

# Living and working and COVID-19

## April 2020

Results from Eurofound's COVID-19 survey

**Massimiliano Mascherini**

**19 May 2020**

# Health crisis with huge impact on economy and labour market

- **Global:** ILO projections 10.5% drop in working hours worldwide in 2020q2, equivalent of 305 million full-time workers (36 million new unemployed in US)
- **Unemployment:** EU official unemployment rate rising in March from 6.5% to 6.6% but taking into account leaves/suspensions, rates much higher (E.g. Spain registered unemployment raised 600000, but another 3.4 million are in short time or suspension of work schemes, meaning that roughly 1/5 of active population is not working)
- **Large scale restructuring in EU:** 2/3 of cases in March/April 2020 were COVID-related. Main sectors affected: Manufacturing, transport (esp. air), retail and hospitality/leisure

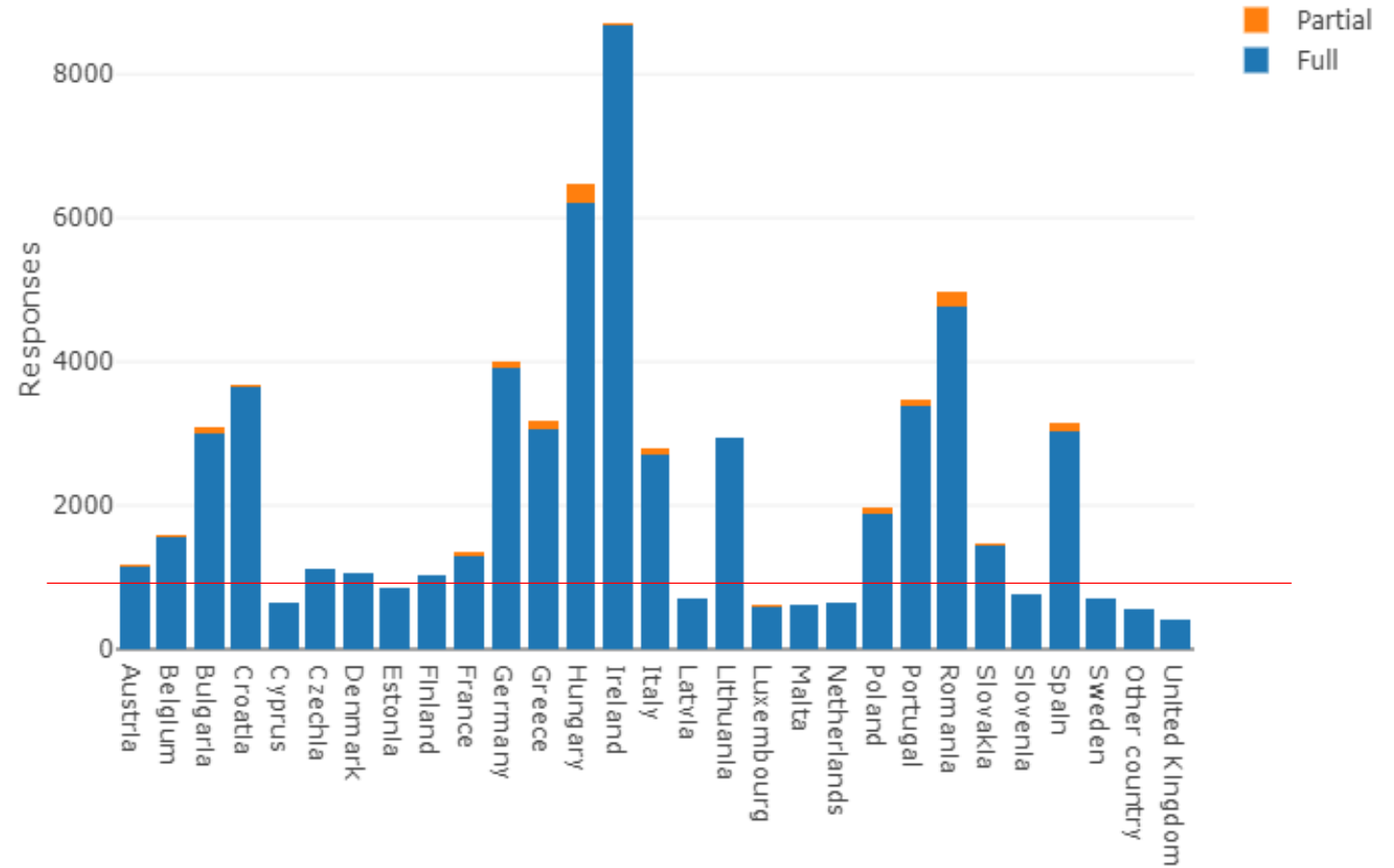
# Living, working and COVID-19

- On April 9<sup>th</sup>, EUROFOUND launched its **online survey** in order to capture the **immediate economic and social impact of the COVID-19 crisis** in Europe and beyond.
- Questionnaire composed of 32 questions, mainly from EQLS and EWCS, investigating three main areas:
  - **Wellbeing**
  - **Work and Telework**
  - **Living Conditions and Financial Situation.**
- Data Collection period: **9-30 April** when most Member States were in lockdown. Additional wave in **June**, when most Member States have released lockdown

# The survey

- Age group: 18+ years old
- Participation 9-30 April:
- **85,000** total responses
- **62,500** (72%) clean responses
- **> 1,000** in **19 Member States**
- From **600** to **1,000** in **8 MS**:  
(CY,EE,LV,LU,MT,NL,SI,SE)
- Sampling:  
Snowball + social media ads.

Response by country



# #COVID19study and Eurofound study

- Where do we stand in terms of quality criteria?
- Non-representative survey, but **ex-post weighting strategy**
- **#COVID19study** is most famous COVID online survey on citizens perceptions, launched by 12 leading universities, including Harvard and Cambridge.

EF online survey meets high standards of the academic driven #COVID19study and even goes beyond in terms of sampling, responses and minimum threshold

	<b>#COVID19study</b>	<b>Eurofound</b>
Starting date	22-Mar	09-Apr
Total Responses	114,000 in 54 countries	89,000 in 27 Member States
Minimum threshold	200	200
Sampling	snowball	snowball + Social Media ads
Weighting	age, gender, education, income	age, gender, education, residence

# Living, working and COVID-19

Key findings (May 6<sup>th</sup>)

- Europe hit very hard by COVID19 crisis
- High levels of loneliness and depression coupled with low levels of optimism
- A large share of respondents claimed to have lost their job (permanently or temporarily) with a dramatic decrease in working time
- Increase in telework that put strain among those workers with children.
- Stark picture of people's lives across 27 Member States who have seen economic situation worsen and deep concern about financial and labour market future
- All this resulted in low level of trust in the EU, lower than trust in national government.

