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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Socioeconomic impact of Covid-19 on gender equality - Research note

Delegations will find attached a research note entitled "Gender equality and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19" that has been prepared by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) at the request of the Portuguese Presidency.

Research note

Gender equality and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19

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Gender equality and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19

Research note

2021

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Country codes

BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CZ	Czechia
DK	Denmark
DE	Germany
EE	Estonia
IE	Ireland
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FR	France
HR	Croatia
IT	Italy
CY	Cyprus
LV	Latvia
LT	Lithuania
LU	Luxembourg
HU	Hungary
MT	Malta
NL	Netherlands
AT	Austria
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
FI	Finland
SE	Sweden
EU-27	27 EU Member States

INTRODUCTION

2020 will be remembered as the year of the COVID-19 pandemic, with two distinct waves of different intensity and timing across countries. The first wave hit the EU between mid-February and the end of June and was characterised by stay-at-home orders and physical distancing measures in most countries. The associated lockdown measures resulted in a significant reduction in total employment in the EU-27 compared to the previous year.

The slowing of the pandemic in the summer led many countries to relax their containment measures, but many sectors and jobs – such as those related to tourism and culture (accommodation, catering, entertainment and recreation, transport, travel agencies, etc.) - did not fully recover, due to limitations on transnational mobility and social distancing. As a result, the sectors and occupations most or least affected by the COVID-19 crisis fluctuated according to the peaks of the pandemic and the different response measures by national governments. The short-lived recovery of summer 2020 ended in the autumn, when a second pandemic wave began.

The COVID-19 health crisis is having strong repercussions on the EU labour market, despite the employment and income support measures adopted. The outbreak has also highlighted the importance of workers providing essential services, such as healthcare, information and communications technology (ICT) and utilities, education and emergency services (including support services for victims of domestic violence) (International Labour Organization (ILO), 2020a). EIGE's analysis[1] shows that women are overrepresented in many of these essential jobs.

The COVID-19 pandemic context highlights a number of gender-specific labour market impacts, such as large gender segregation in 'essential' and 'non-essential' sectors and occupations, gender differences in telework opportunities, and non-gender-neutral implications of increased unpaid care work. The closure of schools and other care facilities during the pandemic has further complicated reconciliation of paid work and care responsibilities for many workers, especially women with children. Although outside the scope of this study, a spike in gender-based violence is also evident. Many of the factors that trigger or perpetuate violence against women and girls have been amplified by preventive confinement measures, deteriorating socioeconomic situations, and job losses.

(1) Covid-19 and gender equality (europa.eu)

In the absence of a gender equality perspective in short term emergency and long-term reconstruction measures, the COVID-19 pandemic's effects risk maintaining or even furthering pre-existing gender inequalities and rolling back the progress achieved to date. The study aims to provide a more detailed and timely picture of short-term and long-term gender equality challenges in the EU due to the COVID-19 crisis, focusing on: 1) the labour market situation; 2) working arrangements and incomes; 3) the impact on gender roles and work-life balance of workers; and 4) the role of employment supporting factors and recovery measures, in particular from a work-life balance perspective.

The study was prepared at the request of the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU. It aims to contribute to important future policy decisions in support of the gender equality goals of the EU recovery process.

1 LABOUR MARKET SITUATION

1.1 GENDER DIFFERENCES IN LABOUR MARKET TRENDS UNTIL Q3 2020

The start of the pandemic led to large declines in employment for both women and men, but employment rebounded more strongly for men than for women in summer 2020

Following five years of growth at EU-level, employment declined for both women and men in all EU Member States since the start of the COVID-19 crisis (Figure 13, Annex). Despite support measures, comparing Q2 2019 and Q2 2020 (Table 1) shows that employment of women (15-64) reduced by 2.2 million (2.4% decrease), and by 2.6 million for men (2.4 decrease). The partial recovery in summer 2020 (Q3) brought more men back to the labour market than women, with 1.4 million jobs taken by men and only 0.7 million jobs by women. These statistics indicate **the trend towards longer-lasting crisis effects for women than for men**.

Table 1- Evolution of employment rates, by sex and age (%, EU-27)

Age	Women		Men		Women		Men	
	Employment, Q2 2020 (million)	Employment change (Q2 2019-2020)	Employment, Q2 2020 (million)	Employment change (Q2 2019-2020)	Employment, Q3 2020 (million)	Employment change (Q2 2020-Q3 2020)	Employment Q3 2020 (million)	Employment change (Q2 2020-Q3 2020)
15-24	6.3	- 10.4%	7.7	-9.0%	6.6	+5.3%	8.1	+6.4%
25-49	53.0	- 3.0%	61.9	-3.2%	53.1	+0.3%	62.3	+0.7%
50-64	28.5	+0.7%	33.0	+0.8%	28.7	+0.7%	33.5	+1.4%
15-64	87.8	-2.4%	102.5	-2.4%	88.5	+0.8%	103.9	+1.4%

Source: Eurostat (lfsq_egan).

Note: Employment change (%) over the period ([t+1] – t)/t.

Employment losses and gains varied substantially between different groups of women and men (**Error! Reference source not found.**). **Young people - especially young women - lost disproportionately more jobs during the first COVID-19 wave,** while those aged 50+ were comparatively sheltered from employment losses. The recovery period also shows that women aged 25-49 had the lowest chance of

obtaining a job in summer 2020. In this age group, fewer than 170 000 jobs were gained by women (0.3 % increase) compared to about 440 000 jobs (0.7 % increase) gained by men.

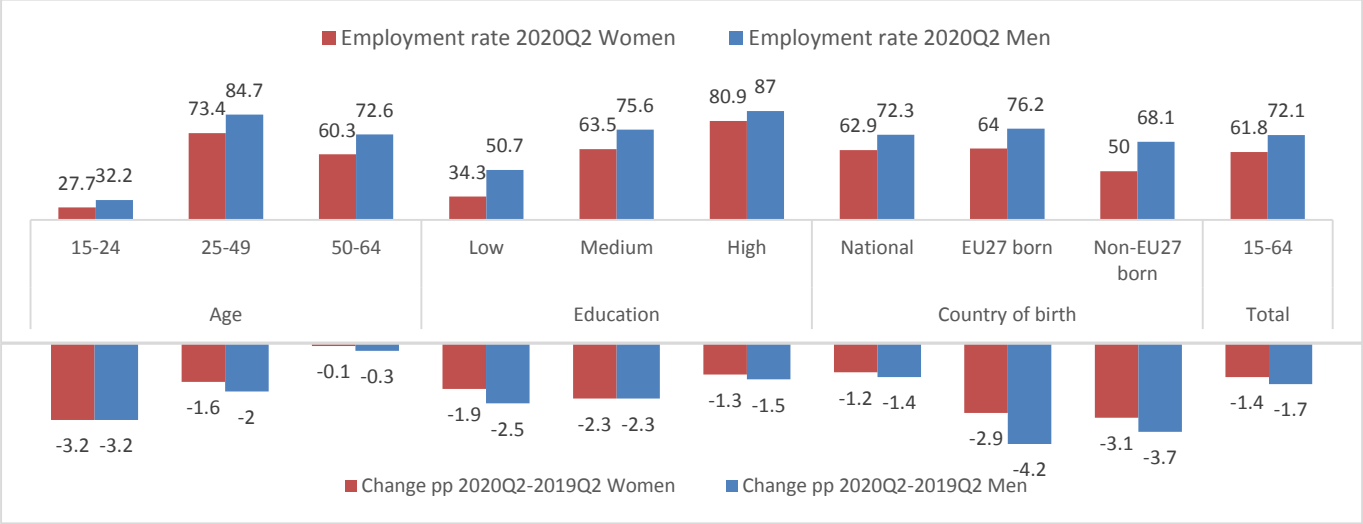
Overall, the employment dynamics throughout 2020 point to a major short-term impact for almost all in spring 2020, with potentially **long-lasting 'scarring' effects, particularly for the careers of women**. Entering the labour market during a recession can negatively affect young people's labour market outcomes for a decade or longer (ILO and ISSA, 2020). This is particularly concerning for the current generation of younger women. Their limited job opportunities at graduation, in addition to likely forthcoming – even if temporary - detachment from the labour market due to disproportionate shouldering of childcare duties (Hershbein, 2012; Choi et al., 2020) implies far longer career breaks and the ensuing earnings 'penalties' in comparison to their male peers.

Young, low–educated and migrant women are left especially far behind in the labour market

Looking at the effects of the first pandemic wave, Figure 1 shows that the decline in employment rates was not only severe for young people, but also for **those with lower educational attainment and those born either in a non-EU country or in another EU Member State.** The decline in employment chances of those closest to the margins of the labour market (primarily young, low-educated and migrant women) are of particular concern, especially given that long-term effects (economic consequences, cultural and gender norms) are still unfolding.

The employment rate of **migrant women** (those born in a non-EU country**)** dropped to 50 %, eradicating decades-long gains. Although foreign-born men also suffered a large drop in employment during the COVID-19 crisis, around 68 % were still in employment in Q2 2020, pointing to a wide gender employment gap among foreign-born workers. Migrant women account for the vast majority of workers in occupations such as health professionals, cleaners and helpers (in activities of households as employers) and personal care workers (Fasani and Mazza, 2020). These workers tend to be low paid, often have additional jobs to increase their working hours and income, and are more likely to be employed in undeclared work, under temporary arrangements and in occupations that cannot be performed from home (Foley and Piper, 2020).

Figure 1 - Employment rates (%) in Q2 2020 and changes (percentage points (p.p.)) between Q2 2019 and Q2 2020, by sex and age, education and country of birth (15-64, EU-27)



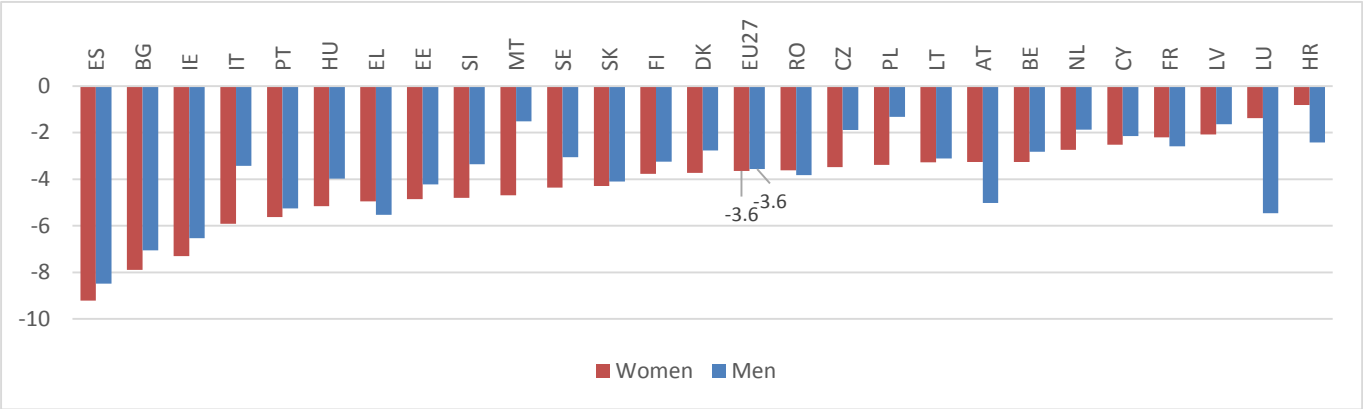
Source: elaboration from Eurostat (lfsq_ergaed; lfsq_ergacob).

Initial employment shock impacts countries differently but women are most affected

In all EU Member States, women and men registered a negative impact of the COVID-19 crisis on employment, although the magnitude of that **impact varied substantially**[2]. Spain, Bulgaria and Ireland show the largest impact on both women's and men's employment, with twice the average reduction observed in the EU (Figure 2). In Malta, Italy and Poland, large employment reductions have widened existing gender gaps. In Bulgaria, the COVID-19 crisis particularly hit young women (aged 20-24), with only 26.4 % in employment in Q2 2020, showing a 6.4 p.p. reduction since Q2 2019. Young Bulgarian men fared comparatively better, with 39.3 % in employment in Q2 2020, with a 6 p.p. reduction compared to Q2 2019. Conversely, the decline in employment was much larger for men than for women in Luxembourg and Austria (Figure 2).

(2) See Table 6, Annex for more country level information on employment rates of women and men (15-24; 15-64) for summer 2020.

Figure 2 - Impact* of COVID-19 on employment, by sex and country (%, EU-27, Q2 2020)



Note: *Impact of COVID-19 on employment in Q2 2020 calculated as the percentage change in the number of employed in Q2 2020 compared to Q2 2019, minus the average annual growth rate of employment registered between Q2 2014 and Q2 2019; Q2 2020 data for DE are not available.

Source: Elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsq_egacob).

During the first pandemic wave, women's total working hours in paid jobs fell more sharply than that of men

Across the EU, the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic was generally accompanied by a wide range of national wage supplementation/replacement schemes, short-time working schemes, and even freezes on job terminations (IT) to reduce the immediate employment impacts[3]. Eurostat data shows that **absences from work more than doubled in Q2 2020** compared to the same period in 2019, for both women and men aged 20-64 (from 9 % to 19 % for women, and from 6 % to 14 % for men), chiefly due to a **substantial increase in temporary lay-offs,** but also for 'other reasons', including **maternity leave and parental leave,** which accounted for 6 % of employed women and 3 % of employed men[4]. Analysing the developments in total hours worked throughout this period thus provides employment complementary measures of fluctuations in labour input as well as labour demand.

Figure 3 shows the change in the index of total actual hours worked[5] in the main job for women and men aged 20-64 between Q2 2019 and Q2 2020. At EU level, **the amount of total actual hours worked dropped sharply for both women and men** during the first wave of the pandemic, with **a stronger decline among women (-16.6 index points) than men (-14.2 index points)**. The overall labour market

[3] For example, according to data published by Eurostat, the total number of corresponding hours not worked, authorised by the scheme or actually used by the local units in April 2020, amounted to 140 million in Belgium, 841 million in France and 305 million in Italy.

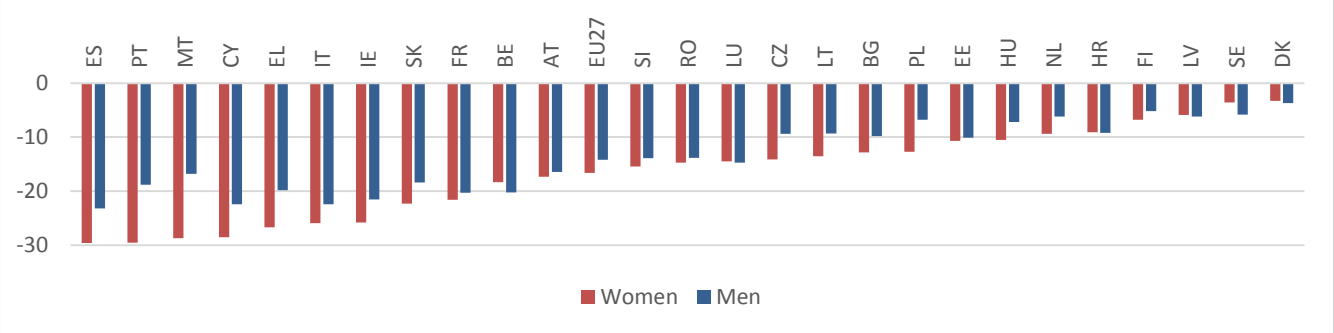
[4] EIGE elaboration from Eurostat (lfsi_abs_q ; lfsq_egacob).

[5] Total actual hours worked in the main job are the total actual hours worked by all employees and self-employed in their main occupation during the quarter. Data are indexed to be equal to 100 in 2006 in order to compare between countries. People temporarily absent from work (still considered employed) influence the value of the index.

effect of the first lockdown period – accounting not only for lost jobs as indicated above, but also for changes in the total number of hours worked within main jobs – was much more negative for women than for men.

The index reduction shows that this is the largest drop registered by women and men in total hours worked at least since 2006 (Figure 14, Annex) and is even larger than that registered after the 2008 crisis (the index dropped by 5.7 index points for women and 9.5 index points for men between Q2 2008 and Q1 2013). In almost all of the EU countries for which data is available, the decrease was more pronounced for women than for men, with the gender gap in the reduction of total hours worked being particularly high in Portugal and Malta, at around 11 index points.

Figure 3 - Change in index of total actual hours worked in the main job, by country and sex (points, 20-64, EU-27, Q2 2019 – Q2 2020)



Note: Index of total actual hours worked in the main job (2006 = 100); seasonally adjusted data; data for DE are not available.

Source: Elaboration from Eurostat (lfsi_ahw_q).

Women remaining in employment had a smaller reduction in weekly working hours than men, reflecting the fact that the crisis amplified workloads in a number of essential jobs. The average EU number of actual weekly hours in the main job ([6]) dropped from 38.5 hours for men in Q2 2019 to 37.2 hours in Q2 2020 (1.3 hours), whereas the decrease for women was smaller - from 32.8 hours in Q2 2019 to 32 hours in Q2 2020 (0.8 hours). The effect of this reduction on income is not only highly sensitive to existing social protection arrangements for women and men (see Section 4.1) but also to the increased workload in a number of essential jobs. At EU level, for example, the average number of actual weekly hours of work declined by only 0.1 hour for women and 0.3 hours for men employed in human health and social work activities. In six Member States (DK, IE, ES, CY, SI, FI), the average number of actual weekly hours in a main job increased for women in Q2 2020 compared to Q2 2019, with a small increase in hours noted for men in only two of those Member States (DK, CY).

([6]) Eurostat (lfsq_ewhan2).

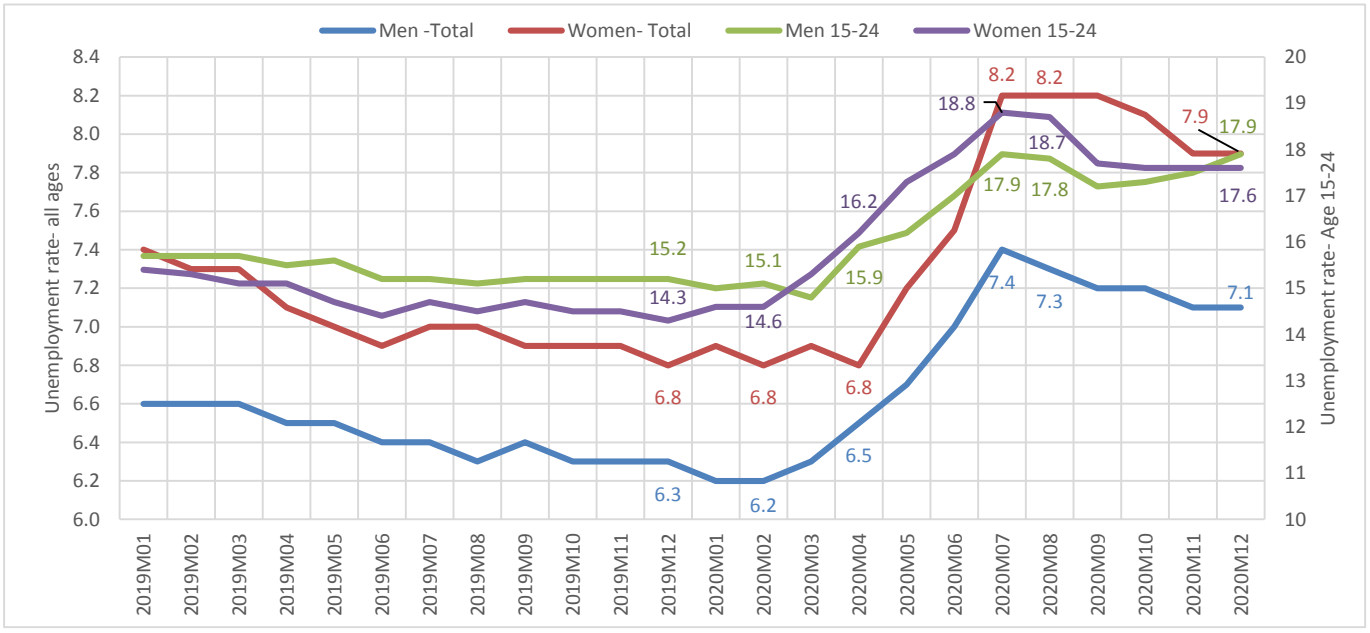
During Q3 2020**,** the number of hours worked rebounded somewhat for employed women and men in the EU, although the level lagged behind that of Q3 2019. At EU level, the average number of weekly hours of work in a main job in Q3 2020 was 39 hours for men, compared to 39.7 one year earlier. For women, the level in Q3 2020 had already nearly rebounded to the level of the previous year (33.6 and 33.9 hours, respectively). This recovery was accompanied by a large increase in the number of job advertisements posted online (almost 8 million), only 2 % below 2019 levels. However, it turned out to be rather short-lived, as the second COVID-19 wave and new lockdown measures sent the labour market into decline again in late 2020 (Cedefop, 2020a).

