



European Foundation  
for the Improvement  
of Living and Working  
Conditions

The tripartite EU Agency providing knowledge  
to assist in the development of better social,  
employment and work-related policies

# Visit of EU Heads of Mission in Ireland to Eurofound

28 September 2021

Eurofound

#EurofoundLive

To our guests joining online – the event will commence shortly

## Welcome addresses

- *Moderator: **Maria Jepsen**, Deputy Director, Eurofound*
- **Ivailo Kalfin**, Executive Director, Eurofound
- **Stanislav Vidovič**, Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Ireland

# Living and working in Europe: Current research findings and priorities of Eurofound

- *Moderator: Maria Jepsen, Deputy Director, Eurofound*
  - **Massimiliano Mascherini**, Head of Unit ad interim, Social Policies
  - **John Hurley**, Acting Head of Unit, Employment
  - **Barbara Gerstenberger**, Head of Unit, Working Life
  - **Mary McCaughey**, Head of Unit, Information and Communication
- #EurofoundLive



European Foundation  
for the Improvement  
of Living and Working  
Conditions

The tripartite EU Agency providing knowledge  
to assist in the development of better social,  
employment and work-related policies

# Living and working in Europe: Current research findings and priorities of Eurofound

Visit of EU Heads of Mission in Ireland to Eurofound  
28 September 2021

Massimiliano Mascherini, John Hurley, Barbara Gerstenberger, Mary McCaughey  
#EurofoundLive

# Living, working and COVID-19

POLICY BRIEF



Eurofound  
European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions  
The European Agency providing knowledge to assist in the development of better social, employment and work-related policies

**COVID-19 EU PolicyWatch**  
Database of national-level responses  
Eurofound's COVID-19 EU PolicyWatch collates information on the responses of government and social partners to the crisis, as well as gathering examples of company practices aimed at mitigating the social and economic impacts.

Overview

Countries:

Types:

Categories:

Target groups:

Search database

Factsheet for case AT-2020-10/229 - [View](#) - measures in Austria

## Corona short-time work scheme

Corona Kurzarbeit

Country: Austria, applies nationwide

Time period: Temporary, 01 March 2020 - 30 September 2020

Type: Tripartite agreements

Category: Employment protection and retention - Income support for people in employment (e.g. short-time work)

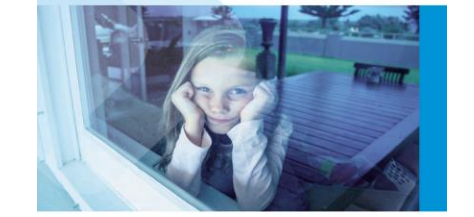
Author: Bernadette Ailinger (Forba) and Eurofound

Case created: 31 March 2020 (updated 06 May 2020)

Related ERM support instrument [🔗](#)



Labour market change  
**COVID-19:**  
Policy responses across Europe



Monitoring EU convergence  
**Upward convergence in material well-being: Is a COVID-19 setback inevitable?**

POLICY BRIEF



Living conditions and quality of life  
**Education, healthcare and housing: How access changed for children and families in 2020**



**Equality: Has COVID-19 rolled back recent gains?**



Produced at the request of the European Commission in the context of the new Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025

RESEARCH REPORT



COVID-19  
**Living, working and COVID-19**



RESEARCH REPORT



Employment and labour markets  
**COVID-19: Implications for employment and working life**



COUNTRY HIGHLIGHTS



**Working life in the COVID-19 pandemic 2020**



RESEARCH REPORT



Industrial relations  
**Involvement of social partners in policymaking during the COVID-19 outbreak**



FIRST FINDINGS

## Living, working and COVID-19

### First findings – April 2020

**Introduction**

In the space of just a few weeks, the COVID-19 pandemic has radically transformed the lives of people around the globe. Apart from the devastating health consequences on people directly affected by the virus, the COVID-19 pandemic has had major implications for the way people live and work, affecting their physical and mental well-being in a profound way.

To capture the immediate economic and social effects of this crisis, Eurofound launched a large-scale online survey across the European Union and beyond on 9 April. Entitled **Living, working and COVID-19**, the aim of the survey is to investigate the impact on well-being, work and telework and on the financial situation of people living in Europe. It includes a range of questions relevant to people across various age groups and life situations. Most of the questions are based on Eurofound's European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS) and European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), while other questions are new or were adapted from other sources, such as the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC).

By 30 April, more than 85,000 people had already taken part in the e-survey. The survey will remain online over the next few months in order to explore the impact across one of the COVID-19 pandemic on life and work in the EU and the rest of the world. The first results will be published in September 2020. This fact sheet presents the first main findings recorded by April 2020, when most European countries were under lockdown regimes introduced by national governments in a bid to control and slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus among the population.

The first results show a Europe grappling to respond to the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, with many respondents reporting high levels of loneliness coupled with low levels of optimism about their future. Overall, people are showing some decrease in their well-being. Respondents are also reporting a dramatic fall in trust in the EU and their national governments, with low levels reported across many countries. The survey findings also confirm an increase in telework and, for a growing number of respondents, a feeling of insecurity regarding their job with a dramatic decrease in working time. Finally, the survey points a stark picture of people across the 27 EU Member States who have seen their economic situation worsen and are deeply concerned about their financial future.

**Quality of life and COVID-19**

**Life satisfaction, happiness and optimism are below usual levels**

Respondents' subjective well-being in April 2020 was relatively mixed. In the EU overall, people rated their life satisfaction on average at 6.3 and happiness at 6.4 on a scale of 1 to 10. Both of these are below the ratings given in Eurofound's general population surveys, such as the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS), which in 2016 measured EU average life satisfaction at 7.3 and happiness at 7.4. People aged 50 or over in the COVID-19 survey had somewhat higher satisfaction (6.4) and happiness (6.5) than young and middle age groups, who rated life satisfaction at 6.2 and 6.3 respectively, and happiness both at 6.5. People who were unemployed had significantly lower life satisfaction than the average at 4.7 points.

Life satisfaction across countries is shown in Figure 1 below. While generally Denmark and Finland have the highest ratings at 7.4 and 7.3 respectively, interestingly France figures among the countries with the lowest average life satisfaction (5.9) – a position it does not generally hold in other surveys conducted before the COVID-19 crisis.

1. All individual responses were weighted to reflect the demographic profile of the general population in each country. An age- and education-weighted index and the EQLS Life index for further methodological information, please see the survey website: [www.eurofound.europa.eu/covid-19](#)

2. Results from the health dimension of the survey (EWCS) and not in EWCS as a reference point for contextual information. However, it is important to note possible differences in sampling methods.

# Part I

COVID-19 – crisis in a nutshell

# Measuring the socio-economic impact of the crisis



 Eurofound

Take Eurofound's  
**COVID-19**  
**SURVEY**

# Eurofound's e-survey on Living, working and COVID-19

- Large-scale online survey across EU and beyond
  - Spring 2020
  - Summer 2020
  - Spring 2021
- Over **130,000 respondents** in EU27
- Panel wave in autumn
- Wrap-up 2022





# COVID-19 crisis: a modern Kerberos



A. Tempesta, 1608

# Impact of COVID-19 – key findings

- High levels of loneliness and depression coupled with low levels of optimism
- Deep concern about financial, labour market future but positive effect of support measures
- Large share of respondents claim to have lost their job with a dramatic decrease in working time for many
- Increase in telework put strain on workers with children

