has she given up to something in order to take care of the household?**

She doesn't mention any renounce, because she used to do the domestic work with pleasure when she was out eight hours a day, and now she does it with even greater pleasure

5.- Most frequent tasks

This section has to be filled in by following the Tasks File form attached to these guidelines.

ANNEX

6.- The performance

This section has to be filled in by following the Job Analysis form (modified).

Valentina collaborates with the other members of the family in order to do the housekeeping. At first she likes to put everything in order in the house, placing each object at its own place. After that she handles with what has a priority. She does not follow a timetable connecting each domestic work to a particular week day. Decisions regarding all the members of the family are shared with her husband and daughters, thereafter it's mainly up to her to take care of their progress. Homework is shared, mainly with her husband. Her daughters too, though young, have been assigned some duties, such as to lay and to clear the table.

Concerning Intellectual and psychological Aptitudes required for job we have the following table

To rate from 0 to 3 the need of each required aptitude in this scale.

0- Inappreciable 2- Medium 1- Scarce 3- High

1. General intelligence required for the job 3

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2. Aptitude for solving problems	3
3. Calculation skills	3
4. Ease of communication	3
5. Spatial aptitude	3
6. Creativity, ease of participation and originality	3
7. Concentration skills	2
8. Movement coordination	3
9. Manual dexterity	2
10. Ability to differentiate colors, identify and combine them	2
11. Data, ideas or sentences memory	2
12. Spatial memory	2
13. C Response capability	3

Concerning personality and social requirements we present the table coming from interview.

To rate from 0 to 3 the need of each required aptitude in this scale.

0- Inappreciable 2- Medium 1- Scarce 3- High

1. Ease of building personal relationships	2
2. Ability to make quick decisions	3
3. Perseverance and method	1
4. Self-control	3
5. Leadership ability	2
6. Level of responsibility	3
7. Organization skills	3
7.1. In the job itself	3
7.2. Of the work of others	2

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7.3. Administrative skills	2
8. Adaptive capacity	3

On JOB conditions and efforts we have the following table

To rate from 0 to 3 the need of each required aptitude in this scale.

0- Inappreciable 2- Medium 1- Scarce 3- High

1. Physical strain	2
2. Mental effort	1
3. Nervous effort	1
4. Hazardous effort	0
5. Toxicity	0
6. Environmental aggression	0
7. Risks	0
8. Frequent accidents, severity and frequency	0

On PERFORMANCE improvement

1. Possibilities to improve job performance

Valentina thinks it is possible to get and improve one's expertise. She is open to every method helping her to obtain results in the minimum possible time, to let her free to follow her passions through. She is also interested in the natural methods of cleaning and taking care of the house, for the minor impact on the environment and for no damage of hers and her family health.

2. Possibilities of receiving some training

She is not very interested in following courses or meetings in order to improve her expertise. She prefers to acquire such new expertise by watching videos or by reading articles published on social network. She doesn't researches the articles directly, but she opens the interesting ones shared by her contacts.



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3. Main Characteristics of job conditions

Housekeeping requires, according to Valentina, a lot of expertise. But she has told us several times that nobody ever taught her about it. She is not particularly interested in being trained, so as to rise her abilities. She has become expert by practice, experiencing different methods at various times.

She uses (small) appliances for carrying out household. The most used are the washing machine, though she says she prefers to wash by hand some clothing ; the oven to cook; the hand-held mixer; the dishwasher, she uses daily, though sometimes she likes to do the washing up by hand; the vacuum cleaner for the floors, used every day too.

She tells us to realize how different is her housekeeping now in comparison with the time when, although carrying out household, she was working out of home. Now she does work more calmly with less stress and is more tolerant of the mess left around by her husband and daughters. The most noticeable difference with the past is that before, when she was doing the shopping once a week, she used to buy products in large amount , and had to throw away part of them, those not consumed; on the contrary now that she does the shopping more times during the week , she succeeds in buying only what she really needs, reducing that way waste and saving money.