Women are exposed to longer-lasting unemployment, with an ensuing widening of the gender gap

Although the impacts of the crisis are still unfolding, the latest monthly unemployment data (Figure 4) shows **an increasing gender gap in unemployment rates, to the detriment of women**. While men's unemployment rates peaked in July 2020 and have since registered a steady decline, women's unemployment increased at a faster rate than that of men, from April 2020 until September 2020, declining only slightly towards the end of the year. The gender gap in the unemployment rate thus increased from 0.3 p.p. in April 2020 to 0.8 p.p. in December 2020.

Youth unemployment rates raise particular concerns. Despite the employment recovery in summer 2020, the unemployment rate of young women has reached almost 19 %, while that of young men is close to 18 %. Subsequent improvements seem short-lived, with young men's unemployment rates back to the previously observed summer peak by the end of the year, and improvements in young women's unemployment rates halting as well.

Figure 4 - Harmonised unemployment rates, by sex and age (%, EU-27, monthly data 2019- 2020)



Note: Harmonised unemployment rates, according to ILO definition (seasonally adjusted data, not calendar adjusted); percentage of active population. On the left axis is the scale of total unemployment; on the right axis, the scale of youth unemployment (15-24).

Source: Eurostat data (ei_lmhr_m).

Eurostat quarterly data not only confirms that the increase in unemployment was particularly high for young women (+3.9 p.p. compared to one year ago) and young men (+3 p.p.) during Q3 2020, but also shows other groups with cumulative disadvantages. **Unemployment rates increased significantly for women** aged 15-74 (+3.7 p.p.) and **men** (+3 p.p.) **born in a non-EU country** ([7]), as well as **low educated** (+1.8 p.p. for women and +1.3 p.p. for men) ([8]).

Across the EU countries, the largest annual increase was registered in Lithuania (+3.7 p.p. for women) and Estonia (+4.3 for men). Developments in Spain are also of concern: with an increase of +2.5 p.p., the unemployment rate of women aged 15-64 reached 18.4 % in summer 2020. Unemployment in Greece was quite stable, although women's unemployment was nevertheless at around 20 % ([9]) during this time.

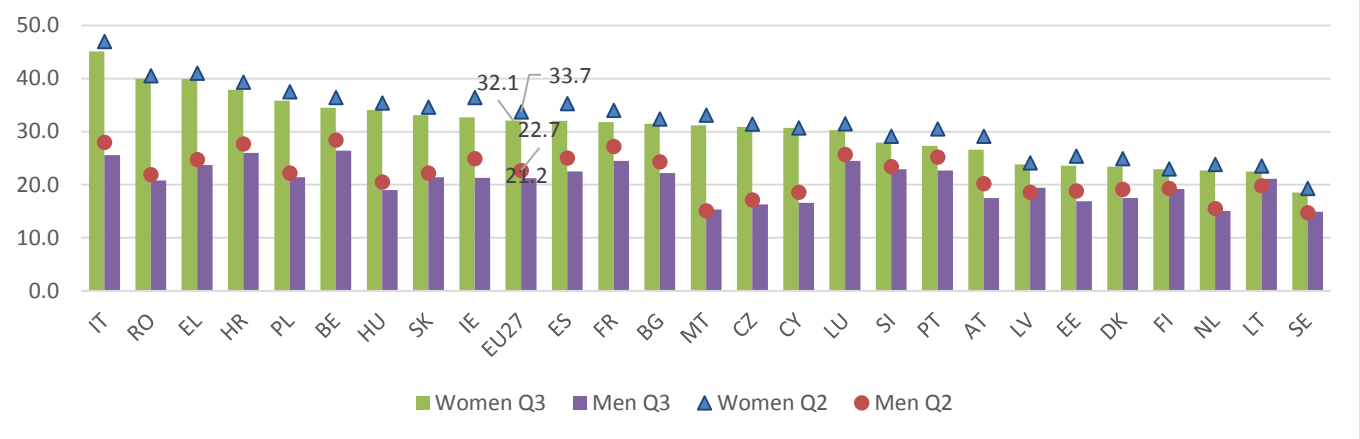
Unemployment rates might have been even higher were it not for government supports to employment and **a substantial move into inactivity**. More than 4.3 million Europeans (2.2 million women and 2.1 million men) moved from unemployment into inactivity ([10]) during the first wave of the pandemic (Q2 2020). This is a much higher share than the previous year ([11]): **36 % of unemployed women and 32 % of unemployed men (Q1 2020) became inactive during the first quarters of 2020,** compared to 25 % of women and 19 % of men in 2019. Across the Member States, **unemployed women tended to move into inactivity more often than men in the majority (17 out of 23) of EU Member States** for which data was available (Figure 15, Annex). Altogether, this led to a major increase in the inactive part of the EU population, predominantly associated with an increase in the number of people willing to work but not seeking employment. In Q2 2020, the number of women aged 15-64 willing to work but not seeking employment reached 9.7 million (+2.8 million compared to a year earlier) compared to 7.1 million men (+2.4 million) ([12]).

([7]) Elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsq_urgacob).
([8]) Elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsq_urgaed).
([9]) Elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsq_urgacob).
([10]) Elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsi_long_q) seasonally adjusted data, data for DE and MT not available and not included.
([11]) Data does not include DE, MT, as data is not available or is unreliable.
([12]) EIGE elaboration from Eurostat (lfsq_igaww).

The partial recovery of the EU labour market in Q3 2020 showed some reverse flows, from inactivity back to unemployment, particularly among women. A record high of 2.7 million women and 2.4 million men moved into unemployment from inactivity during summer 2020 ([13]) (Eurostat, 2020a). Aside from signalling women's will to stay active in the labour market, this may nevertheless point to **bigger barriers for women in finding gainful employment**[14].

As a result of the increased flows out of the labour market, inactivity rates in a number of countries became much larger, especially for women. In Italy, the rate of inactivity for women aged 15-64 reached 47 % (compared to 28 % of men), while in Greece and Romania it exceeded 40 % at the start of the COVID-19 crisis and did not improve much during the summer employment recovery (Figure 5). In a number of countries, such as Italy, Romania, Greece, Hungary and Malta, the gender gap in inactivity rates between women and men was higher than 15 p.p. during the summer of 2020.

Figure 5 - Inactive population as a percentage of the total population of the same age, by sex and country (%, 15-64, Q2 2020 and Q3 2020)



Note: Data for DE not available.

Source: Elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsq_ipga).

Fewer job opportunities, especially for women with care responsibilities

Although in recent years women's labour market participation was steadily increasing (EIGE, 2020a), in 2019 the gender gap in activity rates remained high (11 p.p. for the 15-64 age group) and the COVID-19

([13]) EIGE elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsi_long_q); seasonally adjusted data; data for DE and MT not available and not included.

([14]) See Table 7, Annex for more country level information on changes in unemployment rates between Q2 and Q2, 2020.

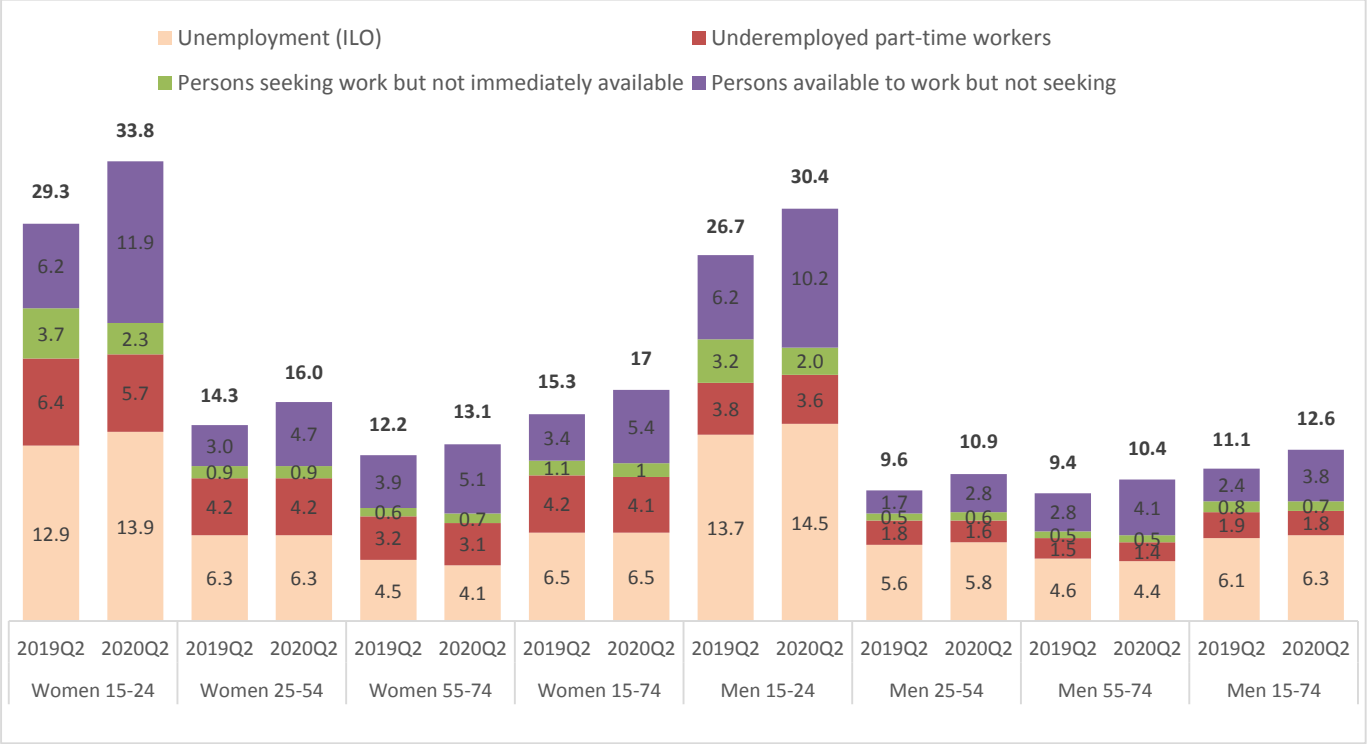
crisis is likely to widen it still further [15]. Even pre-pandemic, childcare and family responsibilities were among the main reasons for women's inactivity. In the EU-27 in 2019, **more than half (53 %) [16] of women** aged 25-49 outside the labour force **indicated *looking after children or incapacitated adults or other personal or family responsibilities* as the main reason for not seeking employment**, while only 8 % of inactive men noted this response as their main reason for not looking for a job (Eurostat) [17].

One of the main features of the COVID-19 crisis is increased burdens of care responsibilities in private households, as well as partial government support to accommodate the need to stay at home. Indicators such as labour market slack [18] are therefore useful in highlighting work-life balance tensions. In 2019, across EU-27, the labour market slack indicator was higher for women than for men, irrespective of age. More specifically, **more women than men were underemployed part-time workers** (i.e. part-time workers who wish to work more) and those **available to work but not currently seeking work** (e.g. due to care constraints) (Figure 6).

According to Eurostat data, at EU-27 level, between Q2 2019 and Q2 2020, the ***unmet demand for employment*** increased by 1.7 p.p. for women and by 1.5 p.p. for men aged 15-74, **reaching 17 % for women and 12.6 % for men** (Figure 16, Annex)**.** There are significant differences between EU countries, however. In Spain, for example, about 30.8 % of women (compared to 21.3 % of men) indicated unmet demand for employment in Q2 2020. Overall, for both women and men, most of the increase during the COVID-19 crisis is due to 'persons available to work but not seeking it'. The increase in the unmet demand for employment was particularly large among young women (+ 4.5 p.p.) and men (+3.7 p.p.) aged 15-24, when comparing Q2 2020 and Q2 2019.

[15] EIGE elaboration from Eurostat (lfsa_argacob).
[16] There is wide variation across EU-27 countries: e.g. from 11 % in Denmark to 77-78 % in Czechia and Poland.
[17] Eurostat (lfsa_igar).
[18] Labour market slack measures the unmet demand for employment in an extended labour force. In addition to the employed and the unemployed (ILO definitions), the extended labour force includes people conventionally considered outside the labour force - people available to work but not searching for it and people searching for work but not available for it.

Figure 6 - Labour market slack as a percentage of extended labour force, by sex and age (%, EU-27, Q2 2019 and Q2 2020)



Note: Labour market slack refers to the total sum of all unmet demands for employment, with each component expressed as a percentage of the extended labour force; seasonally adjusted data.

Source: Elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsi_sla_q).

The recovery in Q3 2020 affected the share of women and men aged 15-74 facing a potential need for employment, which slightly declined compared to Q2 (-0.2 p.p. for both sexes) but remained higher than pre-COVID ([19]). In some EU countries, the unmet demand for employment continued to grow in Q3: for instance, in Luxemburg and Lithuania for women (+2 and +1.7 p.p.), and in Estonia and Cyprus for men (+2.5 and +1.2 p.p.), although the gender gap in the unmet demand for employment remains equal or lower than that registered in Q2 in all EU countries.

1.2 MOST AFFECTED SECTORS AND FORMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Higher employment losses in non-essential sectors with no possibility of teleworking, and ensuing effects on women

In the EU-27 in Q2 2020, the **most negatively affected sector was accommodation and food service.** It is characterised by a large share of temporary (22 %) and part-time workers (30 %) and a higher than average share of young (15-24) (18 %) and foreign-born workers (12 %) (Table 9, Annex). **The drop in employment**

([19]) EIGE elaboration from Eurostat (lfsi_sla_q) seasonally adjusted data; also see Figure 16, Annex.

was larger for women (-21 %) **than for men** (-18 %), while the reduction in hours worked in main job was larger for men (-12 %) than for women (-10 %) (Table 2). Bulgaria registered the largest employment contraction in the accommodation and food service sector (-36 % for women and -33 % for men) ([20]). In some countries, this sector is also characterised by a high rate of undeclared work, especially among women. For instance, in Malta, seasonal or part-time employment attracts a significant number of students in undeclared work, while a proportion of formally inactive women also work in this sector (European Commission, 2017).

Domestic and care services in households were also severely impacted by COVID-19 (activities of households as employers) and registered an 18 % decline in the number of employed between Q2 2020 and Q2 2019 for both women and men. Although this sector represents only 1 % of total employment in the EU-27, it is **strongly women-dominated** (women represent 89 % of total employed), with a higher than average share of non-standard work (60 % of the employed work part-time and 18 % on temporary contracts) and foreign-born workers (28 %).

Table 2 – Employment in Q2 2019 and percentage change in employment and in average actual weekly hours of work in main job between Q2 2019 and Q2 2020, by economic sector (15+, EU-27)

Economic sector	Employment and share of women in Q2 2019			Percentage change between Q2 2019 and Q2 2020					
				Employment			Average number of actual weekly hours of work in main job		
	Employed (000)	%	Share of women	Total	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men
I - Accommodation and food service activities	9,610	5%	54%	-19%	-21%	-18%	-11%	-10%	-12%
T - Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods - and services - producing activities of households for own use	2,249	1.1%	89%	-18%	-18%	-19%	3%	4%	-4%
R - Arts, entertainment and recreation	3,302	2%	48%	-6%	-5%	-8%	-8%	-7%	-9%
N - Administrative and support service activities	8,348	4%	49%	-10%	-10%	-10%	-3%	-5%	-3%
H - Transportation and storage	10,599	5%	22%	-6%	-3%	-7%	-4%	-3%	-4%
G - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	27,556	14%	49%	-5%	-3%	-6%	-4%	-3%	-5%
F - Construction	13,424	7%	10%	-6%	-6%	-6%	-3%	-3%	-3%
C - Manufacturing	32,536	16%	30%	-1%	-2%	0%	-3%	-3%	-3%

([20]) EIGE elaboration from Eurostat (lfsq_egan2).

M - Professional, scientific and technical activities	10,934	5%	49%	1%	1%	1%	-5%	-5%	-6%
A - Agriculture, forestry and fishing	8,752	4%	34%	-2%	-3%	-1%	-1%	-2%	-1%
P - Education	14,594	7%	72%	-1%	-1%	1%	-2%	-2%	-1%
L - Real estate activities	1,587	1%	52%	6%	4%	9%	-7%	-7%	-8%
(D-E) Utilities**	3,053	2%	23%	0%	-2%	0%	0%	0%	-1%
Q - Human health and social work activities	21,317	11%	78%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	-1%
S - Other service activities	4,873	2%	66%	6%	-1%	18%	-4%	-6%	-4%
K - Financial and insurance activities	5,301	3%	53%	3%	3%	4%	-1%	-1%	-2%
O - Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	13,636	7%	48%	4%	7%	2%	0%	-1%	1%
J - Information and communication	6,237	3%	30%	8%	8%	8%	-2%	-2%	-2%

Note: Economic sectors are ranked according to the labour change for women and men (i.e. 0.5*employment change+ 0.5*hours change). Economic sectors that represent less than 1 % of total EU-27 employment are not reported (i.e. B - Mining and quarrying; U - Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies); Utilities includes divisions D - Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply and E - Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities; Average number of actual weekly hours of work in main job for the sector 'Utilities' has been calculated as the unweighted average of a number of actual weekly hours registered in economic divisions D and E, then the percentage change has been calculated.

lfsq_egan2; lfsq_ewhan).

When further disaggregated by sector (Table 3), the largest employment loss in absolute numbers is registered in the food service activities, retail trade, and accommodation[21]. In **food service activities,** the decline in employment amounted to 1.3 million in the EU-27, of whom more than 700 000 were women. Women's relative weight in the sector's employment loss (56 %) was higher than the share of women in the sector's workforce (52 %). Significant job losses were also observed in the **retail trade** in Q2 2020 (-661 000), with women accounting for 57 % of the total employment losses. This was a particularly strong hit to jobs typically available to women, given their declining employment in this sector in recent years. In the **accommodation sector,** the employment decline was -556 000, of whom 62 % were women.

Strong gender segregation in the labour market explains quite different employment losses of women and men. During the first lockdown period, **job losses were highly concentrated in highly feminised sectors** such as retail trade, accommodation, residential care activities, activities of households as employers as domestic personnel, or manufacture of apparel. **In these sectors** (NACE 2 digit), **women's employment reduced by 1.5 million across the EU (close to 40 % of the entire 3.8 million job loses among women).**

(21) See Table 11, Annex for more information.

By contrast, men experienced the largest employment losses in male-dominated sectors more severely affected by the COVID-19 crisis, such as construction and wholesale trade.