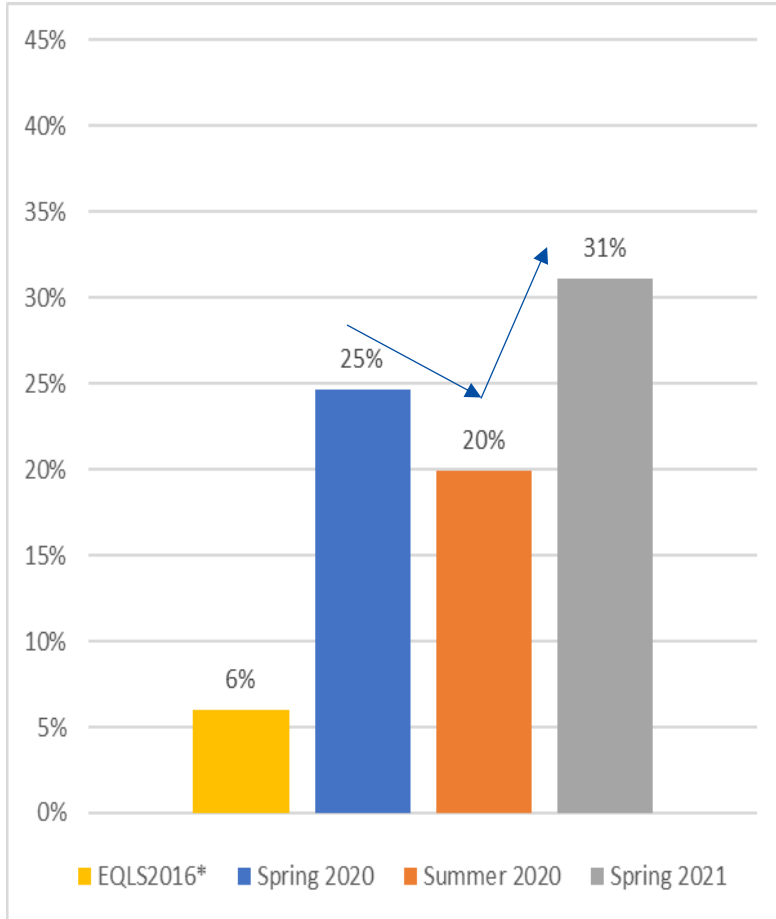


# Impact on mental health

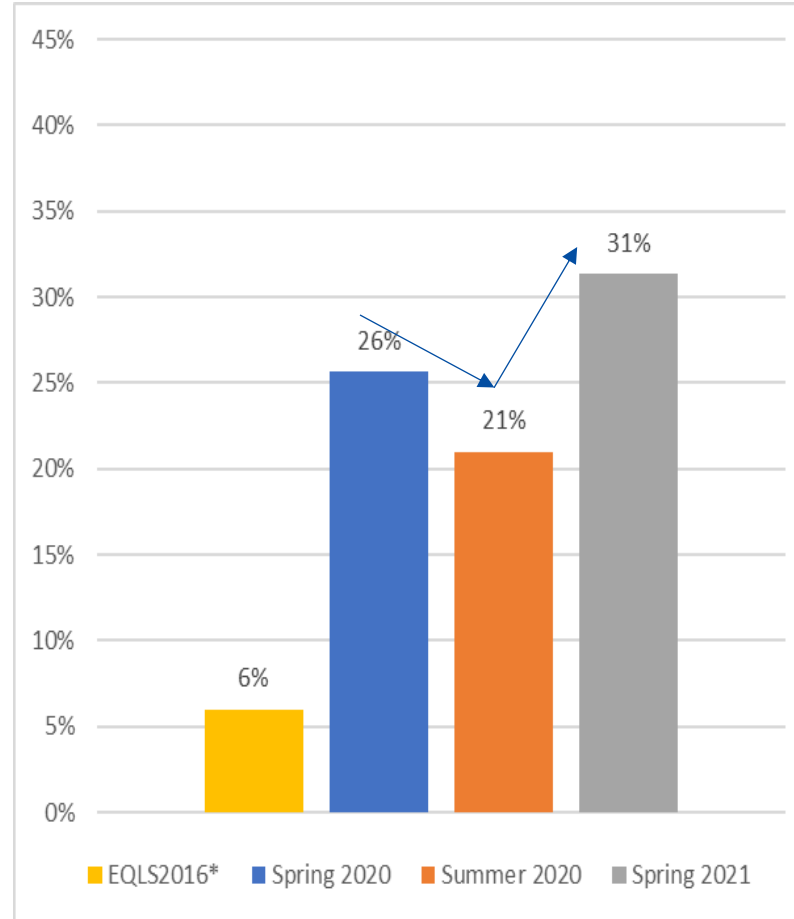
- In addition to disease and death, COVID-19 has generated a '**parallel epidemic**' of mental health which could linger long after the pandemic has subsided
- Increasing evidence for a surge in mental health problems, greater vulnerability and alarming implications for emotional and social functioning
- Pandemic-related distress stems from **fear of illness, economic hardship, and uncertainty** about the real impact of the crisis
- Also a result of **social isolation** and **tensions** (within families) in lockdown as a **result of restrictions** (NPI) deployed to contain the pandemic