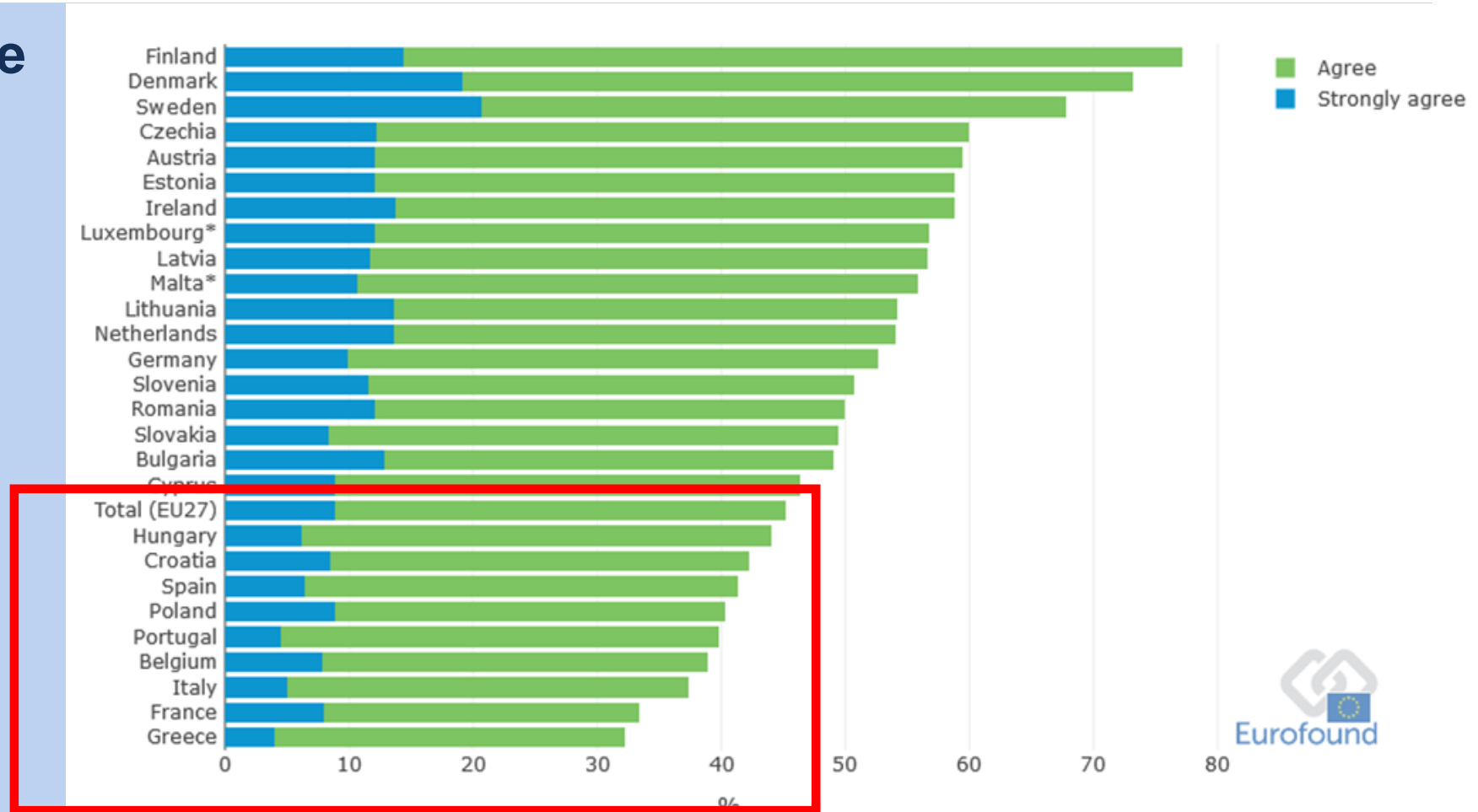
FIRST FINDINGS



Living, working and COVID-19  
First findings – April 2020

# Low optimism in own future...

- **46% of respondents are still optimistic** about their own future (ranges from 32% in Greece to 73% in Finland).
- In EQLS 2016 this share was **64%**.



