

**Work Session on Gender Statistics**  
**(Orvieto, Italy, 11-13 Oct. 2000)**

**ASSISTANCE FOR / BY WOMEN AND MEN AGED 60 YEARS OR MORE**

Paper submitted by Austria<sup>1</sup>

**Introduction**

In June 1998 a survey on the living conditions of persons with 60 years or more was conducted within the Austrian Microcensus for the fourth time (previous surveys: 1971, 1979 and 1987).

The first part of this paper contains some technical information on the Austrian Microcensus, because the core questionnaire of this instrument enables analysis according to the socio-demographic background of the respondents. In the second part the main results of this special program are discussed. Central point of the survey on living circumstances of persons aged 60 years or more (or „seniors“) was the help obtained by seniors from others (relatives, friends, social services, other paid help), if required. The (unpaid) help of the elderly for their children (as well as for other persons) was also of special interest. Additional questions were related to the state of health of the elderly, social contacts, cultural interests, further education. Gender related differences regarding the received or provided aid will be discussed in particular.

**Data Source**

The Austrian Microcensus (AMC) was set up in 1967 and is carried out quarterly (in March, June, September and December). Till 1993 the AMC was a one-stage-, since 1994 it is a two-stage-stratified-random sample of private households, with communes as the primary sampling units. The sampling ratio is 0,9% of all addresses (gross sample size: 31.000 dwellings); it differs between the Länder - in smaller provinces the sampling ratio is much higher than on the average. The AMC is a rotating sample - the selected addresses remain in the sample for two years (= eight surveys), 1/8 of the addresses being changed per quarter. Data collection is mostly done by face-to-face interviews, taken by about 1.200 interviewers. All members of a household are to be interviewed, but proxy answers are allowed.

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Each survey contains a quarterly core questionnaire ("basic program"), which usually is not changed, and a supplementary special questionnaire with varying topics. The core questionnaire consists of two parts:

- constant questions concerning the dwelling and the household (which have to be answered by one household member - "household-sheet A"),
- information on socio-demographic variables concerning each person living at this address ("sheet B" has to be filled in for each household member).

The quarterly changing special program relates to various specific topics - like living conditions of specific population groups such as elderly or physically disabled persons etc., household, dwelling or labour force (LFS). The questions of the special program are usually placed on sheet B.

Sheet A as well as sheet B are optically readable forms. Answering to the core questionnaire is compulsory, whereas to the supplementary programs is voluntary. The response rate for the basic program is about 90%, non-response in supplementary programs is about 5 to 20%.

## Results

### 1. Socio-demographic information

At present 20% of the Austrian population are 60 years or older. According to the population projection in the year 2030 the share of the persons aged 60 years or more will amount 35% - mainly due to the increasing life expectancy and a decline in the birth rate. 60% of the population over 60 years are female, 40% male; from the population older than 75 years already seven out of ten persons are female. Closely connected with this divergent age structure by gender are the differences regarding marital status and type of household: Especially in the upper age groups more men than women are married, while a large majority of older women are widows. At the age of 75 years or more every second woman lives alone.

**Table 1: Population by age groups**

Age groups	Total				Women		Men	
	1998		2010	2030	1998			
	in 1.000	in %			in 1.000	in %	in 1.000	in %
Up to 14	1.380,1	17,1	14,1	13,5	673,3	<b>16,2</b>	706,8	<b>18,0</b>
15 - 59	5.097,3	63,1	62,0	52,3	2.518,9	<b>60,6</b>	2.578,4	<b>65,8</b>
60 - 64	353,8	4,4	5,8	8,1	184,8	<b>4,4</b>	169,0	<b>4,3</b>
65 - 74	698,3	8,6	10,0	14,2	401,1	<b>9,6</b>	297,3	<b>7,6</b>
75 plus	548,9	6,8	8,2	11,9	380,2	<b>9,1</b>	168,7	<b>4,3</b>
60 plus	1.601,0	19,8	23,9	34,2	966,1	<b>23,2</b>	634,9	<b>16,2</b>
Total	8.078,4	100,0	8.051,3	8.116,3	4.158,3	100,0	3.920,1	100,0

S.: Microcensus, average 1998; 2010, 2030 Population projection, medium variant.