# Impact on mental wellbeing

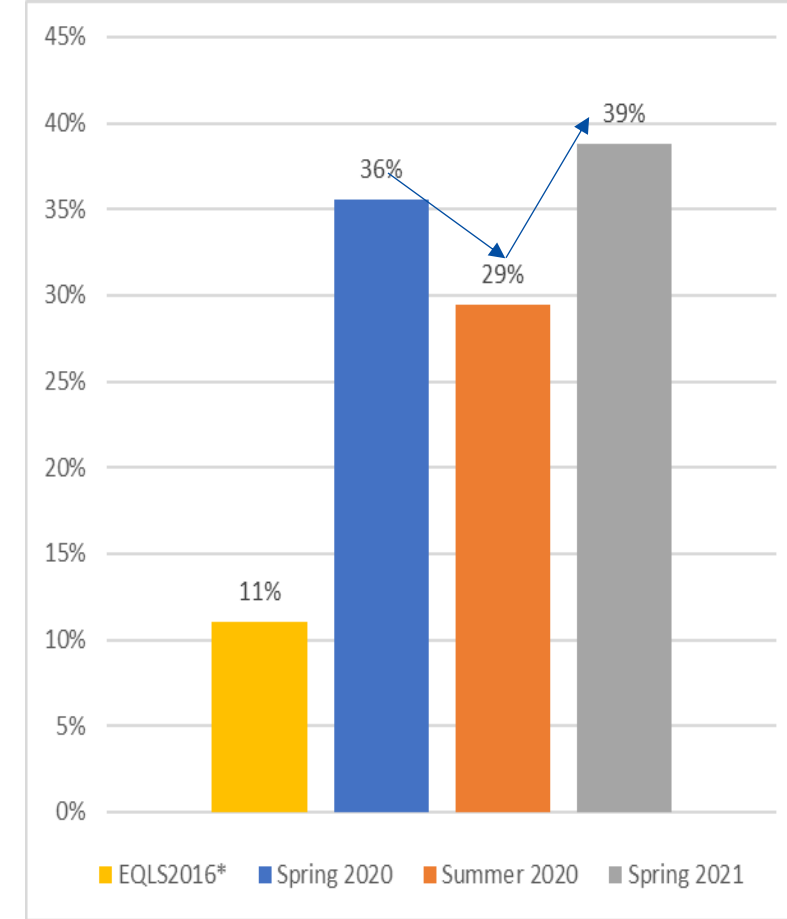
*Feeling downhearted and depressed*



*Feeling lonely*

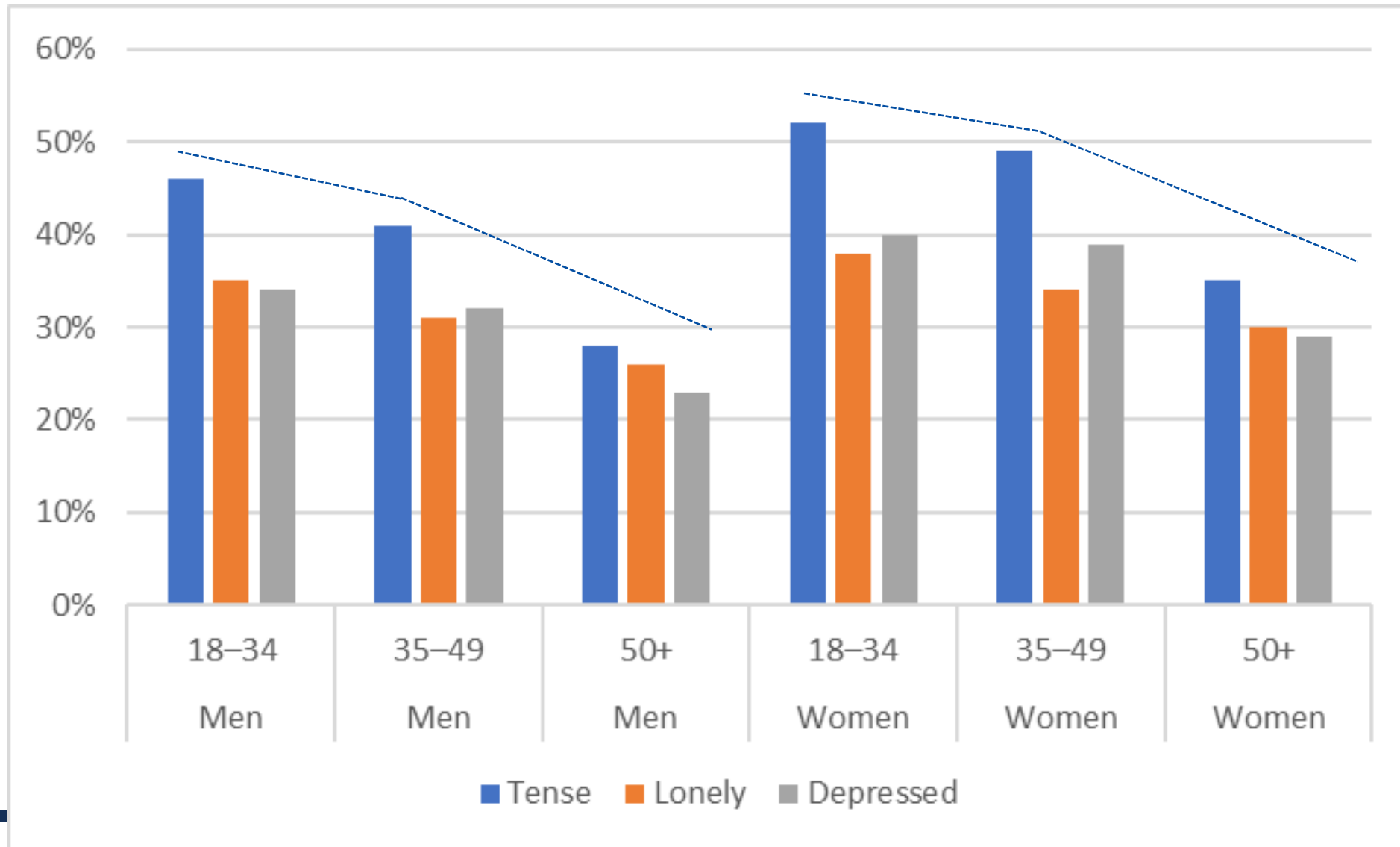


*Feeling tense*



Source: Eurofound Living, working and COVID-19 survey

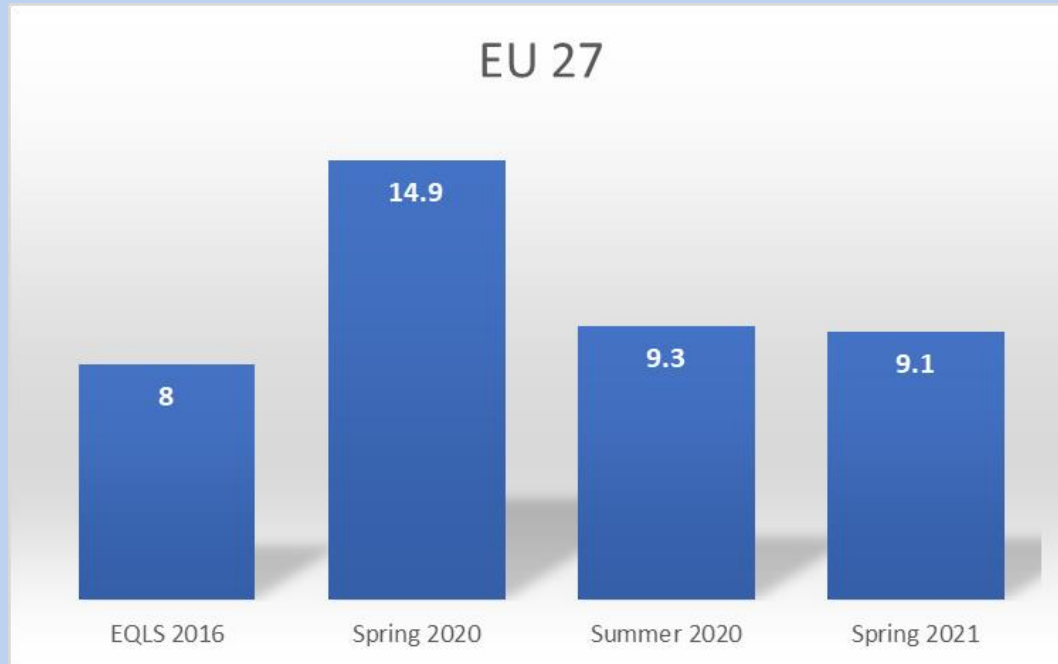
# Not everyone affected the same way



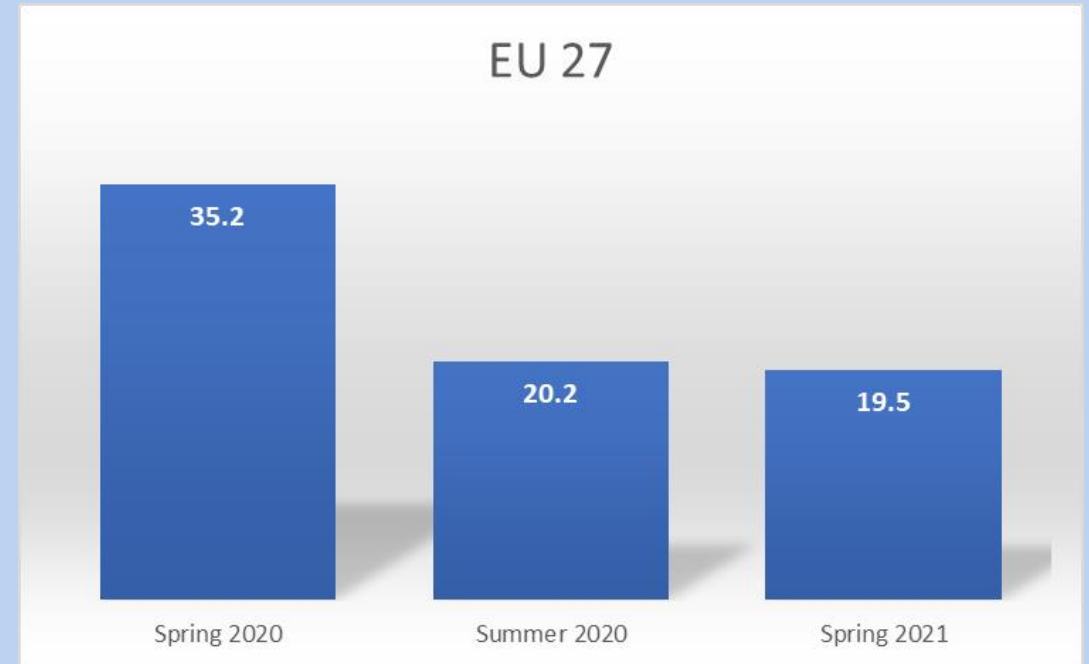
Source: Eurofound Living, working and COVID-19 survey

# A sharp rise in insecurities

How likely you might lose your job in the next 3 months

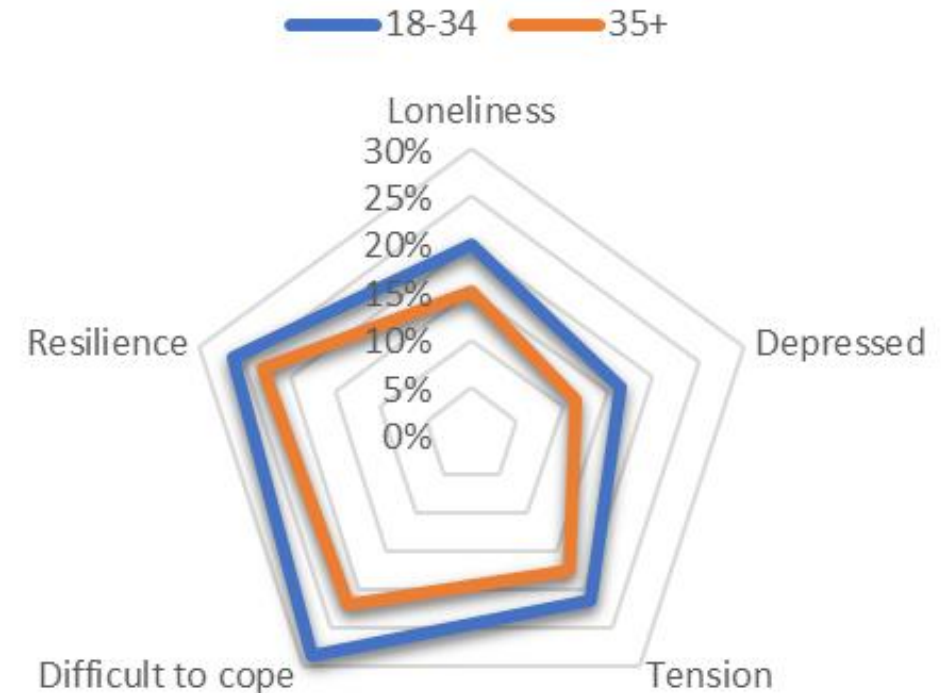


Your economic situation will be worse in the next 3 months



# Possible victims of the crisis: young people

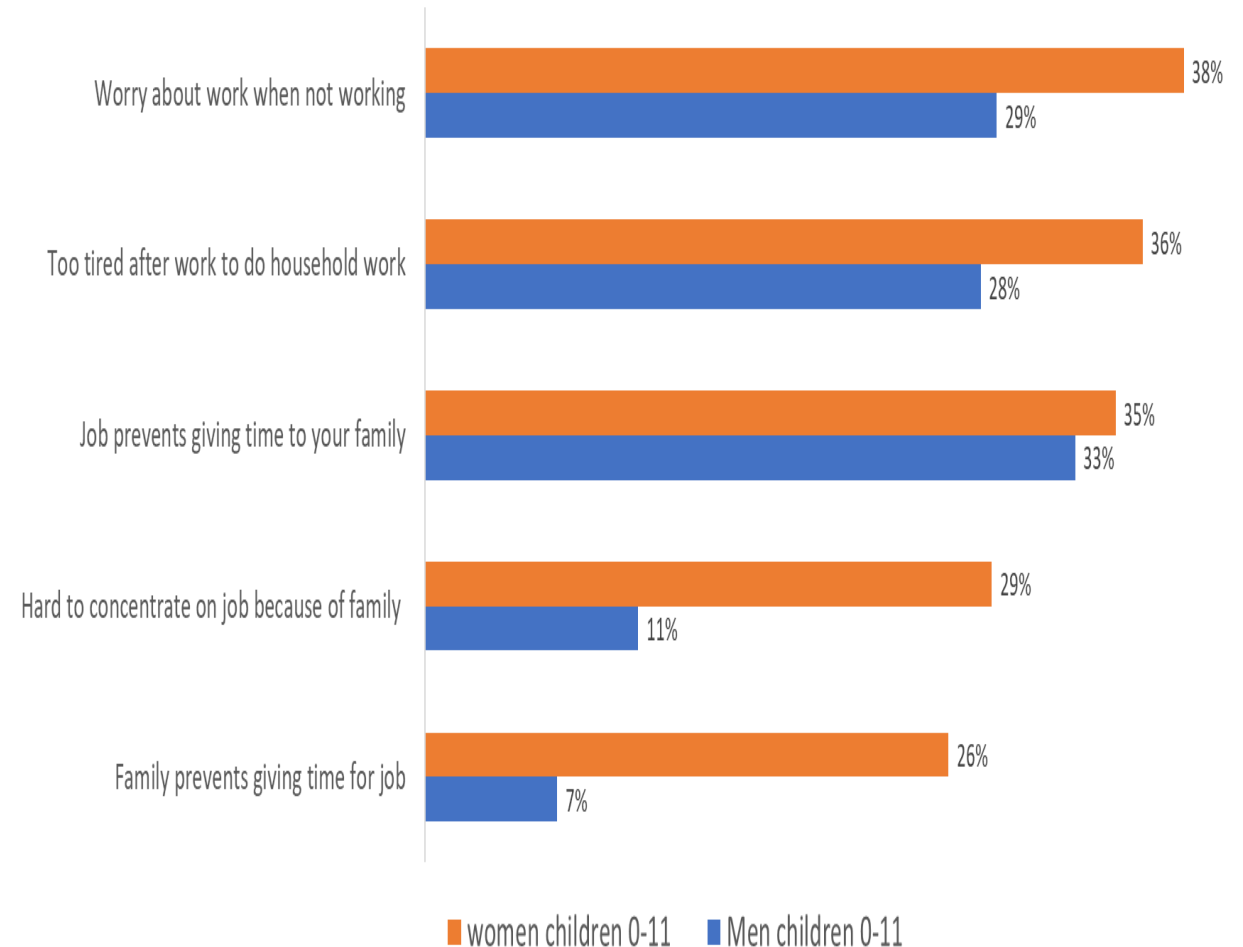
- **Young people** among most affected in terms of mental health
- Young people had higher mental wellbeing than other age groups (2016) but opposite recorded during COVID-19
- Students and unemployed most affected
- School closure and social distancing had severe negative effect on their mental wellbeing