# While feeling lonely and depressed...

## - Loneliness:

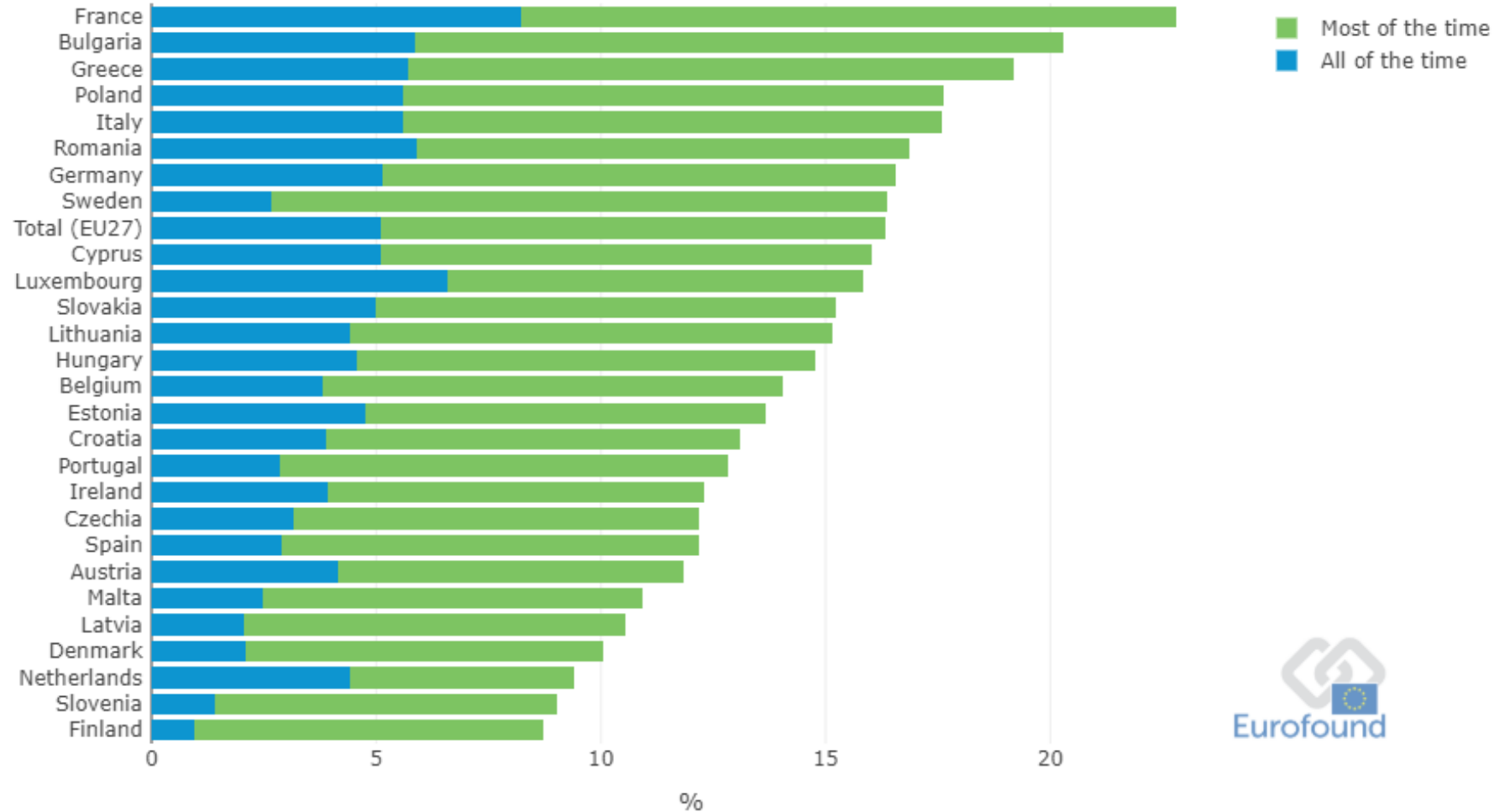
At EU level, 16% of respondents

2016 EQLS, loneliness was rated at just 6%

## - Depression:

At EU level, 13% of respondents

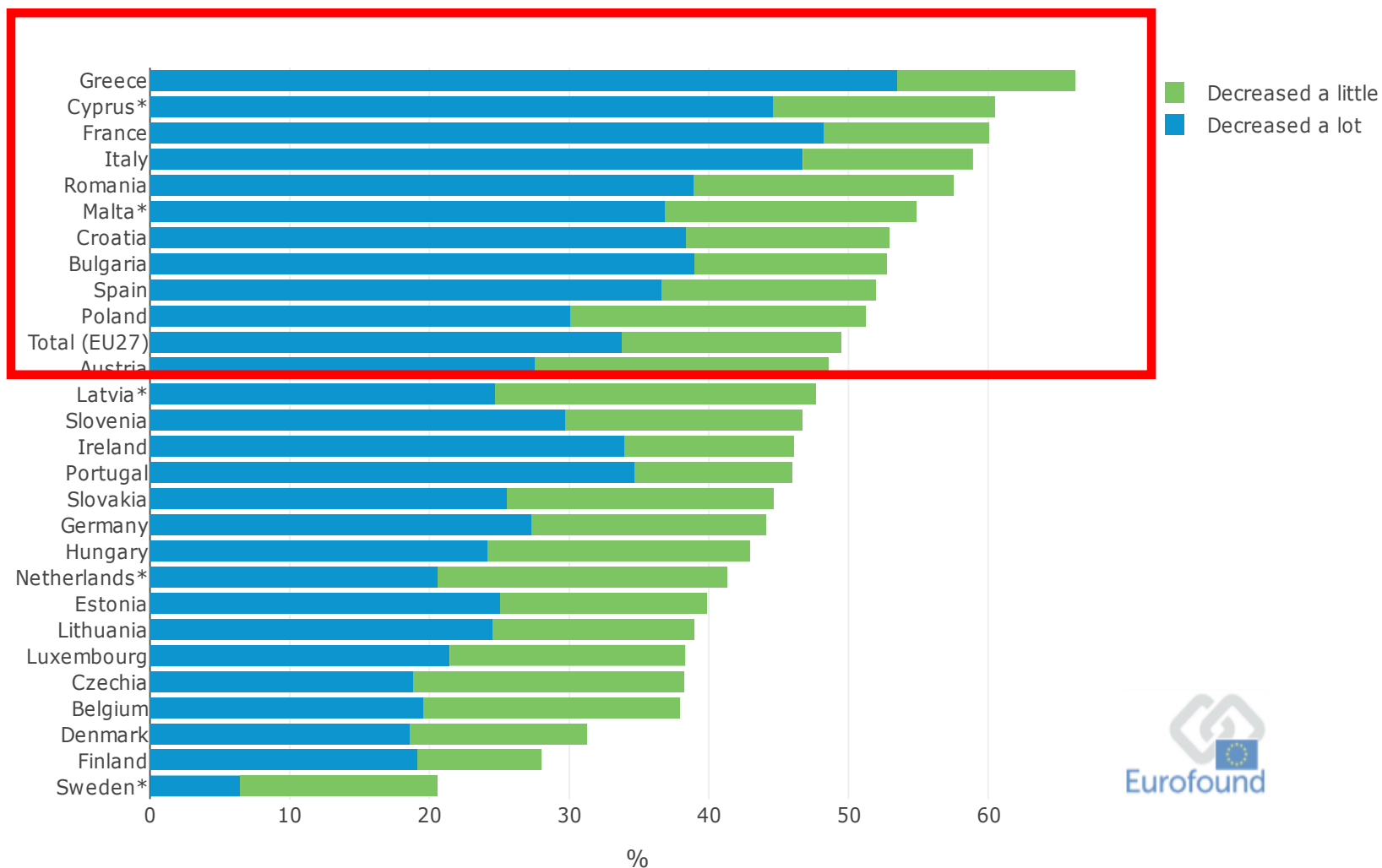
2016 EQLS, depression was rated at just 4%