In Q3 2020, many sectors experienced an increase in employment compared to the previous quarter, though employment recovery was modest and uneven. Most sectors hardest hit in Q2 also did not fully recover in Q3, especially if compared to a year ago. For example, employment was still much lower, especially for women, in such sectors as **accommodation and food services** (-16%)**, domestic work** (-13 %), **administrative and support service** (-12 %) or **arts, entertainment and recreation** (-5 %) (Table 10, Annex). Among the top 10 sectors that experienced the largest employment gains in Q2 2020, summer did not bring on additional gains, with few exceptions being public administration and defence or computer programming) (Table 12, Annex). Across the latter two fields, employment increases in summer 2020 mainly benefited men.

Table 3 - The 10 economic sectors with the largest employment losses between 2020Q2 and 2019Q2 (NACE 2 digit level) (thousand, EU-27)

	Employment change (thousand) 2020Q2/2019Q2			Job loss 2020Q2: share of women	Share of women 2019	Employment change (thousand) 2019Q2/2018Q2		
Economic activity	Total	Men	Women			Total	Men	Women
I56-Food and beverage service activities	-1301	-573	-729	56%	52%	50	-19	68
G47-Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	-661	-284	-376	57%	62%	-120	40	-160
I55-Accommodation	-556	-212	-344	62%	61%	-58	-14	-44
F41-Construction of buildings	-430	-375	-55	13%	9%	78	61	17
N81-Services to buildings and landscape activities	-416	-167	-249	60%	55%	71	35	36
T97-Activities of households as employers of domestic personnel	-413	-49	-364	88%	89%	-32	8	-40
Q87-Residential care activities	-405	-109	-296	73%	81%	119	16	103
G46-Wholesale trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	-362	-294	-68	19%	34%	51	-13	64
H52-Warehousing and support activities for transportation	-359	-300	-59	16%	25%	22	-8	30
F43-Specialised construction activities	-318	-331	13	-4%	9%	109	106	3
Employment loss in first 10 divisions with largest employment loss (A)	-5,220	-2,693	-2,527	48%	46.7%	288	213	75
Total employment loss in divisions with employment reductions (B)	-8,492	-4,875	-3,614	43%		-1,051	-508	-532
Share employment losses in first 10 divisions: (A)/(B)	61%	55%	70%			-	-	-

Note: Employment loss refers to the observed reduction in employment in the respective economic activity (i.e. employment change between 2019Q2 and 2020Q2); for comparison of trends employment changes between 2018Q2 and 2019Q2 are also reported in the last three columns of the table. Column 4 of data reports the share of women in the total employment loss registered in the economic activity (e.g. in I56-Food and beverage service activities, among the 1,285 thousand registered employment reductions, 726 thousand are women: i.e. 57%). While column 5 reports the share of women registered in the economic activity in year 2019. The ranking do not include: for men: T98- Undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of private households for own use; for women: A03 - Fishing and aquaculture; B06 - Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas; B07 - Mining of metal ores; B09 - Mining support service activities; C12 - Manufacture of tobacco products; E39 - Remediation activities and other waste management.

Source: elaboration on Eurostat data (lfsq_egan2; lfsq_egan22d).

Fragile signs of more women choosing men dominated jobs, such as in ICT

During the first wave of the pandemic employment increased in some sectors compared to Q2 2019 (**Error! Reference source not found.**). These are principally ICT-related activities, public administration, and social work activities without accommodation. In most of these sectors, employment had grown in the previous year (Q2 2018-Q2 2019) but at a lower rate. The significant employment growth in ICT-related activities was due to the increased use of telework, e-commerce, online schooling and other public e-services during the pandemic.

The employment growth in ICT-related activities in Q2 2020 shows that the share of women is increasing. For instance, in computer programming, consultancy and related activities, the share of women in 2019 was only 23 %, compared to 28 % in Q2 2020. Similarly, the employment growth in the women-dominated sector of social work activities without accommodation, shows an increase in men's employment almost as large as the increase in women's employment. An employment increase (mainly for men) is also registered in other personal service activities ([22]). As most of the activities included in this economic division were closed during Q2 2020 (e.g. hairdressing and beauty treatment, physical well-being activities), this observed increase in employment may be related to growth of jobs in the funeral services and related activities.

At EU level in Q3 2020, employment in the public administration, utilities sector and ICT increased, reflecting the growing demand for digital services. However, more men than women were employed in public administration and in other personal service activities (**Error! Reference source not found.**, Annex).

([22]) Other personal activities include, for example, washing and (dry-)cleaning of textile and fur products, hairdressing and other beauty treatment, funeral and related activities, physical well-being activities and a range of other personal service activities.

Table 4 - 10 economic sectors with the largest employment increases between Q2 2020 and Q2 2019 (NACE 2 digit level), (thousand, EU-27)

	2020Q2/2019Q2				2019	2019Q2/2018Q2		
	Employment change (thousand)			Job growth: share of women	Share of women	Employment change (thousand)		
Economic activity (NACE rev.2 2 digit)	Total	Men	Women			Total	Men	Women
O84-Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	587	145	441	75%	48%	21	-25	47
J62-Computer programming, consultancy and related activities	573	412	161	28%	23%	262	193	69
Q88-Social work activities without accommodation	348	134	214	62%	83%	20	-37	58
S96-Other personal service activities	200	185	14	7%	77%	66	11	55
K65-Insurance, reinsurance and pension funding, except compulsory social security	175	88	87	50%	57%	-49	-17	-31
J61-Telecommunications	174	148	26	15%	32%	10	8	2
C27-Manufacture of electrical equipment	158	132	26	16%	33%	-13	-32	20
C32-Other manufacturing	109	87	22	21%	43%	24	3	21
C21-Manufacture of basic pharmaceutical products and pharmaceutical preparations	107	63	43	41%	48%	33	10	23
L68-Real estate activities	101	72	29	29%	51%	11	-32	43
Employment growth in first 10 division with largest employment increase (A)	2,532	1,467	1,065	42%	52.5%	386	80	306
Total employment growth in divisions with employment increases (B)	3,599	2,287	1,312	36%		2,916	1,402	1,508
Share employment growth in first 10 divisions: (A)/(B)	70%	64%	81%			13%	6%	20%

Source: elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsq_egan22d).

Part-time jobs losses were particularly high among women

In the first COVID-19 wave, **the pandemic and containment measures had the greatest impact on temporary, self-employed and part-time workers, largely women** (Table 8, Annex) (EIGE, 2020a). In 2019, in the EU women (15-64) were slightly more likely than men to be employed on a temporary contract (15.5 % and 14.5 %, respectively) [23] and considerably more likely to be employed part-time (29.9 % versus 8.4 %) [24]. Between Q2 2019 and Q2 2020 in the EU-27, more than 4.2 million temporary workers aged 15-64 lost their jobs, along with almost 1.6 million part-time workers.

Women bore significant job losses: temporary workers declined by more than two million and part-time workers by 1.1 million, with **women accounting for 69.5 % of the job losses registered among part-time workers** (15-64) (their share in Q2 2019 was 75.2 %) and 48.4 % of the losses in temporary work (their share in Q2 2019 was 50 %) (Table 5). Many other precarious jobs have been affected. For example, in June 2020 in

[23] Eurostat (lfsa_etpgacob).

[24] Eurostat (lfsa_eppga). Part-time work is particularly widespread among women aged 15-64 in the Netherlands (75.2%), and ranges between 40-50 % in Belgium, Germany and Austria.

Germany, mini-jobs([25]) declined by 850 000 compared to a year earlier, with a slightly higher decline for women than for men (Grabka et al., 2020).

Table 5- Employed, by form of employment and sex (thousand, 15-64, EU-27, Q2 2019, Q2 2020)

	Employment change (thousand) 2020Q2/2019Q2			Employment change (%) 2020Q2/2019Q2			Job loss 2020Q2: share of women
Type of work	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	
Part-time	-1,583	-483	-1,100	-4.4%	-5.4%	-4.1%	69.5%
Temporary	-4,231	-2,181	-2,050	-16.7%	-17.3%	-16.2%	48.4%
Self-employed	-541	-356	-185	-2.1%	-2.0%	-2.1%	34.2%

Source: Elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsq_epgaed; lfsq_etgaed; lfsq_esgaed).

The gender gap in part-time work is particularly high for parents, with women citing caring for children or other family members as the main reason for working part-time. In the EU-27 in 2019, one-in-three (33.1 %) women (25-49) with children worked part-time, compared to only 5 % of men of the same age with children ([26]). **Among lone parents with children under 12** (85 % of whom were women in 2019) ([27]), **women are at a higher risk of losing jobs and income due to temporary work.** Of all lone parents in the EU (15-64) in 2019, 13.6 % of women and 7.4 % of men worked with temporary contracts [28].

Gender divide in self-employment underlies women's job losses in the most affected sectors and results in higher risk of contracting virus

The economic sectors most affected by forced closures and social distancing (e.g. tourism and accommodation, culture, retail trade) are characterised by a high share of self-employed workers. In 2019, more than one-third of the self-employed in the EU-27 worked in **accommodation and food service activities, arts and entertainment, construction, wholesale and retail trade** (27 % for women and 40 % for men). Self-employed workers are at risk of being disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, as they are less likely to have lower access to social protection systems (e.g. sickness benefit, unemployment benefit, paid or sick leave, maternity or parental leave) (Eurofound, 2020a; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2020a).

([25]) Mini-jobs is part-time employment form in Germany. This sceheme is coordinated by the Minijob-Zentrale and is primarily targeted at employment of domestic household workers, such as cleaners or gardeners.

[26] Growing to 36.5 % for women with one or more children, the youngest of whom is <5 years old, Eurostat (lfst_hhptechi).

([27]) EIGE elaboration from Eurostat (lfst_hhaceday); calculated on single adults aged 15+ with dependent children (0-11 years of age).

[28] Eurostat (lfst_hhtemty).

Although self-employment is less common among women than among men (9.5 % and 16.7 %, respectively) and women represent only one-third (32.6 %) of all entrepreneurs in the EU-27 [29], **self-employed women tend to operate in less profitable sectors than men, such as health and social services, and personal and domestic services (**European Commission and OECD, 2016)**, putting them at higher risk of contracting the virus**. In the EU-27 in Q2 2020, the number of self-employed declined by more than half a million compared to the same period in 2019 (-356 000 men and -185 000 women) (Table 5).

Growing gender equality concerns within the cultural and creative sectors (CCS), particularly hit by the COVID-19 crisis

Since the start of the COVID-19 crisis, artistic and cultural events have been postponed or cancelled throughout Europe. Along with the tourism industry, the OECD has identified arts, entertainment and recreation among the sectors most impacted by containment measures (OECD, 2020b) and with the most likely long-term negative impacts (ECF, 2020). At the same time, these sectors have played a major positive role amid the crisis – offering works free online, mitigating feelings of isolation, and contributing to people's mental and emotional well-being (ECF, 2020).

Box 2.1 - Cultural and Creative Sectors Workforce

7.4 million people across the EU-27 carry out a cultural activity or have a cultural occupation – this corresponds to **3.7 % of people employed** within the whole EU-27 economy. Women constitute 47.7 % of cultural employment, compared with 45.9 % in the total economy. The Baltic Member States recorded the highest female shares of cultural employment, with a peak of 65 % in Latvia, 61 % in Lithuania and 59 % in Estonia. By contrast, the lowest shares of women were recorded in three southern countries – Italy and Spain (each at 43 %) and Malta (42 %) (Eurostat, 2020b).

The cultural sector is characterised by a fragmented and precarious workforce, with high prevalence of part-time contracts, on-demand and project-based agreements, small and micro-enterprises, freelancers and independent contractors (ILO, 2020b). While these work arrangements offer independence and flexibility, they also create challenges in access to healthcare or social security, such as paid sick leave, maternity and parental leave. This problem was exacerbated by COVID-19, as the **employment and income support measures were not accessible to non-standard forms of work** (OECD, 2020b). People employed in CCS are also often not captured by official statistics, which leads to underestimating the impact of the pandemic and the importance of the sector itself.

Men in CCS tend to be in charge of more commercially prominent cultural institutions, even in sectors where they are outnumbered by women, replicating patterns of **vertical segregation** and **'glass escalators'**[30]. This leaves **women working in CCS more vulnerable to shocks like the COVID-19 crisis,** as well as posing an even greater threat to inclusion and workforce diversity within these sectors (Eikhof, 2020).

[29] EIGE calculation from Eurostat (lfsa_esgacob; lfsa_egaed; lfsa_egan).

([30]) Based on Williams (1992), the 'glass escalator' refers to the way men are put on a fast track to advanced positions when entering women dominated occupations. .

Workers in the informal economy are likely to suffer disproportionately from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 crisis

The sectors most impacted by the COVID-19 crisis are also those with a high incidence of undeclared jobs[31]. **Workers in informal employment often lack employment and social protection, have poor access to healthcare services or income support** in case of sickness or lockdown, and many **cannot work remotely** (ILO, 2020c). According to a recent special Eurobarometer, **the personal service sector** (including childcare, care for the elderly, and cleaning services) **was the most commonly identified sector for undeclared work** in the EU-27 in 2019 (27 % of those who were in undeclared work mentioned this sector), followed by construction (19 %), and hospitality (16 %) (European Commission, 2019a).

Sectoral gender segregation meant that men were much more likely than women to be in undeclared work in the construction sector (30 % and 3 %, respectively), while **women were more likely to be in personal services** (47 % and 13 %, respectively) and **in the hospitality sector** (22 % compared to 13 % of men). Women were more likely than men to have worked undeclared as babysitters (28 % versus 4 % of men), and waitresses (21 % of women, 10 % of men), while men were more like to have done so in repairs or renovation work (32 % versus 5 %). Compared to the 2013 Eurobarometer, the proportion of respondents in undeclared work who mentioned providing assistance for a dependent or elderly person increased by 7 p.p. (from 3 % to 10 %).

1.3 Working in Essential occupations during the COVID-19 crisis

Most EU countries imposed lockdown measures to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, which included movement and travel restrictions and temporarily suspended economic activities, with the exception of jobs deemed 'critical', 'essential', or 'key' by national governments. These jobs were present in the health and care sector, victim support services, education, the agro-industrial sector, supermarkets, pharmacies, and banks. Most workers in these sectors (including the self-employed) continued to attend work physically during periods of lockdown.

Risk of COVID-19 infection for essential workers, especially in care sectors

Workers in essential occupations, especially those that require physical contact and close social interaction, are at the greatest risk of contracting COVID-19. Estimates for Italy (INPS, 2020), for example, show that keeping essential sectors open contributed to about one-third of COVID-19 cases

(31) See, for example, All aboard: Hauling undeclared workers onto the pandemic rescue boats | Eurofound (europa.eu).

recorded between 22 March and 4 May in 2020 ([32]). Poulkias and Branca (2020) analysed the risk of infection for essential workers and deemed it very high or high for health professionals, personal care workers, personal service workers (including travel attendants and transport conductors), food preparation workers, drivers, cleaners and helpers, agricultural workers or security workers (i.e. police officers, prison guards, etc.).

A heavy toll on healthcare and domestic workers increases further

During the pandemic, the **working conditions for healthcare workers worsened considerably, with longer working hours and additional difficulties in reconciling work and family life** (Harvard Health Publishing, 2020). National labour authorities in Portugal report healthcare workers being denied their parental rights in the workplace (ILO, 2020d). In Italy, women healthcare workers in high-risks units were more likely than their male colleagues to report increased working hours and the need for psychological support (Felice et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 crisis has **negatively affected the psychological wellbeing of healthcare workers, especially women**. Stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms are among the effects observed among health professionals, with women showing more negative psychological health outcomes than men (Shreffler et al., 2020; Crimia and Carlucci, 2020, Coto et al., 2020). Evidence also shows that the pandemic has exacerbated violence, harassment, and stigmatisation of health workers (Devi, 2020).

Domestic workers are not only at increased risk of contracting the virus (they often work with children and the elderly, and not always with adequate personal protective equipment (PPE)), **many were dismissed during the lockdown** in the first COVID-19 wave (Table 2), often losing their accommodation (if live-in domestic workers) and work permits as a result. In this context, migrant women have faced additional vulnerabilities, such as increased workloads without extra pay or compensated hours and pressure to stay overnight in their workplaces to lower the risk of exposure during commuting (Foley and Piper, 2020).

([32]) Deaths of essential workers are estimated to account for 13 % of the deaths recorded in the period.

2 WORKING ARRANGEMENTS (WITH A FOCUS ON TELEWORKING) AND INCOMES

2.1 TELEWORK AND TELEWORKABILITY IN THE EU BEFORE AND AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of workers in the EU have begun to work from home. **Telework is not a new working arrangement, but it creates new challenges and opportunities for gender equality**. Workers who could telework during the COVID-19 crisis were more likely to remain in employment, to work the same or similar working hours as before the crisis, and less likely to suffer a decline in income.

Although telework can offer workers unprecedented temporal (time) and spatial (location) flexibility, greater autonomy, improved work-life balance, and reduced commuting time, it can also lead to longer working hours, increased intensity of work, higher stress levels, blurred boundaries between work and private life, and greater sense of isolation and loneliness which, in turn, may adversely affect the worker's mental health and wellbeing (Holdsworth and Mann, 2003). Women with care responsibilities may be particularly affected by both the positive and negative effects of telework. For example, teleworking might support work-life balance, but can also reduce the professional visibility of women teleworking from home and their career prospects.

Gender differences in the use of telework before the COVID-19 pandemic related to gender roles and work-life balance needs

Before the pandemic, men represented a greater share of workers with T/ICTM [33] arrangements (54 % compared to 46 % for women). The **share of women was higher in home-based telework** (57 %), however, suggesting that gender roles and work-life balance needs play a role in shaping gender differences in types and frequency of telework. For example, **working from home was higher in households with children, especially among lone parents.** In the EU-27 in 2019, the share of people working from home was 14.3 % for women and 14.4 % for men. This share was higher in households with children (15.7 % for women; 15.9 % for men), reaching 17.3 % for lone women and 25.3 % for lone men with children [34]. The share of women and men working from home increased strongly with number of children (reaching 21.4 % for women and 19.1 % for men with three children or more). Having children under 12 years of age increased the share of women and men working from home by around 2-2.5 p.p. [35].

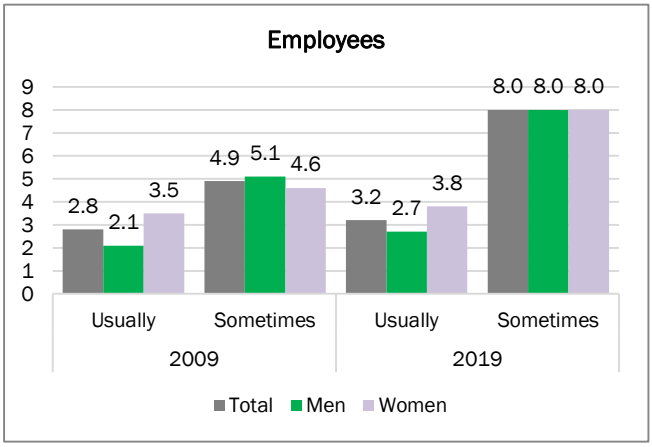
In 2019, around 11 % of employees worked from home at least some of the time. However, only 3.2 % of them worked from home regularly, a share that had remained quite stable since 2009 and was slightly higher for women than for men. Working from home was more widespread among self-employed workers than employees, especially among self-employed women who routinely used teleworking (Figure 7).

([33]) T/ICTM includes workers who (1) work with ICT 'all of the time' or 'almost all of the time'; and (2) work at one or more locations other than the employer's premises 'at least several times a month'. A distinction is made between workers who work mainly from home (regular home-based teleworkers) and mobile workers (Eurofound, 2017).

