

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
EURO
BARO
METER
FLASH SURVEY

WOMEN IN TIMES OF COVID-19

IMPRESSUM

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The report has been drafted for the European Parliament by Ipsos European Public Affairs.

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Manuscript completed in March 2022

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ABOUT THE PUBLISHER

This document was published by the Public Opinion Monitoring Unit within the Directorate–General for Communication (DG COMM) of the European Parliament.

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LINGUISTIC VERSION

Original: EN

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INTRODUCTION

Marking International Women's Day 2022 on 8 March, the European Parliament, Directorate-General for Communication commissioned a new Flash Eurobarometer survey to gather women's opinions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on violence against women, mental health and women's working lives. Specifically looking at gender related issues the study also focuses on women's future priorities for the European Parliament.

This report presents the findings of the survey in four chapters covering the following topics:

- European Parliament priorities for gender-related issues
- Perceived impact of the pandemic on violence against women
- Experience with violence during the pandemic
- Key measures to address violence against women
- Impact of the pandemic on working life
- Impact of the pandemic on financial independence
- Measures to stop the pandemic and their impact on mental health
- Feelings identified most with since the start of the pandemic
- What would women do or who would they turn to if they experience mental health issues

Ipsos European Public Affairs interviewed a representative sample of women of 15 years and over in each of the 27 Member States of the European Union. Between 25 January and 3 February 2022, 26 741 women were surveyed via computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI), using Ipsos online panels and their partner network. A share of respondents in Luxembourg and Malta was recruited via social media networks. Survey data were weighted to marginal age by gender, activity status and region population distributions using rim weighting. The EU27 averages are weighted according to the size of the 15+ population of each country. A technical note on the methods applied to conduct the survey is appended as an annex to this report.

Notes:

- 1) Survey results are subject to sampling tolerances meaning that not all apparent differences between groups may be statistically significant. Thus, only differences that are statistically significant (at the 5% level) – i.e. where it can be reasonably certain that they are unlikely to have occurred by chance – are highlighted in the text.
- 2) Due to rounding, the percentages shown in the charts and tables do not always exactly add up to the totals mentioned in the text.
- 3) In this report, countries are referred to by their official abbreviation. The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

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

* Cyprus as a whole is one of the 27 EU MS. However, the 'acquis communautaire' has been suspended in the part of the country which is not controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. For practical reasons, only the interviews carried out in the part of the country controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus are included in the 'CY' category.

KEY FINDINGS

European Parliament priorities for gender-related issues

- When asked which **gender-related issues** they would like to see tackled as a priority by the **European Parliament**, women are most likely to mention ‘trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children’, ‘mental and physical violence against women’ (both 47%) and the pay gap between women and men (41%)
- About three in ten women find that addressing the stronger difficulties for women in **reconciling their private and working lives** (31%) and the protection of women and girls belonging to **vulnerable groups** (30%) should be key priorities for the European Parliament.
- There are **substantial country differences**: For example, the share of women thinking that the European Parliament should prioritise tackling the pay gap between women and men ranges from 28% in Romania and 33% in Germany, Greece and Ireland, to 55% in Portugal.

Violence against women during the pandemic

- About three-quarters (77%) of women across the EU think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in physical and emotional violence against women in their country, including 46% who think there has been a large increase.
- In 25 out of 27 Member States, a majority of women think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in physical and emotional violence against women in their country. This view is shared by about nine in ten women in Greece (93%), Portugal (90%) and Austria (89%).
- Across countries, a sizeable group of women **know women in their circle of friends and family** who have experienced online harassment / cyber violence, street harassment (both 16%), domestic violence or abuse, economic violence (both 14%), and harassment at work (11%).
- In four countries, about a quarter of respondents know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced **domestic violence or abuse** since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic: Greece and Romania (both 25%), and Croatia and Cyprus (both 24%).
- A clear majority (58%) of women think that a **key measure to reduce violence against women** is making it easier to report violence against women, including to the police.

The impact of the pandemic on women's working life and financial independence

- About four in ten women (38%) agree that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their **income**, including 15% who totally agree and 23% who somewhat agree.
- This can be explained by women doing less work for a salary or wage than they wanted to, either because of the pandemic's impact on the job market (31% agree this applies to them) or because of the increase in work at home (25% agree).
- Women in Southern and Eastern European Member States are more likely to agree that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their working lives. For example, the share of women agreeing that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their work-life balance is largest in Cyprus (68%), Greece (59%) and Malta (58%).
- About one five women note the pandemic has made them either much more (7%) or somewhat more (12%) financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends. In Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Latvia, Portugal and Romania, more than a quarter of women say this is the case.

The impact of the pandemic on mental health

- Around four in ten women (41%) find that lockdown and curfew measures, limiting options to shop, go out, go to events, etc. had a major negative impact on their mental health. 38% answer this about limitations of the number of people you could meet at home or visit.
- At country level, the proportion of women saying that lockdown and curfew measures had a major negative impact on their mental health ranges from 25% in Estonia and 29% in Denmark to 50% in Poland, 54% in Cyprus and 58% in Greece.
- Feelings women can identify most with since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic are 'worried about / missing friends/family' (44%), 'feeling worried/anxious and getting stressed out' (37%) and 'worried about my future' (33%).
- At country level, the proportion of women that identify the most with feeling 'worried about / missing friend/family' is highest in Croatia (67%), Portugal, Spain (both 63%), and Greece (62%).
- If they were to experience mental health issues, women are most likely to seek support in their **direct environment** – 48% would turn to friends and family if they were to experience mental health issues, while 27% would turn to hobbies, recreational activities, or sports.
- Apart from friends and relatives, women are most likely to turn to their **family doctor/general practitioner** or **psychologist/therapist** – 38% would turn to either of these types of medical professionals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Marking International Women's Day 2022 on 8 March, the European Parliament, Directorate-General for Communication commissioned a new Flash Eurobarometer survey to gather women's opinions only on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on a range of different topics:

- European Parliament priorities for gender-related issues
- Violence against women during the pandemic
- The impact of the pandemic on women's working life and financial independence
- The impact of the pandemic on mental health

Ipsos European Public Affairs interviewed a representative sample of women of 15 years and over in each of the 27 Member States of the European Union: between 25 January and 3 February 2022, 26 741 women were surveyed via computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI), using Ipsos online panels and their partner network.

European Parliament priorities for gender-related issues

Top concerns: tackling trafficking and sexual exploitation, violence against women and pay-gap

When asked which gender-related issues they would like to see tackled as a priority by the European Parliament, **women are most likely to mention 'trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children' and 'mental and physical violence against women' (both mentioned by 47%).**

About four in ten (41%) mention **'the pay gap between women and men and its impact on career development'**.

About three in ten women (31%) think that the EP should prioritise addressing the stronger difficulties for women in reconciling their private and working lives. A similar share (30%) select the protection of women and girls belonging to vulnerable groups as a key priority for the EP.

There are **substantial country differences**. For example, the share of women thinking that the European Parliament should prioritise tackling the pay gap between women and men ranges from 28% in Romania and 33% in Germany, Greece and Ireland, to 55% in Portugal.

Violence against women during the pandemic

Perceived impact of the pandemic on violence against women

About three-quarters (77%) of women across the EU think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in physical and emotional violence against women in their country: 46% think there has been a 'large increase' and 31% that there has been a 'small increase' in violence against women.

In all but two countries, a majority of women think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in physical and emotional violence against women in their country.

About nine in ten women in Greece (93%), Portugal (90%) and Austria (89%) share this view. By contrast, in Finland and Hungary (48% and 47%), about one in two women report that violence against women has increased in their country.

Experience with violence during the pandemic

Across countries, a sizeable group of women know women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced online harassment / cyber violence, street harassment (both 16%), domestic violence or abuse, economic violence (both 14%), and harassment at work (11%).

In some countries these figures are notably higher: For example, in four countries, about a quarter of respondents say that they know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced domestic violence or abuse since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic: Greece and Romania (both 25%), and Croatia and Cyprus (both 24%).

Socio-demographic analysis shows that younger respondents are more likely to say that they know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced the different types of violence.

Key measures to address violence against women

A clear majority (58%) of women think that a key measure to reduce violence against women is making it easier to report violence against women, including to the police. Increasing options for women to seek help, for example through telephone hotlines, and increasing awareness and training of the police and judiciary on the subject are each mentioned by 40% of respondents.

A similar proportion (38%) find that increasing women's financial independence is a key measure to address violence against women. One third of respondents (33%) think it is important to have more awareness raising campaigns and more education about the subject. A quarter reply that more measures to tackle online harassment is a key measure to reduce violence against women (25%).

In line with the EU average results, the largest share of respondents across all but two countries select making it easier to report violence against women, including to the police, as a key measure to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in their country. Women in Portugal, Malta and the Netherlands (66%, 67%, 68%) are overall the most likely to think that making it easier to report violence is a key measure.

The impact of the pandemic on women's working life and financial independence

Impact of the pandemic on working life

About four in ten women (38%) agree that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their income, encompassing 15% who totally agree and 23% who somewhat agree. This can be explained by women doing less paid work – meaning less work for a salary or wage – than they wanted to, either because of the pandemic's impact on the job market (31% agree this applies to them) or because of the increase in work at home (25% agree).

Moreover, about one in five women note they have considered or **decided permanently reducing the amount of time they allocate to paid work** due to the pandemic (21% totally or somewhat agree that this applies to them).

The survey results also show that the pandemic has had a **substantial negative impact on women's work-life balance** – 44% agree that this applies to their personal situation, including 14% who totally agree and 30% who somewhat agree. Finally, 29% of women agree that, because of the pandemic, their professional decisions changed (such as changing jobs).

Impact of the pandemic on financial independence

About one in five women note the pandemic has made them either much more (7%) or somewhat more (12%) financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends.

This applies to more than a quarter of women in Bulgaria (37%), Cyprus (33%), Greece (31%), Romania, Portugal (both 28%), Croatia (27%) and Latvia (26%).

The impact of the pandemic on mental health

Measures to stop the pandemic and their impact on mental health

Around four in ten women (41%) find that lockdown and curfew measures, limiting options to shop, go out, go to events, etc. had a major negative impact on their mental health (major negative impact' means the proportion of women answering either '4' or '5-Major impact' on the response scale for this question.). A similar share (38%) answer this about limitations of the number of people you could meet at home or visit. Fewer find that travel restrictions (33%), workplace and office closures (28%), and school and childcare closures (26%) had a major negative impact on their mental health.

It is important to underline that these figures **vary significantly across socio-demographic groups**. For example, 40% of women with one child under the age of 15 in the household find that school and childcare closures had a major negative impact on their mental health.

At country level, proportions vary substantially as well. For example, the proportion of women saying that lockdown and curfew measures had a major negative impact on their mental health ranges from 25% in Estonia and 29% in Denmark to 50% in Poland, 54% in Cyprus and 58% in Greece.

Feelings identified most with since the start of the pandemic

Feelings women can identify most with since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic are **'worried about / missing friends/family'** (44%), **'feeling worried/anxious and getting stressed out'** (37%) and **'worried about my future'** (33%). Around three in ten women identify with **'feeling trapped/stuck at home'** (30%), **'feeling lonely/isolated'** and **'feeling bored / fed up / going stir crazy'** (both 29%).

Around one in five women say that, of the feelings and situations listed in the survey, they identify the most with **'feeling depressed / suffering from depression'** (22%). Similar shares mention **'worried about others developing mental health problems'** (21%) and **'concerned about my mental wellbeing'** (20%). **Less than one in six women surveyed (15%) identify with 'none of these' feelings.**

In 22 out of 27 Member States, respondents are the most likely to feel worried about or missing friends and family. The proportion of women that identify the most with feeling **'worried about / missing friend/family'** is highest in Croatia (67%), Portugal, Spain (both 63%), and Greece (62%).

Younger women are more likely to identify with most of the feelings / situations since the start of the pandemic. This is, for example, clearly visible when looking at the proportion feeling lonely / isolated: 41% of women aged 15-24 and 32% of those aged 25-39 identify with this feeling, compared to 24%-26% of those aged 40-54 and 55 and above.

What would women do or whom would they turn to if they were to experience mental health issues?

If they were to experience mental health issues, women are most likely to seek support in their direct environment – 48% would turn to friends and family if they were to experience mental health issues, while 27% would turn to hobbies, recreational activities, or sports. Apart from friends and relatives, women are most likely to turn to their family doctor/general practitioner or psychologist/therapist – 38% would turn to either of these types of medical professionals.

In 22 out of 27 Member States, women are most likely to turn to friends and family if they were to experience mental health issues. Proportionally, women in Finland (71%), the Netherlands, Slovakia and Sweden (all 63%) are the most likely to do so.

Women's age is strongly related to the organisations or people they would turn to if they were to experience mental health issues. This is particularly visible when comparing the youngest and oldest age groups. Women aged 15-24 are for example more likely than those aged 55 and above to turn to friends and family (60% vs 43%) or a psychologist /therapist (47% vs 30%). On the other hand, the oldest age group (55 and above) is far more likely to turn to their family doctor/ general practitioner (48% vs 18% of those aged 15-24).

1. EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PRIORITIES FOR GENDER-RELATED ISSUES

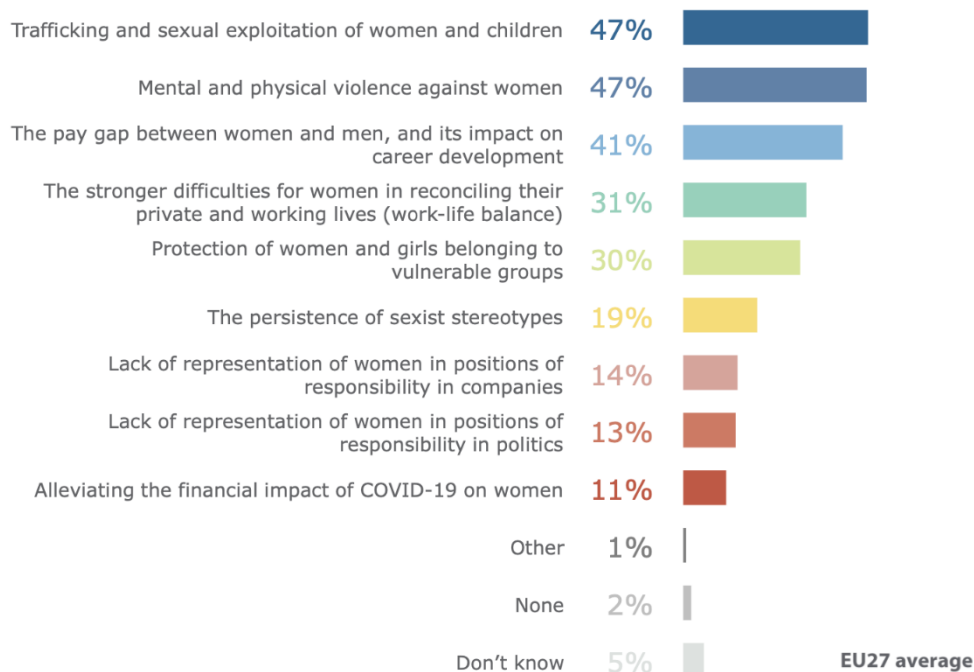
Respondents were presented with a list of nine gender-related issues – ranging from, amongst others, mental and physical violence against women, gender pay gap, work-life balance to the persistence of sexist stereotypes. They were asked to select those issues that they would like to see tackled as a priority by the European Parliament (EP).