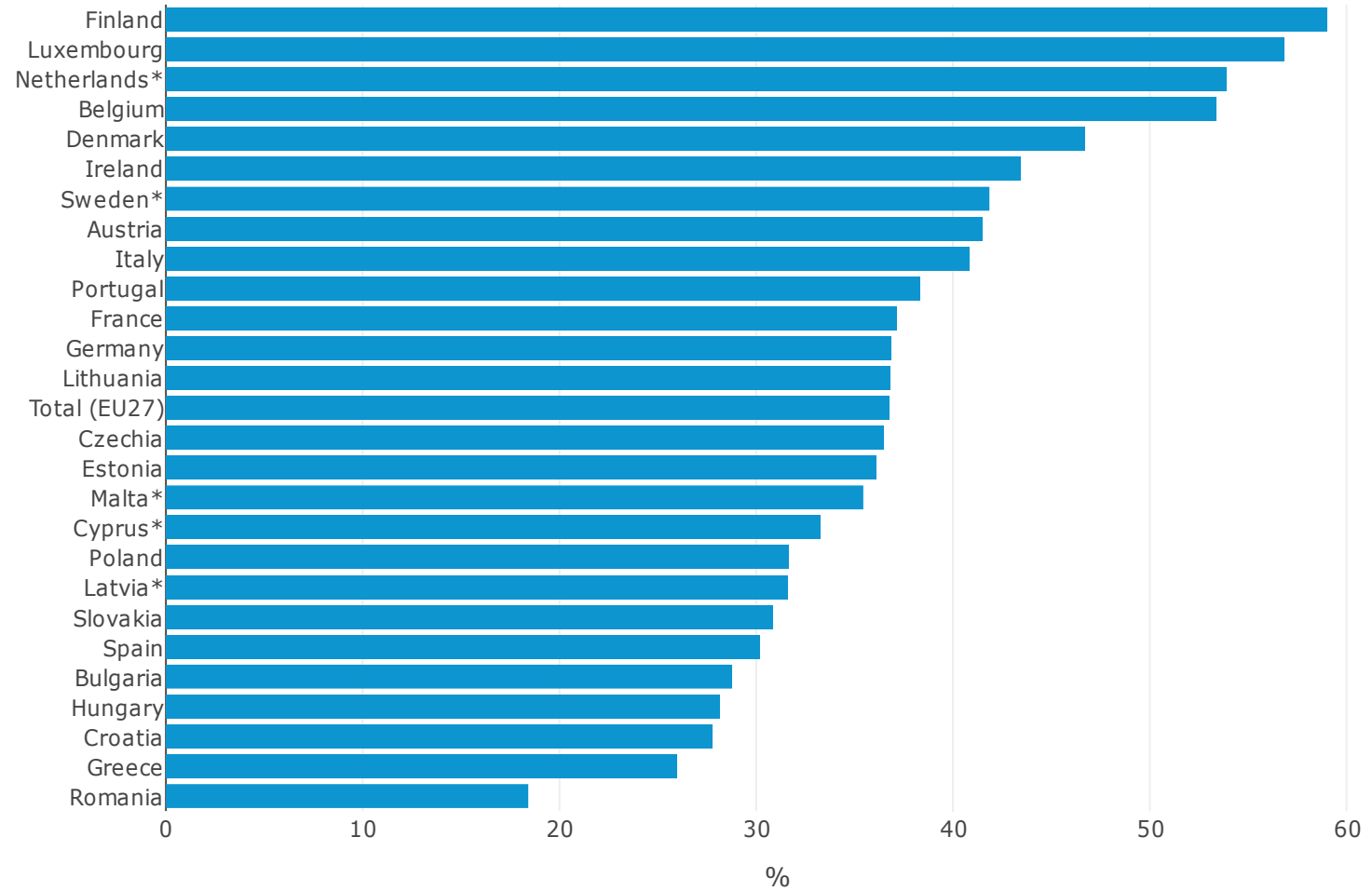
# Work and working hours

- **5%** report having **lost their job** or contract permanently
- **50%** report having seen their **working hours decrease** (with Romania, Italy, France, Cyprus and Greece most affected)



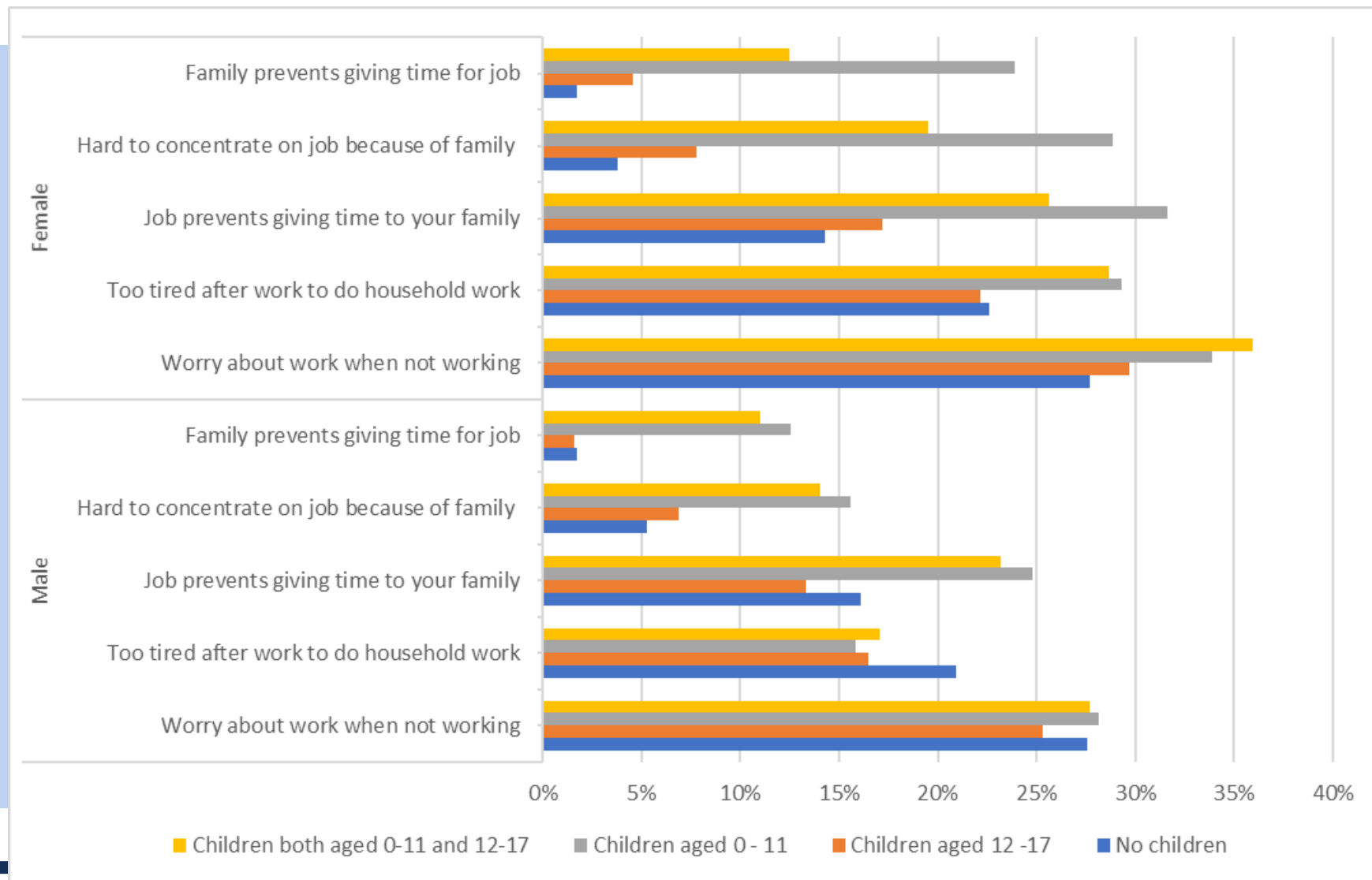
# Telework

- **37% of respondents started to work from home as a result of the COVID-19 crisis**
- This share was above 30% in the majority of Member States



