

SURVEY ON THE RECONCILIATION OF WORK, FAMILY AND PERSONAL LIFE. 2021

The percentage of people working from home in the Basque Country has increased by 5.3 points over the last decade

Reconciling work and family obligations continued to be very difficult for more than one out of four people in work in 2021

28.7% of employed people resident in the Basque Country expressed having great difficulty balancing work with looking after minor children, and 25.9% with looking after their dependents, according to Eustat data. This high degree of difficulty is also perceived by 25.8% of working people when it involves balancing work with personal activities. From the point of view of gender, it is worth noting that the greatest difference in terms of the difficulties faced by men and women can be seen when it comes to balancing work with looking after children; while the percentage stood at 25.8% for women, it was 31.4% for men.

With regards to the amount of time spent per day on looking after children and dependent persons, differences were found between men and women. Women who work outside the home and have children under the age of 15 dedicated on average 1.4 hours more per day to their care than working men (4.9 and 3.5 hours, respectively). Moreover, while just over half of women (51.6%) dedicated 5 hours or more per day to looking after their children, in the case of men this percentage stood at 27.2%, with 34% dedicating 2 hours or less to the care of their children.

Furthermore, regarding the time dedicated by people in work to looking after dependent persons, women spent, on average, more than three quarters of an hour more per day on this activity than men (2.2 and 1.4 hours, respectively).

The distribution of domestic tasks amongst working men and working women in the Basque Country was also imbalanced: almost nine out of ten men (85.3%) dedicated 2 hours or less to those tasks, whilst three out of ten women (30.2%) dedicated 3 hours or more.

The data show that the difference between the amount of time men and women spent on care and household chores has been diminishing over time. While in 2011 the difference was 0.9 hours for household chores, 1.9 hours for caring for children and 1.2 hours for caring for dependents, in 2021 these differences fell to 0.5 hours, 1.4 hours and 0.8 hours, respectively.

This uneven distribution of functions means that 15.1% of working women were very unsatisfied with the collaboration offered by their spouse or partner in carrying out domestic tasks. In contrast, a high number of working men were very satisfied with the participation of their partner (69.7%). Despite this, or precisely because of it, the percentage of men declaring themselves to be very satisfied with the time they spend on household tasks (45.1%) is similar to that for women (44.1%).

It is worth mentioning that working women expressed a greater satisfaction from looking after their children; 59.3% indicated a high satisfaction; and their dependents; 48.8%; for working men, these percentages dropped to 53.7% and 44.6%, respectively.

As regards general job satisfaction, the overall rating was 7.3 (out of 10), with some differences according to specific aspects. The lowest-rated aspect was promotion in the workplace, with 4.3; followed by flexibility of working hours and breaks during the working day, with 6.5; and salary

remuneration, with 6.6. The highest-rated aspects were the working day and job stability, with 7.3, and holidays and leave, with 7.2.

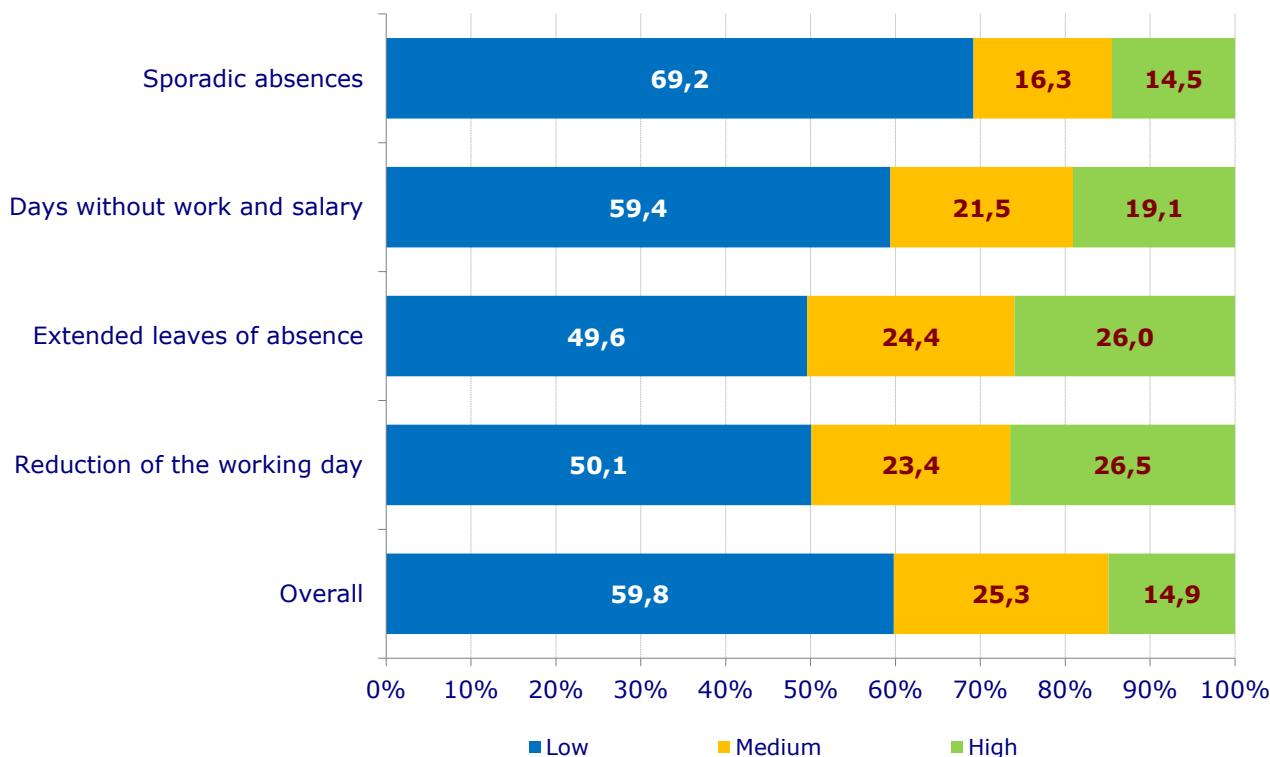
Over the last 10 years, the percentage of people who regularly prolong their working day has risen by 4 points