In line with the results discussed in the section of the report dedicated to ‘Violence against Women’, many women find that **addressing violence against women should be a priority for the EP**. The chart below shows that ‘mental and physical violence against women’ comes in shared first position, together with ‘trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children’ – both are selected by 47% of women as gender-related issues that the EP should prioritise.

Three in ten women select **the protection of women and girls belonging to vulnerable groups** as a key priority for the EP. A similar share (31%) of women think that the EP should prioritise **addressing the stronger difficulties for women in reconciling their private and working lives**.

Other gender-related issues are less often seen as issues that the EP should prioritise, including the persistence of sexist stereotypes (19%), and the lack of representation of women in positions of responsibility in companies (14%) and in politics (13%). About one in ten women (11%) find that the EP should prioritise alleviating the financial impact of COVID-19 on women.

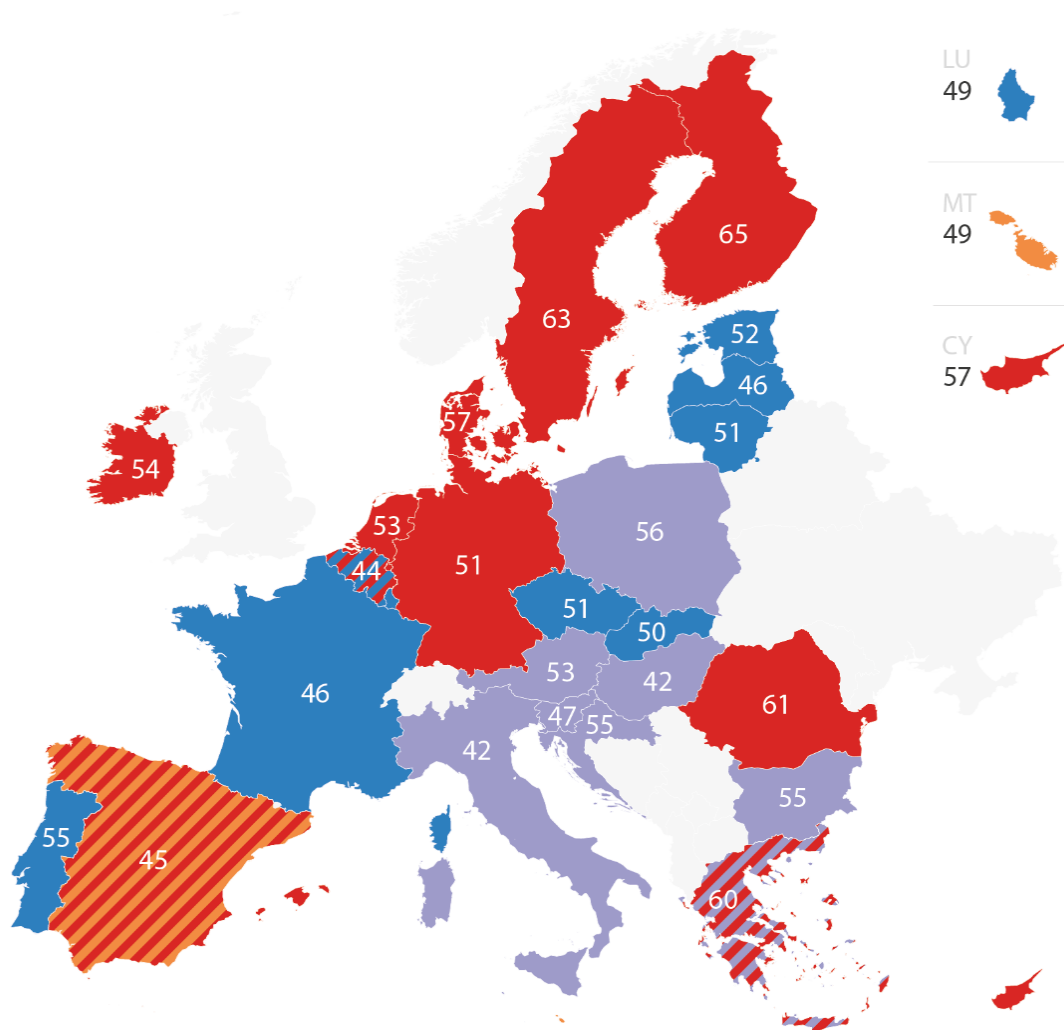
Q9 With a view to the role of the EP, which of the following gender-related issues would you like the Members of Parliament to tackle as a priority? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

Q9 With a view to the role of the EP, which of the following gender-related issues would you like the Members of Parliament to tackle as a priority? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% by country)

- The pay gap between women and men, and its impact on career development
- Trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children
- Mental and physical violence against women
- The stronger difficulties for women in reconciling their private and working lives (work-life balance)



Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

Mental and physical violence against women is the (shared) top-ranking gender-related issue for the EP to tackle in 8 out of 27 Member States. The proportion of women who think that the EP should prioritise tackling this issue ranges from 38% in Luxembourg, 39% in Latvia and 40% in both Czechia and the Netherlands, to 59% in Sweden and 60% in Greece.





























Trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children is seen as the (shared) most pressing gender-related priority by women in 11 Member States. The share of women indicating that the EP should tackle this issue as a priority is the lowest in Italy (32%), and Luxembourg and Malta (both 38%), and the highest in Greece (60%), Romania (61%), Sweden (63%) and Finland (65%).

The pay gap between women and men (and its impact on career development) is selected by the largest share of women in nine Member States. The proportion of women selecting this priority ranges from 28% in Romania and 33% in Germany, Greece and Ireland, to 55% in Portugal.

In Malta and Spain, the **stronger difficulties for women in reconciling their private and working lives** comes in (shared) first place. In Sweden, Denmark Finland and the Netherlands, not more than one in five respondents select this issue as a priority (between 15% and 20%); in Lithuania, Luxembourg, Spain and Malta, this applies to more than 40% of women (between 43% and 49%).

Although the **protection of women and girls belonging to vulnerable groups** is nowhere selected by the largest share of respondents, there are four countries where at least 40% of women identify this issue as one that need to be tackled as a priority by the EP: Greece (40%), Ireland and Romania (both 41%), and Finland (49%). The lowest proportion selecting this issue are seen in Czechia, France and Luxembourg (all 24%).

Q9 With a view to the role of the EP, which of the following gender-related issues would you like the Members of Parliament to tackle as a priority? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% by country)

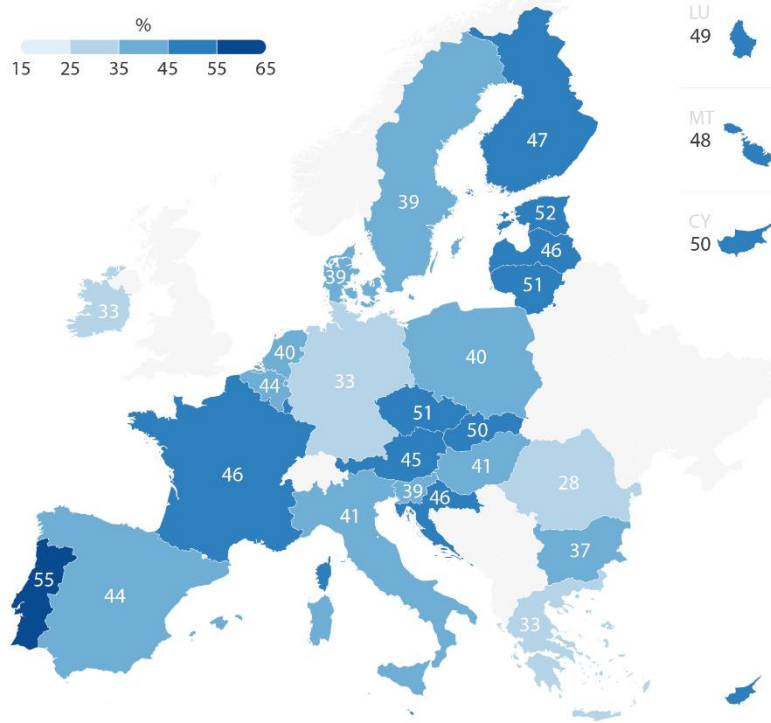
	Trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children	Mental and physical violence against women	The pay gap between women and men, and its impact on career development	The stronger difficulties for women in reconciling their private and working lives (work-life balance)	Protection of women and girls belonging to vulnerable groups	The persistence of sexist stereotypes	Lack of representation of women in positions of responsibility in companies	Lack of representation of women in positions of responsibility in politics	Alleviating the financial impact of COVID-19 on women	Other	None	Don't know
EU27 	47	47	41	31	30	19	14	13	11	1	2	5
BE 	44	43	44	26	29	23	13	12	10	1	3	6
BG 	51	55	37	32	37	8	9	9	13	1	2	3
CZ 	44	40	51	27	24	15	14	16	13	1	3	6
DK 	57	52	39	19	37	10	10	8	4	1	2	11
DE 	51	50	33	29	27	15	10	9	14	1	3	8
EE 	43	43	52	39	33	18	9	12	10	0	1	6
IE 	54	52	33	31	41	19	15	19	12	1	1	3
EL 	60	60	33	31	40	16	11	14	9	0	1	1
ES 	45	41	44	45	34	19	15	11	9	1	2	4
FR 	43	42	46	30	24	23	20	17	7	1	3	5
HR 	47	55	46	32	30	19	19	14	14	1	0	1
IT 	32	42	41	40	25	25	18	19	14	1	2	3
CY 	57	54	50	29	36	13	10	13	9	1	0	3
LV 	41	39	46	32	29	13	9	10	11	1	2	8
LT 	40	44	51	43	29	16	8	5	8	0	1	6
LU 	38	38	49	43	24	24	20	13	10	3	2	3
HU 	41	42	41	38	35	9	14	17	13	1	2	6
MT 	38	46	48	49	26	25	14	17	12	1	0	3
NL 	53	40	40	20	35	25	12	11	5	1	2	10
AT 	48	53	45	32	28	16	9	6	19	1	1	5
PL 	52	56	40	24	27	21	11	13	12	1	1	5
PT 	49	44	55	40	38	13	14	16	9	0	0	2
RO 	61	55	28	26	41	13	11	15	10	1	1	4
SI 	46	47	39	28	29	17	21	24	12	1	1	2
SK 	49	43	50	27	32	13	17	13	17	1	1	3
FI 	65	44	47	20	49	20	7	5	4	0	0	5
SE 	63	59	39	15	37	16	8	11	7	1	1	8

Most-frequently selected response shown in **orange**

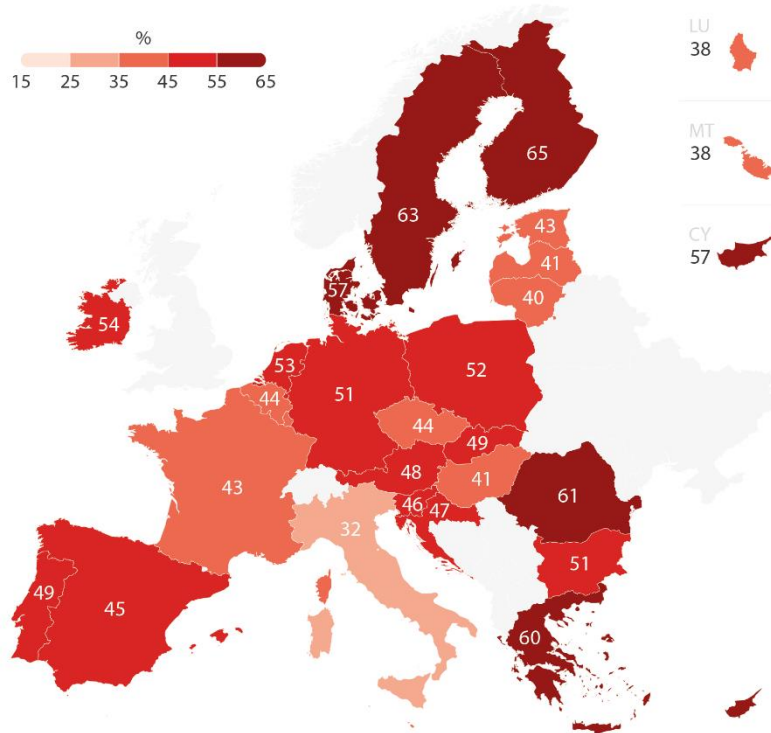
Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

Q9 With a view to the role of the EP, which of the following gender-related issues would you like the Members of Parliament to tackle as a priority? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% by country)

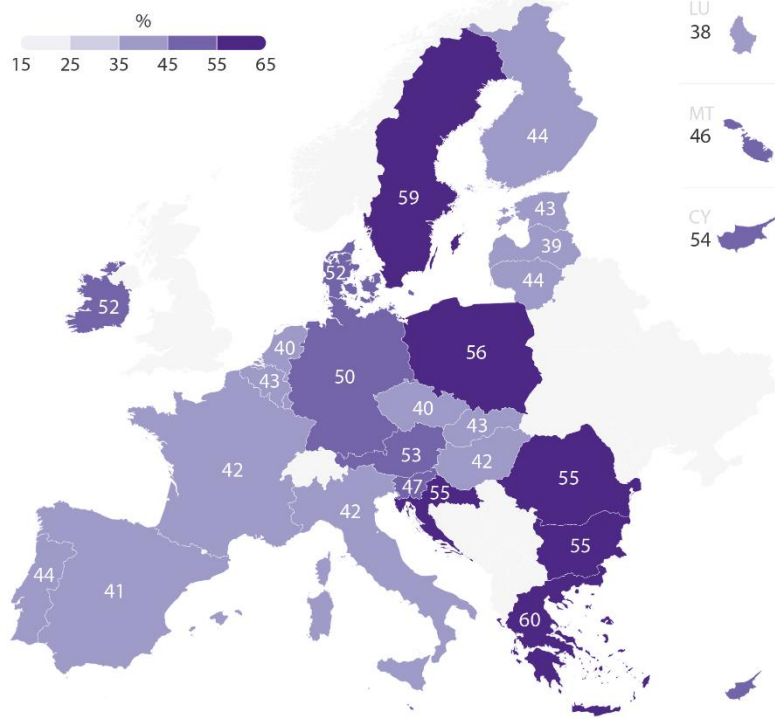
The pay gap between women and men, and its impact on career development



