

PANDEMIC Research News

International Women's Day: Information about Gender (in)Equality from 5 European countries during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

This summary comes from COME-HERE (COVID-19, Mental Health, REsilience and Self-regulation) data, designed to examine life in five European Union countries, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Sweden during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Questions

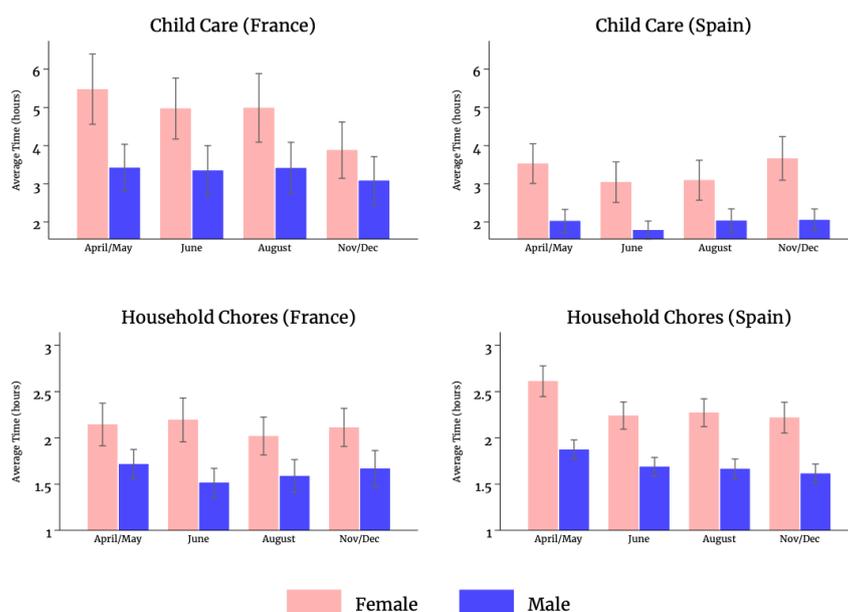
- How much time did you spend caring for and studying with your children on an average weekday?
- How much time did you spend doing household chores on an average weekday?

The COME-HERE survey is nationally representative and follows the same pool of individuals over time. The four rounds of survey were respectively conducted in April/May (8,063 respondents), June (4,788 participants), August (5,565 respondents), and November/December 2020 (5,594 respondents). Below descriptive evidence is presented and highlights differences and similarities with respect to gender and gender inequality. We present here only a few facts.

Traditional gender roles in France and Spain during the pandemic

Females still undertake considerably more time spent on daily household chores and child care than males in France and Spain. A result that has been consistent throughout the pandemic, with differences that are often strongly statistically significant.

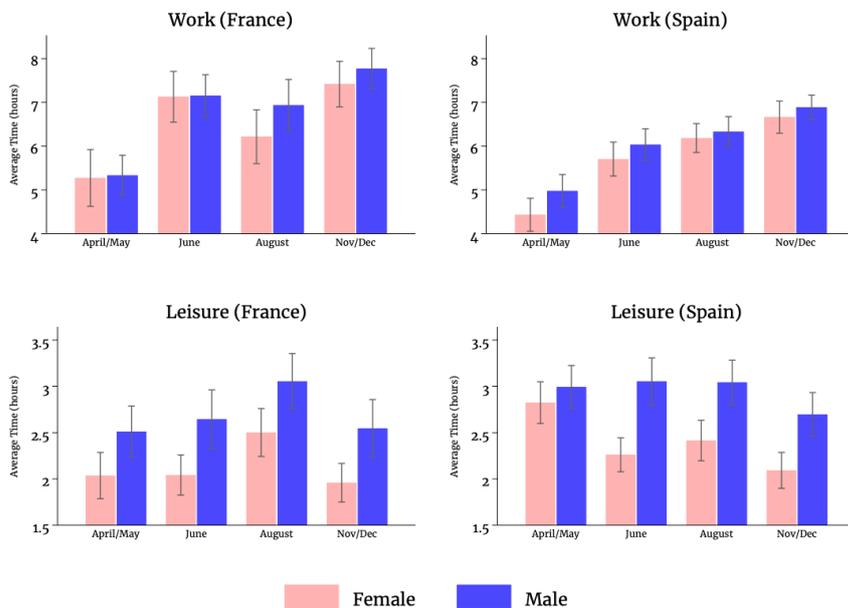
For both France and Spain, this pattern seems to come at the expense of leisure time for females in comparison to males.



