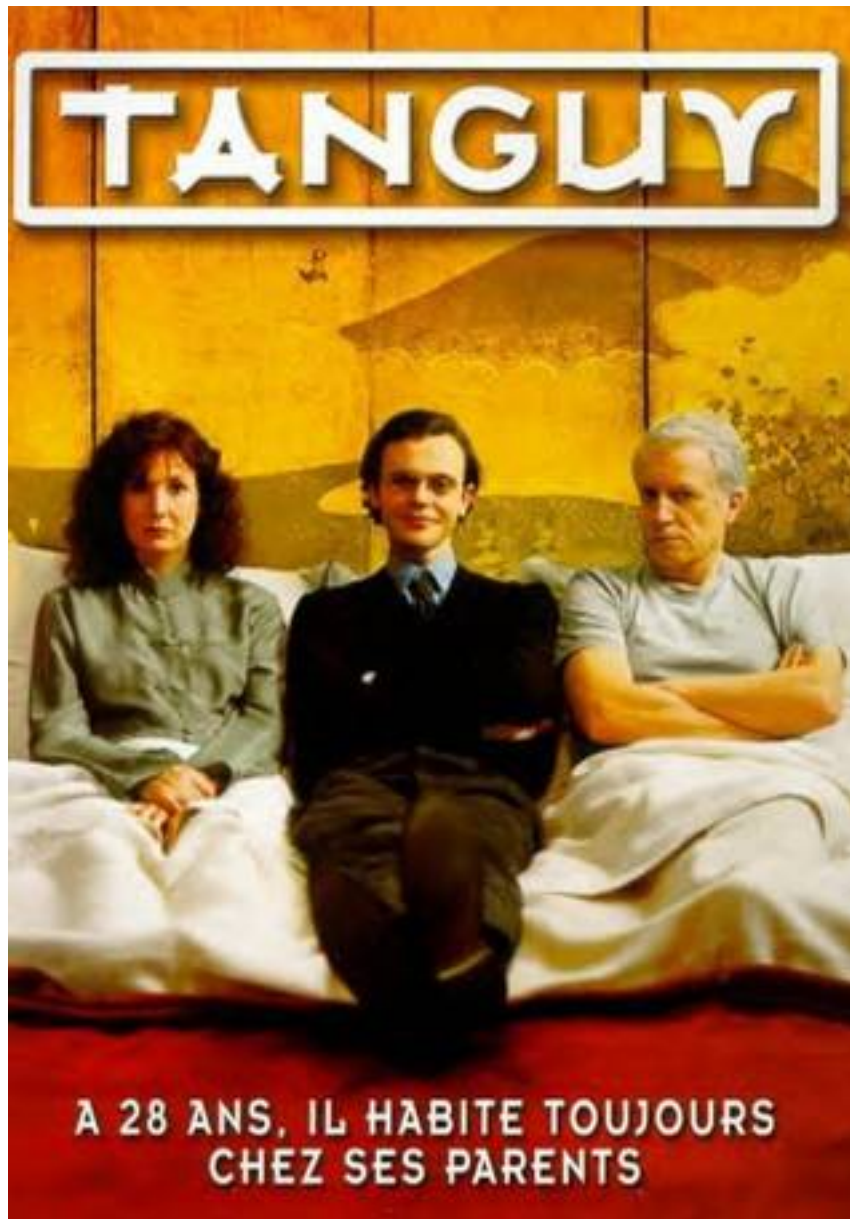




Italy. Lower Salaries Keep Young People in the Family Nest

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An increasing number of young adult Italians remain with their families because of low wages offered for entry level jobs, according to a new report.



The socio-economic think-tank Isae said that the number of young adults staying home had climbed by 6% in 13 years and today about 75% still lived with their parents.

According to Isae, 68.4% of young adults lived with their parents in 1991 while in 2004 this percentage rose to 74.1%.

In 1991, the think-tank pointed out, first job salaries were 83% of the average national salary, while in 2004 they were only 74%. Last October Economy Minister Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa sparked polemics when he referred to the young adult Italians living at home as "big babies".

"Let's get these big babies out of the home," the minister told a parliamentary committee in regard to a budget measure to set aside funds to help young adults pay the rent on a place of their own.

"We need to encourage young people to leave home. If they don't, they just stay with their parents, they don't get married and they don't become independent," he said.

Bank of Italy Governor Mario Draghi recently has spoke on the need to improve prospects for young people in regards to both salaries and job security.

"If they expect to have a salary which is lower than in the past and have to battle continually with job insecurity, they will lower their spending permanently," he said.

Low salaries and precarious working conditions also prevent young people from leading independent "adult lives", Draghi added.

The economic reality of why young adults stay at home is in contrast with the stereotype of young Italians living at home for the comfort and security.

This stereotype was the basis of a successful 2001 French film, *Tanguy*, about a 28-year-old college graduate who fights his parent's efforts, even in court, to get him out of the family nest.

The film was inspired by a real Italian court case won by a son whose parents tried to force him out of their home.

In Italian marriage vows couples promise to maintain their children until they fulfill their aspirations. This concept is recognised by the country's constitution which does not set a time limit on this obligation.

(ANSA NEWS)



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