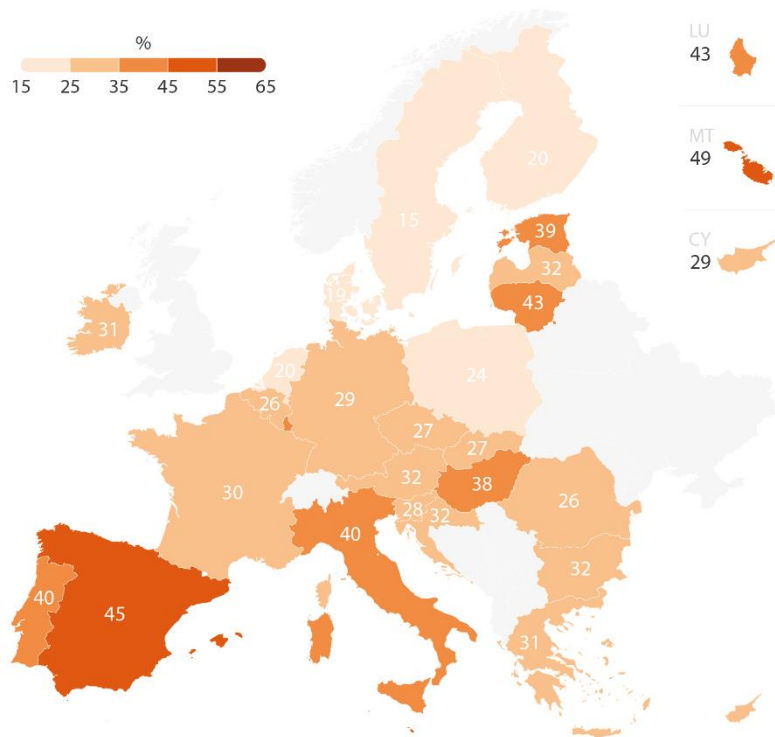
Trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children



Mental and physical violence against women



The stronger difficulties for women in reconciling their private and working lives (work-life balance)



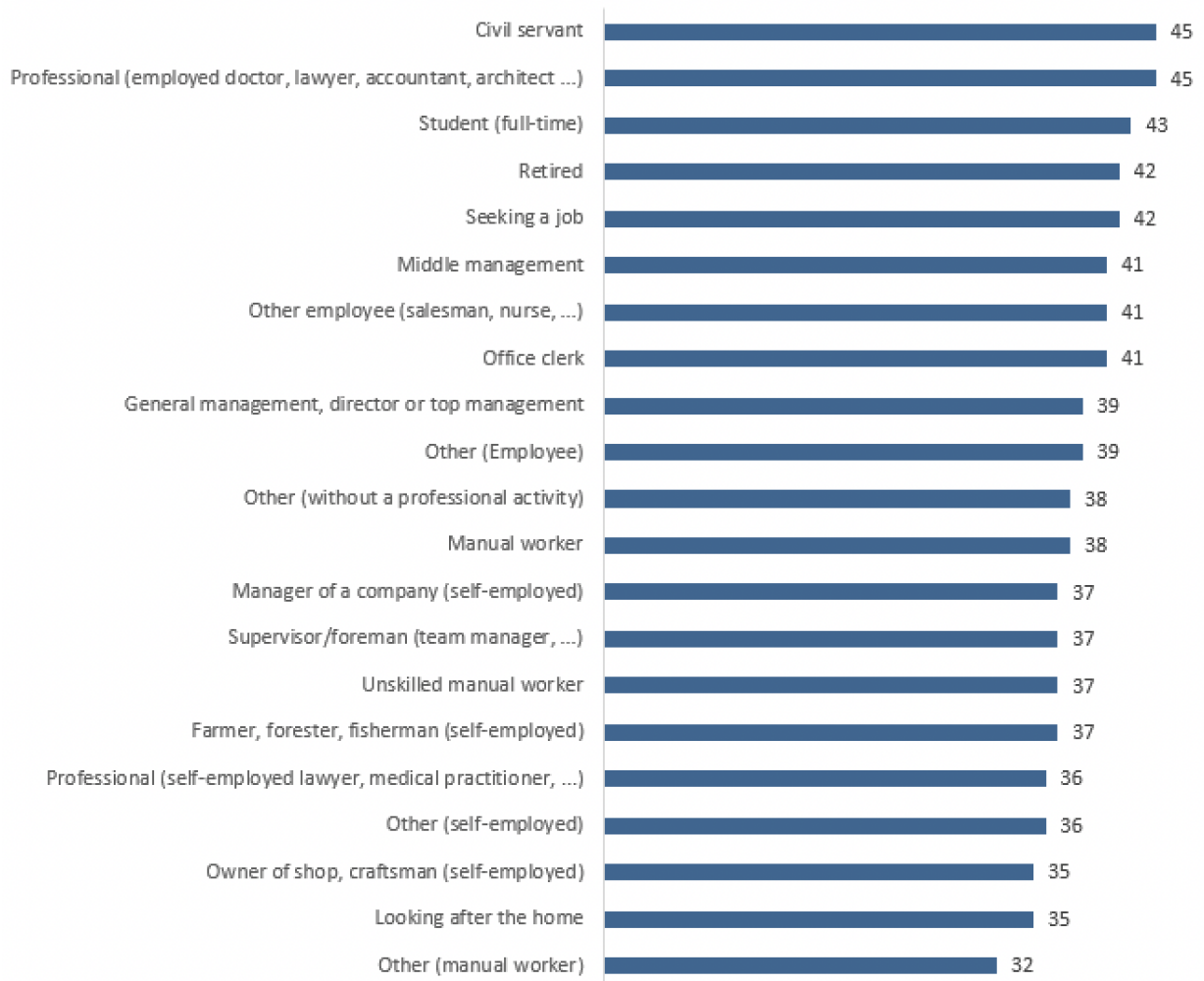
Socio-demographic considerations

The oldest **age group** is particularly concerned about the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children: 52% of women aged 55 and above find that the EP should tackle this issue as a priority, compared to 41%-45% of those aged 15-24, 25-39 or 40-54. Younger women are somewhat more likely to be concerned about the lack of representation of women in positions of responsibility in companies and politics: 18% of those aged 15-24 find that the EP should address as a priority the lack of representation of women in positions of responsibility in politics, compared to 12% of both those aged 25-39 and 40-54, and 14% of those aged 55+. Younger women more frequently think that the EP should prioritise addressing the persistence of sexist stereotypes: 25% of those aged 15- 24 think so, versus 19% of those aged 25-39 and 18% of both those aged 40-54 and 55+.

Women with a **higher level of education** are more likely than their lower-educated counterparts to believe that the EP should tackle as a priority the stronger difficulties for women in reconciling their private and working lives (work-life balance): 35% of women who completed their education when aged 20 or above find this, compared to 30% of both women who finished their education aged up to 15 years or aged 16-19 years. Women who completed their education when aged 20 and above are also more likely to find that the EP should prioritise addressing the pay gap between women and men and its impact on career development (44% think so, compared to 34% and 38%, respectively, of women who finished their education aged up to 15 years or aged 16-19 years). Mental and physical violence against women is perceived as a priority for the EP to address by 49% of women who completed their education aged 16-19, which is higher than the proportion observed for both those who completed their education when aged 15 or younger (42%) or when aged 20 and above (46%).

Women working as an **employee** are often concerned about the pay gap between women and men and its impact on career development (42% find that the EP should address this as a priority), both compared to women who are self-employed (36%) and those in manual labour (37%). Similarly, employees are more likely to find that the EP should prioritise tackling the stronger difficulties for women in reconciling their private and working lives, both compared to women who are self-employed and those in manual labour (33% vs 28%-29%). Self-employed women more frequently find that addressing the persistence of sexist stereotypes should be a key priority for the EP, both compared to employees and those in manual labour (22% vs 15%-18%). Likewise, self-employed women are more likely to reply that the EP should address the lack of representation of women in positions of responsibility in politics, both compared to employees and those in manual labour (16% vs 11%-13%).

Importance of pay gap between women and men by type of profession



Q9 With a view to the role of the EP, which of the following gender-related issues would you like the Members of Parliament to tackle as a priority? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% by socio-demographics)

	Trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children	Mental and physical violence against women	The pay gap between women and men, and its impact on career development	The stronger difficulties for women in reconciling their private and working lives (work-life balance)	Protection of women and girls belonging to vulnerable groups	The persistence of sexist stereotypes	Lack of representation of women in positions of responsibility in companies	Lack of representation of women in positions of responsibility in politics	Alleviating the financial impact of COVID-19 on women	Other	None	Don't know
EU27	47	47	41	31	30	19	14	13	11	1	2	5
Age												
15-24	44	46	37	26	26	25	17	18	12	1	2	4
25-39	41	44	41	35	27	19	15	12	14	1	2	5
40-54	45	46	40	33	28	18	13	12	11	1	2	7
55+	52	48	41	30	33	18	13	14	9	1	2	5
Education (age when completed)												
Up to 15	46	42	34	30	33	17	12	12	14	1	3	6
16-19	49	49	38	30	31	17	13	13	11	1	2	6
20+	47	46	44	35	29	19	15	14	11	1	2	4
Still studying	47	47	42	26	27	26	18	17	9	1	1	4
Occupation												
Self-employed	45	43	36	29	30	22	13	16	13	1	2	5
Employee	44	45	42	33	27	18	15	13	13	1	2	5
Manual worker	46	45	37	28	33	15	13	11	16	0	3	5
Not working	50	48	40	31	31	19	13	14	9	1	2	5
Children (<15 years) in household												
No children	49	48	42	30	30	19	13	14	10	1	2	5
One child	43	45	37	34	30	18	15	13	14	1	2	4
Two children	41	44	38	40	30	18	13	11	14	1	2	4
Three or more children	42	43	37	39	27	16	14	14	16	1	2	6

Most-frequently selected response shown in *orange*

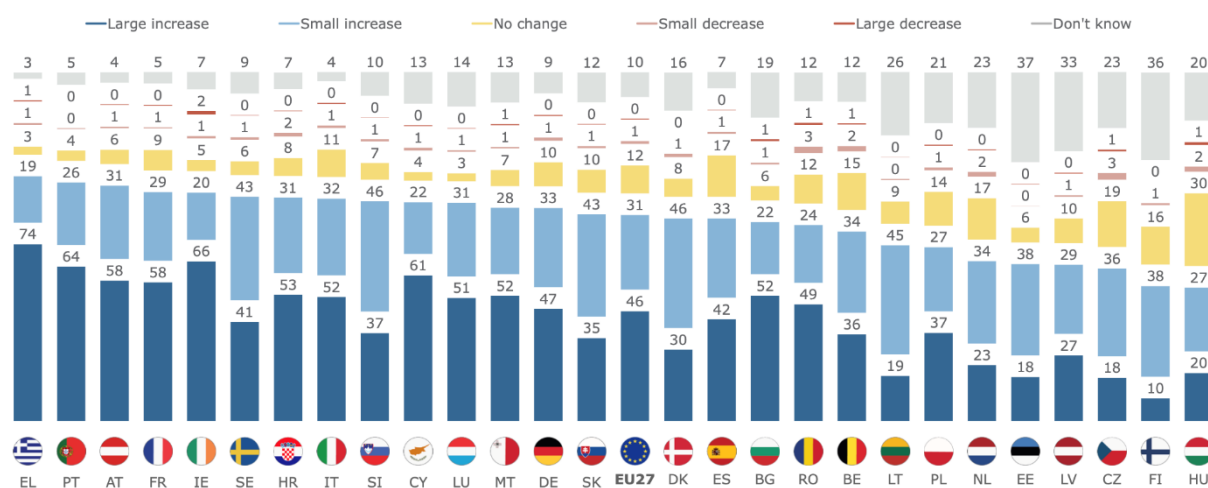
Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

2. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN DURING THE PANDEMIC

2.1 Perceived impact of the pandemic on violence against women

About three-quarters (77%) of women across the EU think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in physical and emotional violence against women in their country: 46% think there has been a 'large increase' and 31% that there has been a 'small increase' in violence against women. Few of them think that the pandemic has led to a decrease in physical and emotional violence against women: 1% think it led to a 'small decrease' and less than 1% to a 'large decrease'. 12% of women think there has been no change in violence and 10% 'don't know' whether there was a change or not.

Q6 Do you think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase or decrease in physical and emotional violence against women in (COUNTRY)? (% by country)



Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

The results vary considerably across the Member States. **In all but two countries, a majority of women think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in physical and emotional violence against women in their country.** This view is shared by about nine in ten women in Greece (93%), Portugal (90%) and Austria (89%). By contrast, in Finland and Hungary (both 47%), about one in two women report that violence against women has increased in their country.

The proportion answering that there has been a **'large increase' in violence against women in their country** due to the COVID-19 pandemic ranges from 10% in Finland to 74% in Greece. Over half of respondents think there has been a 'large increase' of violence in 11 countries.

Three in ten women in Hungary (30%) and about one in six women in Czechia (19%), Spain and the Netherlands (both 17%) think that the COVID-19 pandemic has not led to any change in physical and emotional violence in their countries. Respondents in Latvia, Finland and Estonia are more likely than their counterparts in other countries to reply that they 'do not know' how to evaluate the change in violence against women (between 33% and 37%).

Socio-demographic considerations

Compared to younger women (aged 15-24 and 25-39), older women (aged 55 and above) are somewhat more likely to think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in physical and emotional violence against women in their country (78% vs 73%-75%).

Women who are not working or who are self-employed are more likely than women in manual labour jobs to reply that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in violence against women in their country (78%-77% vs 70%).

Those living in a household with no children under the age of 15 are more likely than their counterparts in households with children to answer that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in violence against women in their country (78% vs 72%).

The longer women remained in education, the more likely they are to answer that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in violence against women (78% of those who completed education aged 20+, compared to 73% of those who completed education aged 15 or younger).