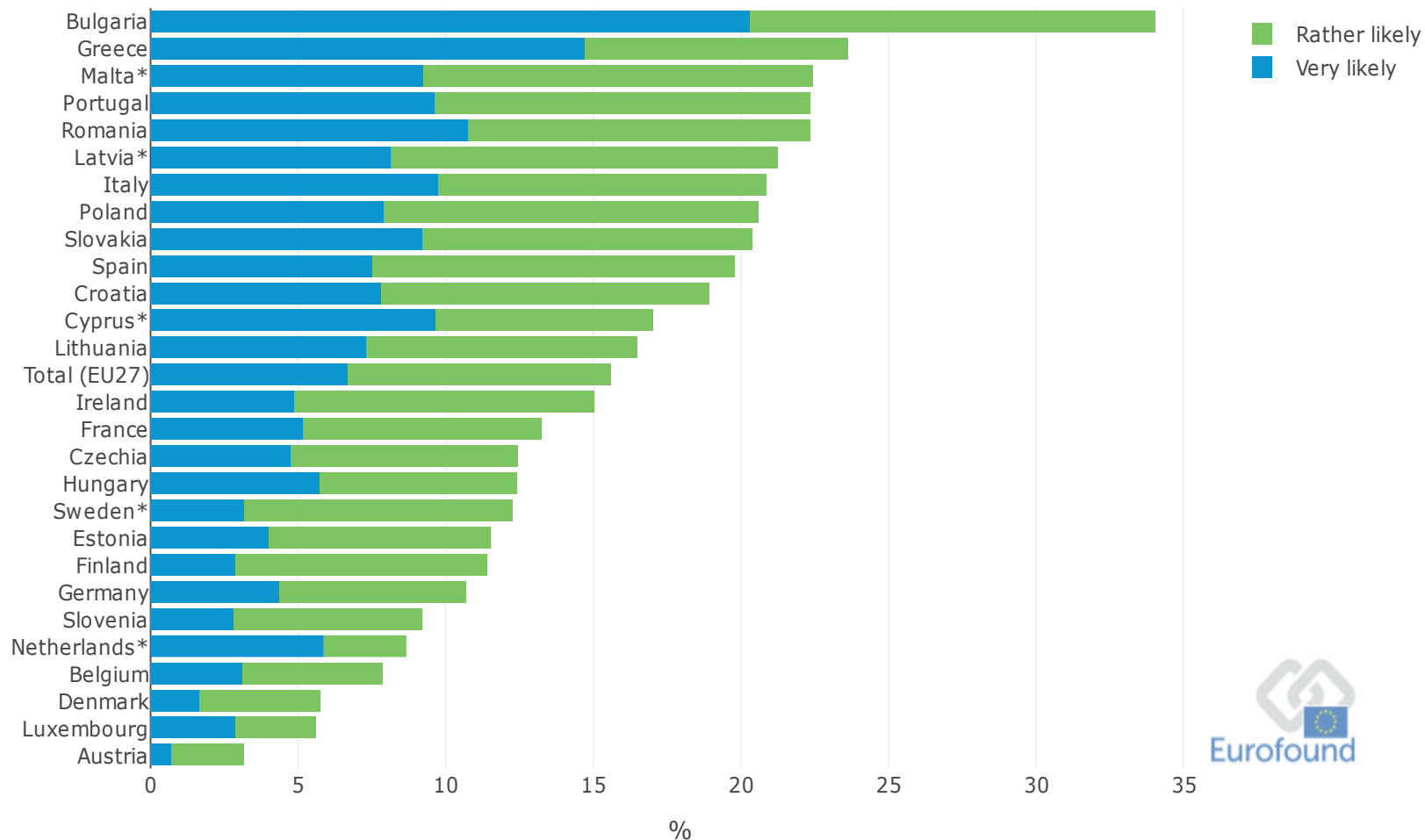
# Work Life Balance: A gender and household divide

- Women with **young children** twice as likely to encounter problems
  - Family prevents time for job:  
24% F vs 13% M
  - Job prevents time for family:  
32% F vs 24% M
  - Hard to concentrate:  
28% F vs 16% M
- ... against marginal share of those without children



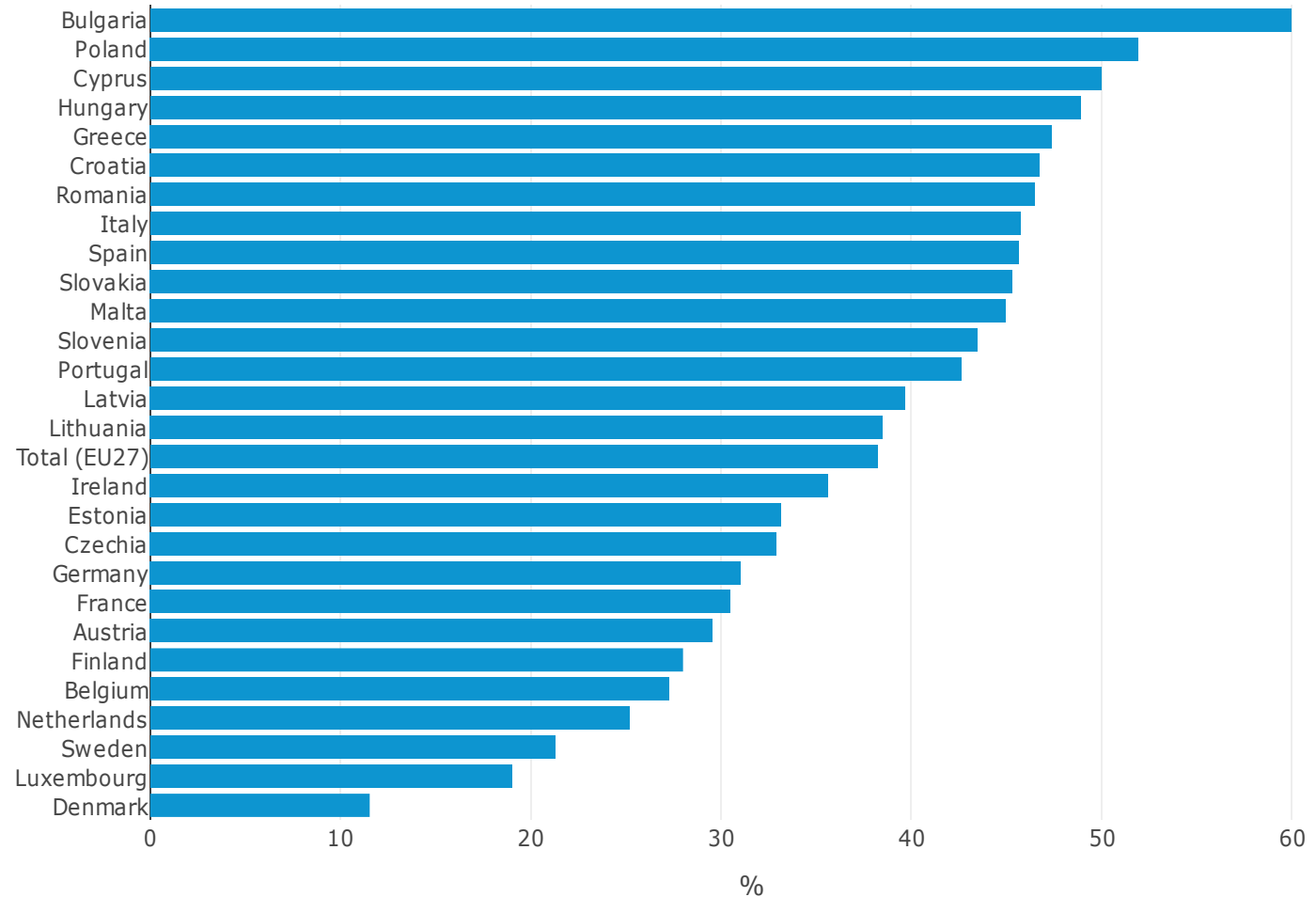
# Great insecurity for the future: Fear of losing job