([34]) Eurostat, (lfst_hhwahty).

([35]) Eurostat, (lfst_hhwahchi).

Figure 7 - Shares of employees and self-employed working from home as a percentage of total employment, by sex (%, 20-64, EU-27, 2009, 2019)



Note: the percentages refer to the share of people that 'usually work from home' and those who 'sometimes work at home'.

Source: Eurostat, EU-LFS (lfsa_ehomp).

A higher share of women in teleworkable occupations

The **degree of job teleworkability** is a proxy for the probability of teleworking. Estimates of the shares of workers employed in sectors and occupations where physical presence is not essential vary from 20 % to 37 % (Boeri et al., 2020; Sostero et al., 2020). Teleworkability is higher in ICT and knowledge-intensive sectors, and for high-skilled workers generally. Telework is more widespread in countries where knowledge and ICT-intensive service sectors account for a larger share of total employment (e.g. NL, FI, SE)([36]). While women's employment in the ICT sector remains relatively low (**Error! Reference source not found.**), a **much higher share of women than men are estimated to be in teleworkable occupations (45 % compared to 30 %)** (Sostero et al., 2020). The gender difference in teleworkability relates in part to patterns of vertical and horizontal segregation, with men overrepresented in sectors with limited

([36]) Eurostat (isoc_iw_hem).

teleworkability potential (e.g. agriculture, mining, manufacturing and construction), and women overrepresented in occupations with a lower share of physical handling tasks (e.g. office-based, secretarial or administrative occupations).

Pandemic teleworking may have helped women to keep jobs

A higher degree of teleworkability does not necessarily translate into the actual adoption of telework or home-based work. While most estimates of the share of EU workers in teleworkable occupations were around 20-40 % in the pre-pandemic period (depending on the study), in 2018, only 15 % were effectively teleworking at least once a week ([37]). The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing confinement measures accelerated the adoption of teleworking modalities (ILO, 2020e), although significant differences remained across industries and occupations, as well as across EU countries.

According to the Eurofound e-survey Living, working and COVID-19, conducted during the first lockdown period in April-May 2020, 38.6 % of women and 34.9 % of men in the EU-27 started to work from home ([38]). The increase was particularly high among young women aged 18-34 (49 %) and among men of the same age (38 %). Even after the lockdown period, work from home remained high in the EU. The second wave of the Eurofound e-survey was conducted **in June/July 2020** and found that **over 50 % of women and 46 % of men were still working from home at least some of the time.**

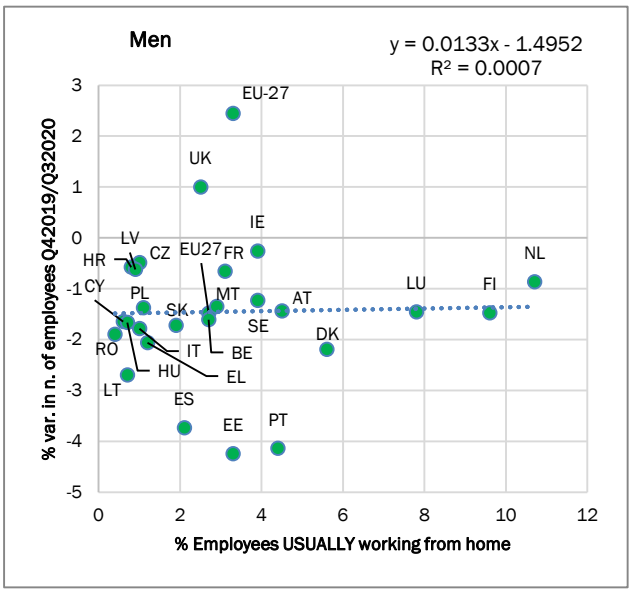
The use of teleworking varies considerably between Member States, which, in part, explains the different effects of the COVID-19 crisis on women and men. According to Fana et al. (2020), in Italy, Spain, Greece and to some extent Poland, the significantly higher prevalence of women in the forcefully closed sectors is not compensated by higher presence in the essential and teleworkable sectors, suggesting a significant gender imbalance in the impact of the COVID-19 crisis. Conversely, in Germany and France, women are significantly more prevalent in the essential and teleworkable sectors.

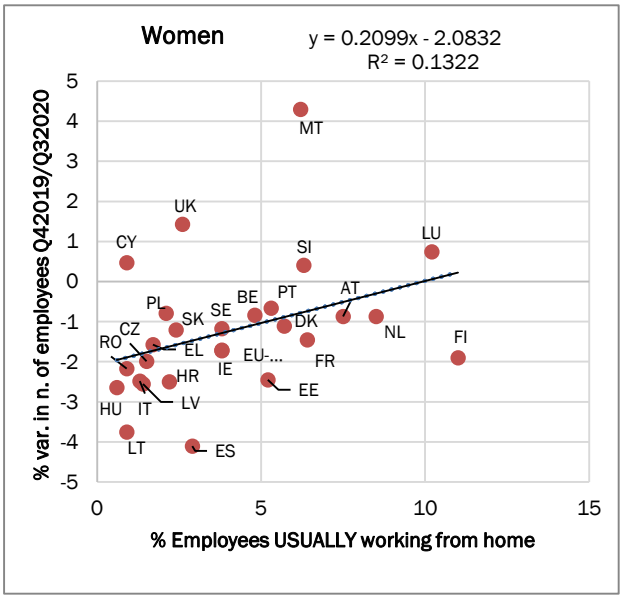
Figure 8 illustrates the cross-country correlations observed between the pre-pandemic use of teleworking and employment changes between Q4 2019 and Q3 2020 for employees in the Member States. It shows a weak positive correlation for women employees and none for men, probably due to a greater diffusion of teleworkable occupations among women. This suggests that **in countries where the share of women employees usually working from home before the pandemic was higher, there was a correspondingly lower decline in women's employment** between Q4 2019 and Q3 2020. For men, this relationship was absent.

([37]) Eurostat (isoc_iw_hem).

([38]) The two waves are not fully comparable. The survey for the first wave does not provide data on people working from home (as in the second wave) but only on those who started working from home as result of the pandemic and on the frequencies of working from home before the pandemic. By contrast, the second wave has data on people working from home but not on the share of people working from home as a result of the pandemic.

Figure 8 - Cross-country correlation between percentage variation in number of employees (Q4 2019 – Q3 2020) and the percentage of employees usually working from home, by sex (EU-27, 2019)





Source: Eurostat (lfsa_ehomp) and (lfsq_eegais).

2.2 TELEWORK AND THE GENDER DIGITAL DIVIDE

The increased use of telework during the pandemic has shown companies the **potential of a digital workforce**, with increased exposure to digital technologies prompting companies to revise their traditional work organisation, production, and delivery methods (Cedefop, 2020b).

It is anticipated, however, that this trend **may create a new divide between those who can telework and those who cannot** (Joint Research Centre (JRC), 2020). As shown in Milasi et al. (2020) and underlined by the European Commission (2020a), the benefits of telework **may not be available to the unskilled or**

untrained (OECD, 2016), especially workers in manual occupations or those with low digital skills, who are among the lowest paid in the workforce. Although the COVID-19 pandemic extended teleworking to more workers, including those not previously teleworking, many workers remain excluded from it.

Gender divide in digital skills widens with higher level of skills and age

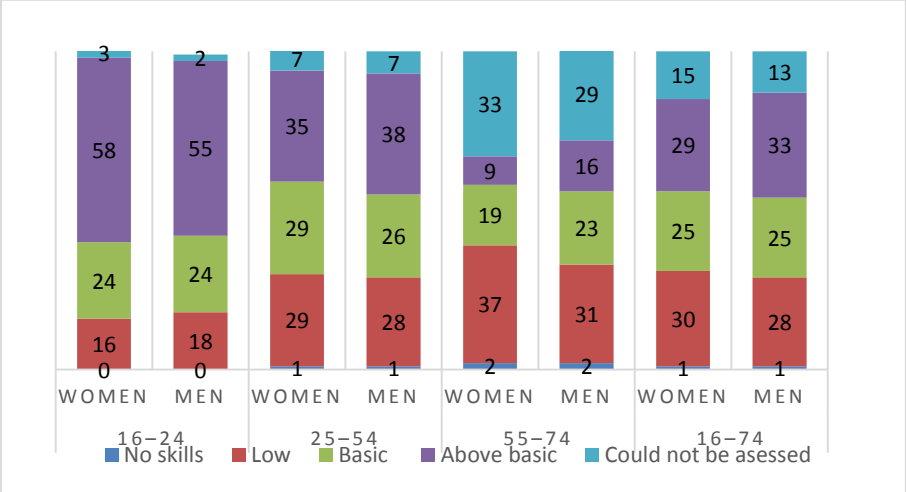
Workers with strong digital skills are better positioned to respond to the demands of remote working during the current crisis and in the future. As women, on average, have less access, less exposure, and less experience with digital technologies than men (OECD, 2019), they are less able to participate equally in an increasingly digital society and are potentially disadvantaged when working remotely (OECD, 2020c). Fewer women than men have access to the internet and women are also less likely to participate in ICT-related education and employment (EIGE, 2016a; EIGE, 2020b).

Equal access to ICT is not itself sufficient to close the digital gender divide and women need the knowledge and resources to translate access into effective use (Human Rights, Big Data and Technology Project (HRBDT), 2017). The **digital literacy gap** is manifested in the lack of basic technological skills, which impede access to and use of ICTs. A study published by Accenture (2017) identified **the gender divide in digital skills as one of the main factors affecting the gender pay gap and the ability to break the glass ceiling**.

Figure 9 shows that **the gender gap increases when considering above-basic digital skills and for older ages**. The average **gender gap in digital skills is largely accounted for by older women**, with the gap disappearing or even reversing among younger generations (EIGE, 2020b). Indeed, **more girls than boys under 24 years of age have advanced digital skills** and there is **no gender gap among those aged 25-54**. A gender gap of 7 p.p. does emerge among people aged over 54 years, however ([39]).

[39] Eurostat (isoc_sk_dskl_i).

Figure 9 - Levels of digital skills of individuals, by sex and age group (%, EU-27, 2019)



Source: Eurostat, (isoc_sk_dskl_i).

Note: Digital skills are measured in relation to performed activities across 4 domains of digital competencies: information, communication, problem solving and software skills. Individuals with "above basic" level of skills display such levels of skills in all 4 domains; individuals with a "basic" level of skills have at least one "basic" levels of skills across 4 domains; individuals with "low" level of skills miss some type of basic skills, i.e. have from one to three "no skills" across 4 domains; individuals with "no skills" did not perform any activities across all 4 domains, despite declaring having used internet at least once during the last 3 months; digital skills could not be assessed for those individuals who have not used internet in the last 3 months. For this figure, EIGE has used numerical data rounded to zero decimals by Eurostat and therefore percentages might not add up to 100%.

Gender differences in the use of digital platforms may increase in the COVID-19 crisis

While data on platform work in the EU is incomplete, difficult to compare and varies substantially by country, estimates from up to 2020 suggested that about 10% of the EU population has ever provided some services via platforms and that platfrom work constituted the main employment activity for around 2% of the population (EIGE, 2020b). The COVID-19 crisis is accelerating the creation of digital platforms for remote work and independent work, offering an important chance for some women to benefit from the work flexibility offered by such platforms, especially in the case of freelance remote workers, those in digitally delivered services (such as software, design or sales) and marketing (Mc Kinsey, 2020). However, **women are still underrepresented in platform work in general** (both online and on-site), as **its employment structure follows the patterns of gender segregation in the broader economy** (EIGE, 2020b). Women also tend to only partially benefit from the opportunities offered by labour platforms ([40]),

([40]) For an exhaustive discussion of digital labour platforms, see JRC (2019). Digital Labour Platforms in Europe: Numbers, Profiles, and Employment StatusofPlatform Workers.

service platforms and online market platforms, because of sex-based discrimination and bias against female sellers ([41]) and women freelancers ([42]).

Although little information is available on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the platform economy, early studies underline the potential negative consequences in terms of job losses, lower wages, and reduced work opportunities (Moulds, 2020). These findings are confirmed by a forthcoming EIGE report on platform work (2021) based on a survey of platform workers (n=4932) carried out in 10 Member States (DK, ES, FR, LV, NL, PL, RO, SI, SK, FI) in November-December 2020.

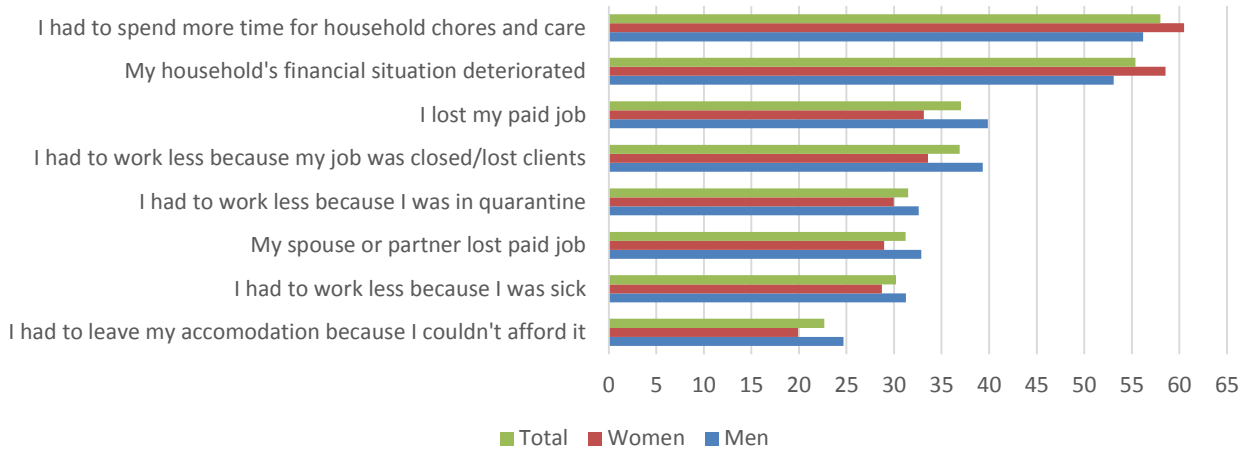
Of the online platform workers surveyed (i.e. those whose work is web-based and provided remotely), 20 % started working on online platforms in 2019 and 18 % in 2020. Women represented 50 % of online platform workers who joined in 2019 and 52 % of those who joined in 2020. The most prevalent types of web-based remote services provided by women are clerical and data-entry tasks (e.g. customer service, data entry, transcription) and writing and translation work (e.g. article writing, copywriting, proofreading, translation). Men more often provided micro tasks (e.g. object classification, tagging, content review, taking online surveys, website feedback).

The COVID-19 pandemic and related policy measures (e.g. lockdown, quarantine, closures of businesses, schools) appear to **have strongly and negatively impacted the lives of the online platform workers** surveyed. For these people, online platform work served as an important source of income during turbulent times: almost half (48 %) of those who lost their usual jobs started or restarted work via online platforms due to COVID-19 and another 31 % increased the number of hours worked via platforms. Overall, more than one-third (37 %) of online platform workers lost their usual jobs due to COVID-19, at a rate of 40 % for men and 33 % for women (Figure 10). Looking into household situations of online platfrom workers, more men than women indicated that their partners lost job during the pandemic.

([41]) Kricheli-Katz and Regev (2016) found that women earn 20 % less when selling identical new products on eBa. They also found that auction prices for used objects are 3 % lower in the case of female sellers.

([42]) A survey by Hyperwallet (2017) showed that 33 % of women work online under a pseudonym or have a user name that does not reveal their gender, in an attempt to avoid discrimination. Of these, 72 % choose to work under a gender-neutral name to maintain anonymity.

Figure 10 - The impact of COVID-19 on online platform workers (%, 2020)



Notes: weighted results; percentages are calculated in relation to all platform workers performing tasks online (*n = 3,865*); the respective survey question is '*Since March 2020, have you experienced any of the following situations because of the COVID-19 pandemic or related policy measures (e.g., lockdowns, quarantine, closures of businesses, schools, etc.)?'; s*ome answer options have been shortened for readability.

Source: EIGE (2020c).

Flexibility inherent in platform work made it an accessible source of income during the economic downturn, but did not safe from deteriorating financial situations, pointing to precarious income situations among many platfrom workers. Women (59%) were more likely than men (53%) to say that their households' financial situation had deteriorated. Nonetheless, more men (25%) than women (20%) working on online platforms had to leave their accommodation because they could no longer afford it.

The pandemic have further negatively impacted both women and men online platform workers, albeit in somewhat different ways. Men were significantly more likely to have to take leave or time-off from paid job due to sickness, quarantine or self-isolation. Women had to spend more time for household chores and duties. Overall, the EIGE platform workers' survey shows that at the time of data collection women spent on average 25 hours a week on household work, caring for children or other family members, compared to 20 hours a week for men. The burden of housework and caring fell even heavier for platform workers with children and those who are foreign-born, older and less educated. This reflects a substantial increase in time spent on household chores and care for both women and men – one of the major COVID-19 crisis effects on personal lives, economic well-being and work-life balance.

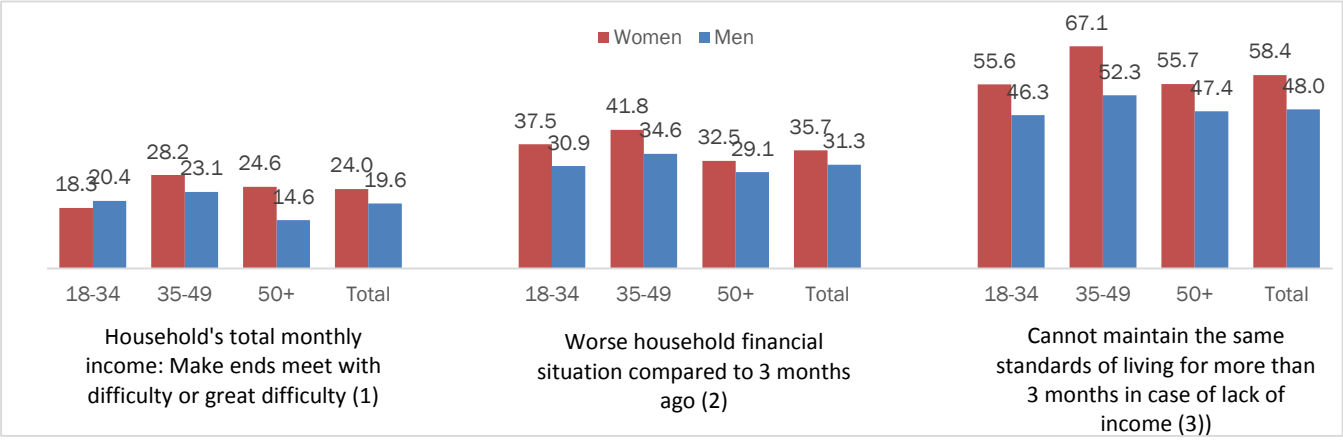
2.3 Impacts of COVID-19 on income

The COVID-19 crisis sharply increased financial fragility and poverty risks, especially among women

Even before the outbreak of the pandemic, the risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU-27 was higher for women than for men ([43]) and the COVID-19 crisis is likely to aggravate the situation.

An e-survey conducted by Eurofound in July 2020 showed that **women were more at risk of financial fragility than men**, with 58 % (compared to 48 % of men) reporting that they would not be able to maintain the same standard of living for more than three months, and 36 % being in a worse financial situation than the previous three months (compared to 31 % of men) (Figure 11). Similarly, 24 % of women and 20 % of men found it difficult to make ends meet, compared to 16 % of women and 14 % of men in that position in 2016 (EQLS, 2016) ([44]).