Source: Eurofound Living, working and COVID-19 survey – wave 1

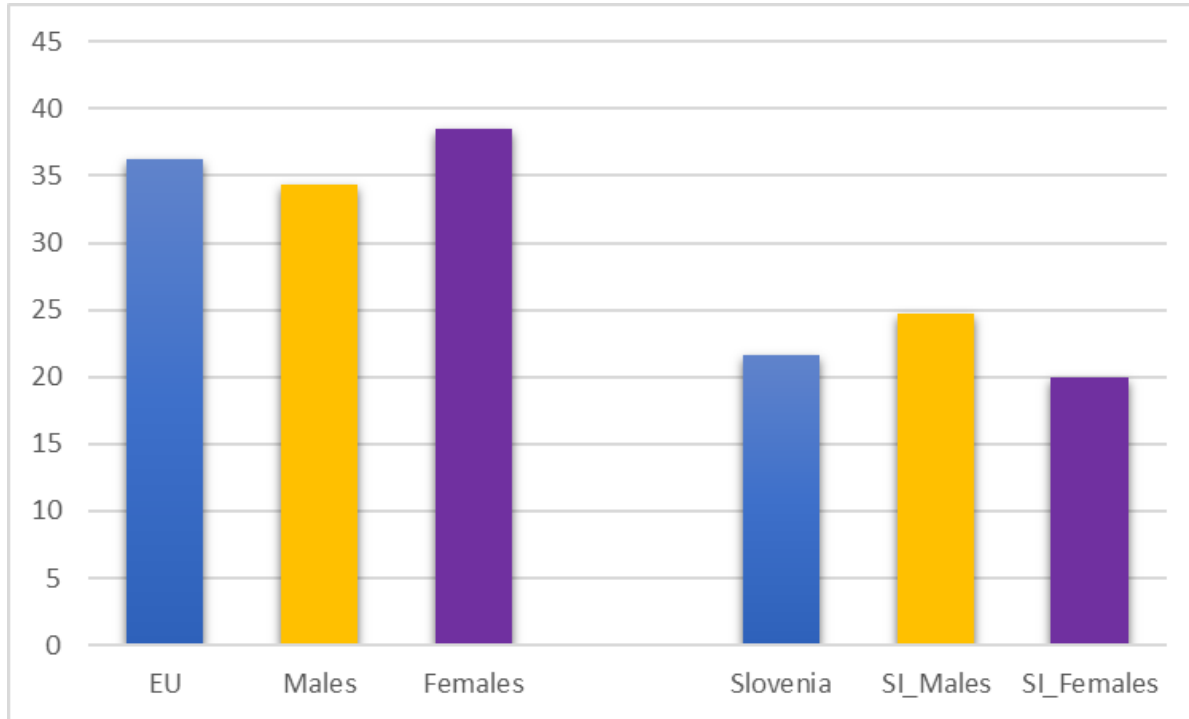
# Possible victims of crisis: women

- Women first victims in terms of employment participation
- With the closure of schools, **work–life conflict escalated** as people work from home and **mothers of small children** often most impacted
- Main reasons are twofold:
  - **gender imbalances** across **different jobs** in the economy
  - **unequal distribution** of family responsibilities within the household

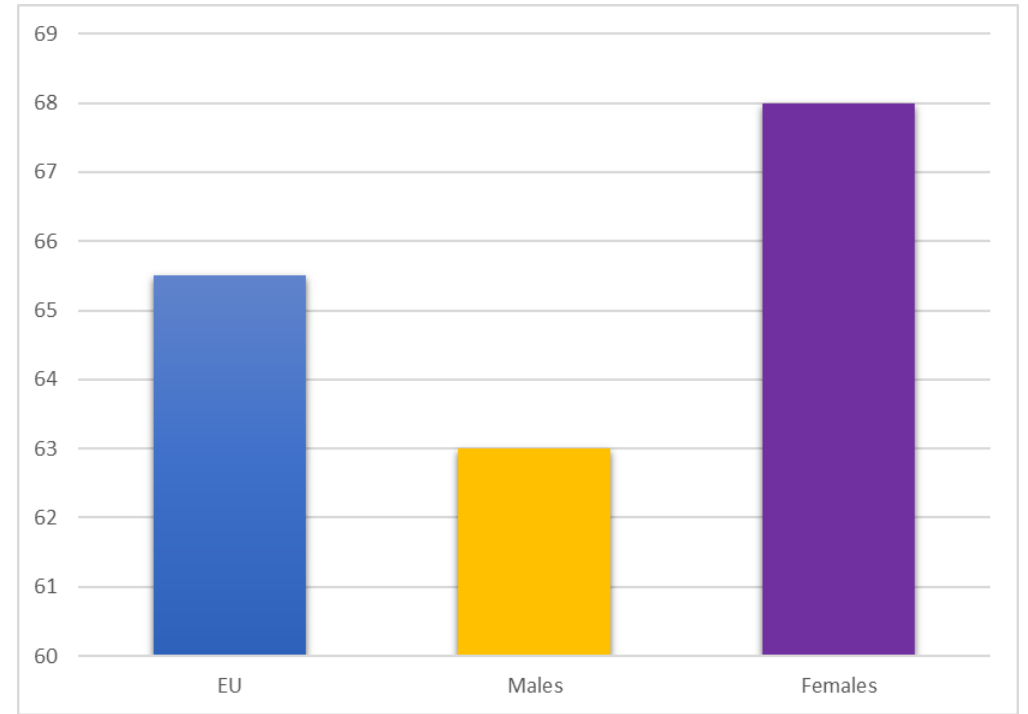




# Surge of telework



Starting to work from home since the onset of the pandemic



Wanting to work from home more than once a month after the pandemic.

# Part II

*Telework: What happened in 2020 and what will happen next?*

# Pre-COVID-19: working from home

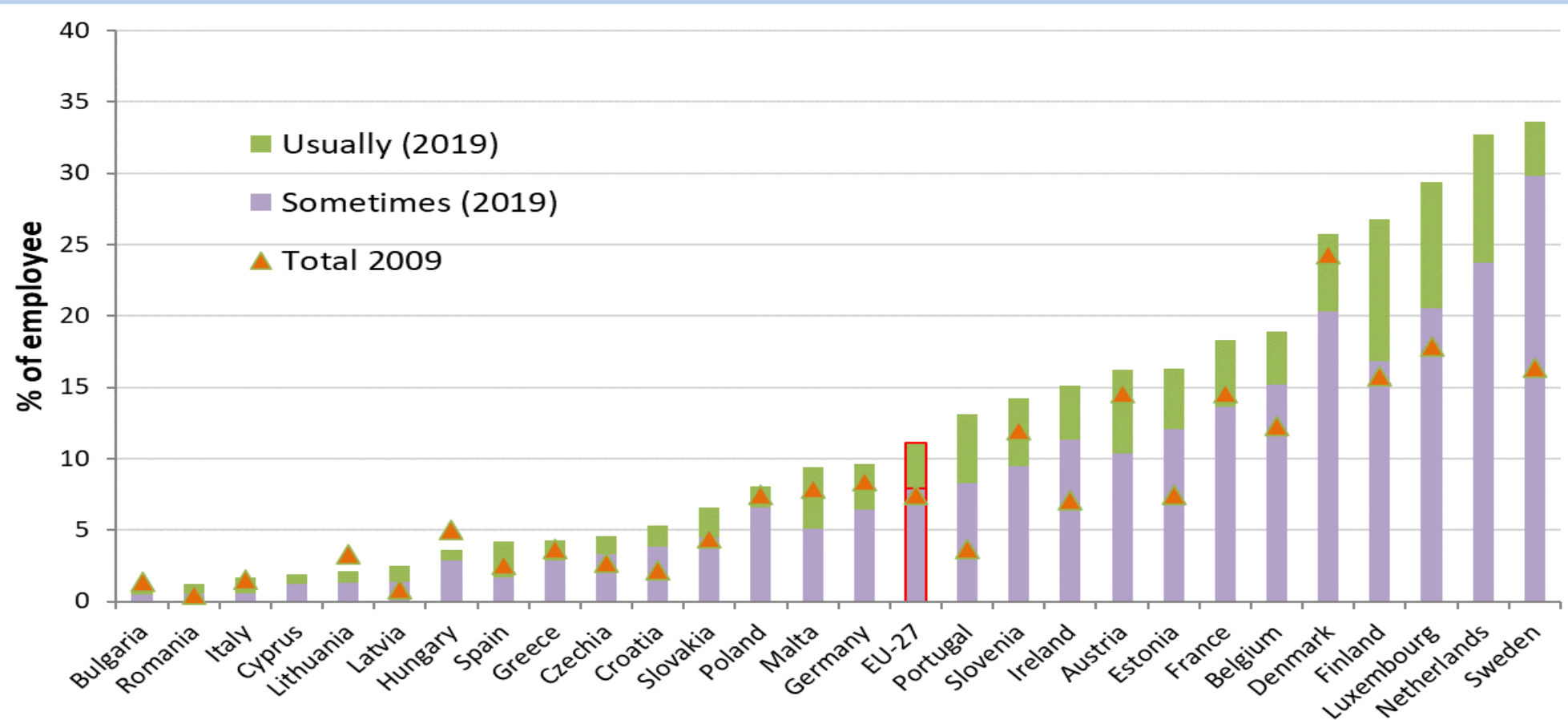
**1982-85**

- Eurofound's first research programme on teleworking

**.... 2019**

- 3% of EU employees worked from home 'usually'
- 8% of EU employees worked from home 'sometimes'