**Table 2: Persons aged 60 years or more by marital status**

Age groups	Persons aged 60 years or more	Marital status			
		single	married	widowed	divorced
		in %			
	in 1.000	in %			
<b>Total</b>	1.601,0	7,1	56,0	32,1	4,8
60 - 64	353,8	6,6	74,6	12,4	6,3
65 - 74	698,3	7,0	62,9	24,9	5,1
75 plus	548,9	7,6	35,0	53,8	3,5
<b>Women</b>	<b>966,1</b>	<b>8,4</b>	<b>40,8</b>	<b>45,6</b>	<b>5,2</b>
60 - 64	184,8	7,5	65,5	20,1	7,0
65 - 74	401,1	8,4	49,6	36,2	5,8
75 plus	380,2	8,9	19,5	67,8	3,7
<b>Men</b>	<b>634,9</b>	<b>5,2</b>	<b>79,0</b>	<b>11,5</b>	<b>4,3</b>
60 - 64	169,0	5,7	84,6	4,1	5,6
65 - 74	297,3	5,2	80,9	9,6	4,2
75 plus	168,7	4,6	70,0	22,4	3,0

S.: Microcensus, average 1998.

**Table 3: Persons aged 60 years or more by type of household**

Age groups	Persons aged 60 years or more	Type of household (selection)					
		Couples			One-person household	Lone-parent household	Institutions
		without children	with children	total			
	in 1.000	in %					
<b>Total</b>	1.601,0	43,2	13,3	56,5	28,1	5,0	3,0
60 - 64	353,8	48,5	22,3	70,8	14,2	5,5	0,9
65 - 74	698,3	49,6	12,6	62,2	24,8	4,9	1,0
75 plus	548,9	31,6	8,5	40,1	41,2	5,1	7,0
<b>Women</b>	<b>966,1</b>	<b>33,1</b>	<b>10,9</b>	<b>44,0</b>	<b>37,8</b>	<b>7,1</b>	<b>3,9</b>
60 - 64	184,8	44,1	18,5	62,6	18,4	8,4	1,0
65 - 74	401,1	41,2	10,1	51,2	33,6	7,1	1,1
75 plus	380,2	19,3	8,2	27,4	51,6	6,4	8,2
<b>Men</b>	<b>634,9</b>	<b>58,5</b>	<b>17,0</b>	<b>75,5</b>	<b>13,3</b>	<b>1,9</b>	<b>1,7</b>
60 - 64	169,0	53,3	26,5	79,9	9,5	2,4	0,7
65 - 74	297,3	60,9	16,0	77,0	13,0	1,5	0,8
75 plus	168,7	59,4	9,2	68,6	17,8	1,9	4,3