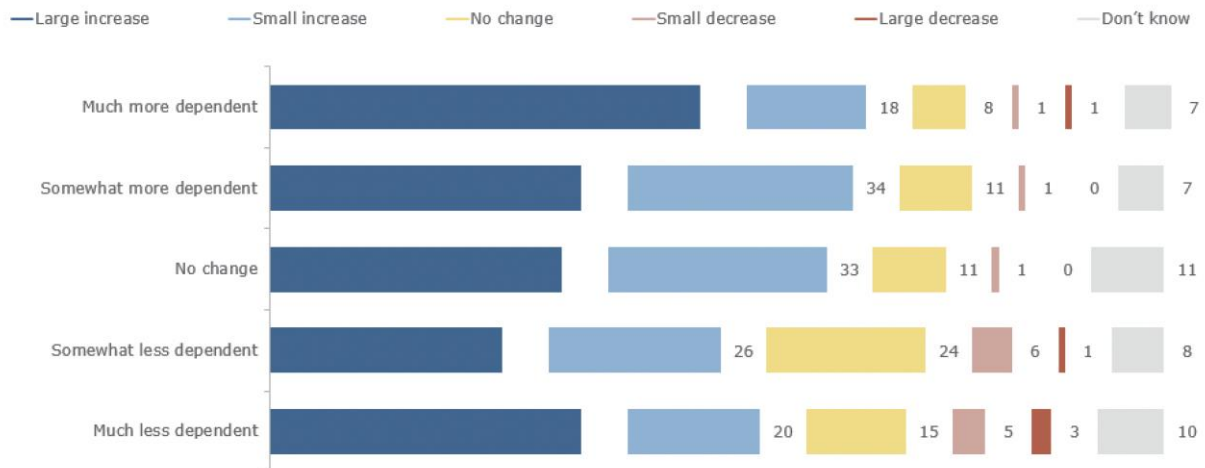
Q6 Do you think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase or decrease in physical and emotional violence against women in (COUNTRY)? (% by country)

	Total 'Increase'	Total 'Decrease'	No change	Don't know
EU27	77	2	12	10
Age				
15-24	73	4	15	8
25-39	75	2	14	10
40-54	77	1	12	10
55+	78	1	10	11
Education (age when completed)				
Up to 15	73	3	15	9
16-19	77	1	11	10
20+	78	1	11	10
Still studying	77	3	11	8
Occupation				
Self-employed	77	2	11	10
Employee	76	2	13	10
Manual worker	70	3	15	12
Not working	78	1	11	10
Children (<15 years) in household				
No children	78	1	10	10
One child	74	3	14	9
Two children	73	2	16	10
Three or more children	72	2	15	11

Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

It is also worth noting that **women who indicate that the COVID-19 pandemic has made them more financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends** are overall the most likely to think that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an increase in physical and emotional violence against women in their country. This view is shared by 82% of women in this group, compared to 77% of women who have seen no change and 64% of those who became less dependent.

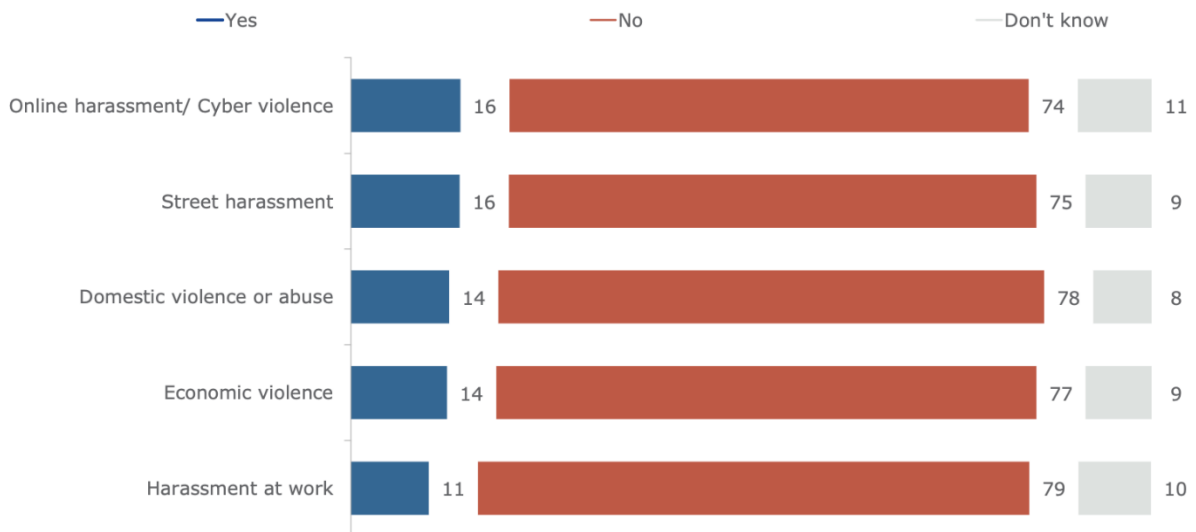
Perceived increase of violence against women, by level of financial dependency



2.2 Experience with violence during the pandemic

To get more insight into women's direct experience with violence during the pandemic, respondents were asked if they know of any women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced various forms of violence. For all the types of violence, **between 11% and 16% of respondents know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced it during the pandemic**. Most often encountered types of violence are online harassment / cyber violence and street harassment (both 16%), followed by domestic violence or abuse and economic violence (both 14%). About one in ten (11%) know of women among their friends and family who suffered from harassment at work during the pandemic.

Q7 Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, do you know of any women in your circle of friends and family who have experienced one of the following forms of violence? (% EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=26 741)





























In four countries, about a quarter of respondents say that they know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced **domestic violence or abuse** since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic: Greece and Romania (both 25%), and Croatia and Cyprus (both 24%). In Denmark, Estonia, Finland and the Netherlands, this figure is below 10%.

In Bulgaria and Cyprus, three in ten women answer that they know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced **economic violence** since the start of the pandemic; this figure is also high in Croatia, Romania and Greece (between 22% to 26%). In Denmark, Finland and Sweden, less than 10% of respondents answer 'yes' to this question.

More than a quarter of women in Greece (33%), Ireland (30%), Malta (29%) and Luxemburg (28%) know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced **street harassment** during the pandemic. On the contrary, in Estonia this applies to 5% of women. The proportion of women who say the same about **harassment at work** varies between 6% in Hungary and 27% in Luxembourg, while the proportion for **online harassment and cyber violence** ranges from 10% in Estonia to 29% in Croatia.

In line with the EU average results, in about half of the countries, online harassment / cyber violence and street harassment tend to be the types of violence that are more frequently mentioned by respondents. In a few countries, economic violence is more frequently mentioned than other types of violence. For example, in Bulgaria, 30% of women say they know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced economic violence, compared to between 15% and 19% of women who answer the same for the other types of violence listed in the survey.

Q7 Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, do you know of any women in your circle of friends and family who have experienced one of the following forms of violence? (% 'Yes' by country)

		Online harassment/ Cyber violence	Street harassment	Domestic violence or abuse	Economic violence	Harassment at work
EU27		16	16	14	14	11
BE		18	22	15	15	13
BG		16	16	19	30	15
CZ		16	12	13	16	8
DK		12	12	8	6	8
DE		13	12	11	10	7
EE		10	5	8	10	12
IE		27	30	21	16	18
EL		28	33	25	26	22
ES		14	17	12	11	13
FR		12	17	15	12	16
HR		29	22	24	22	24
IT		15	15	11	13	8
CY		26	24	24	30	20
LV		20	9	14	19	11
LT		17	10	15	17	9
LU		24	28	20	19	27
HU		17	12	12	18	6
MT		27	29	19	16	16
NL		14	18	9	10	11
AT		16	18	11	15	11
PL		20	13	19	18	8
PT		17	17	14	14	14
RO		22	19	25	25	13
SI		18	16	20	19	16
SK		16	11	14	16	7
FI		22	15	8	8	9
SE		15	10	10	8	10

Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

Socio-demographic considerations

Younger respondents are more likely to say that they know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced the different types of violence. The largest differences are seen for online harassment / cyber violence and street harassment. For example, 8% of women aged 55 and over say so about street harassment during the COVID-19 pandemic; this proportion then gradually increases to 39% for the youngest respondents (between 15 and 24 years-of-age).

Comparing women with **a different level of education**, a small, but significant effect is seen with women who stayed in education the longest being somewhat more likely to know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced the different types of violence; for example, 12% of those who completed education aged 20+ know women who were harassed at work, compared to 9% of those who completed education aged 15 or younger.

There are also differences when looking at respondents' **occupation** and the presence of **children in the household**. For these variables, women who are not working and those in a household with no children tend to be less likely to report knowing of women who have experienced violence during the pandemic – these differences, however, may be explained by the difference in age structure of these groups.

Q7 Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, do you know of any women in your circle of friends and family who have experienced one of the following forms of violence? (% 'Yes' by socio-demographics)

	Online harassment/ Cyber violence	Street harassment	Domestic violence or abuse	Economic violence	Harassment at work
EU27	16	16	14	14	11
Age					
15-24	34	39	21	22	21
25-39	23	21	20	19	16
40-54	14	12	14	15	11
55+	8	8	9	8	6
Education (age when completed)					
Up to 15	13	13	13	13	9
16-19	12	11	12	12	8
20+	16	15	15	14	12
Still studying	32	38	20	20	20
Occupation					
Self-employed	21	20	20	21	17
Employee	18	17	17	16	14
Manual worker	24	19	21	21	18
Not working	13	14	11	11	8
Children (<15 years) in household					

No children	13	14	11	11	9
One child	22	20	22	21	16
Two children	20	18	19	21	14
Three or more children	21	20	26	23	18

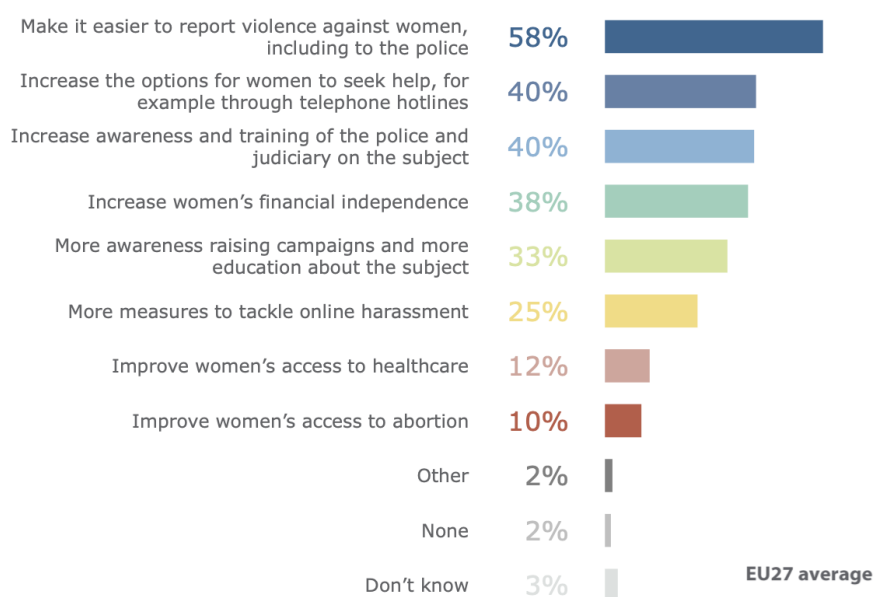
Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

2.3 Key measures to address violence against women

Women participating in the survey were presented with a list of ten measures that could be taken to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in their country – from making it easier to report violence against women to improving access to abortion.

A clear majority (58%) of women surveyed think that a key measure to reduce violence against women is making it **easier to report violence against women**, including to the police. **Increasing options for women to seek help**, for example through telephone hotlines, and **increasing awareness and training of the police and judiciary** on the subject are each mentioned by 40% of respondents. A similar proportion (38%) find that **increasing women’s financial independence** is a key measure to address violence against women. One third of respondents (33%) think it is important to have **more awareness raising campaigns and more education** about the subject. A quarter reply that **more measures to tackle online harassment** is a key measure to reduce violence against women (25%). Finally, about one in ten respondents (12%) mention **improving women’s access to healthcare** and a similar share (10%) select **improving women’s access to abortion**.

Q8 In your view, what are the key measures that should be taken, if any, to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in (COUNTRY)? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% EU27)































Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

In line with the EU average results, the largest share of respondents across all but two countries select making it **easier to report violence against women**, including to the police, as a key measure to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in their country. Women in Portugal, Malta and the Netherlands (66%-68%) are overall the most likely to think that making it easier to report violence is a key measure. In Romania, this measure is selected by 46% of respondents, while a larger share – 51% – select **increasing options for women to seek help, e.g. through telephone hotlines**, as a key measure to reduce violence. The latter measure is also selected by a majority of respondents in Bulgaria (56%) and Denmark (59%). In Spain, on the other hand, less than three in ten respondents think that increasing option to seek help is a key measure.

In Greece, the largest share of women (54%) mention **increasing awareness and training of the police and judiciary on the subject of violence against women** as a key measure to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in their country. This measure is also selected by a majority of respondents in Cyprus (51%), Sweden (52%) and Portugal (55%). In the Netherlands and Lithuania, in contrast, about a quarter of respondents select this measure (23% and 25% respectively).

In three countries – Croatia (56%), Austria (53%) and Lithuania (52%) – a majority of women believe that **increasing women's financial independence** is a key measure to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in their country. At the lower end of the country ranking, this measure is selected by 23% of respondents in Denmark and 28% in France.

Q8 In your view, what are the key measures that should be taken, if any, to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in (COUNTRY)? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% EU27)

		Make it easier to report violence against women, incl. to the police	Increase options for women to seek help, e.g. through telephone hotlines	Increase awareness and training of the police and judiciary on the subject	Increase women's financial independence	More awareness raising campaigns and more education about the subject	More measures to tackle online harassment	Improve women's access to healthcare	Improve women's access to abortion	Other	None	Don't know
EU27		58	40	40	38	33	25	12	10	2	2	3
BE		64	41	36	33	30	27	13	8	2	1	3
BG		62	56	32	38	39	17	11	3	2	1	1
CZ		54	43	27	38	22	33	8	6	1	2	6
DK		62	59	38	23	24	33	5	3	3	1	7
DE		54	38	33	35	25	31	13	12	1	3	6
EE		52	50	31	42	39	25	11	6	1	1	3
IE		62	37	42	34	39	30	18	10	3	1	1
EL		53	47	54	38	44	23	14	7	1	0	1
ES		52	28	47	44	49	23	8	6	3	2	2
FR		64	42	50	28	28	28	10	8	2	2	3
HR		65	37	43	56	33	15	12	14	1	0	1
IT		62	42	37	41	35	21	11	6	3	1	3
CY		52	47	51	44	37	19	12	7	1	1	2
LV		51	44	36	40	29	19	18	4	2	1	5
LT		54	44	25	52	31	14	16	10	1	1	3
LU		58	38	44	45	33	26	8	8	3	1	3
HU		54	45	42	33	24	23	18	16	1	1	5
MT		67	41	50	35	32	23	10	20	3	0	1
NL		68	42	23	31	39	27	10	6	5	2	5
AT		58	37	40	53	24	24	12	10	2	1	2
PL		55	35	35	45	32	15	18	30	1	1	4
PT		66	46	55	45	38	13	12	4	1	0	0
RO		46	51	43	43	40	22	14	5	2	1	1
SI		55	37	33	48	32	22	18	6	1	2	3
SK		65	39	28	50	27	22	11	13	1	1	3
FI		65	44	35	37	20	36	15	6	2	0	5
SE		59	42	52	42	26	24	11	5	3	0	4

Most-frequently selected response shown in orange

Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

Socio-demographic considerations

Across all socio-demographic groups, the **largest share of respondents select making it easier to report violence against women, including to the police** as a key measure to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in their country.