21.4% of the working population had to habitually dedicate more hours to their job than those established or foreseen, and another 17.9% did so sometimes.

An increase was observed, in respect of 2011, in the percentage of people who had to prolong their working day. Where the working day was almost always prolonged, the rise stood at 4 percentage points, but where the working day was sometimes prolonged, the increase was 1.7 points.

On the other hand, 17.6% of working men believed that requesting paternity leave would be highly detrimental to them. Notwithstanding, just 8.2% of men believed that paternity could affect them slightly compared to 19.3% of working women, who believed that maternity could create promotion inequalities. The fear that requesting leave or reduced hours for family reasons would affect career options was slightly greater amongst women than amongst men (30.2% and 27.6%, respectively).

Population in work in the Basque Country by difficulty of requesting permissions (%). 2021



Source: Eustat. Survey on the reconciliation of work, family and personal life

The percentage of people who enjoyed flexible working hours rose by 4.8 percentage points in the last year

Amongst the various methods that might facilitate the reconciliation of work, family and personal life, short-term leave is within reach of the majority of the working population, followed by the possibility of requesting leave in the form of unpaid days off. Furthermore, almost half the working population stated that they experienced little difficulty in obtaining extended leaves of absence or a reduction in working hours.

A flexible timetable for finishing work, another solution for improving reconciliation, was enjoyed by almost half of workers with the possibility to do so (47.1%). From the gender perspective, men benefited the most, as 50.6% had a flexible timetable compared to 43.3% of women. With regard to the previous year, an increase of 4.8 points was observed in the percentage of people who enjoyed flexible working hours: while in 2020, 42.3% of the population benefited from this measure for a better work-life balance, in 2021 the percentage rose to 47.1%.

As for working from home, there were no significant differences compared to the previous year. Although the percentage of people working from home occasionally was up 3 percentage points (going from 7.3% to 10.3%), the percentage of people doing so at least half of the time fell by 2.4 points (from 10.8% to 8.4%). If we look at the situation 10 years ago, there has been an increase (+5.3 percentage points) in the percentage of people who, to a greater or lesser extent, work from home.

With respect to the different types of working day, a steady decrease was seen in the percentage of people who had a split working day. While in 2011, 40.8% of people worked only morning and afternoon shifts, in 2021 it was 30.6%, hence there was an increase in the percentage of people who had a continuous working day (50% in 2011 to 55.5% in 2021) or a mixed working day (from 9.2% in 2011 to 13.9% in 2021).

In 4.1% of cases it was the father who sporadically took care of young children during the working day, the highest percentage in the last decade

In households where both partners worked, looking after children during the working hours of the parents corresponded to schools in 89.8% of cases, on 4.7% of occasions to both working parents and in 3.7% of cases to family members or other unpaid people.

Children under the age of 15 of the employed population in the Basque Country by daily care (when both spouses work). 2021

	2020	2021
Total (thousand)	177.5	181.0
Daily care during the working day of the employed person (%)		
Both	4.4	4.7
Relatives or individuals without earnings	2.8	3.7
Other individual with earnings	0.6	0.6
Nurseries	1.9	1.1
Education centres	90.4	89.8
Sporadic care during the working day of the employed person (%)		
Mother	15.0	11.5
Father	3.0	4.1
Both	68.0	64.4
Relatives or individuals without earnings	12.1	17.5
Other individual with earnings	1.0	0.3
Selfemployed (left alone)	0.8	2.1

Source: Eustat. Survey on the reconciliation of work, family and personal life

In these same households, the sporadic care of children when, during working hours, they have to be taken to the doctor, are ill or do not have school, was provided in most cases by both parents (64.4%), and less frequently by family members or unpaid people (17.5%), by the mother (11.5%) or the father (4.1%).

Finally, in relation to work preferences, the working population opted for the condition of salaried worker (84.4%) against that of self-employed worker (15.6%) and for working in the public sector (61.9%) as opposed to the private sector (38.1%), while this preference is more balanced between large companies (53.5%) and small companies (46.5%).

For further information:

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