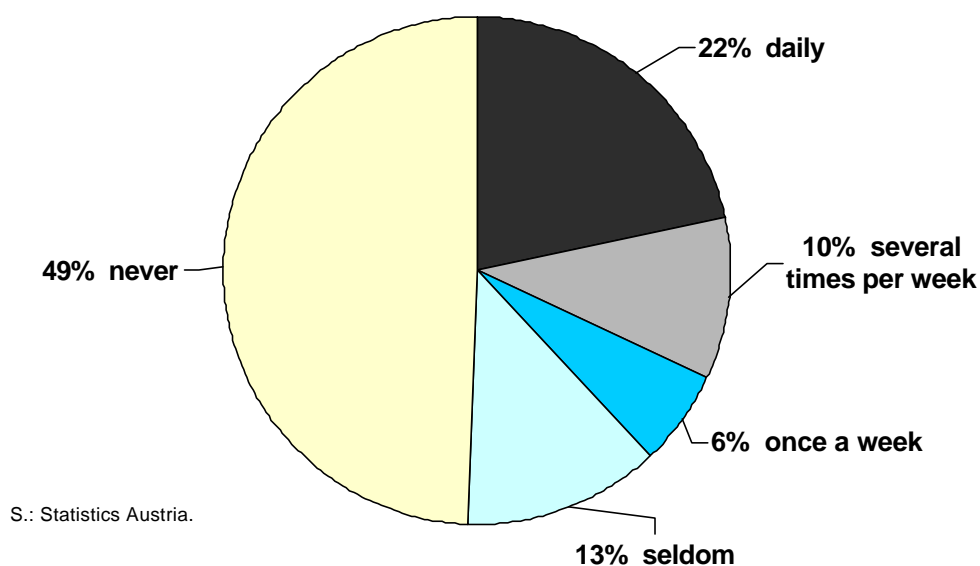
S.: Microcensus, average 1998.

## 2. Support of female and male seniors by others

About 50% of the seniors receive help from their relatives, friends, social services or other paid persons. Men indicated more often than women daily help, whereas more women than men are supported irregularly ("seldom").

### Assistance for seniors by relatives, friends, social services

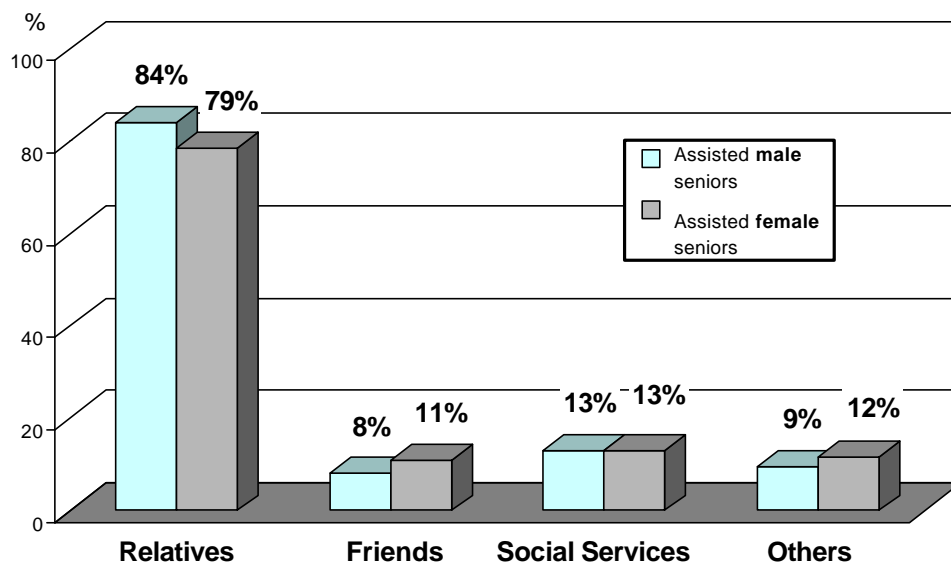
diagram 1



As expected, persons aged 60 years or more receive help mostly from their family members or further relatives - men to a greater extent than women, whereas women get more help from friends, neighbours or other paid persons than men. These differences are growing with the age.