- **16% think it is likely they will lose their job in the near future as a result of the COVID-19 crisis**
- This concern is higher in southern and eastern Member States



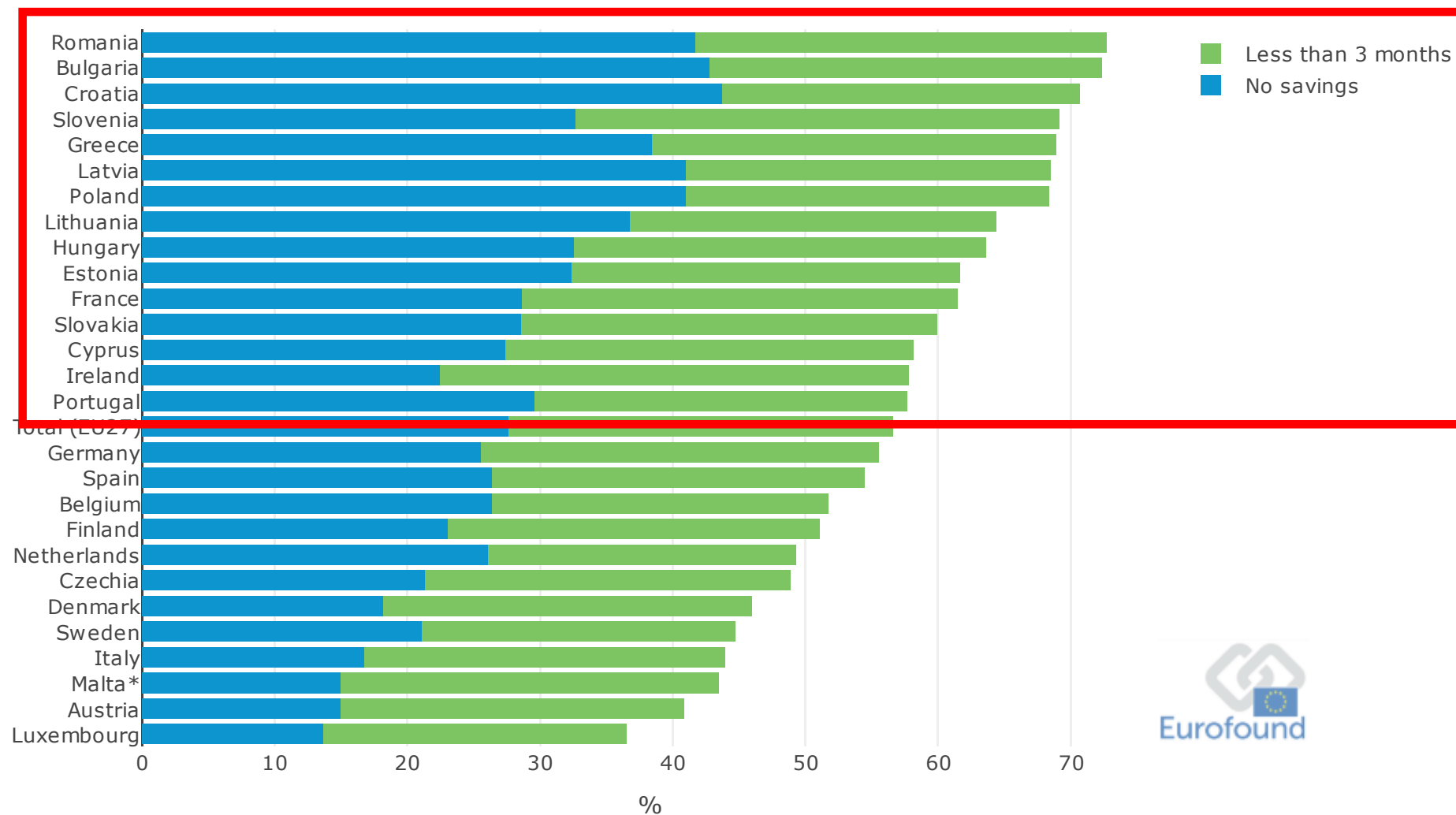
# A worsening and insecure financial situation....