Figure 11 - Financial situation of household during the COVID-19 first wave, by sex (%, EU-27, July 2020)



Legend: (1) 'A household may have different sources of income and more than one household member may contribute to it. Thinking of your household's total monthly income: is your household able to make ends meet?' % who said 'With difficulty or great difficulty'; (2) 'When you compare the financial situation of your household three months ago and now would you say it has become better, worse or remained the same?' % who said 'worse'. (3) 'If your household would not receive any income, how long would your household be able to maintain the same standard of living using savings?' % who said 'no saving' or 'less than three months'.

Source: Eurofound, Living, working and COVID-19 dataset (second wave: July).

National studies indicate differential crisis income effects for workers with different employment statuses. A recent German study shows that the self-employed were much more likely to suffer income losses during the COVID-19 crisis than employees. **Among the self-employed, women were 35 % more likely to**

([43]) EIGE elaboration from Eurostat (ilc_pepso1).

([44]) EU-28 average. Eurofound EQLS-2016. Question Q88- "A household may have different sources of income and more than one household member may contribute to it. Thinking of your household's total monthly income: is your household able to make ends meet….?" Share of people who says: with difficulty or with great difficulty.

experience income losses than men, as women are disproportionately working in sectors more severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (Graeber et al., 2020).

Gender gaps in income losses during the COVID-19 crisis might impact future gender gaps in pension entitlements. According to Eurostat (2020c), in 2018, women aged over 65 received a pension that was on average 30 % lower than that of men. No data is available for 2020 to assess the effects of the COVID crisis on the gender pay gap, which averaged 14.1 % in the EU-27 in 2018 (latest data available) [45]. Nonetheless, aside longer lasting crisis effects for women than for men, the pandemic is also affecting work prospects for those who sustained jobs. For example, almost 60 % of women reported that a promotion or pay rise was unlikely in the near future (Sukces Pisany Szminką Foundation, 2020). As employment is the most important source of individual and household income, low pay and low career prospects is a barrier to achieving equal economic independence for women and men and can lead to a higher risk of household poverty and social exclusion (EIGE, 2016b).

Poorest households with children, especially lone mothers, are hit hardest by crisis

According to early estimates, even with income support measures, the spring lockdown is expected to reduce EU households' disposable income by 3.6 % in 2020, with the **poorest households' being most severely hit** (Almeida et al., 2020). The **risk of poverty is also higher in households with children**. In 2019, across the EU-27, 69.4 % of people living in households with very low work intensity [46] and dependent children were at risk of poverty, compared to 55 % for those living in similar households but without children (Eurostat, 2020e). The highest risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU-27 (40.3%) was recorded among lone parents [47] (Eurostat, 2020d).

The closure of schools and childcare services further impaired the employment opportunities of parents, especially mothers, and increased the risk of poverty among households with dependent children. Data from the Eurofound's COVID-19 online surveys show that households with children struggle to make ends meet much more than households without children (Mascherini and Bisello, 2020). COVID-19 also is likely to increase the poverty risk and material deprivation of lone mothers and their children.

The type of income support received by women compared to men reflects their different positions in the labour market, as well as women's disproportionate burden of care duties. In Italy, women represented

[45] Eurostat (tesem180) The unadjusted Gender Pay Gap (GPG) represents the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and of female paid employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees.
[46] People who live in a household with very low work intensity are defined as those who live in a household where, on average, the working-age adults worked less than or equal to 20 % of their potential working time in a year.
[47] Individuals aged less than 18 years or aged 18-24 years, if economically inactive and living with at least one parent.

79 % of applicants for the specific COVID-19 parental leave introduced in March 2020 ([48]) and 68 % of applicants for the babysitting bonus (INPS, 2020). In Portugal, women represented more than 80 % of beneficiaries of wage replacement schemes for parents whose children's schools had closed (ILO, 2020d).

([48]) To address the problems created by the suspension of childcare services and educational activities in schools, the Cura Italia decree introduced a specific COVID-19 parental leave or, alternatively, the possibility of using a monetary bonus for assistance and supervision of minors (the so-called babysitting bonus).

3 GENDER ROLES

Before the COVID-19 crisis, employed women in the EU spent about 3.9 hours per day on unpaid care ([49]) compared to 2.6 hours for employed men (EIGE, 2021). The gender gap was higher among families with children and women in precarious employment. Women are still largely expected to provide unpaid care to a greater extent than men, even within dual earning families (ILO, 2018; Kan, Sullivan and Gershuny, 2011). **Women are thus more likely to be engaged in supplementing care work due to the closures and restrictions in care services resulting from the pandemic.** As a result, COVID-19 crisis is likely to aggravate gender inequalities in unpaid care (Blasko et al., 2020), reinforce traditional gender roles, and derail the modest progress achieved so far (EIGE, 2020b).

School closures, reduction in the supply of childcare and other care services during lockdown could explain the reason for the further decline in the already low employment of women (25-49), as **women with care responsibilities tend to adapt to the lack of childcare services by reducing their working hours or even (temporarily) giving up paid work** (Blasko et al., 2020). According to the Eurofound's COVID-19 survey in April/May 2020 [50], on average in the EU-27, less than 4 % of the women and men could get support from a service provider, institution or organisation if they needed help looking after their children, while one in four (25 %) could not get help from anybody.

The resulting impact could affect women's wellbeing and longer-term labour market prospects. Reducing working hours or temporarily quitting work in order to look after children after the closure of schools, care for the older family members and do housework, without external support, can impose long-term adverse effects on women's labour market outcomes, in terms of wage penalties, lower social protection and pension contributions.

3.1 IMPACT ON THE UNPAID CARE BURDEN AND LIVING CONDITIONS OF WORKING PARENTS

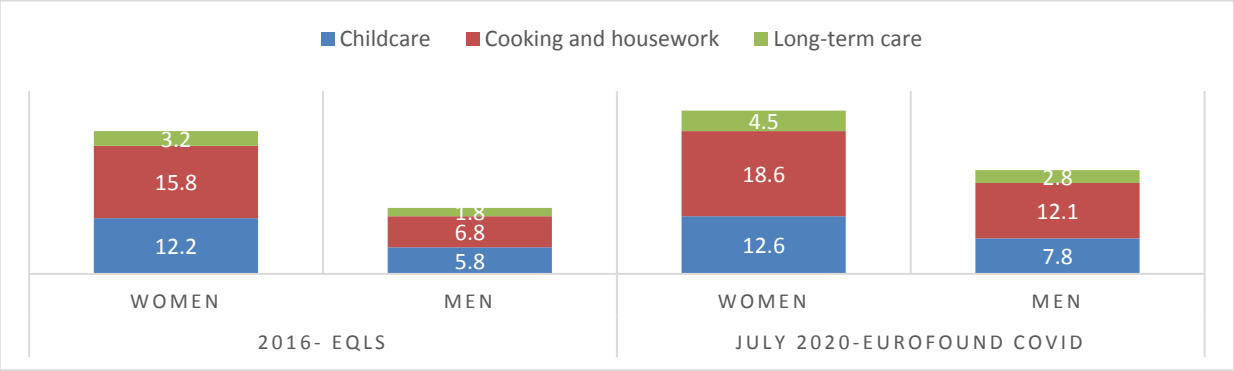
Women are shouldering the brunt of unpaid care, although men's contributions have increased

The first wave of the pandemic saw women spend more hours than men on unpaid care: caring for and educating children/grandchildren (12.6 hours per week, compared to 7.8 for men), caring for the older

([49]) Unpaid care in this context is defined as childcare, long-term care and housework.
[50] Eurofound (2020c). Living, working and COVID-19 dataset.

persons or family members with disabilities (4.5 hours per week, compared to 2.8 for men), and cooking and housework (18.4 hours per week, compared to 12.1 for men) (Figure 12). Data from the Eurofound survey 'Living, working and COVID-19 dataset' was collected in July 2020, which coincided with major reopening of the schools and/or summer holiday periods and may underestimate the difficulties faced by parents and the time spent on education of children between March and May 2020. The data also refers to averages across surveyed people, meaning that some groups have much higher unpaid work loads (e.g. parents) and some much lower.

Figure 12 - Time spent by women and men on unpaid care activities (hours per week, 18+, EU-27, 2016, July 2020)



Note: COVID-19 dataset (second wave: July 2020): 'Last month, on average, how many hours per week were you involved in any of the following activities outside of paid work?'; EQLS microdata (2016): Q43 – 'On average, how many hours per week are you involved in any of the following activities outside of paid work?' (A) caring for and/or educating your children (under 18 years old) and/or caring for and/or educating your grandchildren; (B) caring for family members with disabilities or infirm family members, neighbours or friends (under 75 years old and over 75 years old); (C) cooking and/or housework. Comparison between the two surveys should be considered with caution, due to different questions, samples and data collection methods.

Source: Eurofound Living, working and COVID-19 dataset (2020); EQLS microdata (2016).

Comparing the average hours per week spent in unpaid care activities by women and men resulting from the two surveys highlights the gendered impact of the pandemic on unpaid care. Although the comparison should be considered with caution, due to different questions, samples and data collection methods, it shows that in the EU-27, on average, the **pandemic has increased both women's and men's unpaid care activities, although women continue to bear the brunt of unpaid care**. The largest increase in time spent on unpaid care for men was on cooking and housework, increasing to 12.1 hours per week on average during the first wave of the pandemic, compared to about 6.8 hours in 2016 (Figure 12).

The factors contributing to the growth of unpaid care include the decrease in **informal help received from grandparents** due to mobility restrictions and social distancing, especially in Member States with high

reliance on grandparents' support for childcare (BG, EL, HR, IT, CY, MT, RO) [51]. Similarly, COVID-19 restrictions have affected workers' ability to access hired personal care and domestic workers, with high numbers of migrant care and domestic workers (mostly women) returning to their home countries ahead of border closures (Zacharenko, 2020).

National research shows similar trends. In Belgium, data collected through time diaries shows that working women and men, particularly parents and lone mothers with children, have experienced increased time pressure during the lockdown compared to 2013 (Mullens and Verbeylen 2020). Recent evidence also shows that during the lockdown period, **fathers working from home generally tended to share the care workload more than before,** especially in families where only the father stopped working, while the mother was employed in essential occupations (Andrew, Cattan et al. 2020, Sevilla and Smith 2020). In Germany, men with low and medium levels of education spent more time with their children than they did before the onset of the crisis (Kreyenfeld et al., 2020). Similarly, in Italy, men whose partners continued to work at their usual workplace spent more time on housework than before (Del Boca et al., 2020).

Whether or not the increased participation of men in childcare and domestic work will prompt **lasting changes in household arrangements and a redistribution of care is uncertain.** Andrew et al. (2020) suggest that the lockdown shock on family dynamics may have started new processes, leading to renewed arrangements, gender roles and attitudes. While historical events may initiate such changes, other authors suggest caution, as outcomes are uncertain (Boll and Schüller, 2020). The increased uptake of caring duties by fathers might still reflect a gendered specialisation in unpaid care work. According to Farré et al. (2020), during the first lockdown, the increased share of care by fathers was largely attributable to increased time spent for grocery shopping, which was the only allowable reason to leave the house during lockdown.

Closure of schools and social distancing measures enlarged the scope of unpaid work

The closure of schools and childcare services during the COVID-19 crisis has increased the childcare burden and created new unpaid jobs (e.g. homeschooling), especially for working parents. Prior to pandemic, employed women with childcare responsibilities (in EU-27 and the UK) spent about 23 hours per week on childcare, compared to 19 per week hours for men (EIGE, 2021).

[51] According to EQLS 2016 data, grandparents provide the main type of childcare in half to two-thirds of households in several southern and south-eastern European countries (Eurofound, 2017).

According to the Eurofound July 2020 online survey ([52]), **employed women with children under 12 spent around 54 hours per week on childcare, compared to 32 hours for employed men** (Eurofound, 2020c). Similar results are reported in national data. In Germany, an online survey conducted by the Institute for Employment Research of the Federal Employment Agency (IAB) in June 2020 showed that although the proportion of men involved in childcare had risen significantly during the pandemic, women still shouldered the greater part of childcare and housework (Globisch and Osiander, 2020). During the spring lockdown, women with young children (aged 0-5) faced the biggest challenge in balancing work and family in Italy (Del Boca et al., 2020), in the UK (Collins et al., 2020) and in Spain (Farré et al., 2020), countries that also recorded most of the labour market exits among women and workers with low education. Similarly, in France, a survey undertaken during the strictest phase of the spring lockdown showed that one-in-three women left their job to provide unpaid childcare and housework, compared to one-in-four men (Lambert et al., 2020).

Lone mothers are particularly exposed to the negative consequences of school closures and disruption in access to childcare, due to lower financial resources and the impossibility of sharing care demands (Alon et al., 2020). The data of 2016 shows that even before the pandemic, 42 % of lone parents in the EU had difficulties in affording childcare services ([53]). Low-wage working women with children were less likely than higher-wage women to use childcare services and more likely to rely on relatives and other types of less formal childcare arrangements (EIGE, 2021). The pressure to respond to increased care duties during the COVID-19 pandemic by reducing employment has likely been severe for lone mothers with children (Blasko et al., 2020).

Women in the EU have been more engaged in supporting their children with online schooling during the pandemic and are more dissatisfied with this type of schooling than their partners. In Portugal, for instance, 77.5 % of women help their children aged under 16 with homework, compared to only 41.3 % of men (ILO, 2020d) ([54]).

The COVID-19 crisis increased the burden of women caring for older family members and people with disabilities

The closures of daily care services for people with disabilities and the mobility restrictions for personal carers with irregular jobs (largely migrant women) have increased the burden for carers at home. Workers

([52]) The first wave of the Eurofound online survey in April 2020 did not collect hours spent on childcare.

([53]) EIGE's elaborations from Eurostat (ilc_ats03).

([54]) Preliminary findings of a survey carried out by the Observatory of Education and Training Policies of the University of Coimbra.

employed in essential occupations, particularly women with care responsibilities for the older family members and people with disabilities, face additional difficulties.

As shown in Figure 12, **the lockdown period saw women spend 4.5 hours per week on average caring for their older family members or relatives with disabilities, compared to 2.8 hours for men.** The 2016 EQLS showed that, previously, women spent on average 3.2 hours a week providing this type of care, compared to 1.8 hours for men.

Even before the pandemic, **about 29 % of EU households reported an unmet need for professional home care services**, with large differences between countries (from 12 % in Sweden to above 60 % in Greece and Portugal) (EIGE, 2019). Insufficient care infrastructure pushes women to fill in care gaps (Luppi et al., 2019; Folbre and Bittman, 2004; Saraceno, 2008; Henz, 2009; Henz, 2010). In 2018, over 10 million workers in the EU-28 (six million of whom were women) had care responsibilities for relatives in need of care (aged 15 years and older), i.e. 6 % of women and 4 % of men in employment (EIGE, 2021). In many Member States, the unavailability and/or high costs of formal long-term care services (either home-based or in institutions) has resulted in an increasing role of domestic workers, often migrant women employed irregularly, providing long-term care at home (Spasova et al., 2018; Eurofound, 2020d).

3.2 TELEWORK AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Pandemic teleworking placed work-life balance under pressure, especially for women

Before the pandemic, the lack of accessible, affordable and good quality care services and disproportionate amount of time spent on care activities made it difficult for women to achieve a good work–life balance (European Commission, 2018; EIGE, 2021). The COVID-19 crisis aggravated the situation. The Eurofound e-survey on COVID-19 (2020c) found a general deterioration in work-life balance among EU workers during the first wave of the pandemic compared to the situation described in the 2015 Eurofound survey on working conditions ([55]).

In the context of the pandemic, combining work and family life is more challenging for women than for men, especially with the reopening of economic activities in June/July 2020. Across the EU-27, employed women were more likely than men to find it difficult to concentrate on their job (8 % of women

([55]) The comparison of results from the two suveys should be taken with cautioness, since the sample of the COVID-19 e-survey and the EWCS-2015 is not the same. In addition, in the COVID-19 e-survey the time scale of the questions was adapted: respondents were asked to report on the situation in the last 2 weeks, instead of the past 12 months considered in the EWCS-2015.

and less than 5 % of men) or to give due time to work (6.5 % of women and 3 % of men). Similarly, job related duties during the pandemic had more negative repercussions on housework for women than for men. Nearly every third woman (31 %) indicated feeling too tired after work to do some of the household tasks which needed to be done, compared to around 26 % of men ([56]). About 21 % of women and men responded that their job prevented them from giving their family the time they wanted, a 10 p.p. increase since 2015.

National surveys confirm that women's work-life balance deteriorated more during the COVID-19 crisis than that of men, especially for mothers. In Germany, in May and June 2020 ([57]), the life satisfaction of mothers with children under 16 was significantly lower than that of fathers, compared to a higher and similar life satisfaction between mothers and fathers in 2018 (Huebener et al., 2020). Similarly, in Spain, a July 2020 survey of its research staff ([58]) by the Women's and Science Unit of the Ministry for Science and Innovation (*Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación*, 2020) found that 71 % of working mothers of children under 18 and 64 % of fathers found it stressful to achieve expected work results.

Telework holds a premise to improve work-life balance and support the employment of carer, women and men

Under normal circumstances, the main benefits of teleworking include reduced commuting time and a better work-life balance (ILO, 2020e). It offers the opportunity for a more flexible schedule for workers with children. **As care and household responsibilities are not equally distributed, women tended to value flexible work schedules and limited commuting times more than men** (Mas and Pallais, 2017; Le Barbanchon et al., 2019), and may be more positively affected by the possibility to work from home. Before the pandemic, for example, women working from home reported slightly better work-life balance outcomes than men (Eurofound, 2017). However, this positive effect may be counterbalanced by **the risk of reinforcing gender roles, making telework a highly feminised alternative to office-based work.**

Increased flexibility in working hours may incentivise **higher levels of employment for women with children** as well as **uptake of care responsibilities for men with children**. For example, in Germany, working from home was observed to somewhat **reduce the gender gap in working hours and monthly**

([56]) In the 2015 EWCS the incidence of those feeling too tired after work were similar, around 20%, for women and men.

([57]) Results based on 10,048 interviews in the COMPASS survey, carried out between May 1 and June 21, 2020. The survey involves 250 to 350 people entitled to vote in Germany every day.

([58])The online survey on the gender impact of the first lockdown (March to June 2020) on the work-life balance, was conducted on the research staff of the Ministry between 2 and 17 July 2020, with 1,556 responses obtained.

earnings, primarily because teleworking women with children were able to increase their working hours more than those without a telework option (Arntz et al., 2019). The overall effect of teleworking on the gender pay gap is uncertain, however, and inter alia, depends not only on potential changes for women, but also for men. For example, home-based telework arrangements are noted to relate to the increased gender wage differences in Austria (Beno, 2019) or Italy (Bonacini et al., 2020).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, teleworking supported business and work continuity and a relative shift in the distribution of care duties, especially in those households where women continued to work as usual (e.g. in essential jobs) and partners had to contribute to care tasks more than in the past (OECD, 2020c; ILO, 2020e). However, the widespread adoption of telework has coincided with an increase in women's unpaid work, largely due to the closure of schools and the move to online schooling.

Telework holds important risks, especially for women workers

The ultimate effect of telework on the working and living conditions of both women and men depends on many factors, including the regulatory framework, the prevailing gendered culture of the division of labour in the household, companies' organisational culture and practices, and the provision of accessible and affordable care services (ILO, 2020e).