# Pre-COVID-19: working from home (2009 and 2019)



Source: LFS

# During COVID-19: working from home

**'Working from home' during COVID-19: 20% to 65% of EU workers**

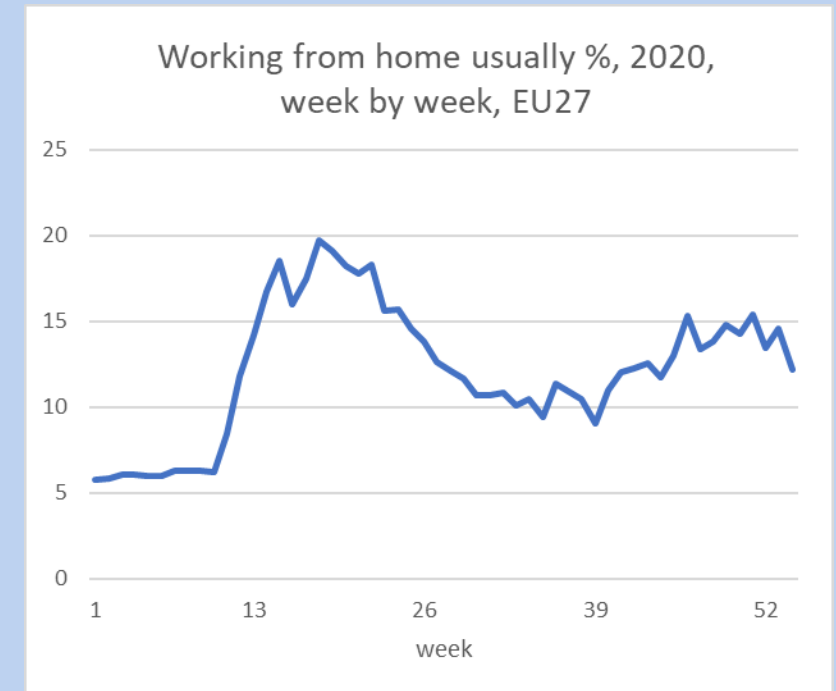
- (based on a broad range of estimates from 'live' survey sources)

**34% of EU employees reported working from home exclusively**

- (Eurofound's Living, working and COVID-19 survey, July 2020 wave)

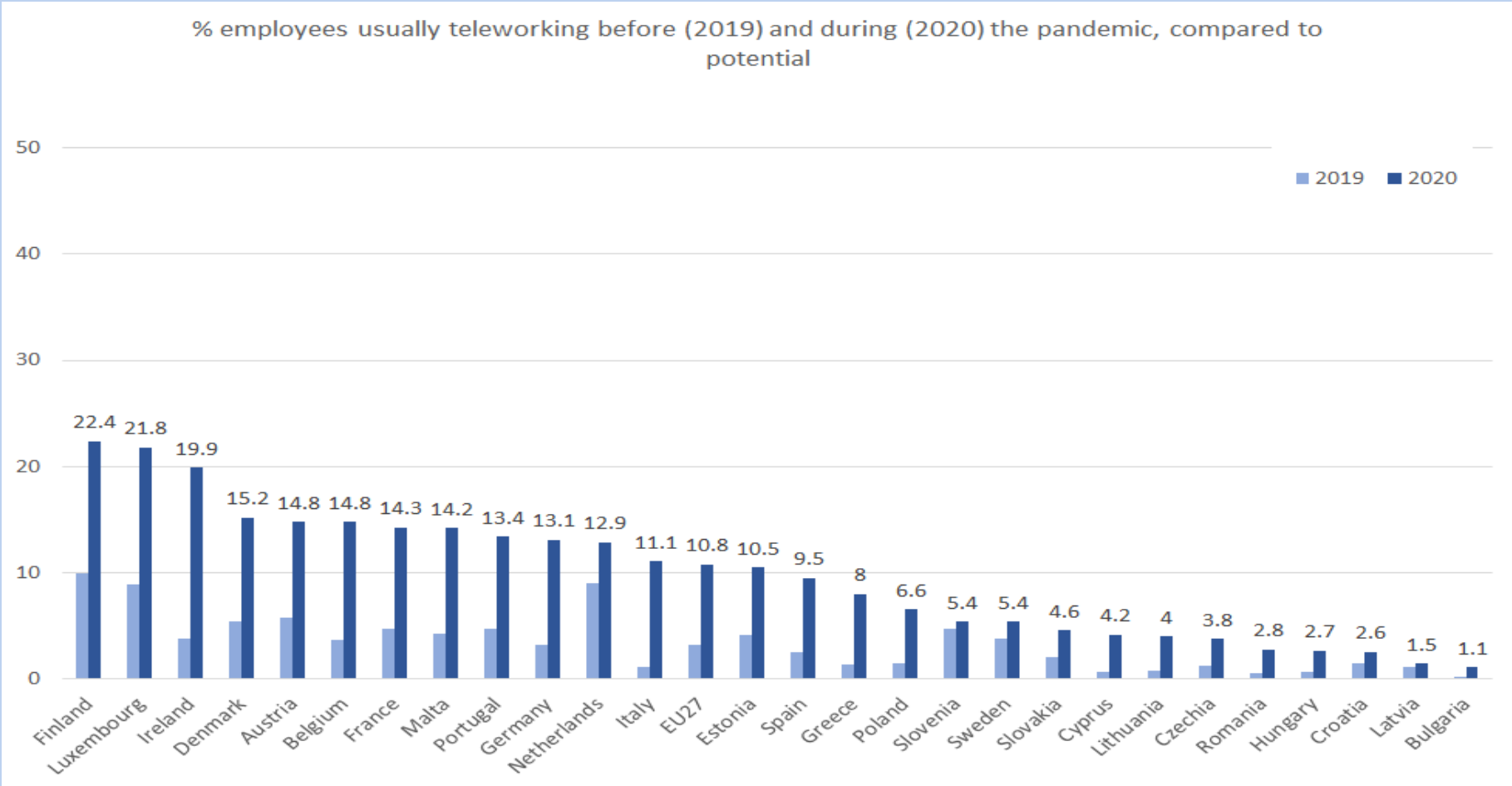
**11% working from home 'usually' and 8% 'sometimes' – 19% overall**

- (EU Labour Force Survey 2020 )



Source: Eurostat (LFS)

# Teleworking: before and during crisis



Source: LFS

# Post-COVID-19: what jobs are (not) teleworkable?

- Matching a detailed occupational tasks framework with IT and EWCS survey data, 130 different occupations evaluated in terms of teleworkability
  - (*Eurofound/European Commission Joint Research Centre, 2020*)
- Main ‘hard’ barrier to teleworkability is that a job has physical handling or manipulation tasks (nurse, waiter, plumber etc)
- Results are:
  - 37% of dependent employment in Europe is teleworkable - similar to estimates for the US
  - a majority of jobs are NOT currently teleworkable

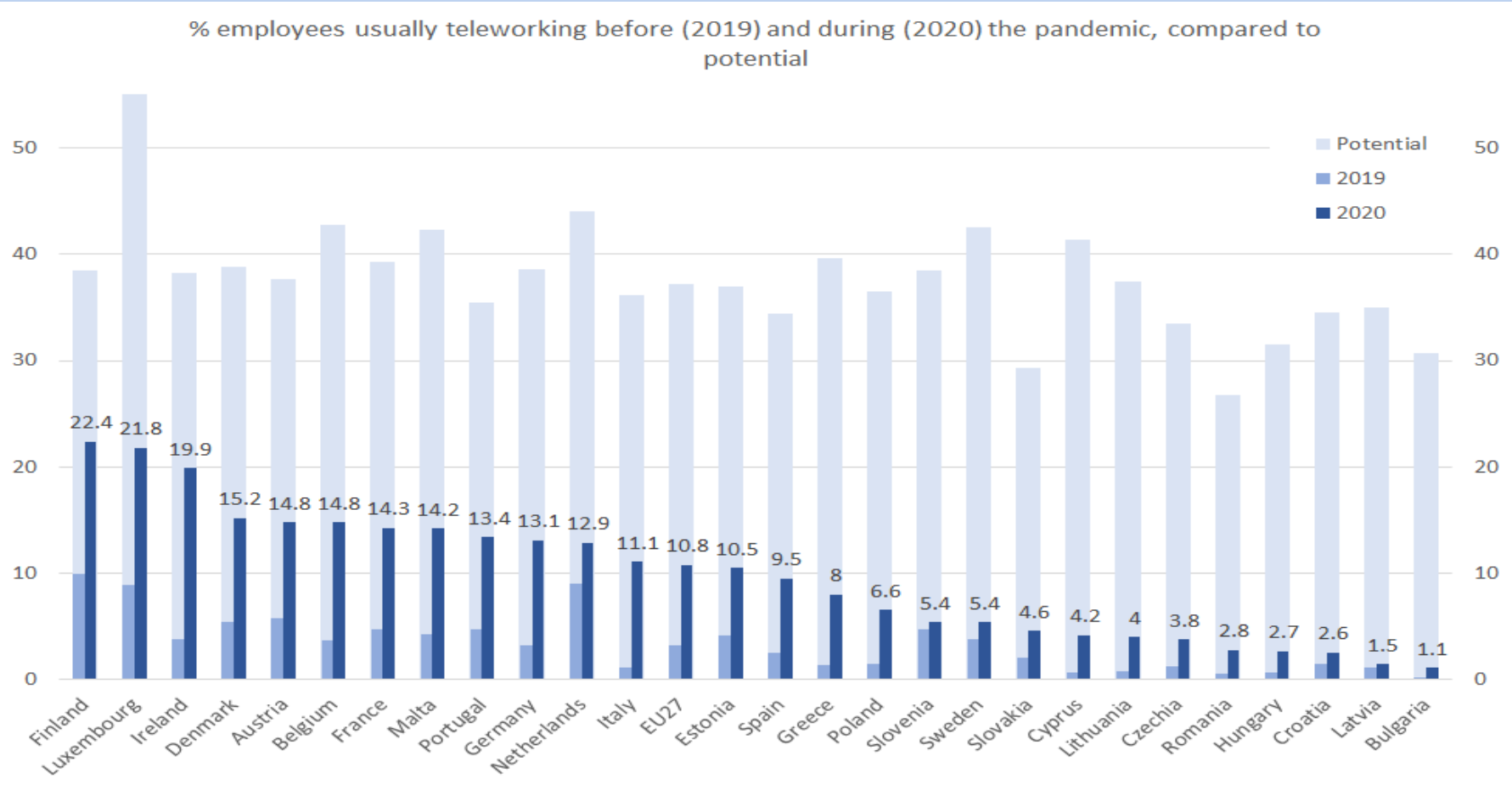
# What jobs are teleworkable?