### Who assists female/male seniors?

diagram 2

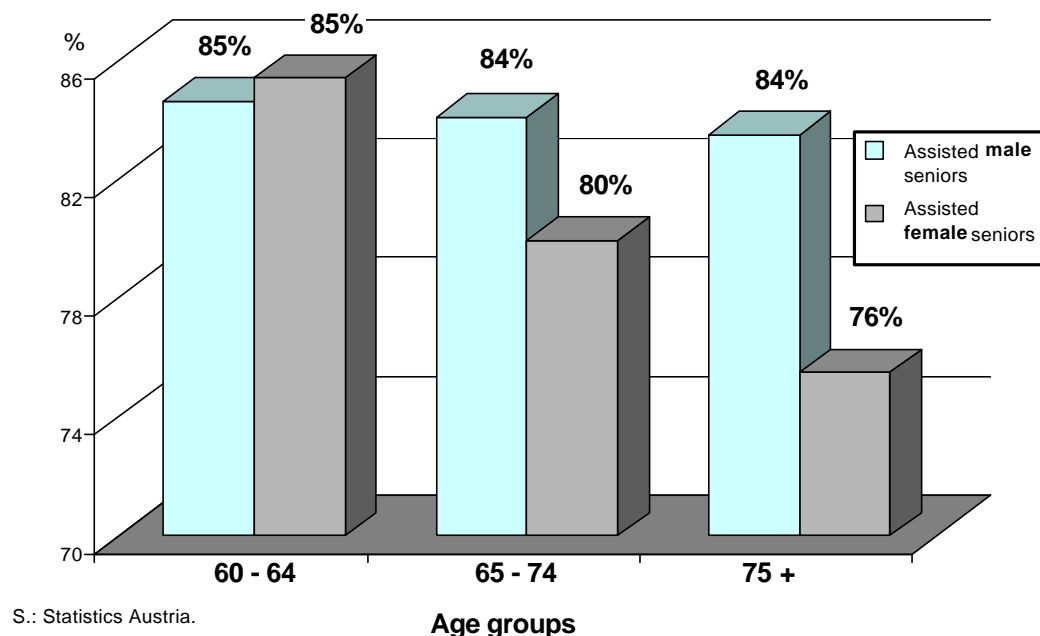


S.: Statistics Austria. - Multiple replies possible.

Men in all age groups receive nearly the same amount of help from their relatives, whereas women show a considerable decrease - partly caused by the different life expectancy and household-typology.

**Assistance for seniors by relatives**

diagram 3

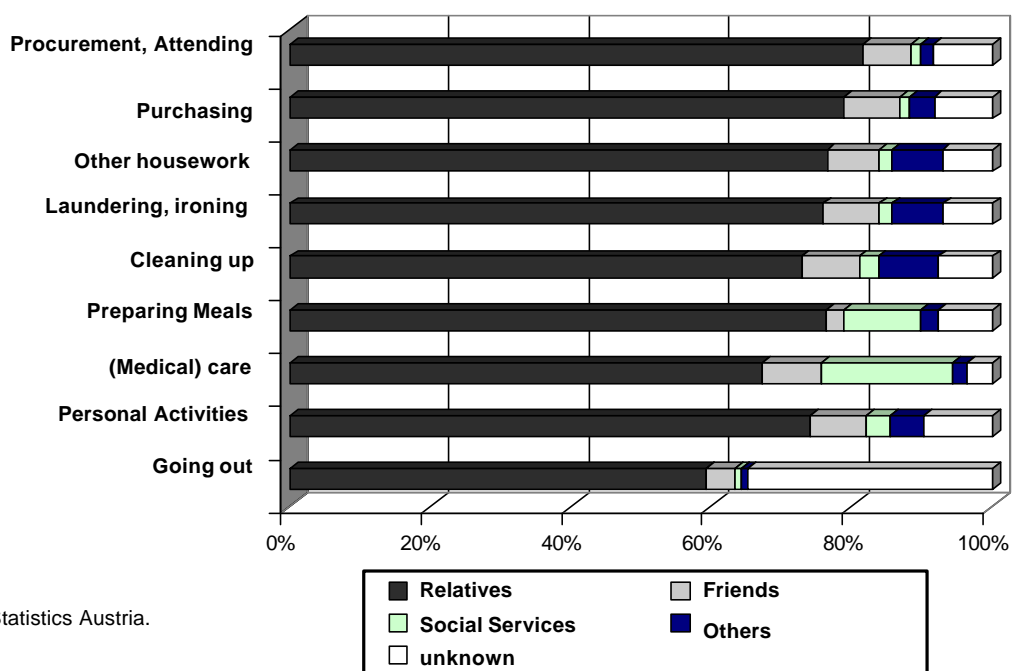


*Diagram 4* ranges the various activities seniors are assisted by others according to the amount of received help in each case. Most of the seniors (36%) indicated help in getting some medicaments or with official attendings, etc. Assistance in going shopping (f.e. carrying the shopping bag) also was indicated often. Daily support occurs mainly concerning "preparing meals". Only few seniors are accompanied when they are walking or making visits; in this field the most additional help would be needed. With increasing age the delivered help grows in all of these categories.