Telework from home may result in an increase in household workload, particularly for women and lone parents, as they typically have to shoulder care for family members and domestic chores, in addition to paid employment (ILO, 2020e; OECD, 2020c). Mascherini-Bisello (2020) compared teleworking women and men and found that the biggest gender divide refers to family duties preventing workers from giving time to their job (reported by 10 % of women and 7 % of men). Percentages are much higher and the gap even wider for parents of small children - **32 % of women and 22 % of men reported family duties preventing them from giving time to their jobs**. Similar differences were recorded in difficulties concentrating on the job because of family and being too tired after work to do domestic chores.

When care responsibilities are not shared equally, the productivity of teleworking women - especially those with children - could be at risk, due to constant interruptions, additional workload, and mental burden while working from home (Blasko et al., 2020). Women with small children (aged 1-5 years) indicated higher work reductions, as children tend to disrupt mothers more than fathers: **during the lockdown periods, mothers reported having been interrupted 50 % more often than fathers** (Andrew et al., 2020). This reflects the impact of gender stereotypes about women's and men's roles in childrearing. If no changes occur, even with teleworking, these factors can affect women's employment disproportionately, potentially exposing them to higher job insecurity in the long-term (Collins et al., 2020).

Although teleworking provides flexibility to combine work and life duties, the increased burden in unpaid care and domestic work, mostly for women, and their greater isolation and invisibility compared to male colleagues working at the office, may **reduce women's career progression** (Hupkau and Victoria, 2020; Guyot and Sawhill, 2020). A new study of employees at a US technology services company found that extensive telecommuting is associated with fewer promotions and lower pay growth (Golden and Eddleston, 2020). Telework may particularly affect the **salaries and career progressions of women with children**. Under the structural pressure of managing care as a priority over paid work, more women than men are put into situations to accept lower wages in return for working from home (Mas and Pallais, 2017). This comes not only with the associated lower employment opportunities, but also reduced access to social protection (Rubery and Tavora, 2020).

Telework can increase **work intensity**. The literature [59] on the use of ICT within and outside employers' premises indicates that while ICT enables greater autonomy, it also leads to higher levels of work intensity (Eurofound, 2019), with potential risks of workaholism, burnout syndrome and a sense of loneliness (Lablaw, 2020). The increase in work intensity includes a risk of **blurring boundaries between paid work and private life** (Eurofound, 2017). For this reason, policymakers and social partners are paying increased attention to the **'right to disconnect'** and to avoid invasive management surveillance and monitoring practices.

Overall, the preliminary evidence shows that COVID-19 related stress may affect **the mental wellbeing of women more than men, especially women with young children.** According to the Eurofound e-survey in April 2020, women with children aged 11 or younger were more likely than men to feel tense (23 % versus 19 %), lonely (14 % versus 6 %) and/or depressed (14 % versus 9 %). The pattern also holds true for women and men with children aged 12-17, although with narrower differences.

Flexible working arrangements and care services can promote gender equality more than teleworking alone

Flexible working arrangements relate to the possibility for workers to decide how to distribute their working hours and where to work ([60]). Empirical studies in the field of organisational studies and work-life

([59]) Eurofound (2020b) provides a list of sources identified by previous research (Green, 2006; Derks and Bakker, 2010; Kelliher and Anderson, 2010; Grant et al., 2013) as contributing to increased intensity in T/ICTM: work process monitoring; permanent connectivity; interruptions; 'social exchange' between employers and employees; corporate or managerial culture, personal ethics or ambition; information overload; email overload.

([60]) The concept of flexibility in the place of work relate to the possibility of working away from the employer's premises, such as at home or at a teleworking centre, or other location. Flexitime occurs when an organisation offers its employees the opportunity to avail of a flexible

balance (Allen et al., 2013; V. Lomazzi et al., 2018; van der Lippe and Lippényi, 2018) **show that flexible working time support and promote gender equality more than teleworking alone**. It gives workers the possibility to arrange working hours according to the needs of the 'family rush hour' when many demands overlap (Craig and Churchill, 2020). This option, unlike telework, keeps a physical separation between the domains of private life and work, making it easier for working parents to manage their responsibilities. However, counter-effects may emerge. While working flexibly can help to balance work with caring activities to some extent, **it can also reinforce the traditional division of caring responsibilities within the family** (EIGE, 2020a; Chung and Van der Lippe, 2018).

While the pandemic has revealed to employers that teleworking is possible (and cost-effective) and could be extended in the future, the **implications for gender equality may be ambiguous, if flexibility in the place of work does not come with flexitime**. As yet, few national studies have investigated the gender equality implications of telework for work-life balance during the pandemic. In addition to studies in the US (Alon et al., 2020; Collins et al., 2020; Power, 2020), Australia (Craig and Churchill, 2020) and the UK (Andrew et al., 2020), research in the EU Member States (chiefly in Germany, Spain and Italy (Boll and Schüller, 2020; Del Boca et al., 2020; Farré et al., 2020) has focused on the impact of COVID-19 closures and telework arrangements on care work (especially on women's childcare).

The need for family-friendly policies and company practices – especially in the context of COVID-19 - is highlighted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2020). The report stresses the need to: i) apply time flexibility in teleworking, allowing working parents to work at the time and in the place most convenient for them; ii) agree on priority tasks to support workers to be as productive as possible, given their care and family responsibilities; iii) ensure that all supervisors adopt a flexible approach in cases of teleworking.

Alon et al. (2020) underlined that increasing the use of telework without **improving supportive care infrastructures** (e.g. child and long-term care services) is likely to increase the work and care burden, especially on women. The provision of supportive care infrastructures should thus be strengthened, including company-provided childcare services (ÖSB Consulting, 2020 [61]. Finally, access and institutional support for the take-up of parental and other family-related leave should be incentivised among men to reduce the current gender gap and the expectations and pressure on women.

The key role of affordable and accessible childcare and home-based long-term care services (in combination with telework) clearly emerged during the COVID-19 crisis. Teleworking has failed to solve the problem of women's increased care burden with the closure of schools and childcare facilities and the

working hours arrangement by giving them the flexibility to start and finish work at times that suit their transport arrangements, family responsibilities, etc.

[61] This report includes a list of Member States' good practices in respect of gender equality aspects of work and care in the context of COVID-19.

overall reduction of access to care services in many Member States. Teleworking parents in these circumstances are dependent on their employer's understanding (Rubery and Tavora, 2020) ([62]), with the risk of losing their jobs.

[62] The authors stress that in a significant number of countries (BG, FR, MT, AT, PT, RO), not being able to work from home was an eligibility condition for parental leave.

4 RECOVERY MEASURES AND FACTORS SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT

4.1 FACTORS SUPPORTING EMPLOYMENT, RECOVERY MEASURES AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The unequal sharing of domestic and care tasks within the household represents one of the main causes of gender inequality. This section identifies and compares a set of policies/measures adopted during the pandemic that are directly or indirectly connected to work-life balance and the organisation of care duties between women and men.

Identification of relevant policies

Research has shown that, historically, reconciliation policies tended either towards the 'complementarity' of male (labour market) and female (family) roles or towards a better sharing of tasks between women and men in each of the two spheres (Lewis, 2002; Vielle, 2001; Orloff, 1996). The current EU policies promote the task-sharing model, which is the only one conducive to full gender equality. This objective is reflected in Directive (EU) 2019/1158 on work-life balance for parents and carers, and the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025, which seeks to promote women's labour force participation, equal pay, greater economic independence for women, and gender-equal parenting and care.

Responses to work-life balance mobilise several levers acting on the distribution of time (working time, family commitments) and the accompanying financial resources:

- Social protection that makes it possible to compensate for withdrawals from the labour market in the case of eventualities linked to 'care';
- Labour law (care leave, protection against dismissal);
- Care services at home or outside the home (outsourcing of care tasks);
- Working time arrangements;
- Organisational practices and culture combating gender stereotypes and discriminatory norms in the workplace.

The fine-tuning of each measure and the measures in combination determine their adequacy in terms of gender equality. Policies that are consistent with a gender-equal 'task-sharing' approach (Vielle, 2001) correctly identify that different eventualities compel workers to reduce or abandon their professional activity for reasons of care (e.g. leave to care for children of different ages, or other family members in need of care) and are designed to promote both women's participation in the labour market (e.g. by providing childcare facilities, local services, domestic help) and men's family involvement (e.g. through paternity leave, well-paid parental leave, or non-transferable or split parental leave).

Prior to the pandemic, these policies were designed based on the model of workers working outside the home while their children attend school. Policy attention focused on the situation of parents of young children until a specified age, and, later, on care tasks related to older people or other family members in need of care.

The pandemic has disrupted this model with:

1. Adoption of containment measures that led to:
   - full or partial schooling of children at home;
   - closure of care facilities;
   - generalisation of home-based work for certain categories of workers (e.g. many women in the service sector);
   - obligation for other categories of workers employed in essential services to work outside the home despite lockdown (including the health sector, which employs a large majority of women);
2. Change in the amount and nature of household and care tasks:
   - care of children;
   - decrease in traditional informal care of children support systems through family and friends, who were discouraged (especially grandparents) from doing so;
   - care of sick (COVID-19) family members;
   - increase in usual household tasks (laundry, cleaning, shopping, cooking, tidying, etc.);
   - change in the nature of care tasks (homeschooling);
3. Carer's illness (COVID-19) that disrupted care of children and other family members in need of care.

In this context - and pointing to a de facto non-priority of placing care at the centre of inclusive labour markets- the majority of the 500 measures recorded in the Eurofound COVID-19 EU PolicyWatch database (April 2020) targeted keeping businesses afloat (35 %), protecting incomes beyond short-time work measures (20 %) and protecting employment (13 %) (Eurofound, 2020b).

Lockdown measures directly and indirectly determine work-life balance for workers. As public health measures, the epidemiological effectiveness of their modalities (whether or not to close schools and care services; identification of essential services, etc.) has been discussed and evaluated in prophylactic terms. Measures also evolved significantly during the second wave and continue to be subject to adaptation. Concerns about work-life balance in relation to lockdown measures have occurred only on a secondary basis and in terms of economic impact (the closure of schools hindering the professional activity of parents, for example) rather than in terms of support for parenting or promotion of gender equality (ILO and WHO databases) ([63]). However, their impact in this regard cannot be underestimated and needs to be considered in different countries.

The analysis here focuses on workers with caring responsibilities. The adoption of lockdown measures resulted in the following common situations: (a) some workers had to combine home-based work with an

([63]) ILO database: COVID-19 and the world of work, country policy responses; WHO, Corona disease (COVID-19) outbreak: country information.

increase and change in the nature of care tasks; (b) some workers had to pursue work outside the home, in essential services for instance, while their children or other family members in need of care were home alone; (c) some workers were sick, even hospitalised, and were unable to care for children or other family members who were at home. In the first two cases, combined with the absence of support measures, workers – many more women than men – were forced to take annual and/or unpaid leave, or to resign.

While some policies may have an indirect impact on the work-life balance of parents and carers (e.g. the ability of the education system to adapt to distance learning, the quality of online courses and student supervision), this study focuses on **measures that directly or indirectly aimed to address the issues of work-life balance in this particular situation** (paying special attention to the self-employed, workers in precarious employment, domestic workers and lone parents), such as:

- Closure of schools and childcare institutions versus opening of certain care structures;
- Other solutions for externalisation of care tasks;
- Home-based work (seen in many countries as a 'response' to schools and childcare closure);
- Labour law (working time arrangements, protection against dismissal linked to care responsibilities);
- Leave (partially subsidised special leave entitlements and family leave entitlements compensated by the State, but usually with benefit of less than 100 % of regular pay);
- Social security (extra top-up of benefits for parents, etc.).

Although the impacts of these policy measures on task-sharing between women and men need to be further explored, preliminary evidence and observations suggest that:

- In the absence of specific policies, and even though the volume of domestic and care tasks has increased for all, the distribution of care tasks between women and men will not substantially alter.
- The sharing of household and care tasks between women and men depends on specific situations in the household: two parents working as usual; two parents working from home; only one parent – woman - working from home; only one parent – man - working from home; lone-parent families.
- Although the closure of childcare services may be determined by public health considerations during the pandemic, solutions for externalisation of care are always more favourable for women, as they make women less dependent on negotiation within the households.
- 'New' home tasks, such as homeschooling, are more likely to be taken by women. The policy measures addressing this specific aspect have a bigger impact on women's work-life balance.
- Lone parents (primarily mothers) have found themselves in particularly complicated situations, especially when they themselves have become ill.
- If formal care services are open, professional carers - usually women - may be under pressure with respect to their own work-life balance. Therefore, a work-life balance solution for service users can, in turn, worsen the situation of service providers.

Preliminary overview of national policies during the pandemic

An **initial inventory of first wave measures** (February-July 2020) **adopted in all EU countries** was primarily extracted from WHO (especially for social distance measures: home-based work, closure of

childcare and schools), ILO and Eurofound ([64]) (for specific reconciliation measures) databases. The Eurofound Report on teleworking regulations during the pandemic also provided a useful resource (Eurofound, 2020c). The analysis of measures faces several limitations. The quality of the information depends on the rigour and consistency of the national correspondents (with certain gaps or even contradictions between databases). In addition, the databases do not systematically integrate the gender dimension: for instance, the available information on the take-up of specific measures is not disaggregated by sex. Job protection during the pandemic, especially when the worker is absent from work for reasons related to care work (or schooling), is an important factor in gender equality but is rarely captured in databases. The databases are organised 'measure by measure', making it difficult to grasp how Member States developed their global COVID-19 work-life balance policy and how special measures relate to one another. In order to fully comprehend the situation of workers, it is necessary to analyse each of these specific measures against the background of existing policies.

Closure of schools and childcare institutions was widespread across EU Member States

During the first wave of the pandemic, all Member States **closed schools and childcare facilities** ([65]), with the exception of Sweden, where they remained open. The duration of that closure varied, but in most cases lasted from mid-March to May 2020, when most countries gradually reopened childcare facilities and then schools. In many countries, some care facilities remained available for children of workers in essential services and in other specific situations (e.g. for children of lone parents in Germany or children in vulnerable situations or with disabilities in Slovenia). Several Member States made provisions for local or regional authorities to strengthen home care and home help services.

Shift to telework to mitigate school closure had a profound impact on work-life balance

The closure of schools was accompanied by an **encouragement to work from home**, except for essential services and/or jobs that cannot be carried out at home. Whether compulsory or not, statutory, conventional or at the employer's initiative, it varied throughout the first wave of the pandemic and from country to country. Generally, in addition to prophylactic or business continuity considerations, **home-based work is conceived, implicitly or explicitly, as a care solution in response to the closure of educational or care facilities** (Eurofound, 2020e).

However, home-based work is difficult to combine with homeschooling of children or the care of young children or other family members. This preliminary overview identified **the dearth of measures directly addressing the specific problems of work-life balance (e.g. homeschooling) among people working from home.** On the contrary, in some countries, 'special leave' was available only for workers with no care solution, and explicitly excluded home-based workers (FR, CY, LT, LU), who, as a consequence, were

([64]) Living, working and COVID-19 dataset, Dublin.
([65]) ILO database : COVID-19 and the world of work, country policy responses.

pushed to use their annual leave or unpaid leave or even to resign. The pandemic revealed an acute need to address the specific situation of home-based workers through work-life balance measures adapted to their situation. For many parents, especially women, the work that is normally provided by childcare facilities or schools fell on their shoulders. This additional burden was not compensated, either in terms of direct social security benefits or social security contributions, despite sometimes leading to a loss of income.

Flexible working time arrangements were taken up as public health measures, designed to promote social distancing in public transport or at the workplace, to support enterprises in difficulty (collective reduction of working time), or to reinforce essential services (flexible use of overtime in Austria and Belgium). Such measures **cannot a priori be considered favourable to work-life balance.** In fact, they may even hinder it. In Slovakia, new legislation foresees that while a worker is operating from home, the employment relationship is not subject to the provisions on the schedule of weekly working hours, daily and weekly rest, and idle time. No wage supplements are paid to the employee for overtime and night work, or for working weekends, unless the employee and employer agree otherwise (Eurofound, 2020e). It is therefore necessary to examine on a case-by-case basis whether working time arrangements take place within a regulatory framework, in a sectoral or company social dialogue, or are dependent on bilateral negotiation with the employer, as well as whether they are recognised as a right for the worker or an occasional occurrence.

Special leave not always sensitive to different working arrangements and family situations of workers

Similar to working time arrangements, **measures relating to leave do not always support the worker's work-life balance**. In order to support business activity, many workers were forced to take annual leave or were put on leave with possible compensation. Other workers, particularly those in essential services, were prohibited from taking leave or could do so only with the special employer's authorisation. Bulgarian legislation provides for the right of workers to use their paid annual leave or unpaid leave to meet their care needs and subjects that right to more restrictive conditions for men than for women. Employers are only obliged to give parental leave to mothers and lone fathers, reinforcing women's role as primary carers. Greece provides four days of leave, one of which must be taken as annual leave.

About 20 countries introduced some of the following measures: special care leave, lump sum per child for extra costs related to the pandemic, independent of leave (IT, PT) or compensation for loss of earnings due to care work (DE, EE, LV). They are either ad hoc measures or resulted from the adaptation of existing schemes (sickness for France, time credit for Belgium, parental leave in several countries). Their duration varies greatly (four days in Greece, including one day of annual leave; 27 days in Italy; up to 60 days in

Lithuania). The possibility of taking special leave for care-related reasons sometimes requires the special employer's authorisation (BE, CY, AT, FI) and, if rejected, may force a parent – likely the mother - to resign. Lone parents might experience these constraints to an even greater extent.

Home-schooling of children requires significant attention from parents (even for children in secondary education) but was not always taken into consideration in the leave design. Generally, leave is provided for parents of children up to 12. In some countries, leave was not available for parents of children over eight (PL). Age limits may not be applicable for children with special needs (BE, CY, PT) or adults with disabilities (SK).

The majority of countries opted for 'special' measures for all workers, regardless of their status (e.g. solutions that foresee social security benefits independent from specific leave), with occasional specific solutions for self-employed and domestic workers. **However, the variety of working patterns and family situations of workers is unevenly taken into account**. To address this diversity, some countries proposed a range of measures for parents. For instance, Italian workers may choose between parental leave or a lump sum for care or babysitting. The lump sum is paid only for declared work and is higher for nursing care, which provides minimum protection to the carer (usually a woman). The granting of a benefit to compensate for the loss of earnings may help to cover specific situations but unless it is associated with protection against dismissal does not appear to be a sufficient solution to keep employees in the labour market.

Men's take-up of special family leave is usually impacted by the level of compensation and whether it is compensated by the State or the employer, which varies greatly across the EU (Koslowski, Blum et al. 2019). It can also evolve over time. In Austria, compensation has evolved from highly conditional (consent of the employer, no other solutions, worker not indispensable, etc.) to an unconditional right, and from partial payment by the employer against reimbursement by public funds to full payment by the State. Rubery et al. (2020) suggest that comparing compensation for special family leave with compensation for job retention schemes provides a good indicator of the value that governments placed on care work and schooling during this period. They found that Germany, Greece, France, Cyprus and Austria (in the first period), Luxemburg, Poland, Portugal and Romania compensated care tasks for an amount equal – or even higher (AT, FR first period) - to that of job retention schemes.

Other aspects may have an impact in terms of gender equality. The requirement for one parent to take leave at a time can be conducive to the wider use of leave by men. In Belgium, where parental leave can only be taken on a part-time basis, employees can reduce working time up to 50 % and ensure full-time care only if both parents take leave. In Italy, each parent is entitled to 15 days and both are encouraged to alternate so that care can be provided for a total of 30 days. The higher rate of compensation for lone parents (BE, CY)

can be considered a positive measure. On the other hand, the double duration of leave for lone parents (DE), usually women, might reinforce gender stereotypes and discrimination in the labour market. The gender impact of different leave provisions needs to be assessed further, taking into account different family situations and employment arrangements.