There are, however, also some differences across socio-demographic groups, such as:

- **Younger women (aged 15-24)** are less likely than their older counterparts to think that increasing women's financial independence is a key measure to reduce violence against women in their country (28% vs 38%-41%), but they are more likely to mention improving women's access to healthcare (16% vs 9% of women aged 55 and over) and abortion (19% vs 8% of women aged 55 and over).
- **Women who completed their education when aged 20 and above** are more likely to reply that increasing women's financial independence is a key measure to reduce violence against women in their country (42% think so, compared to 33% and 37%, respectively, of women who finished their education aged up to 15 years or aged 16-19 years).
- **Self-employed women** are more likely to select increasing women's financial independence as a key measure, in particular when compared to women in manual labour jobs (42% vs 35%), but they are less likely to think that more measures to tackle online harassment is a key measure (19% vs 25%-26% across the other groups).
- **Women in household with three or more children** (under the age of 15) are overall the most likely to state that increasing women's financial independence is key in reducing violence against women in their country (45%, compared to e.g. 37% of women in household without children).

Women who know of women in their circle of friends and family who have experienced a form of violence since the start of the pandemic and women who do not know anybody evaluate the key measures to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in their country in a similar way. Across both groups, making it easier to report violence against women and increasing the option for women to seek help (e.g. via hotline) are the highest-ranking measures. The largest difference between these two groups is seen for the measures that are selected less frequently. Women who know of women who have experience violence are somewhat more likely to answer that improving women's access to healthcare is a key measure (selected by 16% vs 10% among women who do not know of anybody in their circle of family or friends who have experienced violence). A similar difference is also seen for improving women's access to abortion (13% vs 8%, respectively).

Q8 In your view, what are the key measures that should be taken, if any, to reduce physical and emotional violence against women in (COUNTRY)? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% EU27)

	Make it easier to report violence against women, incl. to the police	Increase options for women to seek help, e.g. through telephone hotlines	Increase awareness and training of the police and judiciary on the subject	Increase women's financial independence	More awareness raising campaigns and more education about the subject	More measures to tackle online harassment	Improve women's access to healthcare	Improve women's access to abortion	Other	None	Don't know
EU27	58	40	40	38	33	25	12	10	2	2	3
Age											
15-24	54	41	41	28	33	24	16	19	2	2	3
25-39	54	37	36	40	31	24	16	13	2	2	3
40-54	58	38	37	41	32	24	11	7	2	2	4
55+	61	43	42	38	33	25	9	8	2	1	3
Education (age when completed)											
Up to 15	54	38	38	33	31	25	11	11	3	2	3
16-19	59	42	37	37	30	26	12	9	2	2	4
20+	59	39	42	42	35	24	12	9	2	1	3
Still studying	59	41	44	29	35	25	15	18	2	1	2
Occupation											
Self-employed	54	36	38	42	34	19	13	10	3	1	4
Employee	56	38	37	38	31	26	13	10	2	2	4
Manual worker	53	37	36	35	29	26	15	11	3	2	3
Not working	60	42	42	38	33	25	11	9	2	1	3
Children (<15 years) in household											
No children	60	41	41	37	33	25	10	9	2	2	4
One child	53	38	36	42	31	24	16	11	1	2	2
Two children	56	36	36	40	33	23	14	9	2	2	4
Three or more children	53	38	35	45	27	25	16	12	1	1	5
Women among friends and family who have experienced violence											
No	59	41	38	37	32	24	10	8	2	2	4
Yes	56	38	42	40	32	26	16	13	2	1	1

Most-frequently selected response shown in **orange**

Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

3. THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON WOMEN'S WORKING LIFE AND FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

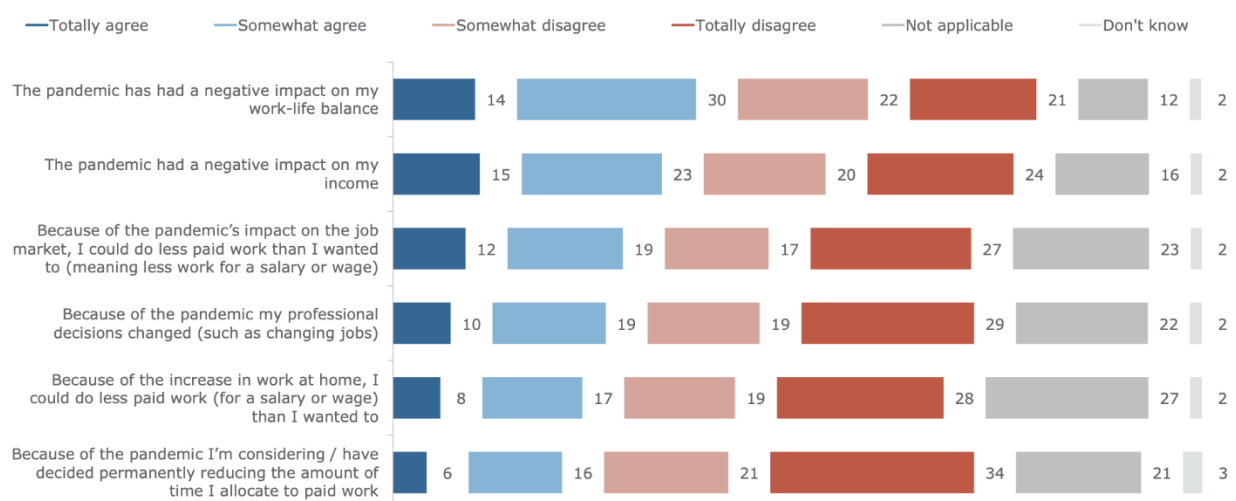
3.1 Impact of the pandemic on working life

To get an insight into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on **women's economic situation and labour**, respondents were asked whether they agreed or not that the pandemic had an impact of different facets of their working life, including work-life balance, income, time allocated to paid work, and professional decisions (note this question was only asked to those with professional activity).

About four in ten women (38%) agree that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their income, encompassing 15% who totally agree and 23% who somewhat agree. This can be explained by women doing less paid work – meaning less work for a salary or wage – than they wanted to, either because of the pandemic's impact on the job market (31% agree this applies to them) or because of the increase in work at home (25% agree). Moreover, about one in five women note they have considered or decided permanently reducing the amount of time they allocate to paid work due to the pandemic (21% totally or somewhat agree that this applies to them).

The survey results also show that the pandemic has had a **substantial negative impact on women's work-life balance** – 44% agree that this applies to their personal situation, including 14% who totally agree and 30% who somewhat agree. Finally, 29% of women agree that, because of the pandemic, their professional decisions changed (such as changing jobs).

Q5 Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the COVID-19 pandemic? (% EU27)



Base: Women in employment (n=16 761)

The share of women agreeing that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their work-life balance is smallest in Denmark (29%). At the other end of the country ranking, in Cyprus, this figure is more than twice as high (68%). Other countries where many women agree that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their work-life balance are Greece (59%) and Malta (58%).





























In three countries, more than half of women agree that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their income: Greece (60%), Bulgaria and Cyprus (both 57%). In a further two countries (Poland and Romania) exactly half agree. At the other end of the country ranking, in Denmark, Finland and Estonia, less than a quarter of women agree that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their income (19%, 22% and 23%, respectively).

The share of women agreeing that because of the pandemic's impact on the job market, they could do less paid work (meaning less work for a salary or wage) than they wanted to, is smallest in Denmark (15%), Estonia (16%) and Finland (17%) and largest in Italy, Portugal, Romania (all 42%) and Greece (45%). Broadly reflecting this result, the proportion of women agreeing that they could do less paid work than desired because of the increase in work at home, ranges from 10% in both Denmark and Finland, and 13% in Estonia, to 38% in Greece and 39% in Romania.

The share of respondents who, because of the pandemic, are considering or have decided permanently reducing the amount of time they allocate to paid work is largest in Ireland (33% agree), followed by Greece and Romania (both 30%). This share is smallest in Denmark, Estonia (both 13%) and the Netherlands (14%).

The proportion of women agreeing that, because of the pandemic, their professional decisions changed is again lowest in Finland (16%), Denmark (19%) and Estonia (21%) and highest in Cyprus (49%) and Greece (47%).

Q5 Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the COVID-19 pandemic? (% Total 'Agree', by country)

		The pandemic has had a negative impact on my work-life balance	The pandemic had a negative impact on my income	Because of the pandemic's impact on the job market, I could do less paid work than I wanted to (meaning less work for a salary or wage)	Because of the pandemic my professional decisions changed (such as changing jobs)	Because of the increase in work at home, I could do less paid work (for a salary or wage) than I wanted to	Because of the pandemic I'm considering / have decided permanently reducing the amount of time I allocate to paid work
EU27		44	38	31	29	25	21
BE		35	30	25	22	22	21
BG		50	57	40	45	32	22
CZ		39	44	37	26	25	21
DK		29	19	15	19	10	13
DE		46	30	26	23	20	19
EE		35	23	16	21	13	13
IE		42	39	29	42	28	33
EL		59	60	45	47	38	30
ES		36	40	31	25	26	22
FR		39	34	28	29	22	22
HR		46	48	34	35	27	20
IT		52	46	42	29	31	23
CY		68	57	38	49	33	28
LV		43	37	26	29	20	23
LT		45	29	27	29	24	16
LU		56	28	22	45	22	24
HU		51	46	38	28	34	18
MT		58	42	28	38	24	20
NL		45	26	21	27	15	14
AT		48	37	32	31	21	21
PL		42	50	39	38	30	24
PT		52	47	42	33	30	23
RO		48	50	42	37	39	30
SI		47	46	37	35	29	24
SK		44	45	35	30	29	18
FI		36	22	17	16	10	16
SE		35	27	20	28	16	17

Base: Women in employment (n=16 761)

Socio-demographic considerations

The socio-demographic analysis shows that **overall younger women are more likely to feel that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their working life** (it should be stressed again that this question was only asked to the population with professional activity). An important example is that 42% of women aged 15-24 and 34% of those aged 25-39 agree that, because of the pandemic's impact on the job market, they could do less paid work than they wanted to, compared to 27%-29% of those aged 40-54 or 55 and older.

Women aged 15-24 or 25-39 are also more likely to feel that the pandemic has had a negative impact on their work-life balance – 51% and 48% agree, respectively, versus 42% of those aged 40-54 and 36% of those aged 55 and older. Women aged 55 and older are least likely to assert that the pandemic had a negative impact on their income – 33% agree this is the case, compared to 39%-40% in the three younger age groups.

Women who completed their education aged 15 or younger more often find that the pandemic had a negative impact on the amount of paid work they could do. For example, 34% of women who completed their education aged 15 or younger agree that they could do less paid work than they wanted to because of the increase in work at home, versus 22%-24% of women who completed their education aged 16-19 or aged 20 or older who agree with this statement.

Analysis at the level of women's employment status shows that, compared to women who are employees, **self-employed women and (to a lesser extent) those who do manual labour are more likely to have experienced a negative impact of the pandemic on their working lives.** First off all, the latter two groups are more likely to have suffered income loss because of the pandemic: 59% of self-employed women and 44% of those doing manual labour agree this is the case, versus 34% of employees. In line with this result, a higher share of self-employed women and women doing manual labour could do less paid work than they wanted to because of the pandemic's impact on the job market – 55% and 37% of the former two groups agree, respectively, compared to 27% of women who are employees.

In households with younger children, women are more likely to feel that the pandemic had a negative impact on their working lives. Notably, 42%-43% of women with one, two or more children under the age of 15 in the household agree that the pandemic had a negative impact on their income, compared to 35% of those without children in this age group in the household. Correspondingly, 35%-36% of women with one, two or more children under the age of 15 in the household agree that, because of the increase in work at home, they could do less paid work than they desired, versus 17% of those without children who agree this corresponds to their personal situation.

Q5 Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the COVID-19 pandemic? (% Total 'Agree', by socio-demographics)

	The pandemic has had a negative impact on my work-life balance	The pandemic had a negative impact on my income	Because of the pandemic's impact on the job market, I could do less paid work than I wanted to (meaning less work for a salary or wage)	Because of the pandemic my professional decisions changed (such as changing jobs)	Because of the increase in work at home, I could do less paid work (for a salary or wage) than I wanted to	Because of the pandemic I'm considering / have decided permanently reducing the amount of time I allocate to paid work
EU27	44	38	31	29	25	21
Age						
15-24	51	40	42	37	37	26
25-39	48	39	34	35	30	27
40-54	42	39	29	27	22	17
55+	36	33	27	18	15	17
Education (age when completed)						
Up to 15	43	38	37	29	34	26
16-19	43	40	30	26	22	19
20+	44	36	30	29	24	21
Still studying	53	44	49	40	38	26
Occupation						
Self-employed	48	59	55	37	36	27
Employee	43	34	27	27	22	20
Manual worker	44	44	37	30	28	24
Children (<15 years) in household						
No children	40	35	29	25	17	18
One child	49	42	36	32	36	25
Two children	47	43	34	34	36	26
Three or more children	50	43	33	33	35	26

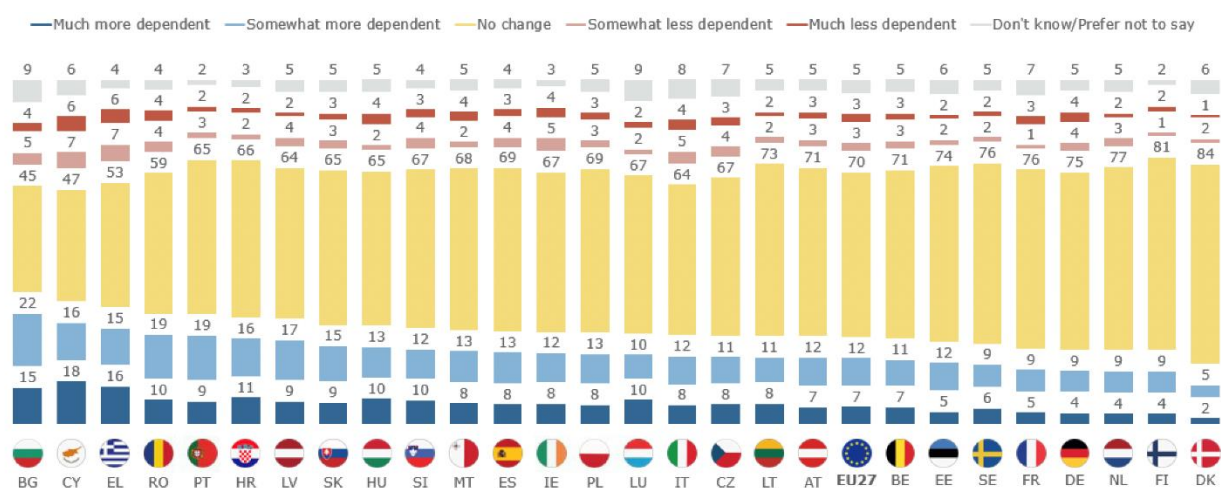
Base: Women in employment (n=16 761)

3.2 Impact of the pandemic on financial independence

To measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women's financial independence, respondents were asked whether the pandemic has made them more or less financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends.