7.- Summary and critical reflection

This section shall be used by the observer/commentator to note everything he/she considers to be important but does not fit in any of the aforementioned sections.

This part of the document should be finished with a summary of the observation in which the most relevant aspects of this analysis are underlined, together with their transfer to the SMEs economy.

Valentina was very helpful during the two hours of shooting, answering accurately to our questions and was at ease showing us all the rooms in her house. Valentina is a charismatic person, knowing exactly what she loves to do in life and in her free time. She has two daughters and, while working, she has never given up her duties as a mother and wife. The whole family recycles garbage in a field near to their house, where there is the compost for organic waste. Despite her role as a housekeeper, she is involved in many interests, in which theater, that she carries on together with other engagements and her family duties, and training courses to become a professional woman as a future work. She is trying to go back to the world of work, due to various opportunities she came across. She surfs the internet, the social network and other new technologies of communication both for playing and for finding new methods of doing homework and new food recipes.

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During the two hours of observation in her house, we saw Valentina preparing lunch for the family. From our interview we also discovered other qualities related to her charges and skills in managing family life. Definitely she shows a great capacity to plan the medical visits and treatments of each of the members of the family, due also to her previous work experience. She also keeps herself up to date for the news of the school of her daughters, not helping them in their homework, unless required. Good practice because her daughters are very independent and are rather successful at school.

She declares to use personal methods for household chores, to minimize the time spent, according to her experience she had done when she was living alone. Very interested also in “alternative” methods giving her the possibility to reach the result with less environmental impact. For example, she renounced to the softener, in favor of vinegar and essential oils to perfume linen. She is aware of being a good cook, first dishes(especially baked pasta) and cakes (her younger daughter confirms); within the various duties of a housekeeper she doesn't dislike to iron. Skills observed:

- Supplying and control of raw materials;
- Care of rooms, equipments and tools;
- Planning of meals;
- Preparing meals;
- Experience in negotiation;
- Handling school-family relationships;
- Looking after the social relationships of the members of the family;
- Autonomous in her choices;
- Capable of choosing what to buy for better management of domestic economy;
- Sharing Work;
- Ability in deciding

BELOW we can see competences acquired at household which correspond to SME:

- Creativity (re-use of food, organisation of family events)



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- Leadership (She is independent and autonomous in decisions)
- Social relationship (with family members, friends, neighbors, children teachers)
- Multitasking (She does a lot of activities during the week)
- Time management (planning in short and long term)
- Flexibility (capacity of adapt in different situations)

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ANNEX

TASK RECORD FILE

VALENTINA

TASK	EXECUTIVE	MANAGEMENT	LEVEL OF DECISION	CRITICISM	IMPACT	CORRESPONDENCE	TIME
Cooking	80%	20%	Unilateral	Five	Finance Organizatio n Family, Relations	Time planning Money Planning Planning wat to buy Relations with suppliers	Daily
Shopping	80%	20%	Unilateral	Four	Finance Organizatio n Family Relations	Organization Finance Family Relations	Every 2/3 days
To clean	80%	20%	Shared	Three	Family	TimePlanning Planning	Daily
Ordering the house	80%	20%	Shared with family	Two	Organizatio n Family	TimePlanning Planning	Daily

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TASK	EXECUTIVE	MANAGEMENT	LEVEL OF DECISION	CRITICISM	IMPACT	CORRESPONDENCE	TIME
Ironing	70%	30%	Unilateral	Three	Family	TimePlanning Planning	Una tantum(=once in a while)
Social relations	60%	40%	Shared with family	Tre	Organizatio n Family		Weekly
School of daughters	60%	40%	Unilateral	Three	Family		More than twice a week
Cures/visits of the family members	60%	40%	Unilateral	Five	Family	TimePlanning Planning	Una tantum(=once in a while)