4.2 GENDER BALANCE OF COVID-19 CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Gender-sensitive COVID-19 crisis management requires to mainstream gender in the design and implementation of emergency and recovery policy responses, including gender analysis, gender impact assessment, collection of sex-disaggregated data and developing gender indicators in all sectors. At the same time, it is essential to promote gender skills and expertise - ensuring gender balance in decision-making processes on prevention and response to COVID-19 in all countries can strengthen governments' responses (OECD, 2020v). Unless gender mainstreaming is implemented, policy responses to the COVID-19 outbreak can exacerbate existing systemic gender inequalities and/or contribute to gender 'pushback movements'.

The benefits of a gender balance in COVID-19 crisis management extend beyond the immediate consequences of the emergency to the longer-term implications of the pandemic for gender equality. However, 25 years after the landmark of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, politics remains overwhelmingly the domain of men. The COVID-19 crisis means that women's absence from political decision-making is now having a direct impact on people's lives.

Alongside research showing that countries led by women fought the pandemic most effectively ([66]), a recent study critically assesses the gender gap in task forces organised to prevent, monitor and mitigate COVID-19 and emphasises the exclusion of gender-diverse voices (BMJ Global Health, 2020). Covering 87 UN Member States, the study showed that a mere 3.5 % of 115 identified COVID-19 decision-making and expert task forces had gender parity in their membership, with men being the majority in 85.2 % of cases.

Box 5.1 summarises the situation in some EU Member States.

Box 5.1 - Gender balance in COVID-19 crisis management structures in some EU Member States (to July 2020)

Belgium: The Scientific Committee for Coronavirus is composed of 13 people, six of whom are women.

([66]) See Global Gender Gap Report (2020), which ranks countries in terms of their gender equality performance, i.e. measuring gender parity in terms of the participation of women and men in society and the opportunities available to each gender in access to health, education and employment, among others.

Estonia: The Research Council for COVID-19 Control is composed of five people. Three are women, one of whom is the Head of the Research Council. The Emergency Government Committee is composed of 10 members, only one of whom is a woman.

Ireland: The National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHET) is made up of 35 people, 15 of whom are women. The Expert Advisory Group monitors and reviews national and international research and developments in relation to COVID-19 and provides expert advice to NPHET, the Health Service Executive and others as appropriate. It is composed of 27 people, 12 of whom are women.

Greece: The Commission for the Management of Emergency Events due to Infectious Diseases is composed of 26 people, eight of whom are women.

Spain: The Scientific Technical Committee COVID-19 is made up of seven people, three of whom are women.

France: The Scientific Committee for Coronavirus is made up of 13 people, three of whom are women.

Italy: The COVID-19 Technical Scientific Committee (CTS) was initially entirely composed of 20 men. After several protests by female deputies and senators and civil society, in May 2020, the Committee integrated six women. In April 2020, the Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family established the Task Force 'Women for a New Renaissance', comprising 12 women from academia, public administration and business. Its aim is to make proposals and recommendations for post-COVID-19 social, cultural and economic recovery.

Lithuania: The Government's COVID-19 Response Committee is made up of one woman and 11 men.

Luxembourg: The Advisory Council to accompany the measures decided as part of the fight against COVID-19 is made up of eight people, three of whom are women.

Hungary: The Coronavirus Task force is made up of 15 people, one of whom is a woman.

Austria: The Coronavirus Taskforce comprises 27 people, divided into 10 from relevant Ministries and 17 experts. There is an equal share of women and men (five of each) among the representatives of Ministries, compared to only five women among the 17 experts.

Portugal: The Task Force for operationalisation and implementation of measures for prevention and control of infection with new Coronavirus – COVID-19 is made up of 76 people, 44 of whom are women.

Finland: The COVID-19 Working Group on essential work-related travel and other traffic is composed of 18 members, 11 of whom are women and one is the Head of the Group. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has appointed a working group to strengthen the rights of the child and the wellbeing of children and families in the aftermath of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The information gathered by the working group will be used in the preparation of the National Child Strategy to assess the realisation of the rights of the child during the state of emergency. The working group is made up of six members, three women and three men.

Sweden: The Swedish government is a self-declared explicitly feminist government and measures are in place to ensure gender-equal representation on all Committees, Commissions of Inquiry and Boards of Government. The Division for Gender Equality must approve all appointments for State Secretaries. If gender balance cannot be achieved, an explanatory memorandum has to be submitted, subject to the approval of the Division for Gender Equality. In June 2020, a Commission of Inquiry was appointed to evaluate the measures taken by the government and municipalities during the COVID-19 pandemic. All proposed measures have to be assessed from a gender equality perspective. The composition of the membership of the Commission is gender equal.

Source: BMJ Global Health (2020); own desk research on data (July 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

The COVID-19 crisis is revealing longer lasting adverse socio-economic effects for women than for men

The sharp and unprecedented decline in total number of working hours during **the first wave of the pandemic was more pronounced for women** than for men, showing the major cumulative effect of losses on the labour market and shrinking hours of work for those who sustained jobs. Young, low–educated and migrant women face even harsher socio-economic reality.

Young people, especially young women, lost disproportionately more jobs during the first COVID-19 wave. Employment generally reduced by 2.4 %, but fell by more than 10 % for young women and 9 % for young men. These jobs represented first steps into the labour market and student jobs allowing people to combine work and study and make their first contributions to the social security system. Previous crises have shown that entering the labour market during a recession can negatively affect young people's labour market outcomes for a decade or longer. This is a particular concern for the current generation of younger women, whose limited job opportunities at graduation combined with forthcoming detachment from the labour market due to caring duties, will pave the way for earnings' 'penalties' now and in the future.

The decline in employment rates has also been severe for low educated and foreign born people, mostly women (born either in a non-EU country or in another EU Member State). The employment rate of women born in a non-EU country, for example, dropped to 50 %, eradicating decades-long gains. Migrant women take a large share of crisis-declared 'essential jobs', including in healthcare, agriculture and food processing.

The initial pandemic and containment measures strongly impacted self-employed, temporary, part-time workers and informal workers. Women are disproportionately represented in these non-standard forms of work, accounting for 69 % of the losses registered among part-time workers aged 15-64. The sectors most impacted by the COVID-19 crisis are also those with a high incidence of undeclared jobs. For example, **accommodation and food services, with 54 % of female workers, registered the largest decline in employment** during Q2 2020 compared to the previous year, with the impact more pronounced for women (-21 %) than for men (-17 %). Estimates of undeclared work point chiefly to hospitality jobs, with women more likely to be in such arrangements (22 % of women compared to 13 % of men).

Women's employment losses were concentrated in highly feminised and hardest-hit sectors such as retail, accommodation, residential care activities, activities of households as employers of domestic

personnel, or manufacturing of wearing apparel. Across these sectors, women's employment reduced by 1.5 million across the EU (or close to 40 % of the entire 3.8 million employment reduction among women). **Men encountered the largest employment losses in the male-dominated sectors** more severely affected by the COVID-19 crisis, such as construction and wholesale trade. The hardest-hit sectors during the first COVID-19 wave, such as accommodation and food service, domestic work, administrative and support service activities, arts and entertainment, carried on with reduced employment in Q3 2020, especially if compared to the recovery in the rest of the economy.

The economic recovery observed in summer 2020 presented major hurdles for women to come back to the labour market. During Q3 2020, overall women's employment increased by 0.8 % compared to 1.4 % of men, with the slightest growth observed for women aged 25-49 (0.3 % compared to 0.7 % for men). The COVID-19 crisis has not only aggravated care duties, but made women's participation in the labour market even more fragile. The shallow recovery, especially among women, indicates that socio-economic impact of crisis might have much longer lasting adverse effect on women than men.

Share of unpaid work is a major determinant of who is losing most in COVID-19 crisis

The unpaid care burden increased for both women and men during the first pandemic wave, although women continued to bear the brunt of it. The closure of schools, reduction or closure of childcare and other care services, as well as other confinement measures, placed **women with caring responsibilities under particular strain for gainful employment and career prospects**. The majority of healthcare workers are women, who often faced serious challenges in balancing work and private life, accompanied by increased risk of contracting the virus and negative psychological effects or even episodes of violence.

A heightened share of care duties saw more employed women than men facing difficulties in concentrating on their job or giving due time to work. The decrease in informal help from grandparents and domestic workers due to mobility restrictions and social distancing exacerbated the difficulties for parents children and people with other care responsibilities. The major burden here fell on women's shoulders. **Women's higher withdrawal from the labour market might be one of the major consequences of the crisis management-induced shock to care arrangements.** This shows that the COVID-19 pandemic may reinforce traditional gender roles within the private sphere and damage women's long-term labour market prospects.

The acceleration of the use of telework had a profound impact on the working and living conditions of workers, with potential positive and negative effects, especially for women with care responsibilities. Generally, the crisis demonstrated that **paid employment - whether in teleworking mode or not - is only possible within the limits of available time outside care duties.** In addition, telework during COVID-19

may have led to longer working hours, increased intensity of work, higher stress levels, blurred boundaries between work and home life, greater sense of isolation and loneliness which may adversely affect workers' mental health and wellbeing.

Digital transformation of economies open new prospects for gender equality, but may well exacerbate long-standing inequalities

The pandemic revealed a new form of labour market inequality defined by the degree of teleworkability within jobs and occupations, and workers' capacity to telework (depending on their digital skills and available space, internet access and equipment at home). Although the COVID-19 confinement measures contributed to the spread of teleworking among mid and low-skilled white-collar occupations, the teleworking remains more widespread among high-skilled and educated workers, those employed in the service sector, living in cities, young people and women**. The spread of telework also reveals new challenges and opportunities for gender equality.** The preliminary evidence shows that **higher share of women than men are engaged in teleworkable occupations,** which may have helped many women to remain in employment. However, if telework is seen more as an option for women with caring duties, **it holds a major risk of reinforcing gender roles and making telework a highly feminised alternative to office-based work**.

Despite the major gender segregation in the labour market, the economic stronghold of digital economic sectors, public administration and social work might break a number of existing stereotypes discouraging women or men to enter these jobs. The crisis demonstrated **fragile signs of breaking down the usual patterns of gender segregation.** In the male-dominated ICT sector, women accounted for a somewhat higher share of new employment than in the previous year. Men accounted for a vast majority of the employment increase in the female-dominated personal services.

The COVID-19 **crisis exacerbates gender gaps in financial fragility and poverty risk,** with 58 % of women reporting not being able to maintain the same standard of living for more than three months (compared to 48 % of men) and 36 % being in a worse financial situation than the previous three months (compared to 31 % of men). The COVID-19 crisis accelerated digitalisation, such as increased creation of digital platforms for remote and independent work, offered some chance of accessing additional income during the crisis. Nonetheless, work on online platforms did not save from financial distress, with 59 % of online patform working women and 53 % of online platfrom working women indicating that their households' financial situation has deteriorated. The risk of poverty has always been higher in households with children, but increased childcare duties during lockdown are likely to have had an adverse effect on maintaining the job - and thus the pay and career prospects - for working mothers, particularly lone mothers. Emerging crisis

statistics show that, among parents, the share of women and men struggling to make ends meet was higher than among households without children.

Emerging gender equality effects of the COVID-19 crisis should be foregrounded in forthcoming recovery and resilience measures

Work-life balance policies were usually based on the model of workers working outside the home while their children attended school. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted this model with the adoption of containment measures that led to homeschooling, closure of care facilities, home-based work and change in the amount and nature of household and care tasks. These measures, although primarily linked to public health considerations, have been designed and assessed mainly from economic perspective. **Concerns about work-life balance in relation to lockdown measures have occurred only on a secondary basis and in terms of economic impact** (e.g. how the closure of childcare services impacts parents' professional activity) rather than in terms of support for parenting or equal sharing of caring duties.

Gender equality considerations should be part of the estimations of potential economic and social impacts when designing containment and recovery measures. Neglect of gender inequalities in unpaid care and new challenges in work-life balance as major hurdles for women's employment was shown to have not only major short-term effects, but also numerous and unfolding long-term effects for women. The current crisis clearly demonstrates that a number of measures introduced to support parents needed more effective policy design. For example, special leave or adaptation of existing parental leave schemes during the COVID-19 crisis did not consider the variety of working patterns or family situations of workers and carers. This study also identified the dearth of measures directly addressing the specific problems of work-life balance (e.g. homeschooling) among people working from home.

Policy responses to the COVID-19 outbreak need to address different socio-economic impacts of crisis for women and men and alleviate very unequal short-term and long-lasting effects. It is therefore **essential to mainstream gender in the design and implementation of emergency and recovery policy responses**. It is also necessary to promote gender skills and expertise among those responsible for crisis management. National gender equality bodies should work with the national structures responsible for Covid-19 recovery efforts to ensure gender-mainstreaming tools, such as gender impact assessments and gender budgeting, are used throughout the recovery. **Ensuring gender-balance in decision-making processes on prevention and response to COVID-19 in all countries can strengthen governments' responses.** The long-lasting gender equality consequences may in fact reflect the mere 3.5 % of 115 identified COVID-19 decision-making and expert task forces with gender-equal membership, with men being the majority in 85.2 % of cases.

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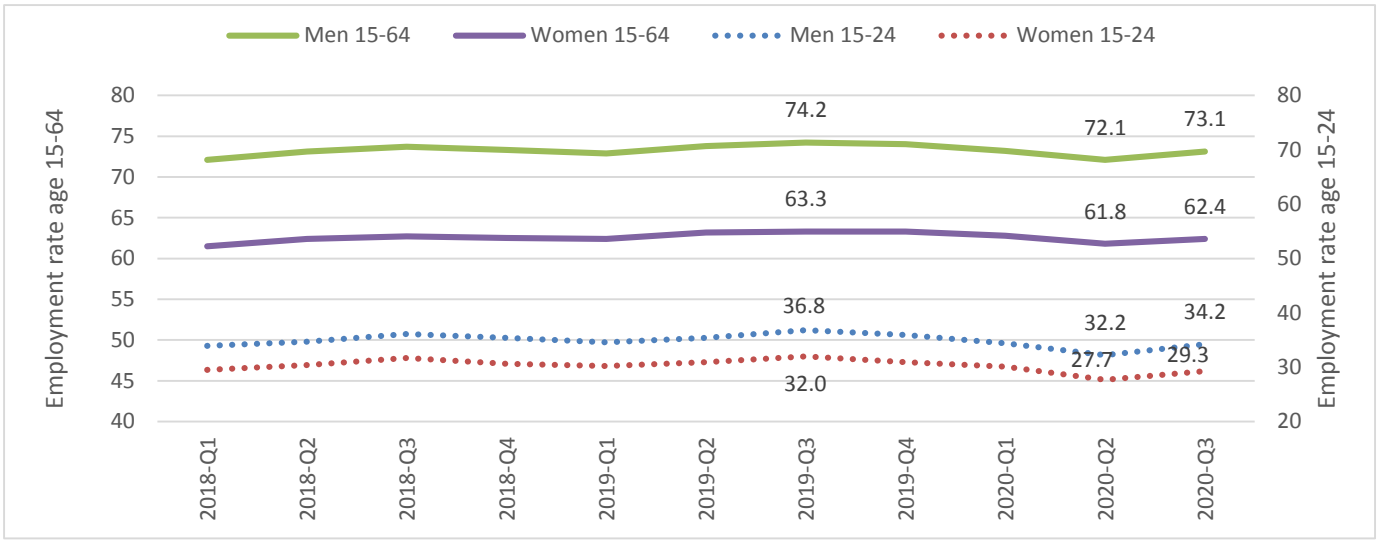
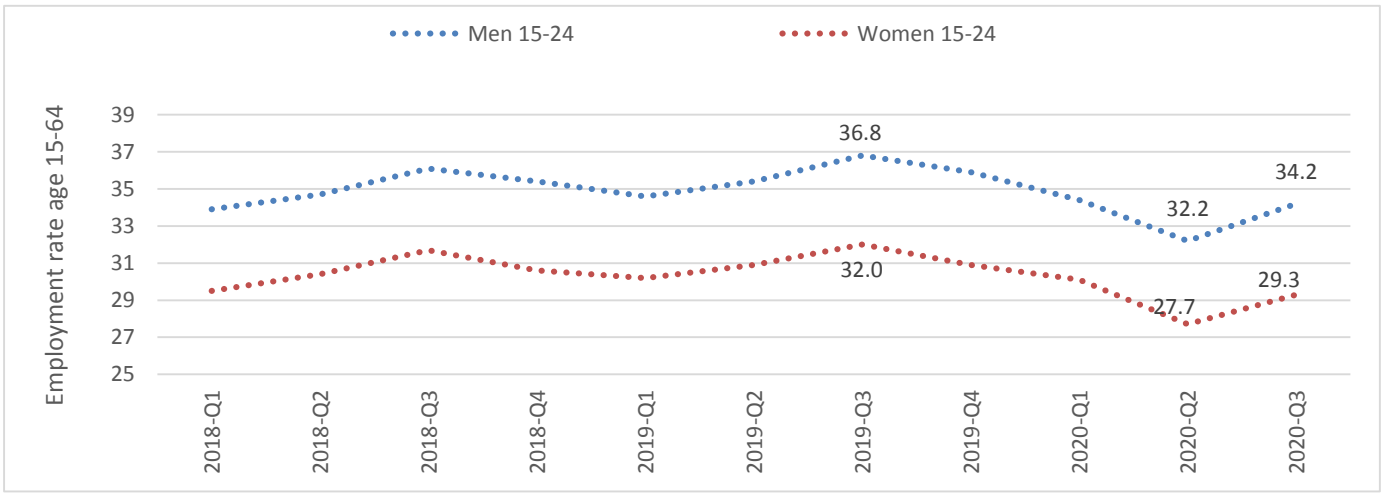
ANNEX

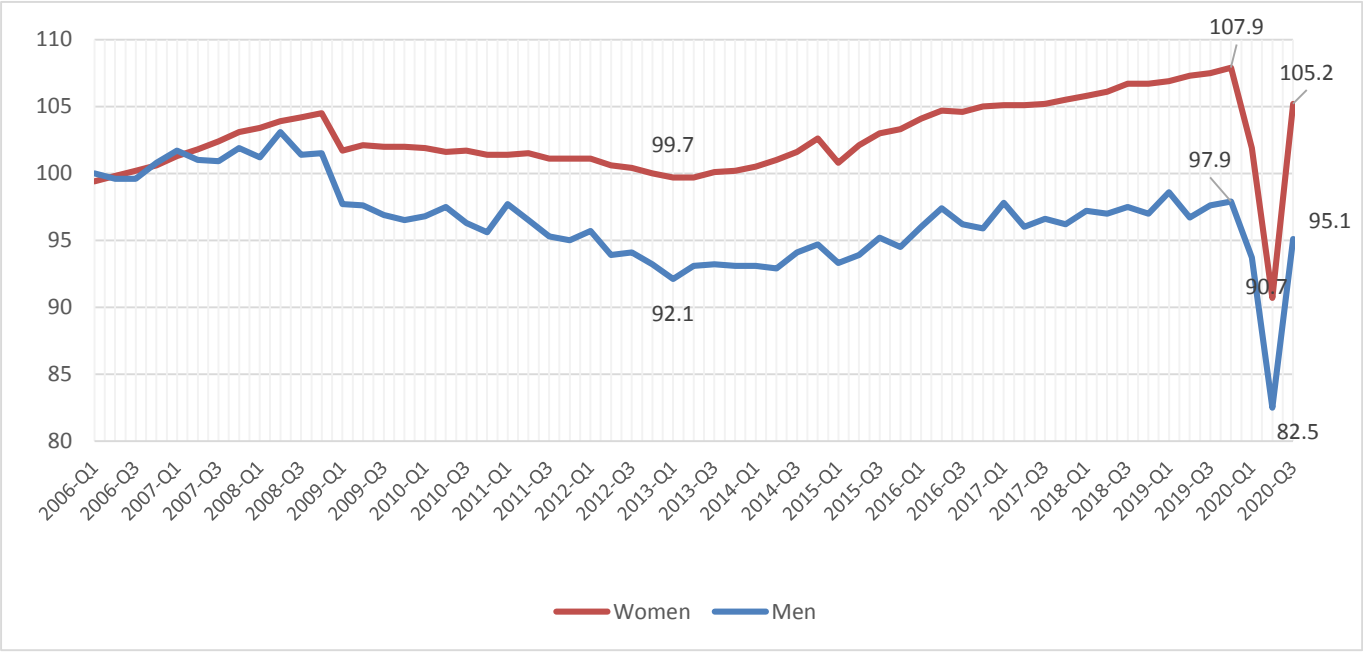
Figure 13 - Evolution of employment rates, by sex and age (%, EU-27, Q1 2018-Q3 2020)