About one five women note the pandemic has made them either much more (7%) or somewhat more (12%) financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends. The remainder of surveyed women (70%) mostly note that there has been 'no change' in their financial dependence. A small proportion of women note that the pandemic has made them somewhat less (3%) or much less (3%) financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends, while 4% don't know and 2% prefer not to say.

Q4 Has the COVID-19 pandemic made you more or less financially dependent on your partner, other relatives or friends, or has there been no change? (% by country)



Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

In seven Member States, more than a quarter of women note that the pandemic has made them **more financially dependent** on their partner, other relatives or friends (this includes Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Latvia, Portugal and Romania). Proportionally, the share of women who have become much more dependent ranges from 7% in Denmark, 13% in Finland, Germany and the Netherlands, and 14% in France, to 31% in Greece, 33% in Cyprus and 37% in Bulgaria. Bulgaria and Cyprus are the only two countries where less than half of respondents note that there has been 'no change' in their financial dependence due to the pandemic.

It should be added that in both Cyprus and Greece, 13% of women indicate that because of the pandemic they have become *less* financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends. In all other countries, this figure is below 10%.

Socio-demographic considerations

There is a **clear divergence between older and younger women** in terms of how likely they are to have become more financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends due to the pandemic. Whereas 27% of women aged either 15-25 or 25-39 note the pandemic has made them more dependent, this applies to 21% of those aged 40-54 and just 10% of those aged 55 and above.

With regard to women's level of education, it is notable that **those still studying** are much more likely to indicate they have become more financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends due to the pandemic (29% vs 16%-19% of those who completed their education at different ages).

Looking at the results by type of occupation, it is striking to see that **34% of self-employed women and 25% of those doing manual labour** note that the pandemic has made them more financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends. By contrast, 18% of women who are employees and 16% of those not working report the same.

Women with younger children in the household are more likely to report that the pandemic has made them more financially dependent on their partner, other relatives or friends. Among women with one, two or more children under the age of 15 in the household, 23%-29% note they have become more dependent, compared to 15% of those with no children in this age group in the household.

Q4 Has the COVID-19 pandemic made you more or less financially dependent on your partner, other relatives or friends, or has there been no change? (% by socio-demographics)

	Total 'More dependent'	Total 'Less dependent'	No change	Don't know	Prefer not to say
EU27	18	7	70	4	2
Age					
15-24	27	13	48	8	4
25-39	27	9	59	4	2
40-54	21	6	69	4	2
55+	10	4	82	3	1
Education (age when completed)					
Up to 15	17	11	66	4	2
16-19	16	6	74	4	1
20+	19	6	72	2	1
Still studying	29	10	52	7	3
Occupation					
Self-employed	34	8	54	3	2
Employee	18	8	70	3	1
Manual worker	25	10	61	4	1
Not working	16	6	72	5	2
Children (<15 years) in household					
No children	15	6	74	4	2
One child	29	10	57	4	1
Two children	25	8	62	4	1
Three or more children	23	10	63	4	1

Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

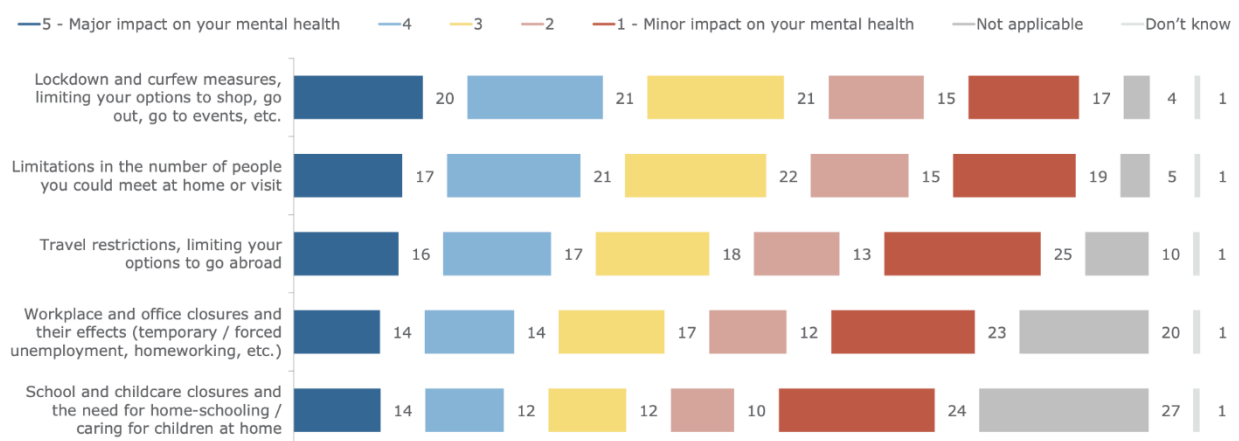
4. THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON MENTAL HEALTH

4.1 Measures to stop the pandemic and their impact on mental health

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments have taken various measures to stop the spread of the virus. Respondents were asked to what extent these measures and their effects had a negative impact on their mental health, using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is 'a minor impact' and 5 is 'a major impact'.

For each of the measures and effects, a substantial proportion of women say that these had a major negative impact on their mental health. In this section, 'a major negative impact' means the proportion of women answering either '4' or '5-Major impact' on the response scale for this question. Around four in ten women (41%) find that lockdown and curfew measures, limiting options to shop, go out, go to events, etc. had a major negative impact on their mental health. A similar share (38%) answer this about limitations of the number of people they could meet at home or visit. Travel restrictions, limiting one's options to go abroad had a major negative impact on the mental health of a third of respondents. More than a quarter (28%) find that workplace and office closures and their effects (temporary / forced unemployment, homeworking, etc.) had a major negative impact on their mental health and about a quarter (26%) say the same about school and childcare closures and the need for home-schooling / caring for children at home.

Q1 Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments have taken various measures to stop the spread of the virus. On a scale from 1 to 5, to what extent did these measures and their effects have a negative impact on your mental health? (% EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=26 741)¹

¹ The item on school and childcare closures was presented to 25 885 respondents (respondents who did not answer D23 – number of children in the household' were not presented with this question).

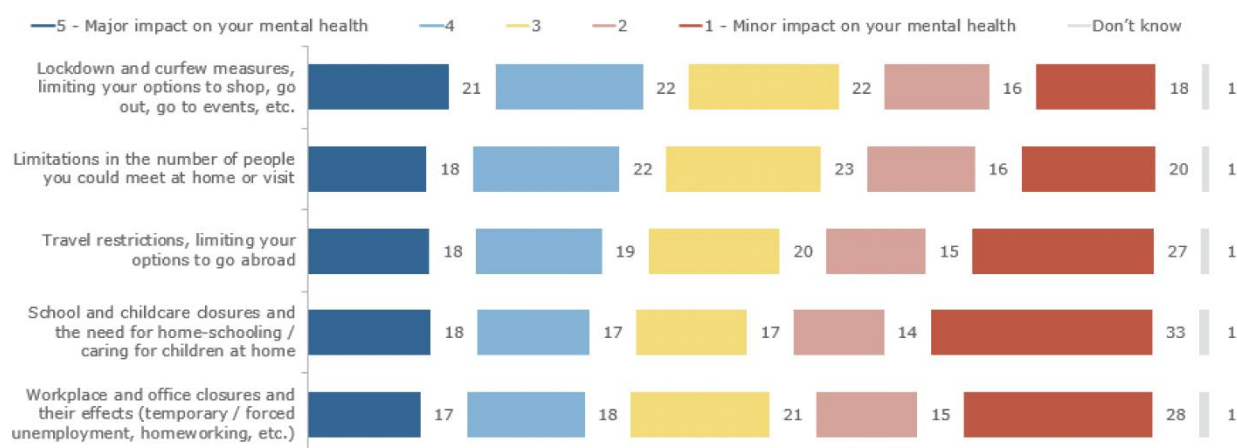
The proportion of women noting that these measures and their effects had a **minor negative impact** ('minor' is the proportion answering either '1-Minor impact' or '2' on the scale) is *lowest* with regard to lockdown and curfew measures (limiting one's options to shop, go out, go to events, etc.) – 32% find that this had a minor negative impact on their mental health. The highest proportion of women indicating that a measure and its effect had a minor negative impact is observed with regard to travel restrictions, limiting one's options to go abroad – 38% note this had a minor negative impact on their mental health.

As can be derived from the above, lockdown and curfew measures is the measure for which the largest relative majority feel this had a major negative impact as opposed to a minor negative impact (41% vs 32%). A relative majority also find that limitations in the number of people you could meet at home or visit had a major negative impact (38% vs 35% who find this had a minor impact). For the three other measures and their effects, a (small) relative majority find these have had a minor negative impact on their mental health.

In the chart on the previous page, it could be noted that, for each measure, a proportion of women did not consider the measure relevant for their personal situation; this proportion, however, varies substantially across measures – from 4% for lockdown and curfew measures to 27% for school and childcare closures.

In the chart below, the impact of the various measures is assessed focusing solely on women who consider the measure applicable to their personal situation.

Q1 Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments have taken various measures to stop the spread of the virus. On a scale from 1 to 5, to what extent did these measures and their effects have a negative impact on your mental health? (% among women who consider the measure applicable to their personal situation)



Base: all respondents, excluding those replying 'not applicable' (n=20 218 to 25 749)

The extent to which the government measures and their effects had a negative impact on women's mental health varies substantially among Member States. The proportion of women saying that **lockdown and curfew measures** (limiting options to shop, go out, go to events, etc.) had a major negative impact (scores 4 and 5 on the scale) on their mental health ranges from 25% in Estonia and 29% in Denmark to 50% in Poland, 54% in Cyprus and 58% in Greece. The proportion of respondents who find that this measure had a minor negative impact on their mental health ranges from 19% in Greece to 47% in Estonia.





























In all Member States, except Denmark, Estonia, Finland and the Netherlands, at least a third of women find that **limitations of number of people you could meet at home or visit** had a major negative impact on their mental wellbeing. Women in Poland (50%), Greece (43%) and Belgium (42%) are the most likely to say this. By contrast, in Estonia, 20% of respondents say so. The proportion of respondents who find that this measure had a minor impact on their health ranges from 25% in Poland to 51% in Estonia.

Travel restrictions, limiting one's options to go abroad are most likely to have had a major impact on the mental health of women in Luxemburg (where 50% note this), Cyprus (48%) and Malta (44%). In contrast, women in Finland (21%), Denmark and Estonia (23%) are least likely to feel that this measure had a major impact on their mental health. The proportion of women who find that this measure had a minor impact on their mental health ranges from 27% in Cyprus, to 51% in Czechia and 57% in Finland.

Women in Bulgaria (44%), Greece (41%) and Cyprus (40%) are the most likely to find that **workplace and office closures and their effects (temporary / forced unemployment, homeworking, etc.)** had a major negative impact on their mental health. By contrast, respondents in Finland (15%), Denmark (16%), Estonia and Germany (both, 17%) are the least likely to think so. The proportion of respondents feeling that this measure had a minor negative impact on their mental health ranges from 26% in Poland to 53% in Finland.

Women in Bulgaria, Poland (both 38%), Portugal and Slovenia (both 36%) are the most likely to find that **school and childcare closures and the need for home-schooling / caring for children at home** had a major negative impact on their mental health. By contrast, women in Denmark and Finland (both 14%), and Sweden (15%) are the least likely to think so. The proportion feeling that school and childcare closures had a minor negative impact on their mental health ranges from 27% in the Netherlands and Poland to 46% in Finland and 47% in Latvia.

Q1 Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments have taken various measures to stop the spread of the virus. On a scale from 1 to 5, to what extent did these measures and their effects have a negative impact on your mental health? (% 'Major impact (scores 4 and 5)' and 'Minor impact (scores 1 and 2)', by country)

	Lockdown and curfew measures, limiting your options to shop, go out, go to events, etc.		Limitations in the number of people you could meet at home or visit		Travel restrictions, limiting your options to go abroad		Workplace and office closures and their effects (temporary / forced unemployment, homeworking, etc.)		School and childcare closures and the need for home-schooling / caring for children at home	
	Major impact	Minor impact	Major impact	Minor impact	Major impact	Minor impact	Major impact	Minor impact	Major impact	Minor impact
EU27 	41	32	38	35	33	38	28	35	26	34
BE 	35	34	42	31	37	34	24	34	23	33
BG 	40	35	41	37	39	37	44	33	38	40
CZ 	43	35	32	46	25	51	23	50	30	44
DK 	29	44	29	42	23	48	16	48	14	43
DE 	34	37	36	35	29	38	17	29	19	28
EE 	25	47	20	51	23	45	17	46	18	39
IE 	40	33	41	33	34	40	22	35	25	28
EL 	58	19	43	29	41	31	41	29	33	39
ES 	47	25	41	32	34	40	35	33	30	38
FR 	44	32	38	33	35	38	22	42	21	39
HR 	42	30	37	39	38	37	33	35	31	37
IT 	47	27	37	35	37	35	35	32	30	35
CY 	54	26	37	36	48	27	40	33	29	40
LV 	31	46	32	43	25	48	25	47	25	47
LT 	32	45	30	46	29	44	22	48	24	38
LU 	40	36	39	40	50	29	23	51	28	45
HU 	37	34	33	38	30	38	29	35	27	35
MT 	34	42	32	40	44	32	24	43	26	38
NL 	34	40	28	44	25	42	21	37	21	27
AT 	39	34	37	35	31	40	22	35	22	33
PL 	50	26	50	25	42	29	39	26	38	27
PT 	45	30	40	35	35	41	39	36	36	38
RO 	34	40	38	35	32	38	27	35	29	33
SI 	47	32	39	36	39	35	38	35	36	37
SK 	41	33	38	32	31	37	26	37	28	33
FI 	31	46	26	52	21	57	15	53	14	46
SE 	30	39	33	39	29	46	20	44	15	42

Socio-demographic considerations

Younger women are more likely to feel that government measures to stop the COVID-19 pandemic had a major negative impact on their mental health. This applies to all measures asked about, including for lockdown and curfew measures (limiting one's options to shop, go out, go to events, etc.): 57% of women aged 15-24 and 51% of those aged 25-39 think this measure had a major negative impact (scores 4 and 5 on the scale) on their mental health, compared to 43% of those aged 40-54 and 32% of those aged 55 and above. Similarly, 41% of women aged 15-24 and 38% of those aged 25-39 find that workplace and office closures and their effects (temporary / forced unemployment, homeworking, etc.) had a major negative impact on their mental health, versus 31% of those aged 40-54 and 17% of those aged 55 or older. Unsurprisingly (considering the age groups with younger children), the same holds true for school and childcare closures and the need for home-schooling / caring for children at home: women aged 15-24, 25-39 or 40-54 are far more likely than those aged 55 and above to feel this measure had a major negative impact on their mental health (32%-37% vs 14%).

Women with a higher level of education are more likely to feel that the different government measures had a major negative impact on their mental health. For example, 36% of women who completed their education when aged 20 or above feel that travel restrictions, limiting one's options to go abroad, had a major impact on their mental health, compared to 30% of those who completed their education when aged 16-19 and 26% of those who completed their education when aged 15 or younger.

With regard to occupation, a clear gap is visible between women in employment (self-employed, employee or manual worker) on the one hand, and those not working on the other hand, with the former being significantly more likely to find that each of the government measures to stop the virus had a major negative impact on their mental health. Unsurprisingly, this applies strongly to workplace and office closures and their effects: 34%-38% of women in the various forms of occupation find this measure had a major negative impact on their mental health, compared to 21% of those not working. School and childcare closures and the need for home-schooling / caring for children at home also more frequently had a major negative impact on the mental health of those in employment (31%-34% of those in occupation find this, versus 20% of those not working).

Compared to women without children in the household, women with one or more children in the household are more likely to feel that the government measures to stop COVID-19 from spreading had a major negative impact on their mental health. This is particularly visible with regard to school and childcare closures and workplace and office closures. For example, 23% of women without children under the age of 15 in the household feel that workplace and office closures had a major negative impact on their mental health, compared to 40% of those with one child in this age group in the household. For those with two, three or more children, the proportions who feel so are 36% and 33%, respectively.

Q1 Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments have taken various measures to stop the spread of the virus. On a scale from 1 to 5, to what extent did these measures and their effects have a negative impact on your mental health? (% 'Major impact (scores 4 and 5)' by socio-demographics)

	Lockdown and curfew measures, limiting your options to shop, go out, go to events, etc.	Limitations in the number of people you could meet at home or visit	Travel restrictions, limiting your options to go abroad	Workplace and office closures and their effects (temporary / forced unemployment, homeworking, etc.)	School and childcare closures and the need for home-schooling / caring for children at home
EU27	41	38	33	28	26
Age					
15-24	57	45	42	41	36
25-39	51	45	41	38	37
40-54	43	38	35	31	32
55+	32	33	27	17	15
Education (age when completed)					
Up to 15	40	39	26	24	21
16-19	37	36	30	23	23
20+	43	39	36	29	26
Still studying	55	43	39	38	36
Occupation					
Self-employed	47	41	42	38	34
Employee	46	41	40	34	32
Manual worker	46	46	38	38	31
Not working	38	35	27	21	20
Children (<15 years) in household					
No children	39	35	31	23	17
One child	48	46	40	40	48
Two children	52	47	38	36	54
Three or more children	42	41	35	33	52

Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

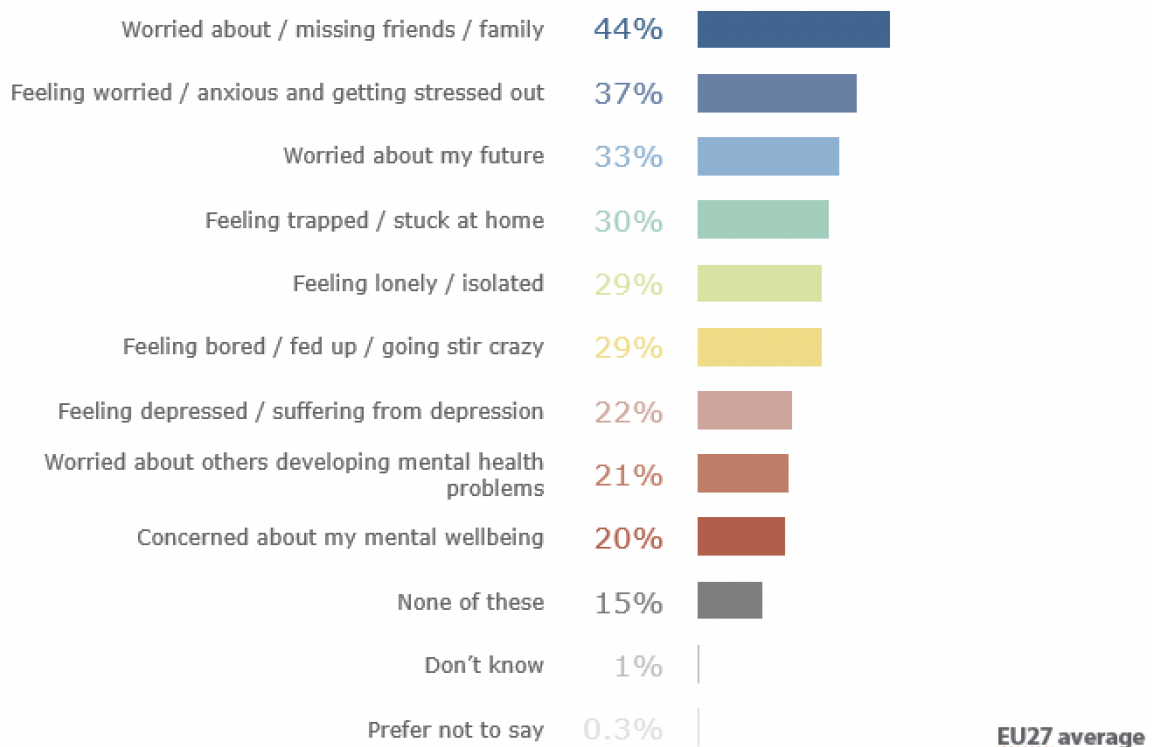
4.2 Feelings most identified with since the start of the pandemic

Respondents were presented with a list of nine feelings and situations and were asked with which of these they had identified with the most since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic (multiple answers were allowed).

In first place, by some margin, comes 'worried about / missing friends/family' – 44% of respondents identify with this feeling. Almost four in ten women identify with 'feeling worried/anxious and getting stressed out' (37%) and one third (33%) with '[being] worried about my future'. The following feelings are each selected by around three in ten women: 'feeling trapped/stuck at home' (30%), 'feeling lonely/isolated' (29%) and 'feeling bored / fed up / going stir crazy' (29%).

Around one in five women say that, of the feelings and situations listed in the survey, they identify the most with 'feeling depressed / suffering from depression' (22%). Similar shared mention 'worried about others developing mental health problems' (21%) and 'concerned about my mental wellbeing' (20%). Less than one in six women surveyed (15%) identify with 'none of these' feelings since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Q2 Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, with which of these feelings / situations have you identified the most? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

In 22 out of 27 Member States, respondents are the most likely to feel **worried about or missing friends and family**. In Poland, this feeling comes in shared first place, together with 'feeling worried / anxious and getting stressed out'. In the remaining four countries – Cyprus, Italy, Malta and Romania – the latter feeling ('feeling worried / anxious and getting stressed out') is selected most frequently.





























Notwithstanding the homogeneity across countries with respect to the feelings and situations that are selected most frequently, there are substantial differences across countries in terms of how often certain feelings are selected. The proportion of women that identify the most with feeling **'worried about/missing friend/family'** is highest in Croatia (67%), Portugal and Spain (both 63%), and Greece (62%). At the other end of the country ranking, 32% of women in Germany, 33% in Austria and 34% in France identify with this feeling.

The proportion identifying the most with **'feeling worried/anxious and getting stressed out'** ranges from 21% in Denmark, 22% in Finland and 25% in Austria and Germany, to 55% in Romania, 59% in Greece and 61% in Cyprus. For the feeling **'worried about my future'**, this figure ranges from 18% in Denmark and 20% in both the Netherlands and Finland, to 47% in Poland, 50% in Greece and 55% in Bulgaria.

Other feelings and situations for which particularly large differences between Member States are observed are **'feeling trapped / stuck at home'** and **'feeling bored / fed up / going stir crazy'**. The proportion identifying with this feeling varies between 19% in Hungary and 54% in Greece. Many women also identify with it in Greece (54%), Cyprus (49%) and Poland (45%). 'Feeling bored / fed up / going stir crazy' is a feeling selected by between 15% of women in Hungary and 48% of women in Finland. Many women also feel bored or fed up in Bulgaria and Sweden (both 42%).

Less than a quarter of women in all Member States reply that they identify with 'none of these' feelings or situations. The proportion answering this ranges from 5% in Bulgaria and Croatia, and 6% in Cyprus, to 21% in Austria and Denmark, 23% in Germany, and 24% in France.

Q2 Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, with which of these feelings / situations have you identified the most? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% by country)

	Worried about / missing friends / family	Feeling worried / anxious and getting stressed out	Worried about my future	Feeling trapped / stuck at home	Feeling lonely / isolated	Feeling bored / fed up / going stir crazy	Feeling depressed / suffering from depression	Worried about others developing mental health problems	Concerned about my mental wellbeing	None of these	Don't know	Prefer not to say
EU27 	44	37	33	30	29	29	22	21	20	15	1	0
BE 	44	31	24	34	27	25	21	21	18	15	1	0
BG 	56	41	55	35	34	42	31	18	19	5	0	0
CZ 	51	26	32	28	29	23	17	15	20	19	0	1
DK 	49	21	18	35	28	33	19	21	18	21	1	0
DE 	32	25	24	21	21	25	19	25	18	23	1	0
EE 	44	32	28	27	24	37	21	22	17	17	1	0
IE 	58	48	34	43	39	46	27	36	31	8	0	0
EL 	62	59	50	54	40	31	25	33	31	7	0	0
ES 	63	43	41	28	26	30	23	24	28	7	0	0
FR 	34	28	24	23	24	23	14	14	13	24	0	1
HR 	67	45	43	43	38	36	21	28	24	5	0	0
IT 	36	49	38	30	36	36	21	19	19	9	1	0
CY 	60	61	43	49	43	24	26	29	26	6	0	0
LV 	52	27	31	24	16	28	18	19	16	13	1	1
LT 	61	38	33	35	23	22	11	23	15	12	1	0
LU 	36	34	29	27	29	30	20	28	22	15	0	1
HU 	43	27	33	19	26	15	16	18	15	18	0	0
MT 	44	46	30	40	28	36	23	32	27	15	1	0
NL 	45	26	20	38	24	29	23	26	16	19	0	0
AT 	33	25	32	24	22	26	21	32	24	21	1	1
PL 	52	52	47	45	36	25	37	20	29	8	2	0
PT 	63	45	41	40	29	29	19	30	32	7	1	0
RO 	52	55	37	42	40	33	28	18	21	9	1	0
SI 	48	32	36	39	31	38	24	20	18	16	1	0
SK 	45	26	43	33	34	28	20	12	17	16	1	0
FI 	60	34	22	26	30	48	21	25	15	16	1	0
SE 	57	28	27	35	35	42	35	18	19	14	1	0

Most-frequently selected response shown in orange

Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

Socio-demographic considerations

Younger women are more likely to identify with most of the feelings / situations since the start of the pandemic. This pattern is, for example, clearly visible when looking at worries about the future: 49% of women aged 15-24 and 43% of those aged 25-39 identify with this feeling, compared to 37% of those aged 40-54 and 21% of those aged 55 and above. Younger women are also more likely to have felt alone since the start of the pandemic: 41% of women aged 15-24 and 32% of those aged 25-39 identify with 'feeling lonely / isolated', compared to 24%-26% of those aged 40-54 and 55 and above. A similar pattern is visible with regard to depression: 34% of women aged 15-24 and 27% of those aged 25-39 identify with 'feeling depressed / suffering from depression', compared to 22% of those aged 40-54 and 15% of those aged 55 and above. An exception is feeling 'worried about / missing friends / family', with which older respondents identify most (48% of those aged 55 and above have worried about or missed friends and family since the start of the pandemic, compared to 41%-43% in the three younger age groups).

Higher-educated women are somewhat more likely to identify with all of the feelings / situations, although differences between women with different levels of education are more limited than those observed between different age groups. By way of example, 38% of women who completed their education aged 20 or older identify with 'feeling worried / anxious and getting stressed out', compared to 35% of those who completed their education aged 16-19 and 30% of those who completed their education aged 15 or younger.

In terms of women's occupation, patterns vary depending on the feeling / situation. This partly reflects the results observed for age. For example, women who are not working (a relatively older group) are more likely to have worried about or have missed friends and family since the start of the pandemic – 48% identify with this feeling, compared to 40%-43% of those who are employees, self-employed or who do manual labour. However, there also are some interesting differences between women who are employees on the one hand, and the self-employed and those in manual labour on the other hand. For example, 42% of women who are either self-employed or work in a manual labour job note they identify with the feeling 'worried about my future', compared to 34% of women who are employees. Similarly, 25% of women who are self-employed and 29% of those in manual labour jobs note that, since the start of the pandemic, they identify with 'feeling depressed / suffering from depression', compared to 22% of women who are employees.

Women with younger children in the household are more likely to identify with a majority of the feelings / situations listed in the survey. For example, 41%-43% of women with one, two, three or more children under the age of 15 in the household identify with 'feeling worried / anxious and getting stressed out', versus 35% of those without children in this age group in the household. Similarly, 37%-42% of women with one, two, three or more children under the age of 15 in the household identify with being 'worried about my future', compared to 30% of those without children in this age group in the household. The number of children in the household has, however, no noticeable relation to the proportion of women who have felt lonely or isolated, or who have been worried about or missed friends or family since the start of the pandemic.

Q2 Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, with which of these feelings / situations have you identified the most? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% by socio-demographics)

	Worried about / missing friends / family	Feeling worried / anxious and getting stressed out	Worried about my future	Feeling trapped / stuck at home	Feeling lonely / isolated	Feeling bored / fed up / going stir crazy	Feeling depressed / suffering from depression	Worried about others developing mental health problems	Concerned about my mental wellbeing	None of these	Don't know	Prefer not to say
EU27	44	37	33	30	29	29	22	21	20	15	1	0
Age												
15-24	43	46	49	39	41	45	34	28	35	6	0	0
25-39	43	42	43	34	32	37	27	24	29	9	1	0
40-54	41	38	37	29	24	27	22	21	19	15	1	0
55+	48	31	21	27	26	21	15	18	13	20	1	0
Education (age when completed)												
Up to 15	42	30	26	27	30	23	18	18	17	17	1	1
16-19	42	35	29	28	26	26	19	20	18	18	1	0
20+	47	38	34	31	28	29	22	22	20	14	1	0
Still studying	48	47	48	38	42	44	33	27	35	7	0	0
Occupation												
Self-employed	40	40	42	29	26	29	25	22	23	13	1	1
Employee	41	37	34	29	26	31	22	23	21	14	0	0
Manual worker	43	39	42	34	31	34	29	22	24	11	2	0
Not working	48	37	30	31	31	27	21	20	19	16	1	0
Children (<15 years) in household												
No children	45	35	30	29	28	27	21	20	19	17	1	0
One child	43	41	42	33	28	32	25	24	24	11	1	0
Two children	44	41	38	37	30	35	24	22	23	11	1	0
Three or more children	44	43	37	34	28	29	27	25	23	10	1	0

Most-frequently selected response shown in orange

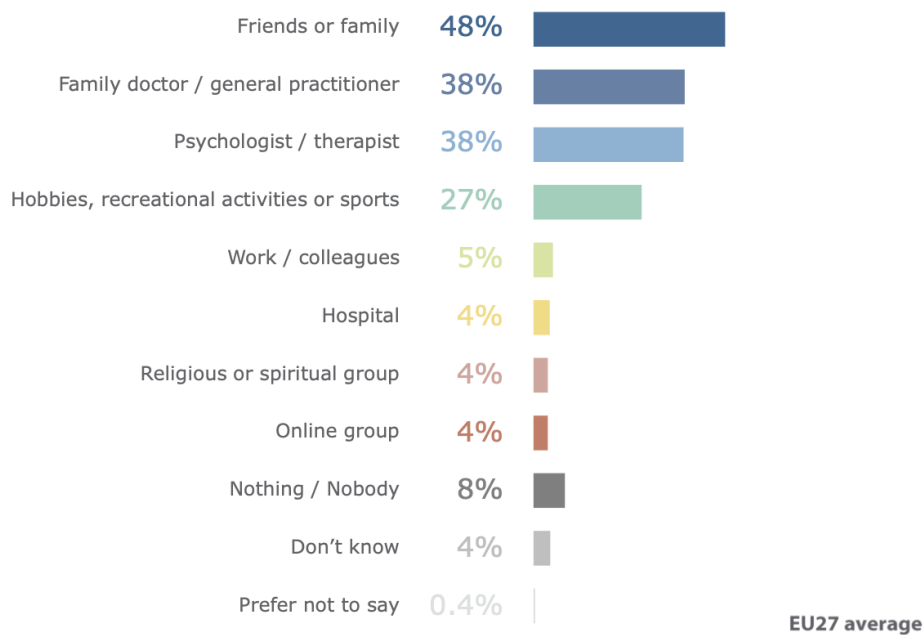
Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

4.3 What would women do or who would they turn to if they were to experience mental health issues?

Respondents were asked what they would do or who they would turn to if they were to experience mental health issues such as stress and anxiety – for this question, they were presented with eight options. The results show that women are most likely to seek support in their direct environment – **about one in two (48%) would turn to friends and family** if they were to experience mental health issues. Moreover, about a quarter (27%) would turn to hobbies, recreational activities, or sports.

Apart from friends and relatives, women are most likely to turn to their family doctor/general practitioner or psychologist/therapist – 38% would turn to either of these types of medical professionals. Women are much less likely to turn to work / colleagues (5%), a hospital, a religious or spiritual group, or an online group (all 4%). Less than one in ten women would turn to ‘nothing / nobody’ if they were to experience mental health issues such as stress and anxiety.

Q3 What would you do or who would you go to if you were to experience a mental health issue such as stress or anxiety? (*Multiple answers allowed*) (% EU27)



Base: all respondents (n=26 741)





























In 22 out of 27 Member States, women are most likely to turn to **friends and family** if they were to experience mental health issues. Proportionally, women in Finland (71%), the Netherlands, Slovakia and Sweden (all 63%) are the most likely to do so. Women in Italy (35%), France (41%) and Spain (43%), on the other hand, are the least likely to turn to family and friends if they were to experience mental health issues.

In one country (Italy), women are most likely to reply that they would turn to their **family doctor / general practitioner**. When looking at the actual proportions, it can be observed that at least one in two women in Denmark (61%), Ireland (53%) and Spain (50%) note they would consult their family doctor / general practitioner in case they were to experience mental health issues. By contrast, only 16% of women in Slovakia, 19% in Greece and 20% in Czechia would do so.

Women in Romania and Spain are the most likely to indicate they would turn to their **psychologist/therapist**. The proportion of women who would turn to their psychologist/therapist ranges from 24% in Hungary and Latvia, and 25% in the Netherlands and Slovenia, to 51% in Greece, 52% in Portugal and 59% in Spain.

In Croatia and Lithuania, if women were to experience mental health issues, they would first turn to **hobbies, recreational activities, or sports**. The proportion of women who would turn to hobbies, recreational activities, or sports ranges from 12% in Denmark, 15% in Italy, and 21% in Poland, to 53% in Latvia and Slovenia, and 55% in Croatia.

Q3 What would you do or who would you go to if you were to experience a mental health issue such as stress or anxiety? (Multiple answers allowed) (% by country)

		Friends or family	Family doctor / general practitioner	Psychologist / therapist	Hobbies, recreational activities or sports	Work / colleagues	Hospital	Religious or spiritual group	Online group	Nothing / Nobody	Don't know	Prefer not to say
EU27		48	38	38	27	5	4	4	4	8	4	0
BE		48	47	31	25	5	4	4	3	9	4	1
BG		55	30	31	47	11	3	3	7	4	2	1
CZ		53	20	38	42	7	3	3	3	7	3	0
DK		62	61	27	12	9	2	1	2	4	4	0
DE		53	38	31	24	5	3	3	4	11	4	1
EE		58	27	35	47	6	1	4	2	9	2	0
IE		61	53	26	30	5	3	6	7	7	3	0
EL		53	19	51	35	5	3	4	6	6	1	1
ES		43	50	59	22	2	7	2	2	3	3	0
FR		41	40	29	32	5	3	3	2	11	6	0
HR		53	36	34	55	10	2	7	3	4	1	1
IT		35	47	41	15	3	6	4	4	7	4	0
CY		52	24	42	37	5	1	8	3	8	1	0
LV		59	22	24	53	10	2	5	3	8	5	0
LT		44	25	36	51	6	2	5	3	7	5	1
LU		52	34	40	36	6	3	3	2	9	4	1
HU		48	23	24	37	7	3	4	6	11	4	0
MT		50	28	42	39	5	3	6	4	7	2	0
NL		63	42	25	29	10	1	4	2	9	3	0
AT		59	31	38	37	6	4	4	4	9	2	0
PL		52	30	45	21	3	3	5	6	8	7	0
PT		53	41	52	34	5	6	7	3	3	2	0
RO		46	28	47	37	6	8	6	6	6	4	0
SI		55	27	25	53	7	2	4	4	6	4	0
SK		63	16	28	39	7	3	8	4	8	4	1
FI		71	40	30	32	8	3	4	3	3	3	1
SE		63	28	38	32	9	7	4	2	6	5	0

Most-frequently selected response shown in orange

Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

Socio-demographic considerations

Women's age is strongly related to the organisations or people they would turn to if they were to experience mental health issues. This is particularly visible when comparing the youngest and oldest age groups. Women aged 15-24 are more likely than those aged 55 and above to turn to friends and family (60% vs 43%), a psychologist /therapist (47% vs 30%), or hobbies, recreational activities, or sports (34% vs 24%). On the other hand, the oldest age group (55 and above) is far more likely to turn to their family doctor/ general practitioner (48% vs 18% of those aged 15-24).

Women with a higher level of education are more likely to turn to friends and family, a psychologist / therapist and hobbies, recreational activities or sports if they were to experience mental health issues. For example, 41% of women who completed their education aged 20 or above would turn to a psychologist / therapist, compared to 34% of those who finished education aged 16-19 and 29% of those who completed education aged 15 or younger. Inversely, women with a lower level of education are more likely to turn to their family doctor / general practitioner – 47% of women who completed education aged 15 or younger would do so, compared to 43% of those who finished education aged 16-19 and 38% of those who completed education aged 15 or younger (note that these results align to the results for the different age groups, higher-educated respondents being relatively younger).

Looking at **women's occupation**, considering that respondents who are not working are relatively older, it may not be surprising to see that **women who are not in employment are more likely to turn to their family doctor / general practitioner** if they were to experience mental health issues (42% would do so, versus 31%, 35% and 36%, respectively, of those who are self-employed, an employee or a manual worker). However, there are also some interesting differences between women in different types of occupation. Notably, self-employed women are less likely than those who are employees or work in manual labour jobs to turn to their friends and family if they were to experience mental health issues (44% vs 52%-54%). Women who do manual labour are less likely to turn to a psychologist / therapist (33% vs 41% of both those who are self-employed or employees).

Looking at the number of **children under the age of 15 in the household**, there is a divergence between, on the one hand, women with no children or one child in the household, and on the other hand, those with two or more children. Markedly, 56% of those with three or more children under the age of 15 in the household would turn to friends or family if they were to experience mental health issues, compared to 48%, 50% and 52%, respectively, of those with no children, one or two children in the household.

Q3 What would you do or who would you go to if you were to experience a mental health issue such as stress or anxiety? (Multiple answers allowed) (% by socio-demographics)

	Friends or family	Family doctor / general practitioner	Psychologist / therapist	Hobbies, recreational activities or sports	Work / colleagues	Hospital	Religious or spiritual group	Online group	Nothing / Nobody	Don't know	Prefer not to say
EU27	48	38	38	27	5	4	4	4	8	4	0
Age											
15-24	60	18	47	34	7	5	5	6	8	3	1
25-39	55	29	45	29	8	5	4	6	7	4	0
40-54	46	39	41	28	6	4	3	3	7	4	1
55+	43	48	30	24	2	3	3	2	9	5	0
Education (age when completed)											
Up to 15	41	47	29	18	5	6	5	4	10	3	0
16-19	45	43	34	24	4	4	2	3	10	4	0
20+	50	38	41	30	6	4	4	4	7	4	0
Still studying	63	20	51	35	5	5	4	5	6	2	1
Occupation											
Self-employed	44	31	41	29	6	5	5	6	8	4	1
Employee	52	35	41	29	9	4	4	4	7	3	0
Manual worker	54	36	33	26	11	6	3	9	7	4	0
Not working	46	42	36	26	1	4	4	3	9	5	0
Children (<15 years) in household											
No children	48	40	37	27	4	3	3	3	9	4	0
One child	50	34	42	28	8	5	5	6	6	4	0
Two children	52	34	41	26	8	5	3	6	7	4	0
Three or more children	56	38	38	31	5	7	7	6	5	4	0





























Most-frequently selected response shown in *orange*

Base: all respondents (n=26 741)

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Between 25 January and 3 February 2022, Ipsos European Public affairs carried out Flash Eurobarometer 'Women in times of COVID-19' at the request of the European Parliament.

This survey covers the population of female EU citizens, residents in one of the 27 Member States of the EU and aged 15 years and over.

	Number of interviews	Fieldwork dates	Population of women 15+ (absolute number)	Population of women 15+ (as % of EU27 population)
EU27 	26 741	25.01.2022-03.02.2022	195 840 619	100%
BE 	1 122	25.01-31.01.2022	4 892 238	2.50%
BG 	1 023	26.01-02.02.2022	3 094 728	1.58%
CZ 	1 041	26.01-31.01.2022	4 588 043	2.34%
DK 	1 053	25.01-02.02.2022	2 461 884	1.26%
DE 	1 088	25.01-31.01.2022	36 589 542	18.68%
EE 	1 015	26.01-01.02.2022	593 446	0.30%
IE 	1 029	26.01-03.02.2022	2 015 529	1.03%
EL 	1 058	26.01-02.02.2022	4 760 555	2.43%
ES 	1 083	25.01-31.01.2022	20 800 851	10.62%
FR 	1 083	25.01-31.01.2022	28 895 699	14.75%
HR 	1 017	26.01-02.02.2022	1 803 981	0.92%
IT 	1 153	25.01-31.01.2022	26 839 725	13.70%
CY 	531	26.01-02.02.2022	383 878	0.20%
LV 	1 043	26.01-01.02.2022	878 814	0.45%
LT 	1 039	26.01-01.02.2022	1 283 709	0.66%
LU 	520	26.01-02.02.2022	262 328	0.13%
HU 	1 037	25.01-01.02.2022	4 397 250	2.25%
MT 	538	26.01-02.02.2022	215 484	0.11%
NL 	1 007	25.01-31.01.2022	7 430 169	3.79%
AT 	1 066	26.01-02.02.2022	3 898 918	1.99%
PL 	1 043	25.01-01.02.2022	16 732 087	8.54%
PT 	1 001	26.01-03.02.2022	4 752 424	2.43%
RO 	1 026	25.01-02.02.2022	8 393 922	4.29%
SI 	1 014	26.01-02.02.2022	891 633	0.46%
SK 	1 039	25.01-31.01.2022	2 371 680	1.21%
FI 	1 043	26.01-02.02.2022	2 371 244	1.21%
SE 	1 029	25.01-29.01.2022	8 492 768	2.24%

All interviews were carried via **Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI)**, using Ipsos online panels and their partner network. Respondents were selected from online access panels, groups of pre-recruited individuals who have agreed to take part in research. A share of respondents in Luxembourg and Malta was recruited via social media networks.

Sampling quota were set based on age (15-24 year-olds, 25-34 year-olds, 35-44 year-olds, 45-54 year-olds, 55-64 year-olds and 65+ year-olds) and geographic region (NUTS1, NUTS2 or NUTS 3, depending on the size of the country and the number of NUTS regions). A combination of “hard” and “soft” quota was used. When using “soft” quota, some leeway is granted for online responses to achieve the target number of interviews.

After data collection, a post-stratification weighting procedure was carried out to adjust the sample to selected population totals. The post-stratification weights align the sample profile to the population profile on relevant socio-demographic variables. Data for this Flash Eurobarometer are weighted to match official population statistics on age group, employment status (employed vs not employed) and geographic region. The EU27 averages are weighted according to the size of the 15+ female population of each country.

To mark International Women's Day 2022, the European Parliament commissioned this dedicated survey among European women only, to better gauge the views of women across generations, countries, and different socio-demographic characteristics in times of COVID-19.

The survey results show the significant impact of the pandemic at both personal and professional levels, including a severe increase in the levels of violence against women.

This Flash Eurobarometer survey was carried out by Ipsos European Public Affairs between 25 January and 3 February 2022 in all 27 EU Member States and covered 26741 interviews in total.

For the full report and data please visit europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2712



**A PUBLICATION OF THE
PUBLIC OPINION MONITORING UNIT
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR COMMUNICATION
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

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europa.eu/eurobarometer**

PE 729.551

Catalogue Number: QA-05-22-061-EN-N

ISBN: 978-92-846-9091-6

DOI: 10.2861/84791