Regarding all nine activities the greatest assistance is provided by relatives, especially if something should be procured or attended or bought. In particular seniors make use of social services for medical care or to get something to eat ("Meals on Wheels"). Other paid help is used for the typical housework.

## In which fields do seniors get help?

diagram 4

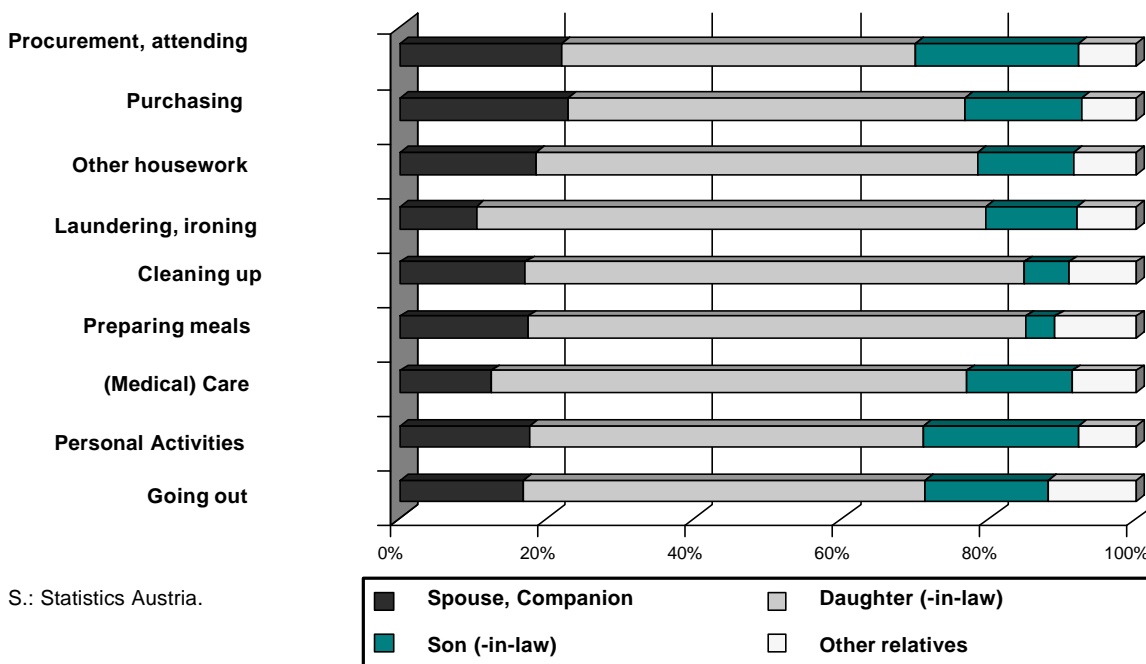


*Diagrams 5 and 6* show which family members or further relatives assist persons aged 60 years or more. Women receive the main part of their assistance from their daughters or daughters-in-law. Help from their spouse or companion has nearly the same level as the help from their sons or sons-in-law; they especially take care if something has to be attended or procured.

On the one hand men are supported by their spouse or companion, on the other hand by their daughters (-in-law). Help of further relatives particularly consists of accompanying the old aged and is also mostly done by women.

