Living conditions and quality of life in the EU



Improving living conditions and quality of life focuses on issues such as work–life balance, gender equality, provision of care and the quality of public services.

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on different groups

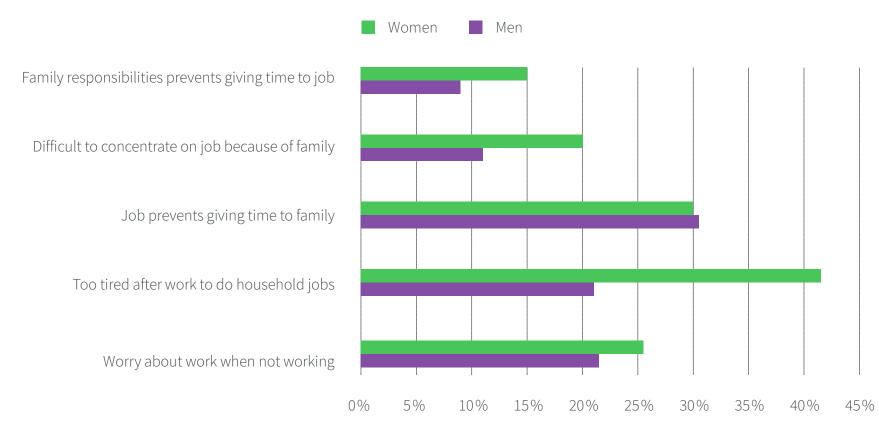
Mental well-being declined during the pandemic, but especially among **young people** and those who have lost their jobs.

Proportion of respondents at risk of depression by age Spring 2020 Spring 2021 Summer 2020 Findings in spring 2021 show 18-34 35-49 nearly two-thirds of 18-34-year-olds 70 % are at risk of depression 60 % 50 % 40 % 30 % 20 % 10 % Source: Eurofound, Living, working and COVID-19 e-survey

While young women had the worst level of mental well-being during the pandemic, the highest increase in loneliness was among older women.

COVID-19 has exacerbated **gender roles**, risking decades of progress. Compared to men, during the pandemic, women have been disproportionately impacted by care responsibilities, poor work–life balance and financial insecurity.

Percentage of women and men with young children experiencing work-life conflicts



Source: Eurofound, *Living, working and COVID-19 e-survey*, Spring 2021 Note: Data represent respondents who answered 'Always' or 'Most of the time'.



As existing inequalities widen due to the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable groups, addressing the challenges and ensuring the well-being of citizens remain key priorities for the EU.

Public services play a central role in enhancing quality of life and responding to the challenges brought about by the pandemic in terms of quality, access and affordability.



Ratings for the quality of public services for individual Member States are available in the **'Countries' section** of Eurofound's website.

https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/country

Provision of care

The provision of **care services** is a key component of social protection, improving quality of life and access to education and employment for EU citizens.

As the population ages in the EU, more long-term care provision – with greater flexibility – will be necessary. Available home care and assistance will be critical, especially in those EU Member States where income is lowest.

However, **cost is the main barrier** for almost half (**49%**) of those with unmet professional home care needs.

Prompt access to primary healthcare, and to home and community care, can prevent the escalation of long-term care problems through early intervention and monitoring of changing needs.

Access to healthcare is an increasing challenge for many Europeans.

Over 20% of respondents were unable to access some form of medical care examination or treatment during the

COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: Eurofound, *Living, working and COVID-19* e-survey



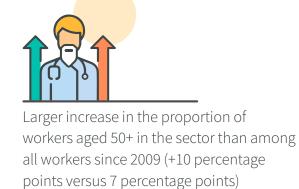
Spotlight on long-term care sector



grew by one-third from 2009 to 2019 to reach 6.3 million, but shortages remain.

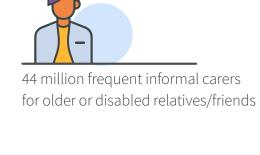


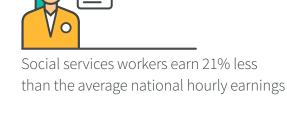
33% in the entire workforce in 2019)











Receiving and providing care became increasingly complicated during the pandemic, and will remain a growing challenge.



Improving living conditions and quality of life in the EU



Balance the mutually reinforcing goals of economic growth and better well-being





Ensure prompt access to primary healthcare and make long-term care more flexible, with more home care arrangements



Translate the principles set out in the

European Pillar of Social Rights into action.