- Almost **40%** perceive **their financial situation as worse** than before
- A similar share expect their financial situation to deteriorate further in the next three months



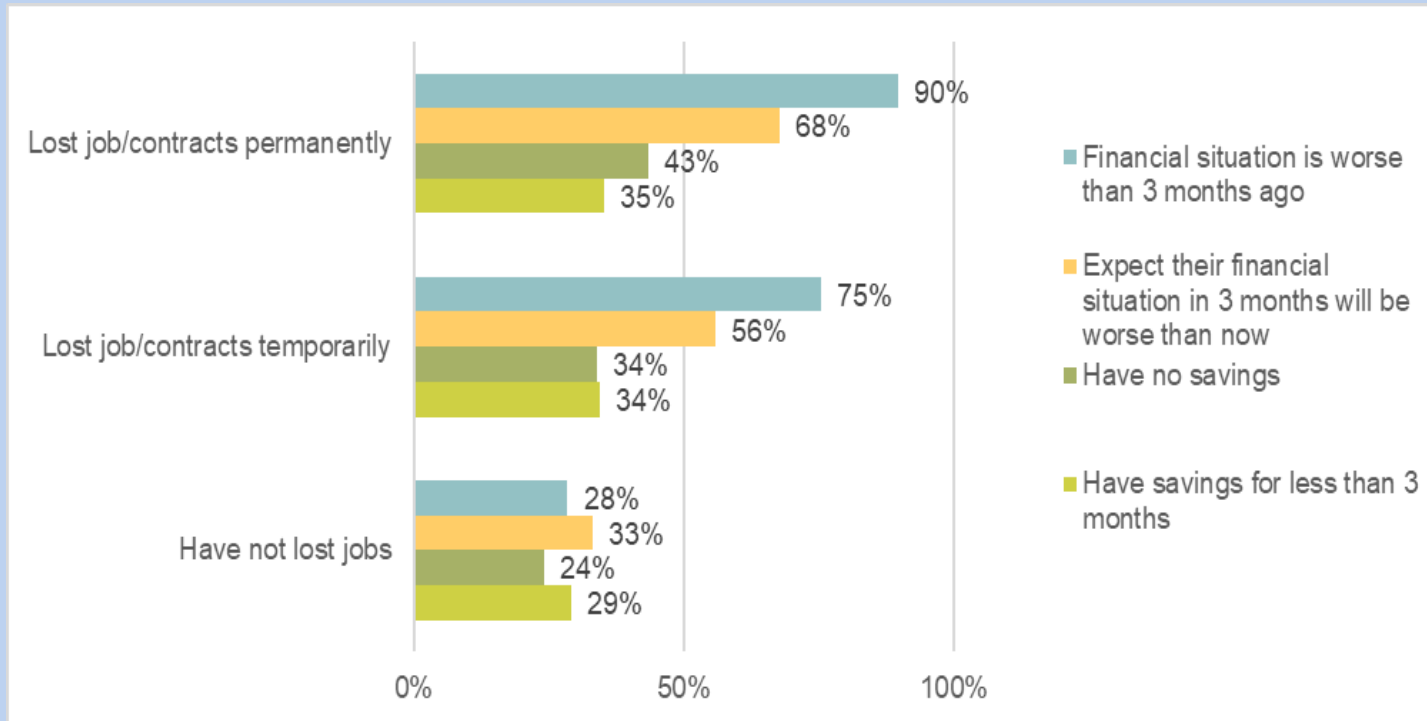
# How long without income

- 56% think they will be able to go less than three months without any income



# Importance of social protection

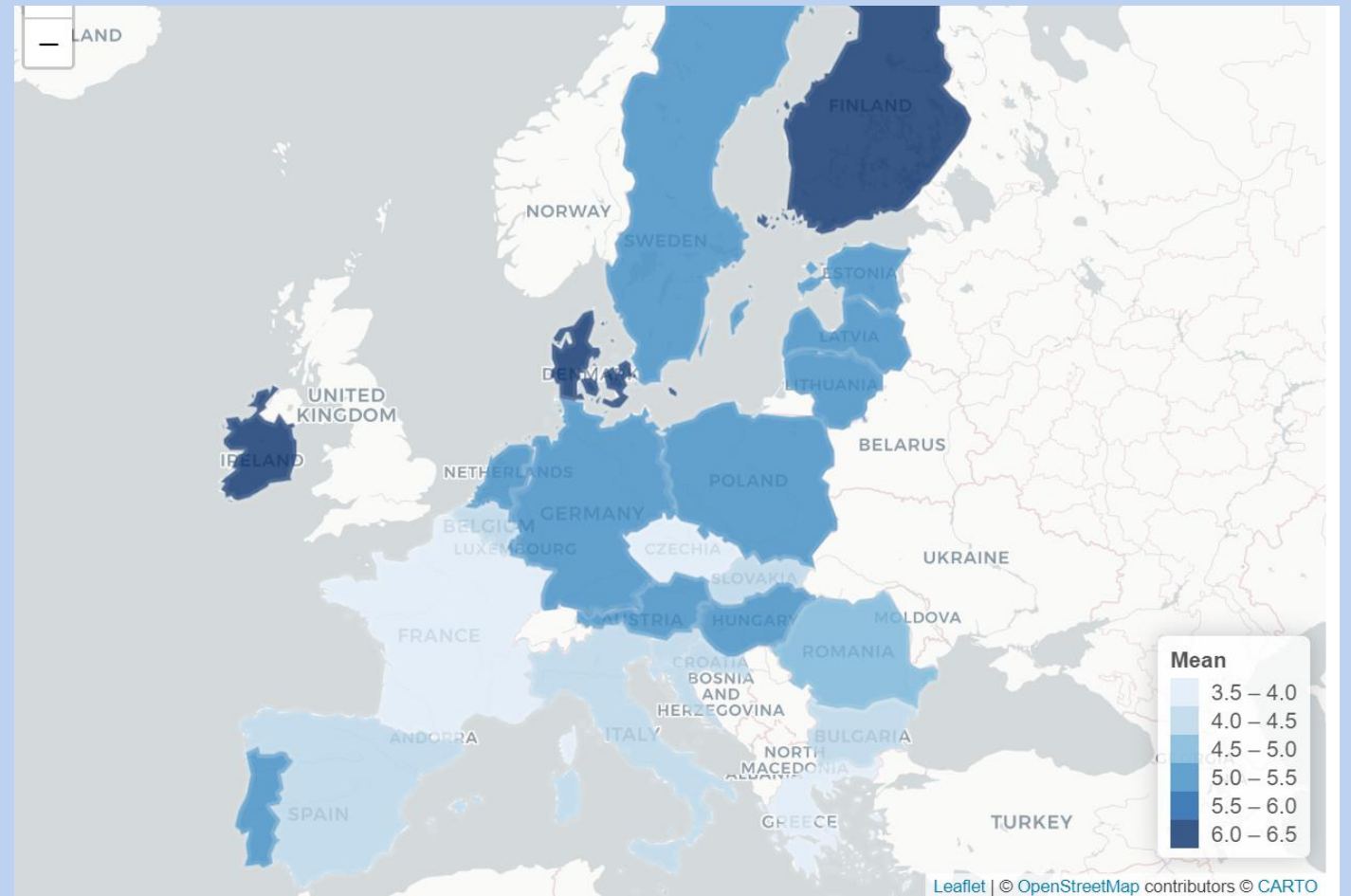
COVID-19 pandemic creates widespread financial insecurity for **those who have lost their job** during the crisis