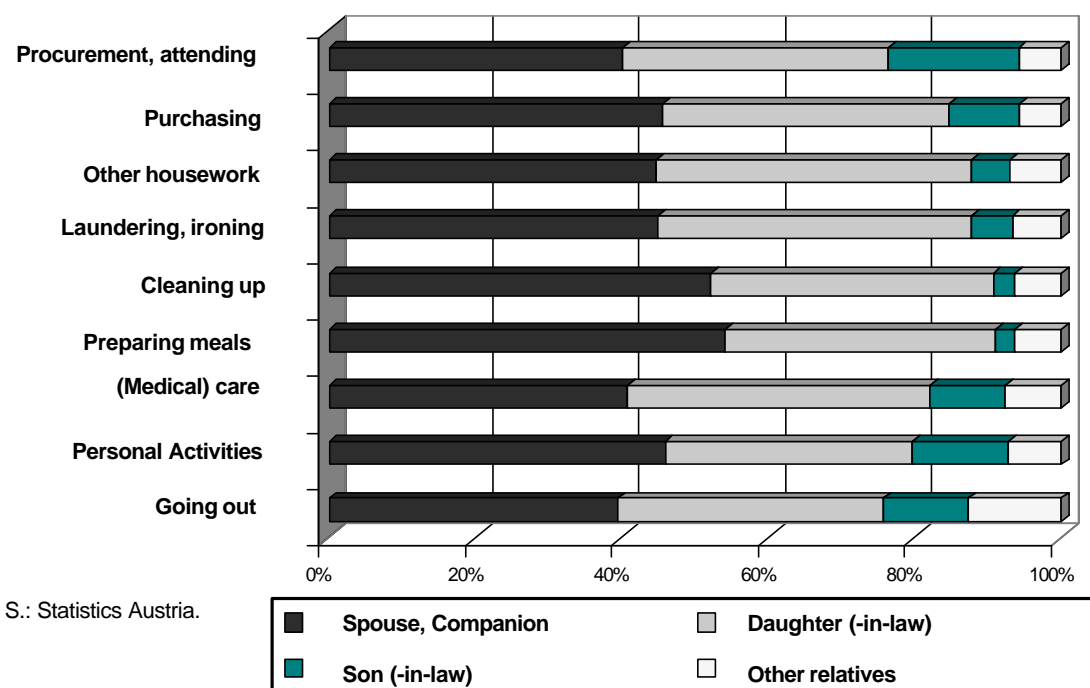
### By which relatives female seniors are supported?