Source: Eurofound / European Commission Joint Research Centre, 2020

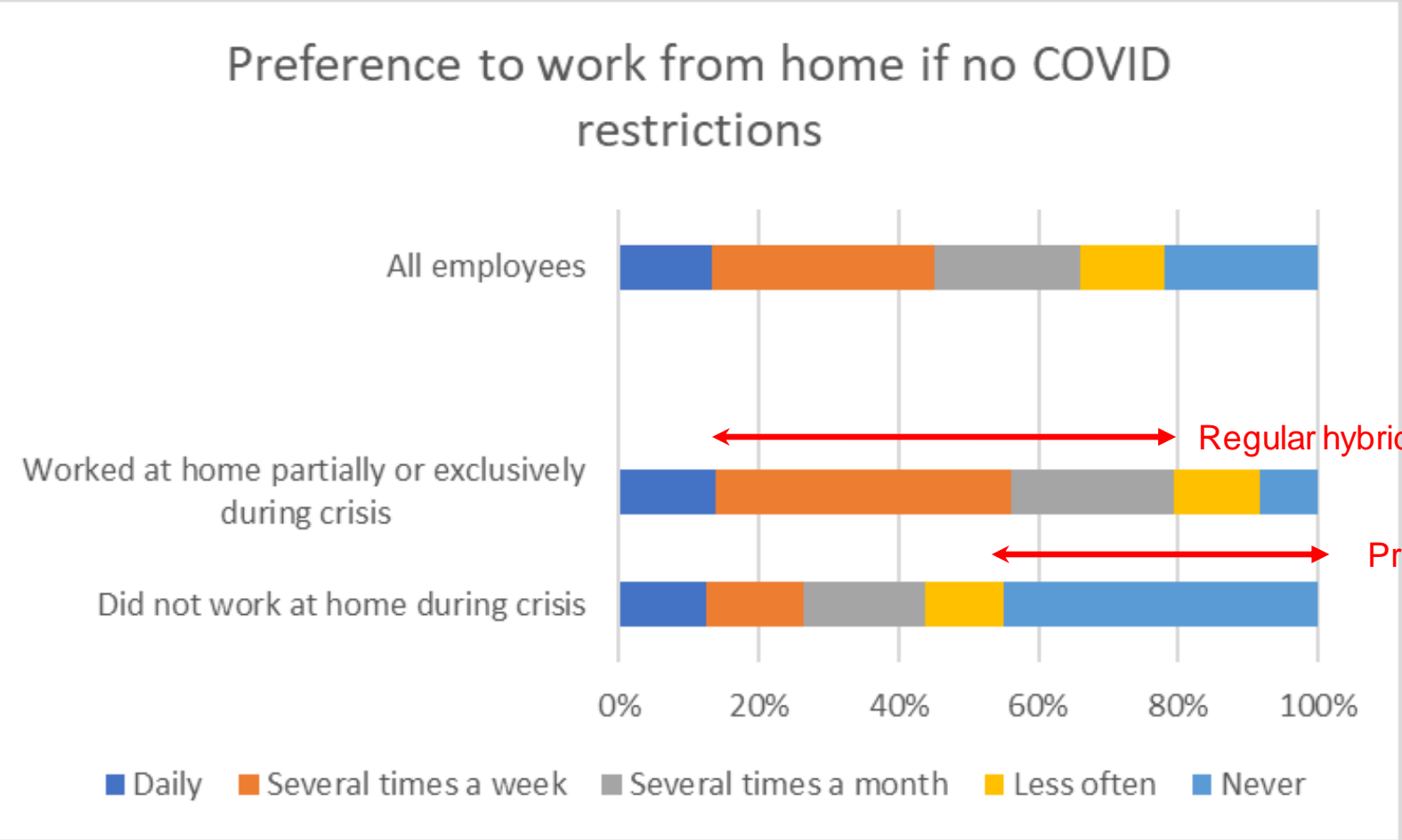


# Teleworking: actual and potential



Source: LFS, Eurofound / European Commission JRC, 2021

# Teleworking preferences

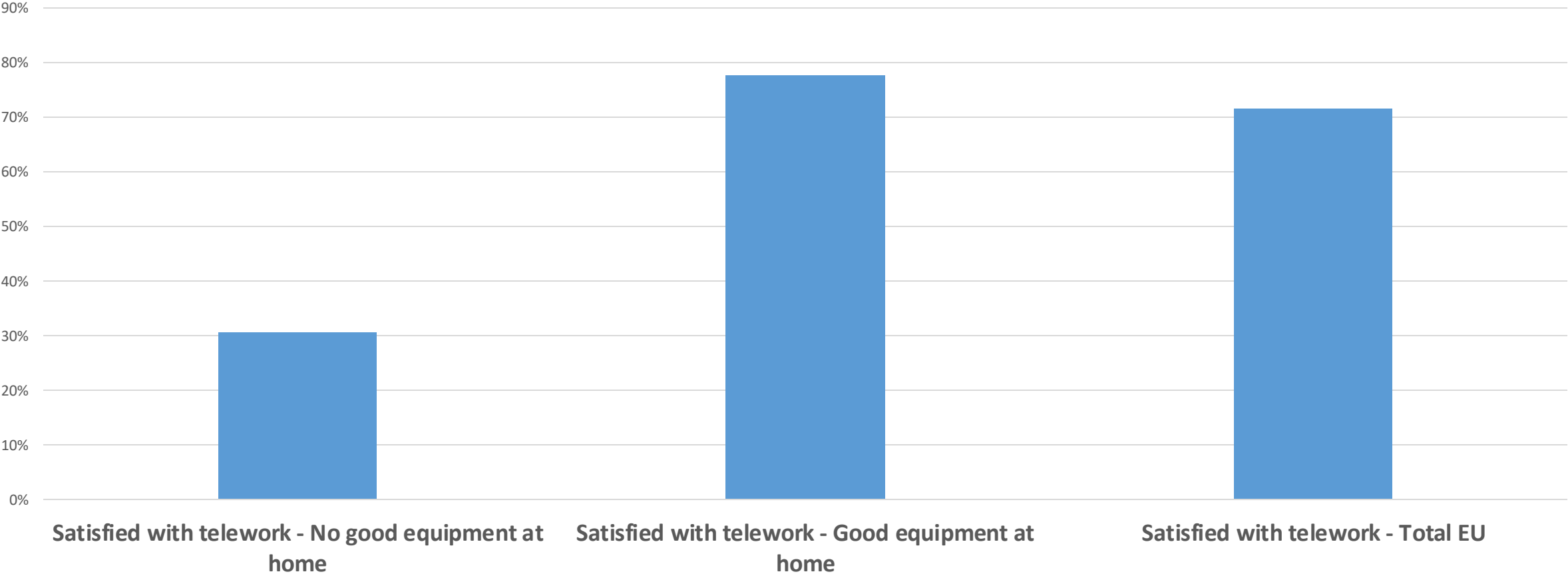


Source: Eurofound Living, working and COVID-19 survey (second wave, July 2020)