As the next figure shows, time spent at work on average for females and males is rarely different statistically. However, the amount of time per day for leisure activities is strongly statistically different. In Germany and Italy, females also spend more time with child care and on household chores than males, though without the potential explanation of inequality in leisure time. Sweden, the other country where we have collected data during the pandemic is much more gender equal. Our data supports pre-pandemic findings from other indices, like the Global Gender Gap Index (created by the World Economic Forum), with Sweden being a rather gender equal country.

Questions

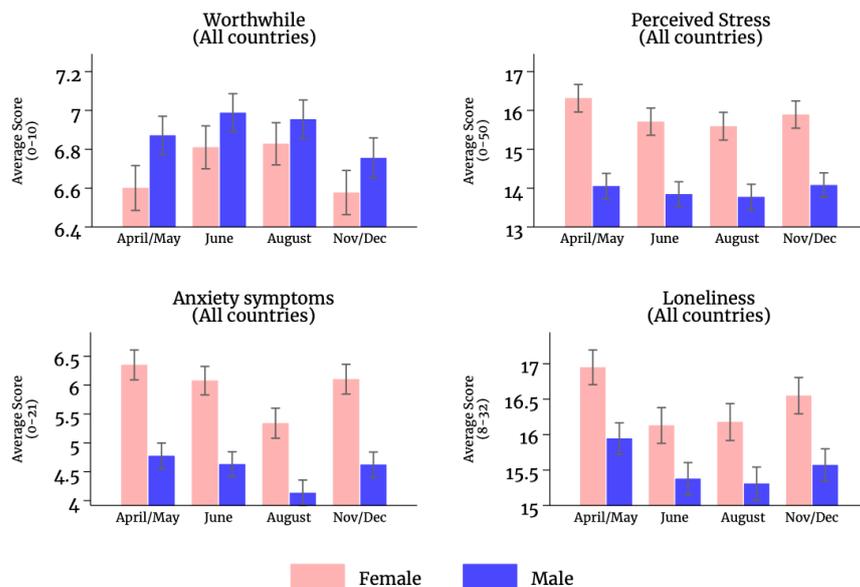
- How much time did you spend working on an average weekday? How much time did you spend doing leisure activities on an average weekday?



Throughout the pandemic, our survey shows that females often felt lonelier, more anxious and more stressed than males too, while feelings of a worthwhile life were reported more by males. This can be seen in the chart just below which shows that on average, in all five European countries, females are suffering more in the pandemic than males.

Questions

In the past week, to what extent have you felt the things you are doing in your life are **worthwhile** rated positively on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 10 (always); **perceived stress** over the last two weeks comes from a 10-item measure, capturing responses via a 5-point Likert scale ranging from with 0 not at all to 4 very often; **anxiety disorder symptoms** is a 7-item measure based on the last two weeks for example feeling nervous and not being able to stop worrying, with 0 not at all to 3 nearly every day; **loneliness** is an 8-item measure refers to feelings of lacking companionship and related concerns over the past two weeks, with 1 never to 4 often.



The five countries are: France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Sweden

These results are an example of what the COME-HERE survey has told us about life for females and males during the pandemic of 2020. Our data shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected women much more profoundly than men, both mentally and in terms of time use. The results outlined here imply that recovery policies will need to explicitly address gender gaps in the workplace and at home.

Research sponsors