diagram 5



### By which relatives male seniors are supported?

diagram 6

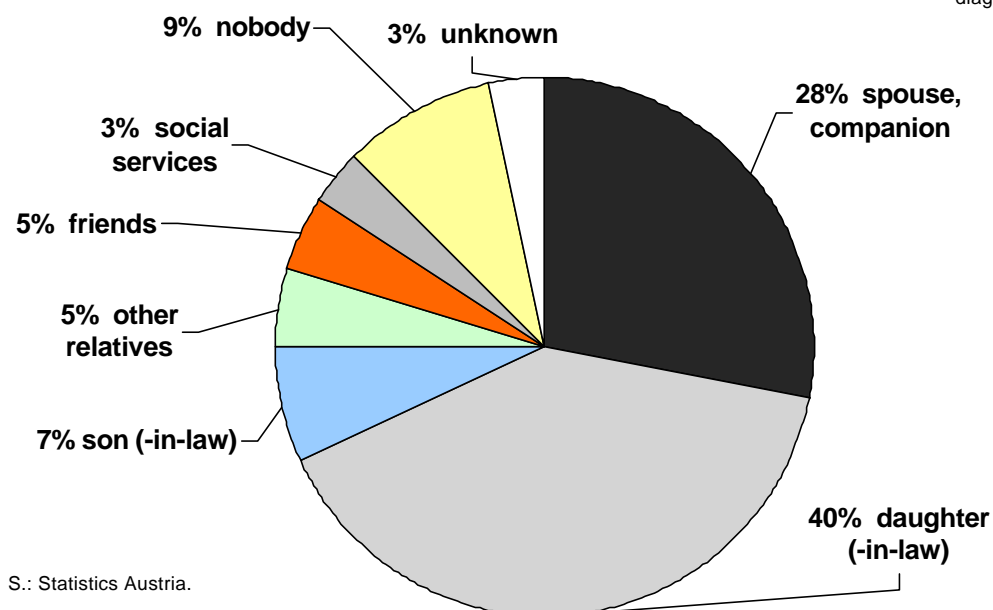


### 3. Support of female and male seniors by others in case of acute illness (diseases with a duration of one week at a maximum)

Especially for older persons it often is necessary to get help immediately, f.i. in case of short-term illness (influenza etc.). While two thirds of the male seniors get care of their spouse or companion, only about one quarter of the women receive help from their partner. But female seniors can count on the care of their daughters (-in-law), who help them twice as much as they support male seniors, where the help already is provided by their spouses or companions. Every tenth women does not receive any help in case of acute illness.

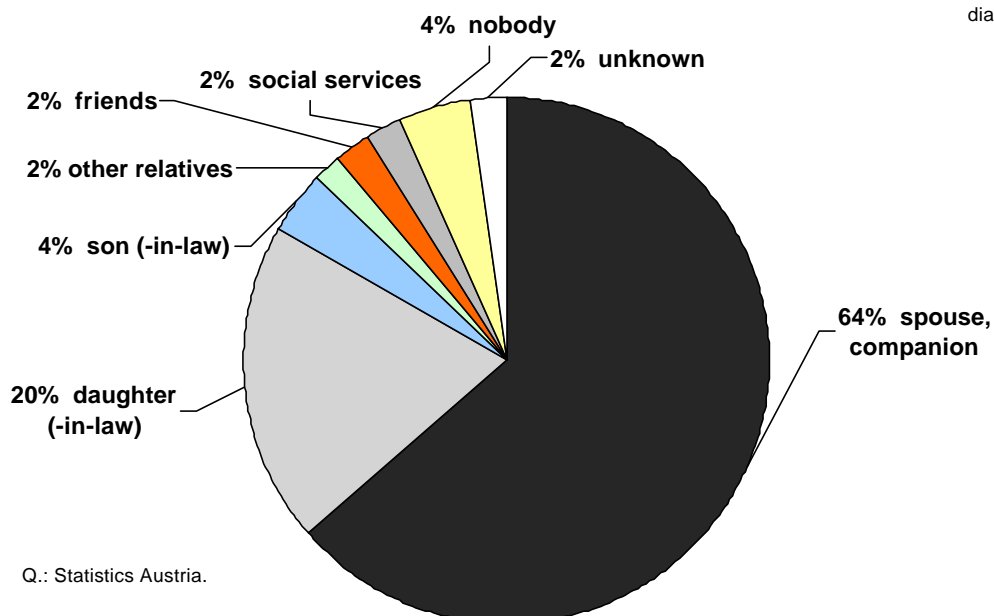
#### Assistance for female seniors in case of acute illness