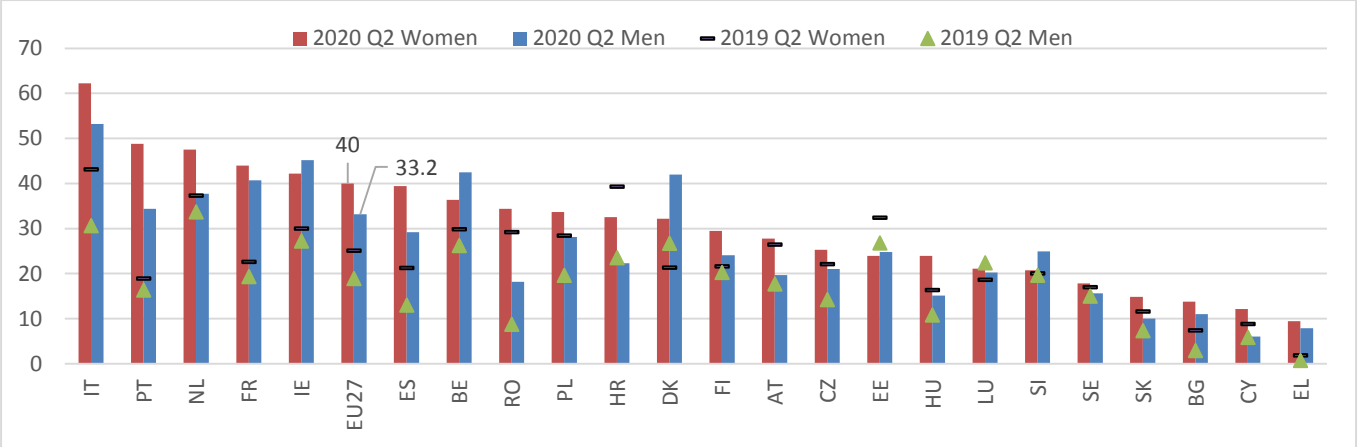
Source: Eurostat (lfsq_ergacob).

Figure 14 - Index of total actual hours worked in main job, by sex (index points, EU-27, Q1 2006-Q3 2020)



Source: Eurostat (lfsi_ahw_q); seasonally adjusted data, not calendar adjusted data.

Figure 15 - Share of unemployed in the first quarter moving to inactivity in the second quarter, by country and sex (%, 15-74, 2019, 2020)



* Unemployed persons are all persons 15 to 74 years of age (16 to 74 years in ES and IT) who were not employed during the reference week, had actively sought work during the past four weeks and were ready to begin working immediately or within two weeks. Unreliable data for LT, LV; data for DE, MT unavailable.

Source: elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsi_long_q).

Figure 16 - Labour market slack as a percentage of extended labour force, by sex (%, EU-27, Q2 2020 and Q3 2020)

Source: elaboration on Eurostat data (lfsi_slal_q), seasonally adjusted data.

Table 6 - Changes in employment rates of women and men, by age group and country (p.p., EU-27)

	Women 15-24		Men 15-24	
	Change (p.p.) between Q2-Q3 2020	Change (p.p.) between 2019Q3-2020Q3	Change (p.p.) between Q2-Q3 2020	Change (p.p.) between 2019Q3-2020Q3
IE	6.7	-3.2	4.9	-6.0
AT	5.2	1.2	5.6	-1.5
FI	4.8	-0.7	-2.1	-6.2
SI	4.6	-6	7.6	-7.1
MT	4.3	-2.3	2.7	-5.4
SE	4	-5.9	1.9	-7.2
BG	3.8	-4.2	1.5	-4.5
BE	3.6	-3.8	4.5	-2.4
EE	3.5	-6	-1.2	-7.5
ES	2.8	-4.7	2.9	-5.6
NL	2.6	-3.1	0.5	-5.0
LU	2.4	1.1	4.5	-6.6
FR	2.1	-1.8	4.0	0.1
CY	2.1	-0.4	0.8	-2.9
IT	1.9	-2.3	1.0	-1.5
HU	1.9	-0.4	2.8	-1.8
LT	1.8	-8.1	-1.7	-6.3
EU27	1.6	-2.7	2.0	-2.6
DK	1.4	-1.3	0.7	-2.5
SK	1.4	-1	0.0	-3.3
PT	1.3	-5.3	-0.3	-8.5
HR	1.1	-6.6	2.8	-1.5
EL	0.8	-1.6	1.4	0.1
CZ	0	-6.5	2.4	0.0
RO	-0.7	-1.3	1.1	-0.7
PL	-1.2	-5.4	1.1	-4.6
LV	-2.6	-4.9	2.1	-1.9

	Women 15-64		Men 15-64	
	Change (p.p.) between Q2-Q3 2020	Change (p.p.) between 2019Q3-2020Q3	Change (p.p.) between Q2-Q3 2020	Change (p.p.) between 2019Q3-2020Q3
AT	2.2	-0.4	2.6	-1.2
MT	1.9	3.2	-0.4	-2.3
BG	1.8	-1.5	2.7	-2.1
IE	1.7	-1.8	2.2	-2
EE	1.6	-1.7	1.4	-3.6
ES	1.5	-2.6	1.9	-2.9
HU	1.4	-0.3	1.6	0.2
PL	1.3	0.1	1	0.1
PT	1.2	-1	0.6	-3.5
SE	1.1	-1.7	0.3	-2.6
SI	1.1	-1	0.6	-1.4
HR	1	-1.3	0.6	1.1
EL	0.9	-0.1	1.6	-0.7
FI	0.9	-1.4	1.1	-1.1
BE	0.8	-0.7	0.8	-0.8
EU27	0.6	-0.9	1	-1.1
SK	0.6	-0.9	0.7	-1.2
DK	0.6	-1.2	0.4	-1.2
RO	0.5	-0.5	1.3	-0.8
NL	0.4	-0.7	0.2	-1.1
FR	0.3	-0.3	1.1	-0.1
IT	0.1	-1.6	0.9	-1.2
CZ	-0.1	-1.5	0.7	-0.3
LT	-0.3	-2.6	-1.2	-2.5
LV	-0.3	-1.3	0.5	-1.7
LU	-0.6	0.1	0.6	-2
CY	-1.5	-1.1	1.1	-1.3

Source: elaboration on Eurostat data (lfsq_ergacob).

Note: Data for DE not available

Table 7 - Changes in unemployment rates of women and men, by country (p.p., 15-64)

	Women 15-64		Men 15-64	
	Change (p.p.) between Q2-Q3 2020	Change (p.p.) between 2019Q3-2020Q3	Change (p.p.) between Q2-Q3 2020	Change (p.p.) between 2019Q3-2020Q3
BG	-1.3	0.8	-0.9	1.5
FI	-1.2	1.8	-1.3	1.7
SE	-0.4	1.9	-0.5	2.4
HU	-0.3	1	-0.2	1
MT	-0.1	0.5	0.3	1.2
RO	-0.1	1.6	-0.2	1.3
SI	0	0.9	-0.1	-0.1
EE	0.1	3.1	0.5	4.3
EL	0.2	-0.5	-1.1	0.1
AT	0.3	1.4	-0.1	1.3
PL	0.5	0.3	-0.1	0.2
HR	0.6	1.9	1.4	1.7
CZ	0.8	0.8	0.3	0.7
LV	0.8	2.3	-1.3	2.6
NL	0.8	1.4	0.3	0.9
SK	1.1	1.6	0.2	1.2
DK	1.1	1.5	1.4	1.4
EU27	1.2	1.2	0.6	1
LT	1.5	3.7	0.1	3
ES	1.7	2.5	0.3	2.2
BE	1.7	1.2	1.4	1.1
CY	2	0.2	1	2.7
PT	2.5	1.1	2.2	2.3
LU	2.5	2.8	0.8	1.4
FR	2.6	0.7	1.8	0.5
IE	2.6	2.7	1.6	1.3
IT	3	1.3	1.8	0.7

Note: Data unavailable for DE.

Source: elaboration on Eurostat data (lfsq_urgacob).

Table 8 - Absolute and percentage change in employment in Q2 2020 compared to the same period in previous year, by sector, type of employment and sex; share of women in 2019, by sector and type of employment (%, 15+, EU-27)

Sector	Temporary employment			Part-time employment			Self-employment		
	Absolute and percentage change between 2019Q2 and 2020Q2		Share of women in 2019	Absolute and percentage change between 2019Q2 and 2020Q2		Share of women in 2019	Absolute and percentage change between 2019Q2 and 2020Q2		Share of women in 2019
	Men	Women		Men	Women		Men	Women	
A	-8%	-6%	30%	-1%	-2%	50%	-1%	-8%	29%
C	-21%	-25%	33%	6%	-1%	67%	2%	-4%	22%
F	-25%	-20%	7%	-9%	-6%	43%	-3%	-16%	4%
G	-18%	-18%	54%	-2%	-4%	75%	-8%	-5%	32%
H	-25%	-31%	25%	-17%	-6%	47%	-3%	-6%	9%
I	-40%	-45%	56%	-25%	-25%	67%	-9%	-9%	40%
J	-8%	-2%	36%	4%	11%	54%	2%	4%	18%
K	-9%	-18%	60%	16%	9%	82%	-4%	-12%	25%
L	0%	-18%	55%	26%	10%	67%	12%	14%	36%
M	-14%	-12%	55%	2%	0%	70%	1%	3%	37%
N	-20%	-23%	50%	-14%	-12%	73%	-10%	-2%	35%
O	-6%	-2%	52%	-7%	16%	80%	:	:	43%
P	-6%	-6%	69%	-8%	0%	78%	-4%	-6%	56%
Q	8%	-8%	78%	1%	-2%	88%	7%	-1%	62%
R	-32%	-23%	48%	-14%	-5%	58%	0%	-4%	40%

S	4%	-15%	67%	15%	3%	80%	13%	4%	69%
T	-27%	-25%	88%	-13%	-20%	92%	:	-17%	81%
TOTAL	-18%	-17%	50%	-5%	-3%	73%	-2%	-3%	32%

Note: Sectors B, D, E, U not reported because of unreliable or unavailable data.

Source: EIGE elaboration on Eurostat data (lfsq_etgan2 ; lfsq_epgan2 ; lfsq_esgan2 ; lfsa_epgan2; lfsa_etgan2; lfsa_esgan2).

Table 9 - Percentage change in employment and hours worked in main job in Q2 2020 compared to the same period in previous year, by sector, share of workers by characteristics in 2019, and distribution of employment across sectors, by characteristics in 2019, (15+, EU-27)

Sectors/ occupations	% change during lock down compared to same period 2019 (2020-Q2/2019-Q2) (15+ o			Share in year 2019						Distribution (excluding no-response) in year 2019 (15+)							
	Employment (A)	Hours worked main job (B)	Composite Indicator	Temporary work	Part-time	Self-employment	Women	Young 15-24	Migrants*	Part-time		Temporary work		Self-employment		Young 15-24	
Sectors (NACE 1 dg)	lfsq_egan2 (1dg);	lfsq_ewhan2 (1dg)	0.5xA+0.5xB	lfsa_etgan2	lfsa_epgan2	lfsa_esgan2	lfsa_egan2	lfsa_egan2	OECD	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
I - Accommodation and food service activities	-19%	-11%	-15%	22%	30%	16%	54%	18%	12%	7%	9%	9%	7%	7%	5%	13%	9%
U - Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies	-19%	-1%	-10%	20%	9%	1%	53%	1%	45%	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
T - Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use	-18%	3%	-8%	18%	60%	4%	89%	3%	28%	4%	1%	3%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
R - Arts, entertainment and recreation	-6%	-8%	-7%	20%	33%	25%	48%	13%	6%	2%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	3%
N - Administrative and support service activities	-10%	-3%	-7%	16%	31%	11%	49%	7%	7%	7%	7%	5%	5%	4%	3%	4%	4%
H - Transportation and storage	-6%	-4%	-5%	11%	11%	9%	22%	6%	5%	2%	6%	2%	7%	1%	5%	2%	6%
G - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	-5%	-4%	-5%	12%	21%	16%	49%	11%	5%	16%	14%	14%	12%	16%	16%	22%	18%
F - Construction	-6%	-3%	-5%	12%	7%	24%	10%	8%	8%	2%	6%	1%	12%	1%	16%	1%	11%
E - Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	-4%	-1%	-3%	11%	8%	3%	22%	4%	3%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
C - Manufacturing	-1%	-3%	-2%	11%	8%	6%	30%	7%	6%	6%	8%	9%	19%	5%	8%	9%	21%
M - Professional, scientific and technical activities	1%	-5%	-2%	8%	18%	32%	48%	6%	7%	5%	6%	4%	3%	14%	12%	5%	3%

Note: *OECD data on foreign-born employed is not available for EU-27 countries and for all 21 NACE 1-digit sectors. Foreign-born data are calculated on information of the following countries: BE, CZ, DK, IE, EL, ES, IT, LU, HU, NL, AT, PL, PT, SK, FI, SE and the following sectors are aggregated: (D,E); (H;J); (L;M;N); (R;S). As it is not possible to rank sectors while maintaining such aggregation, the values provided for these sectors represent the average value of the sector aggregation group. For instance, for sector R- Arts and entertainment (as well as for S-Other services) the value reported refers to the average value of the aggregate (R;S). These values are reported in bold and in different colours, according to the sector aggregation group.

Economic activity	Total		Women		Men	
	Percentage change 2020 (Q2-Q3)	Percentage change Q3 (2019-2020)	Percentage change 2020 (Q2-Q3)	Percentage change Q3 (2019-2020)	Percentage change 2020 (Q2-Q3)	Percentage change Q3 (2019-2020)
I-Accommodation and food service activities	9%	-15%	9%	-16%	10%	-14%
T-Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods	5%	-12%	5%	-13%	9%	-1%
N-Administrative and support service activities	1%	-11%	-1%	-12%	3%	-9%
R-Arts, entertainment and recreation	2%	-6%	1%	-5%	2%	-6%
H-Transportation and storage	2%	-5%	-2%	-7%	3%	-5%
U-Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies	9%	-4%	5%	-10%	14%	1%
F-Construction	3%	-4%	2%	-5%	3%	-4%
G-Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and moto	2%	-4%	2%	-1%	1%	-6%
A-Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0%	-2%	-1%	-3%	0%	-2%
C-Manufacturing	0%	-2%	0%	-3%	0%	-1%
Q-Human health and social work activities	0%	-1%	1%	-1%	-1%	0%
M-Professional, scientific and technical activities	-1%	-1%	0%	0%	-1%	-1%
P-Education	-3%	0%	-3%	-1%	-3%	3%
B-Mining and quarrying	0%	1%	1%	8%	0%	0%
E-Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation	6%	2%	3%	-5%	7%	4%
K-Financial and insurance activities	0%	3%	0%	4%	-1%	2%
O-Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	2%	6%	1%	7%	3%	5%
L-Real estate activities	0%	7%	3%	6%	-4%	8%
S-Other service activities	2%	8%	4%	4%	-2%	16%
J-Information and communication	1%	10%	0%	6%	2%	11%
D-Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	5%	10%	8%	16%	4%	8%
TOTAL-Total - all NACE activities	1%	-2%	1%	-2%	1%	-2%

Table 10 - Changes in employment, by sex and economic activity (%, EU-27)

Source: elaboration on Eurostat data (lfsq_egan2).

Table 11 - 10 economic sectors with the largest employment losses between Q2 2020 and Q2 2019 and trends in Q3 2020 (NACE 2-digit level) (thousand, EU-27)

		Employment change (thousand) 2020Q2/2019Q2			Employment change (thousand) 2020Q3/2020Q2			Employment change (thousand) 2020Q3/2019Q3		
	Economic activity	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
1	I56-Food and beverage service activities	-1301	-573	-729	431	231	200	-1039	-478	-562
2	G47-Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	-661	-284	-376	410	131	280	-340	-192	-148
3	I55-Accommodation	-556	-212	-344	283	118	165	-519	-193	-326
4	F41-Construction of buildings	-430	-375	-55	175	171	4	-360	-294	-65
5	N81-Services to buildings and landscape activities	-416	-167	-249	66	36	31	-424	-183	-242
6	T97-Activities of households as employers of domestic personnel	-413	-49	-364	96	22	74	-249	-1	-248
7	Q87-Residential care activities	-405	-109	-296	-13	-5	-8	-520	-115	-405
8	G46-Wholesale trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles	-362	-294	-68	-34	-31	-4	-376	-352	-24
9	H52-Warehousing and support activities for transportation	-359	-300	-59	141	131	10	-304	-221	-83
10	F43-Specialised construction activities	-318	-331	13	231	205	26	-120	-151	31

Source: elaboration on Eurostat data (lfsq_egan2). The ranking do not include: for men: T98- Undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of private households for own use; for women: A03 - Fishing and aquaculture; B06 - Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas; B07 - Mining of metal ores; B09 - Mining support service activities; C12 - Manufacture of tobacco products; E39 - Remediation activities and other waste management.

Table 12 - 10 economic sectors with the largest employment increases between Q2 2020 and Q2 2019 and trends in Q3 2020 (NACE 2-digit level) (thousand, EU-27)

	Employment change (thousand) 2020Q2/2019Q2			Employment change (thousand) 2020Q3/2020Q2			Employment change (thousand) 2020Q3/2019Q3		
Economic activity (NACE rev.2 2 digit)	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**
O84-Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	587	145	441	230	181	49	828	371	458
J62-Computer programming, consultancy and related activities	573	412	161	94	73	21	605	454	151
Q88-Social work activities without accommodation	348	134	214	-25	20	-44	318	132	186
S96-Other personal service activities	200	185	14	88	0	88	281	156	125
K65-Insurance, reinsurance and pension funding, except compulsory social security	175	88	87	-14	4	-18	175	98	77
J61-Telecommunications	174	148	26	-24	-16	-8	180	154	26
C27-Manufacture of electrical equipment	158	132	26	-51	-30	-22	106	96	10
C32-Other manufacturing	109	87	22	-1	8	-8	124	100	24
C21-Manufacture of basic pharmaceutical products and pharmaceutical preparations	107	63	43	-16	-19	3	64	31	32
L68-Real estate activities	101	72	29	-23	-42	19	105	52	53

Source: elaboration from Eurostat data (lfsq_egan2). The ranking does not include: for men: T98- Undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of private households for own use; for women: A03 - Fishing and aquaculture; B06 - Extraction of crude petroleum and natural gas; B07 - Mining of metal ores; B09 - Mining support service activities; C12 - Manufacture of tobacco products; E39 - Remediation activities and other waste management.