# Part III

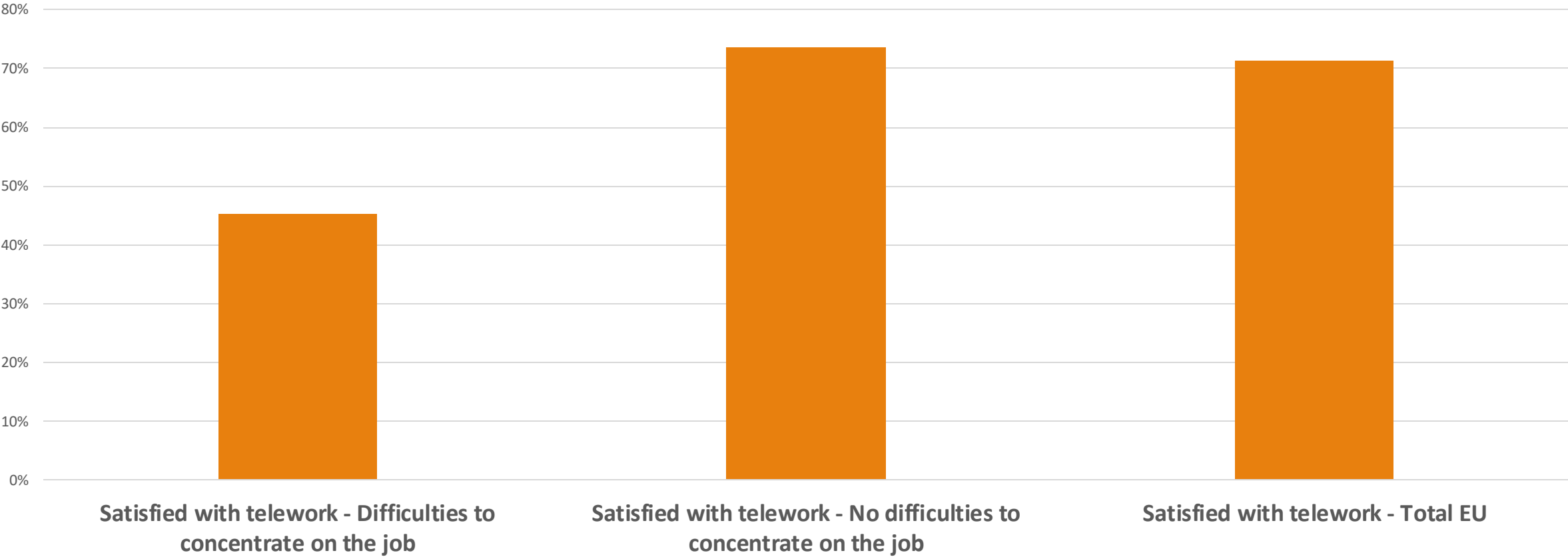
*Telework: What to expect?*

# Satisfaction with working from home: quality of equipment



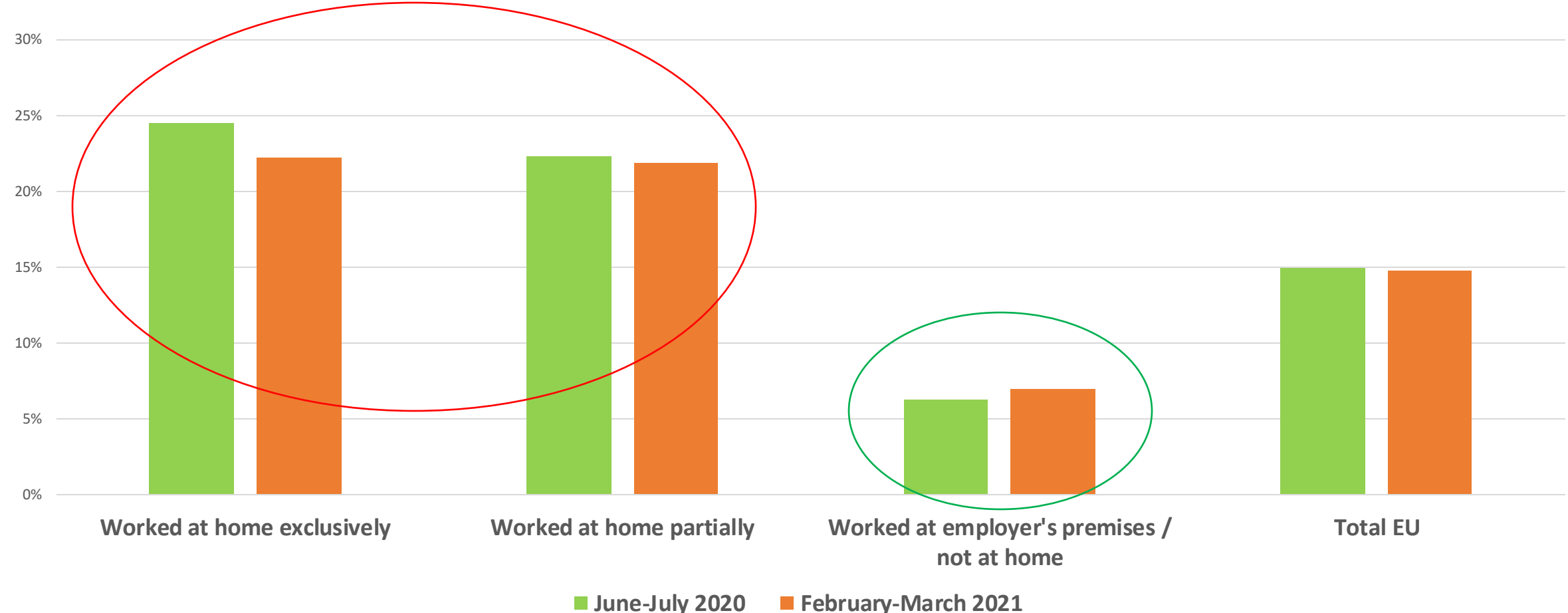
Source: Eurofound, Living, working and COVID-19 survey, second wave, July 2020

# Satisfaction with working from home: ability to concentrate



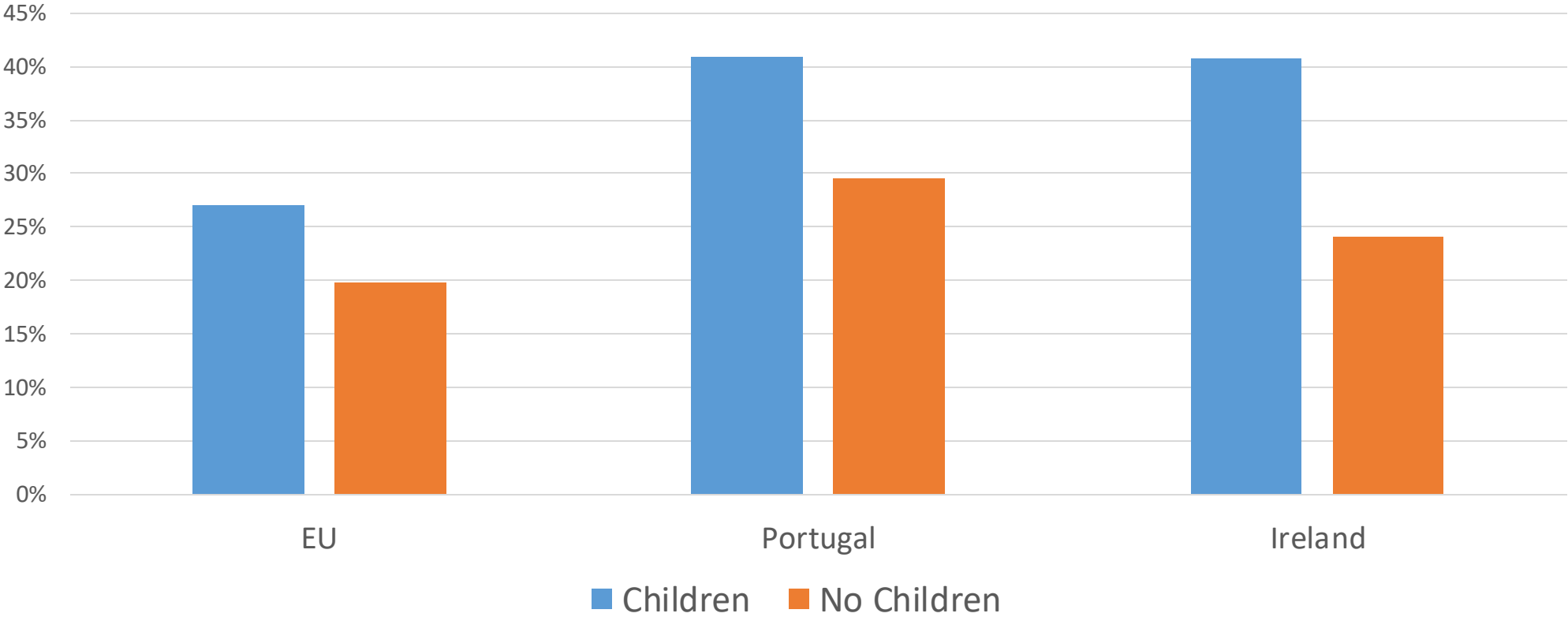
Source: Eurofound, Living, working and COVID-19 survey, second wave, July 2020

# Working during free time regularly, by place of work



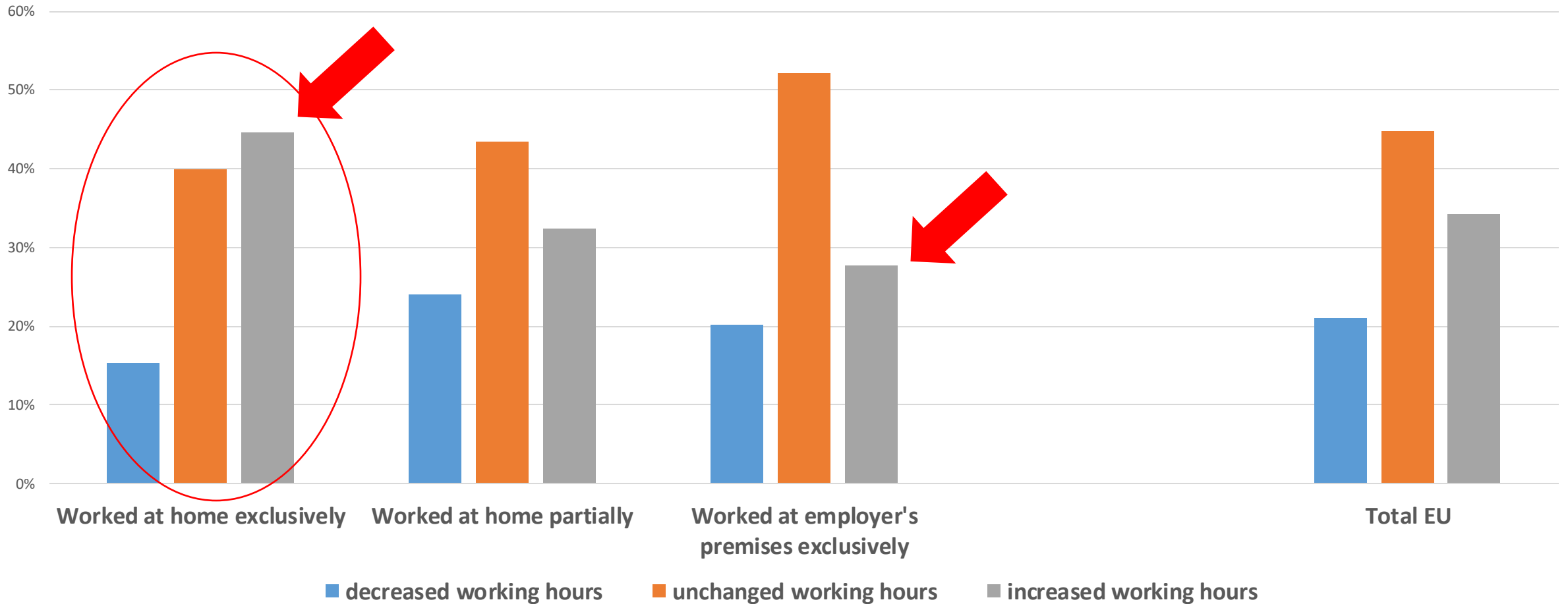
Source: Eurofound, Living, working and COVID-19 survey, second and third wave

# Working during free time regularly (Feb-March 2021), countries with school closure during strict lockdown



Source: Eurofound, Living, working and COVID-19 survey, third wave, February/March 2021