diagram 7



#### Assistance for male seniors in case of acute illness

diagram 8



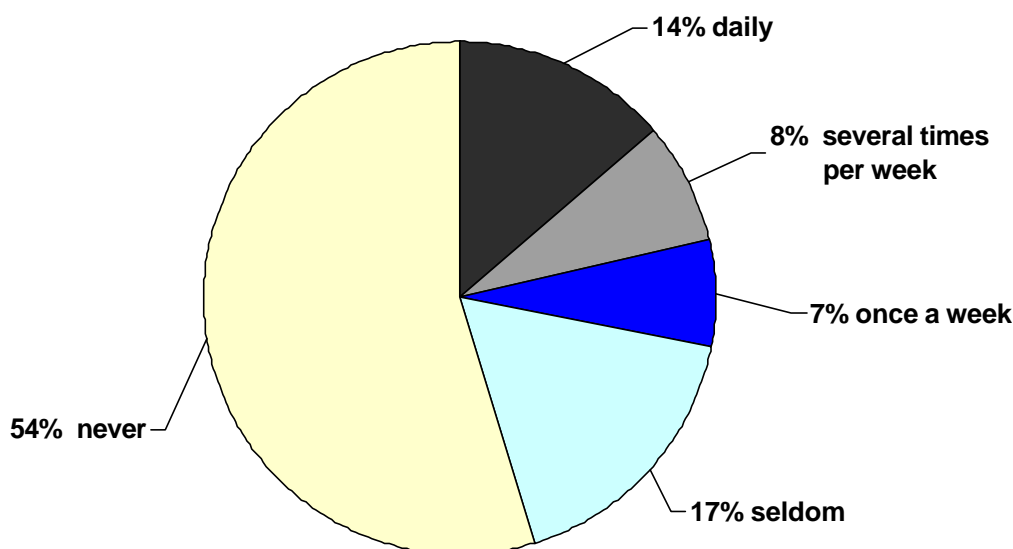


#### 4. Assistance of (grand-) children (-in-law) by female and male seniors

The next two diagrams are presented with the intention to show that persons aged 60 years or more not only receive help, but also support others (in particular their children). Almost nine out of ten seniors have (grand-) children (-in-law); half of these seniors assist their children at least seldom. Women support their children more often daily than men, especially in the age-group 60 - 64 years.

##### **Assistance by seniors for (grand-) children (-in-law)**

diagram 9

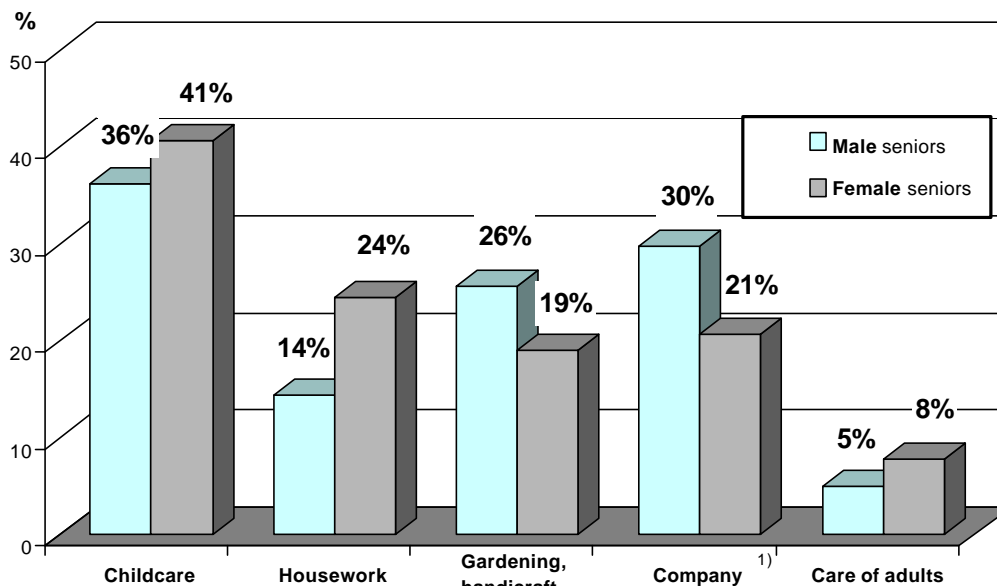


S.: Statistics Austria. - Seniors with (grand-) children (in-law): 1,361.000.

When seniors assist their children, in most cases they take care of their grand-children. The data concerning assistance in the company refer to those seniors who indicated to have a company (either themselves or their children); here the help very often is given daily. The typical division of labour by gender becomes obvious in diagram 10.

##### **In which fields do seniors help their (grand-) children (-in-law)?**

diagram 10



S.: Statistics Austria.

- One quarter of the seniors indicated "company (in property of family)".