- **90% of unemployed** report their **financial situation has worsened** against **28%** of those still in **employment**
- **68%** of the unemployed expect **their financial situation will worsen** even more than now against **33%** of those in employment
- **75%** of unemployed not able to **get by for more than 3 months** without any income against **53%** of those in **employment**

# People report dramatically low levels of trust in the EU and national governments

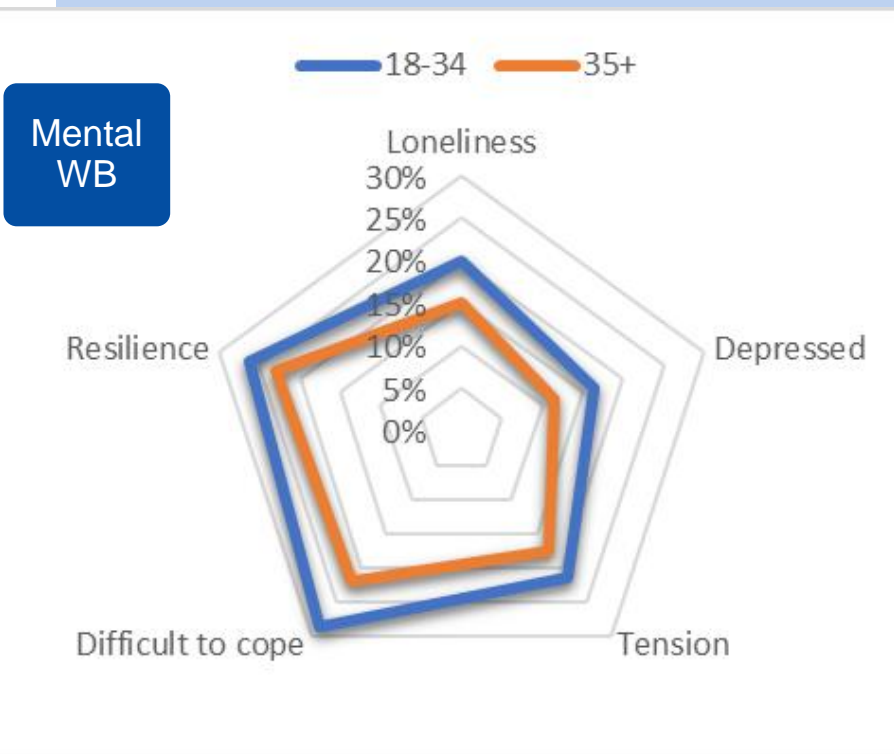
- Trust in the EU is below trust in national Governments
- Trust in the EU was recorded at 4.6 out of 10 on average against 4.8 recorded in trust in national governments
- Trust in the EU was particularly low among unemployed (3.7) and those unable to work (3.8)





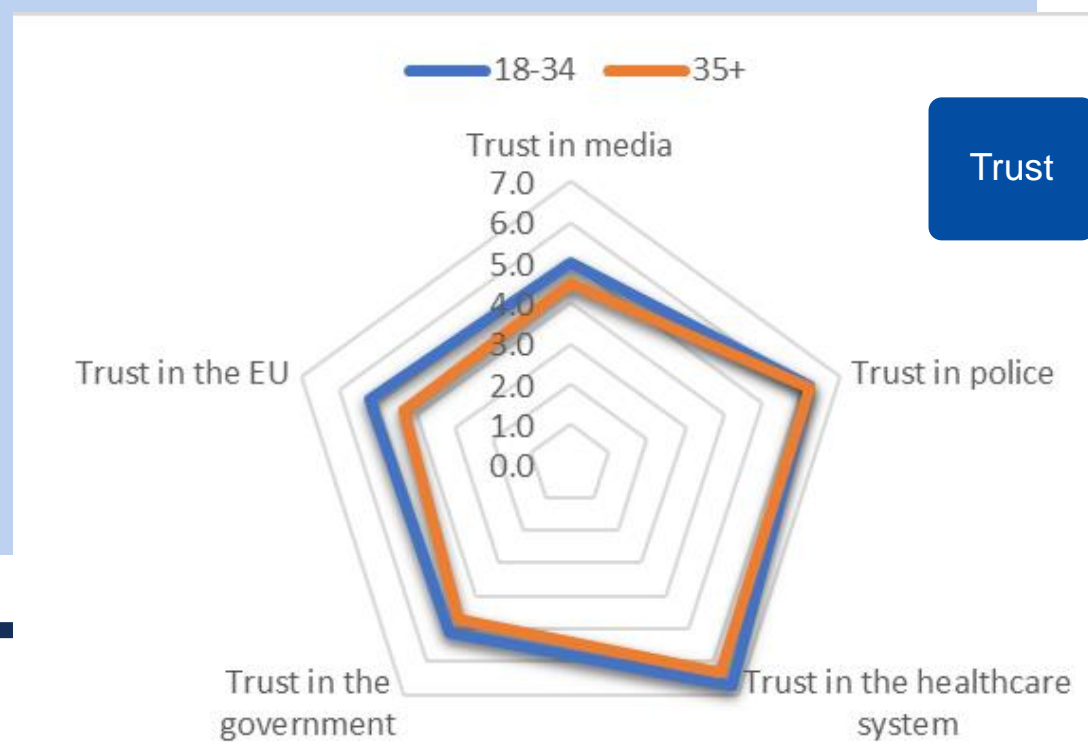
# Focus on youth: Is history repeating itself?

- Eurostat found a larger increase of youth unemployment (from 14.8% to 15.2%) than the general population (6.5% to 6.6%).
- In our survey, 6% of young people claimed to have lost their job against 5% of other age groups.



**Employment situation:**

- Not much difference yet, but..
- More precarious work
- Harder hit sectors



# What next?

- Follow-up waves (June 10<sup>th</sup> – July 1<sup>st</sup>)
- Final survey report
  
- Database on policy measures
- Mapping report
  
- Report ***Impact of COVID-19 on employment and living conditions***
  - Lessons and policy pointers

The New York Times

## ***Coronavirus Lockdown Hits Younger People Harder, European Survey Finds***

By Reuters

May 7, 2020



BRUSSELS — People under 35 have been made sadder and lonelier than older adults as a result of the coronavirus lockdown, a European survey found, concluding that the strain of being separated from friends and family was taking a tougher toll on the young.



**Thank you**