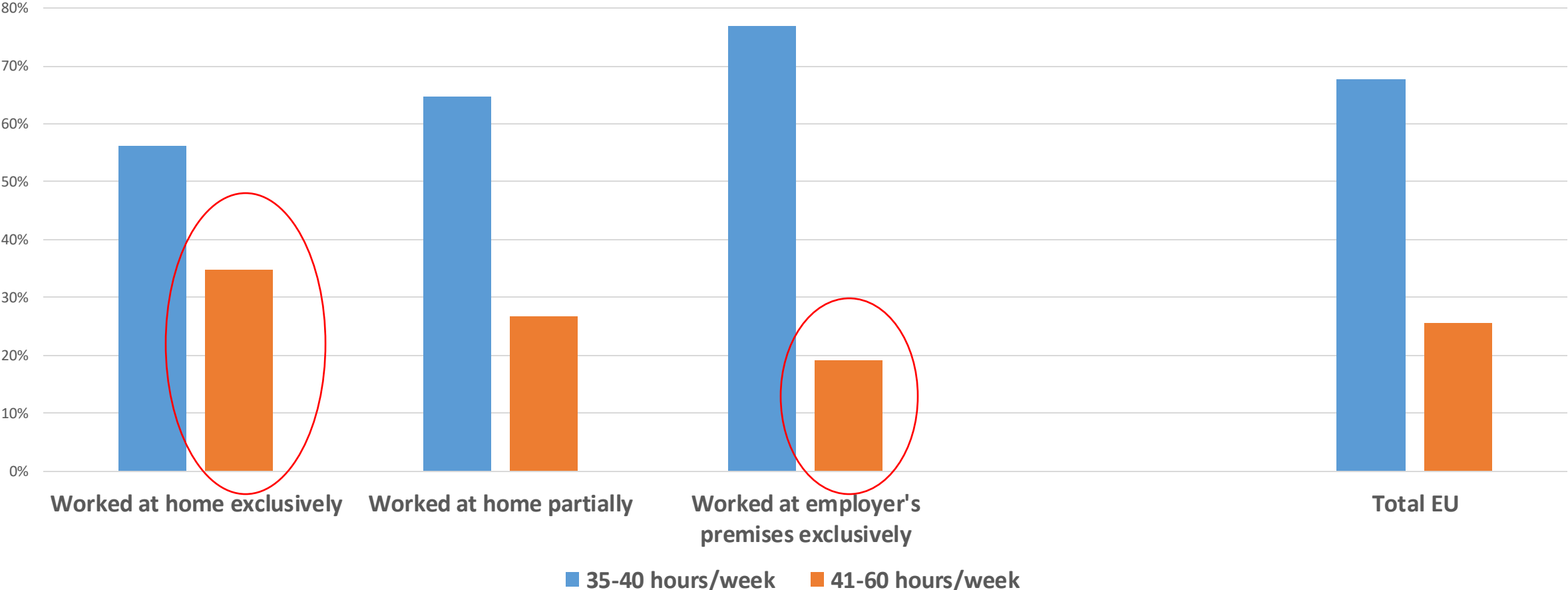
# Change in working hours during pandemic, by place of work (full-time employees)



Source: Eurofound, Living, working and COVID-19 survey, second wave, July 2020

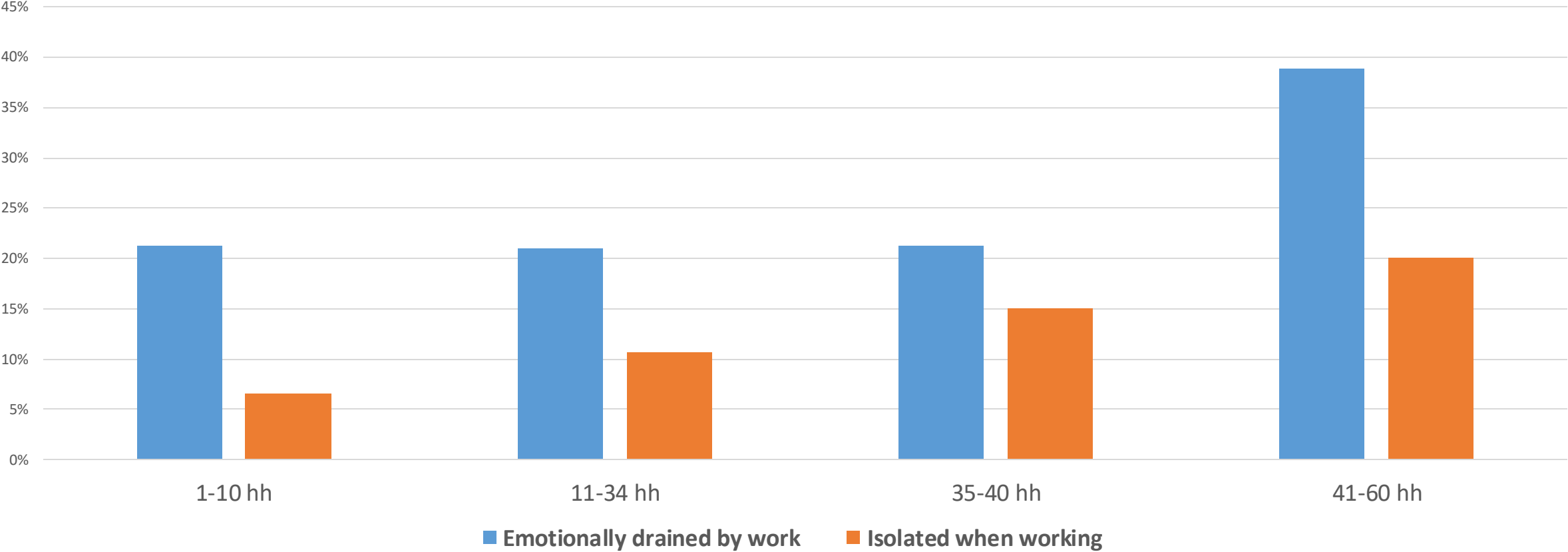


# Working hours per week, by place of work (full-time employees)



Source: Eurofound, Living, working and COVID-19 survey, third wave, February/March 2021

# Isolation, feeling drained by weekly hours worked from home



Source: Eurofound, Living, working and COVID-19 survey, second wave, July 2020

# Issues for telework post COVID-19

- Good equipment and an environment that allows worker to concentrate on the job will increase satisfaction
- Risk of long working hours and working during free time needs to be addressed
- Longer hours spent working from home are associated with higher risk of isolation and feeling drained at the end of a working day
- Telework as a 'coping strategy' to combine work and care responsibilities could lead to a 'gendered' uptake of hybrid work opportunities

# Existing and forthcoming Eurofound sources

Topic page: [COVID-19](#)

Topic page: [Teleworking](#)

## Reports

- [Working anytime, anywhere: The effects on the world of work](#)
- [Regulations to address work–life balance in digital flexible working](#)
- [Telework and ICT-based mobile work: Flexible working in the digital age](#)
- [Right to disconnect: Exploring company practices](#)

## Working papers

- [Further exploring the working conditions of ICT-based mobile workers and home-based teleworkers](#)
- [Right to disconnect in the 27 EU Member States](#)
- [A Taxonomy of Tasks for Assessing the Impact of New Technologies on Work”,](#)
- [Teleworkability and the COVID-19 crisis: a new digital divide?](#)
- [Update on prevalence and teleworkable jobs \(November 2021\)](#)

## Data

- Eurofound’s [Living, working and COVID-19 survey](#)
- [European Working Conditions Survey \(EWCS\)](#)

## Blogs

- [As Member States take different approaches to regulating telework, will the EU bring them into line?](#)
- [Does the new telework generation need a right to disconnect?](#)
- [COVID-19 unleashed the potential for telework – How are workers coping?](#)

## Articles

[Workers want to telework but long working hours, isolation and inadequate equipment must be tackled](#)

## Forthcoming

- [What just happened? COVID-19 lockdowns and change in the labour market](#)
- [Business not as usual: How EU companies adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- [Telework in the EU: Regulatory frameworks and prevalence \(May 2022\)](#)



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

The tripartite EU agency providing knowledge to assist in the development of better social, employment and work-related policies

English (en) Login

- About us
- Publications
- Topics
- Data and resources
- Surveys
- Countries
- Observatories
- News
- Events

## Living, working and COVID-19 - New findings



On 10 May 2021, Eurofound publishes new findings from round 3 of its e-survey, aiming to capture the experience of living and working in the EU through the COVID-19 pandemic. With continuing economic and social consequences of the pandemic, round 3 was carried out as vaccination programmes began.

- Publication: Living, working and COVID-19: Update April 2021 (round 3)
- Event: Watch the webinar - #AskTheExpert: COVID-19 e-survey results
- Publication: Living, working and COVID-19 (rounds 1 and 2)
- Data: Living, working and COVID-19 data
- Topic: COVID-19

## Key Topics



Working conditions and sustainable work



Industrial relations and social dialogue



Employment and labour markets



Living conditions and quality of life



Anticipating and managing the impact of change



Promoting social cohesion and convergence



## Towards the future of Europe: Social factors shaping optimism and pessimism among citizens

Publication | 16 September 2021

Towards the future of Europe...

Right to disconnect...

Minimum wages in 2021: Annual...

## Surveys

Eurofound carries out three pan-European surveys. The surveys offer a unique source of comparative information on the quality of living and working conditions across the EU.

## Discussion with the floor

*Moderator: Maria Jepsen, Deputy Director, Eurofound*



*#EurofoundLive*

# For more information, data, findings and analysis

**1** Sign up for newsletter  
[www.eurofound.link/subscribe](http://www.eurofound.link/subscribe)



**2** Get involved in the debate and follow Eurofound on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube



**3** Keep an eye on Eurofound's Calendar for events and publications  
[www.eurofound.link/calendar](http://www.eurofound.link/calendar)



Thanks to all our online viewers – this event has now ended  
Visit our website [www.eurofound.europa.eu](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu)

# Thank you for your attention

[www.eurofound.europa.eu](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu)