



European Foundation
for the Improvement
of Living and Working
Conditions

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

The Social Consequences of Covid-19

Building Back Better without Poverty
EAPN Policy Conference

By Maria Jepsen, Deputy Director, Eurofound

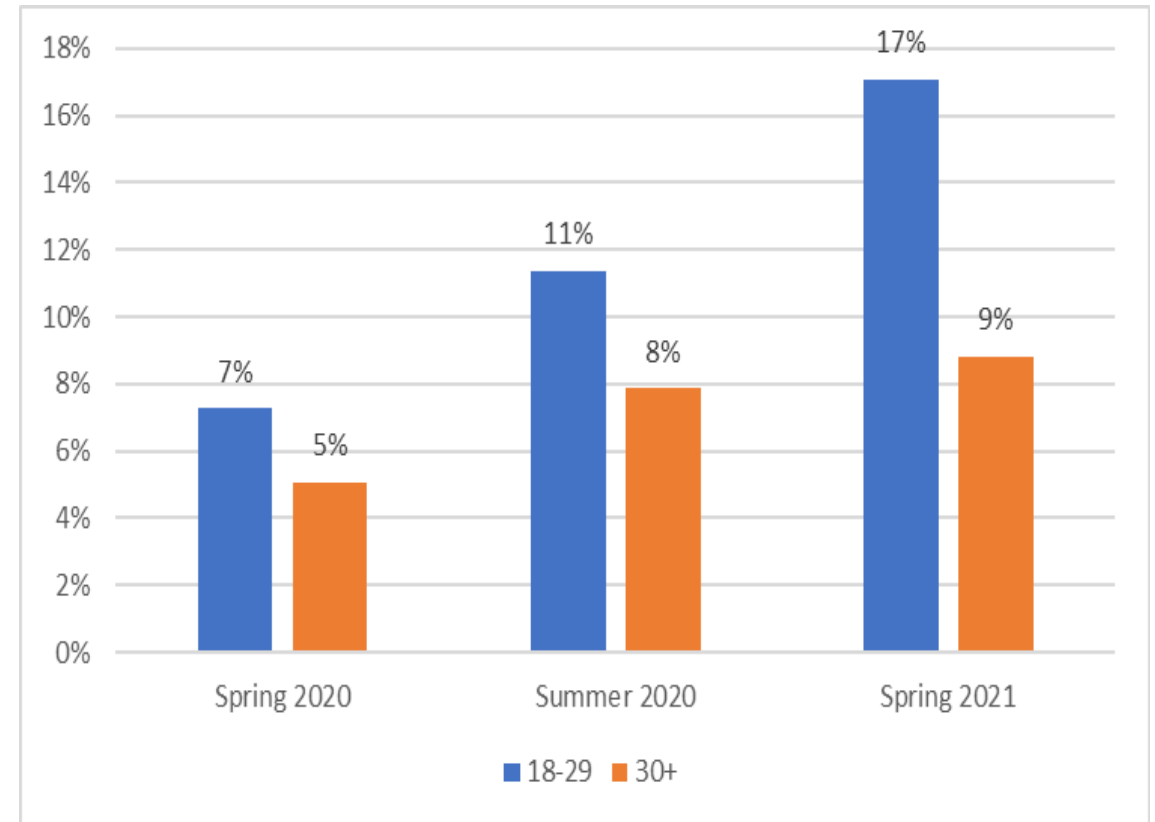
29 June 2021

Introduction

- The COVID-19 crisis is a health, economic and social crisis
- Like **a modern Kerberos**, the gigantic three-headed hound and guardian of Hades, these three faces of the crisis are affecting the various demographic groups in our societies very differently
- Age-specific trends in Coronavirus deaths have been clear since the beginning of the pandemic, with **older people** disproportionately affected by the deadly consequences of the disease
- Conversely, **younger cohorts** are much more exposed than the older population to the wider economic and social consequences, resulting from the restrictive measures implemented by governments in the attempt to control the virus

The victims of the crisis: young people

- **Young people** – the group most affected by the 2008 crisis, have been hit very hard again in terms of employment participation: 17% of youth claimed to have lost their jobs during the pandemic versus 9% of older cohorts.
- Lockdowns and closure of schools hit the youth very hard in terms of mental wellbeing: 22% of youths felt depressed compared to 17% of the older cohorts

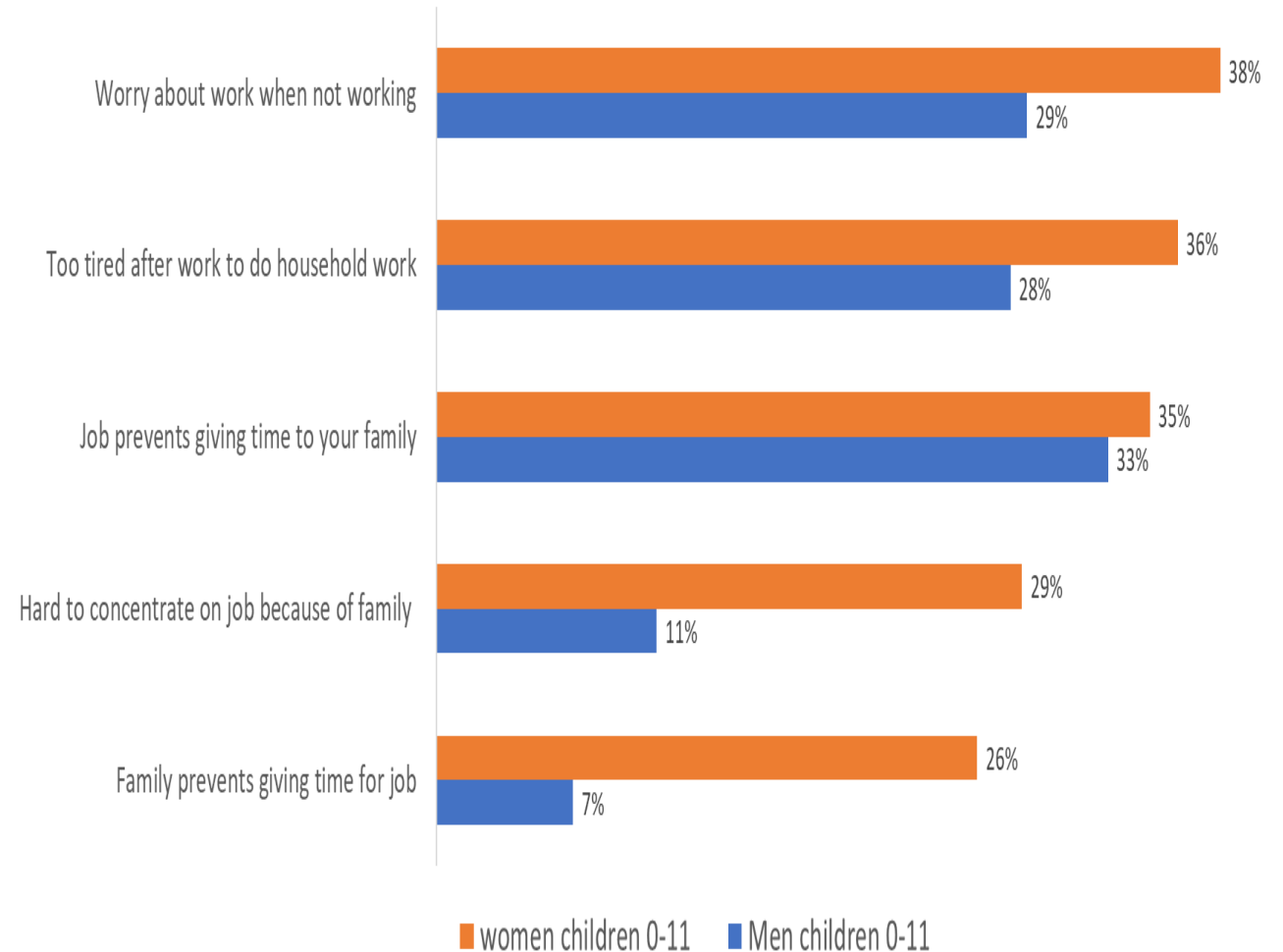


Source: Eurofound, *Living, Working and COVID19*

Note: The question asks, 'During the COVID-19 pandemic have you lost your job(s)/contract(s)?'

The victims of the crisis: women

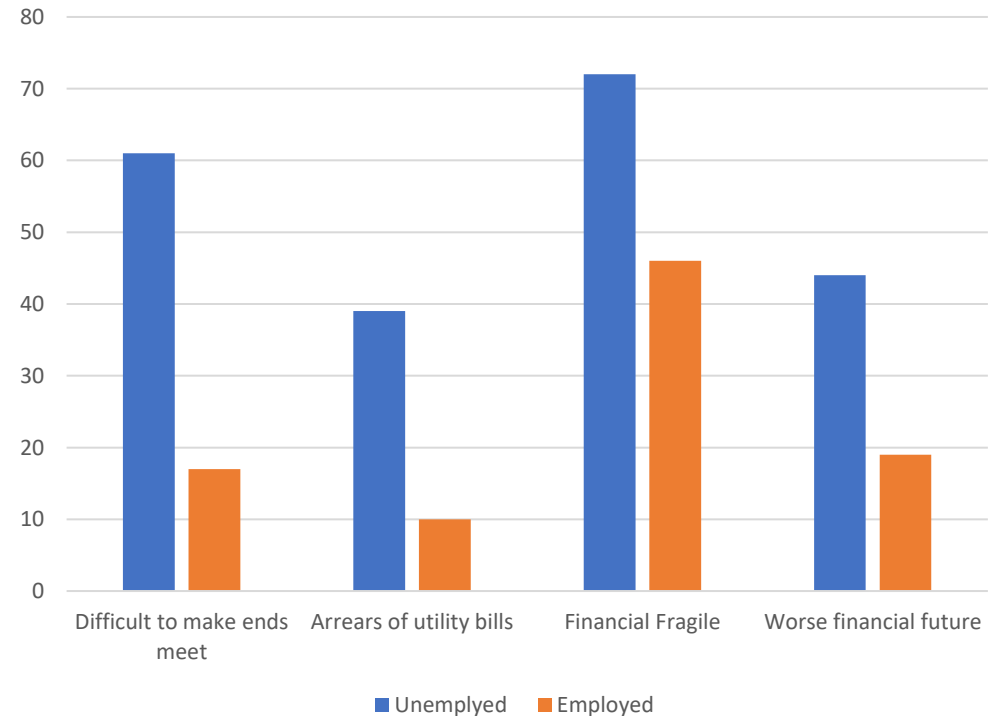
- COVID-19 fallout takes a higher toll on **women**
- Women work in sectors that have been mostly hit by the crisis: hospitality and retail
- Work–life conflict is escalating as people work from home: mothers of small children often bearing the brunt of the impact: 29% of **mothers of small children** found it hard to concentrate on their job because of family responsibilities versus 11% of fathers with young children



Source: Eurofound *Living, Working and COVID19*

The case of the unemployed

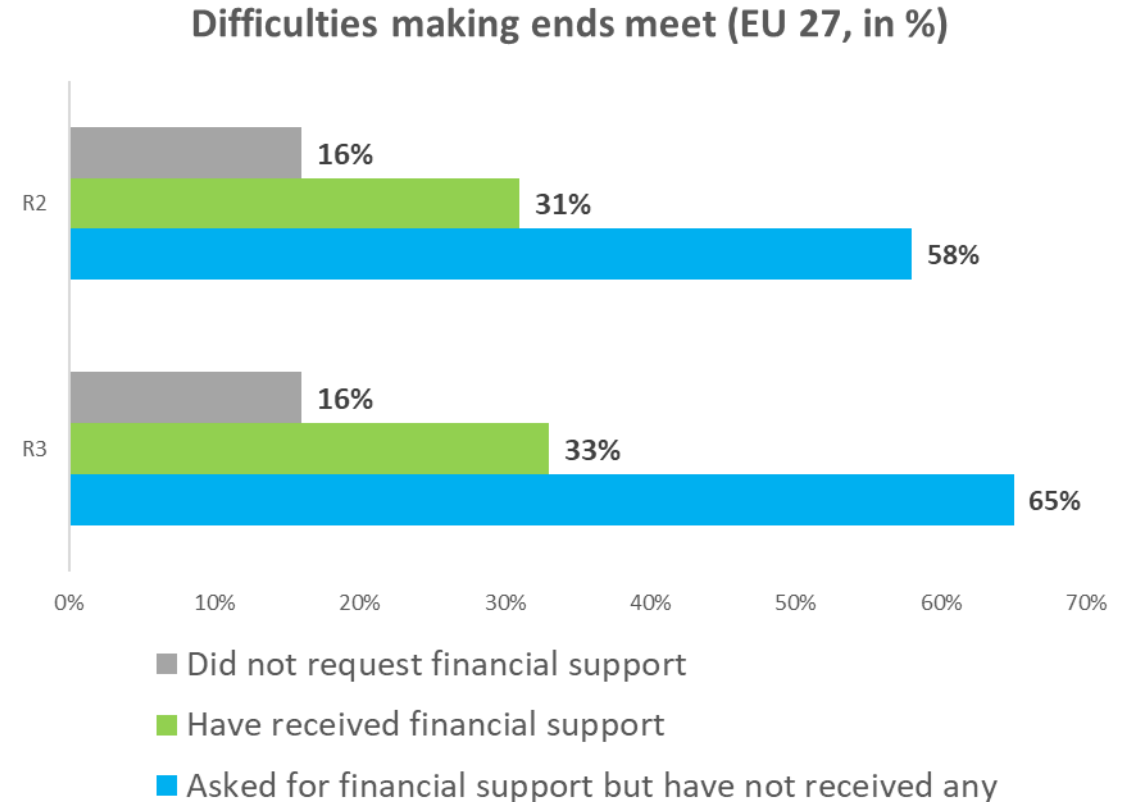
- Access to paid employment is key to preventing financial fragility
- Those unemployed before or who became unemployed during the pandemic found it very hard to find or look for a new job and hence resulted in being rather vulnerable in terms of financial consequences of the crisis



Source: Eurofound *Living, Working and COVID19*

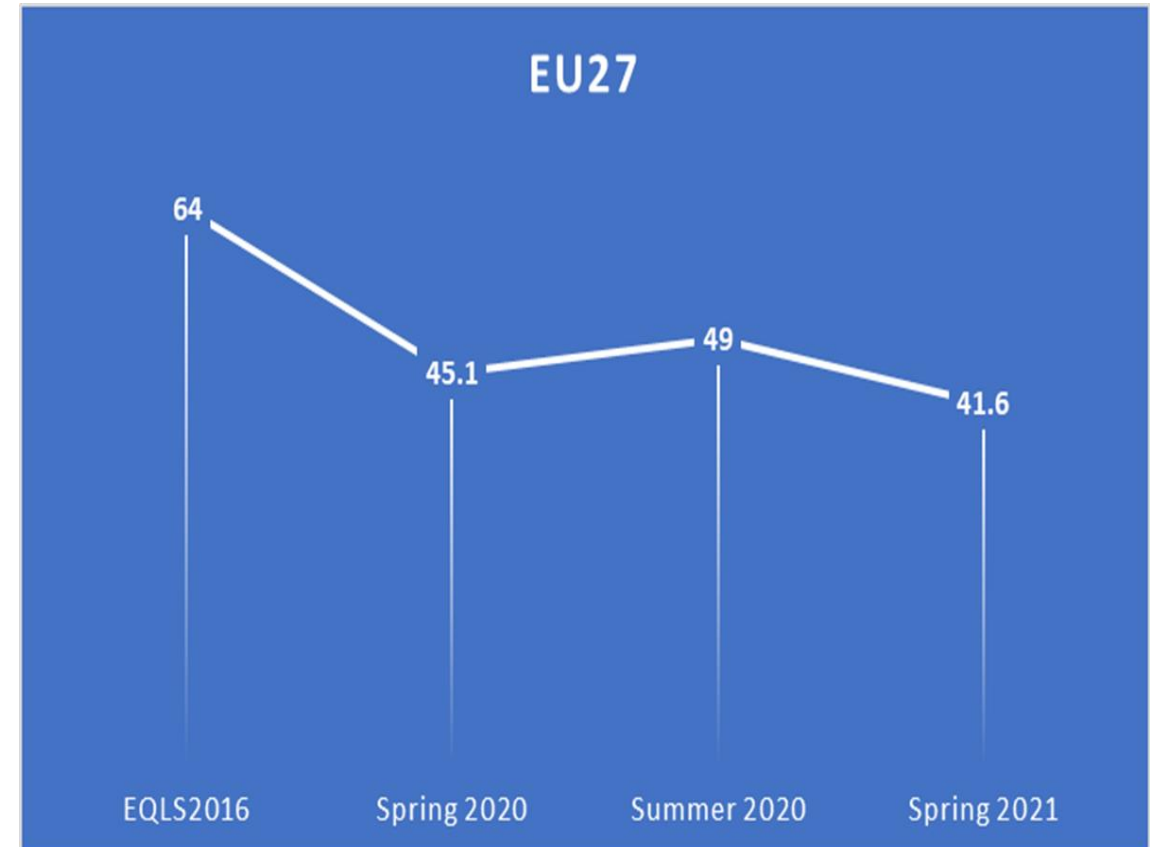
The importance of public support

- Several initiatives have been implemented by the European Union and its Member States to smooth the economic and social impact of the crisis
- Measures were quite effective in reducing the vulnerabilities of those whom they reached
- However, only 11% of citizens think that they really reached those in need and only 50% believe that they were fair



Europe in need of optimism about the future

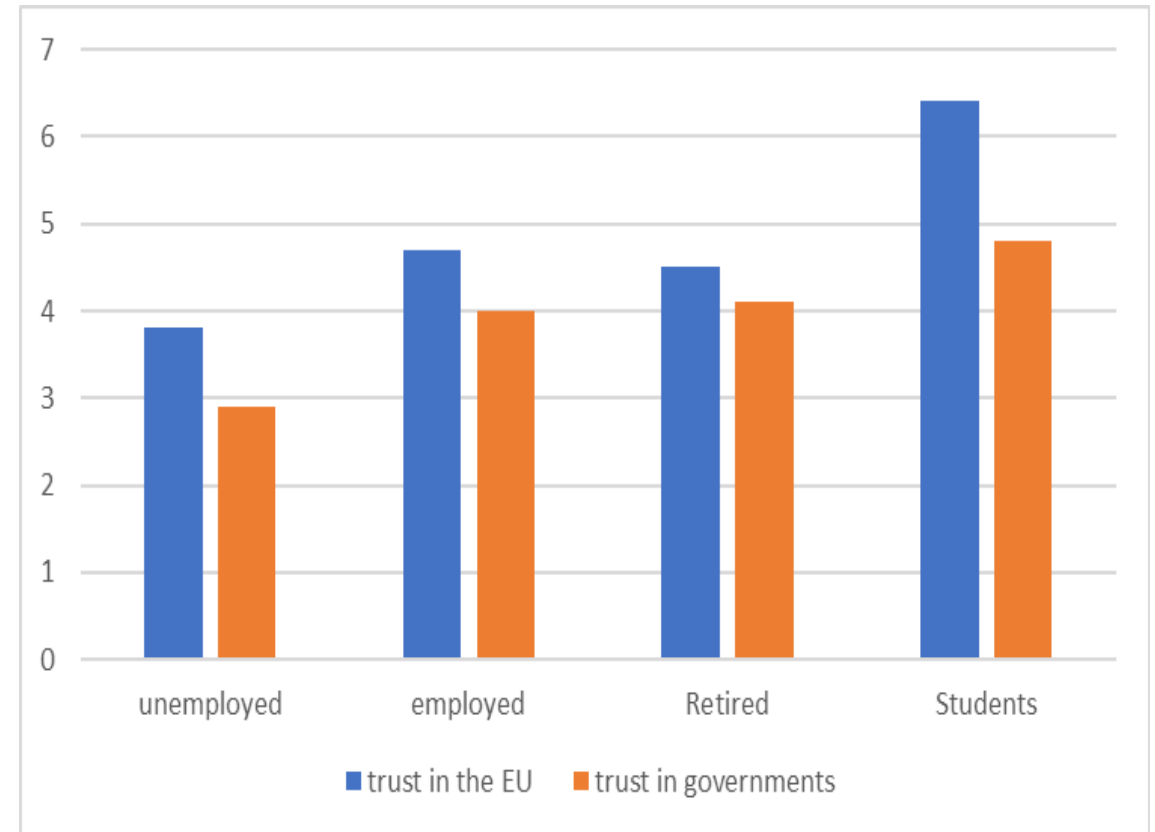
- European citizens have been hit very hard by the COVID-19 three crises.
- Optimism about the future was 64% in 2016, it collapsed to 41% in March 2021, varying from 56% for students to only 20% for the unemployed.
- A way out is needed!



Source: Eurofound, *Living, Working and COVID19 – 'I feel optimistic about my own future'*

Like modern Herakles

- As Herakles defeated Kerberos in the Hades, the EU and its Member States need to defeat the three faces of the COVID-19 crisis all at once!
- The NextGenEU and the RRF indicates digital and green transformation as the road to the recovery.
- However, policy driven transformations are based on trust and consensus
- The needs of all citizens must be addressed in order to build this consensus and ensure sustainable transitions and recovery



Source: Eurofound *Living, Working and COVID19*

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Thank you for your attention

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