



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

Households and social support in Europe

What can we learn from surveys before and during the Covid-19 pandemic?

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Support during the Covid-19 pandemic

The pandemic left households without support:

- Working parents: missing childcare and school
- Lone parents, coparenting families
- Disrupted social support networks for children
- People living alone: lack of social contact
- Older people: at highest risk, needing to isolate – leading to loneliness, especially if living alone

- Living, working, Covid-19 e-survey:
 - Spring 2020: 65,800
 - Summer 2020: 23,900
 - Spring 2021: 37,200

EQLS question measuring social support

From whom would you get support in each of the following situations?

For each situation, choose the most important source of support

If you needed help around the house when ill

If you needed advice about a serious personal or family matter

If you needed help when looking for a job

If needed to urgently raise money (specific amount per country) for an emergency

If you were feeling a bit depressed and wanting someone to talk to

If you needed help in looking after your children

- A member of your family / relative
- A friend, neighbour, or someone else, who does not belong to your family or relatives
- A service provider, institution or organisation
- Nobody

Adapted for e-survey in March 2020: help with shopping instead of amount of money

Social support – before the pandemic (EQLS 2016)

- Resilience strongly associated with available social support (people who said “nobody” had lower perceived resilience)

Family and friends as main sources of support was associated with:

- Higher life satisfaction and lower social exclusion in lone parent households
- Lower social exclusion in single households (no association with LS)

(after controlling for frequency of contact, income, health and demographics)

- Single households: frequency of social contact was associated with better wellbeing
- For older people, children living outside the household are the most important source of support

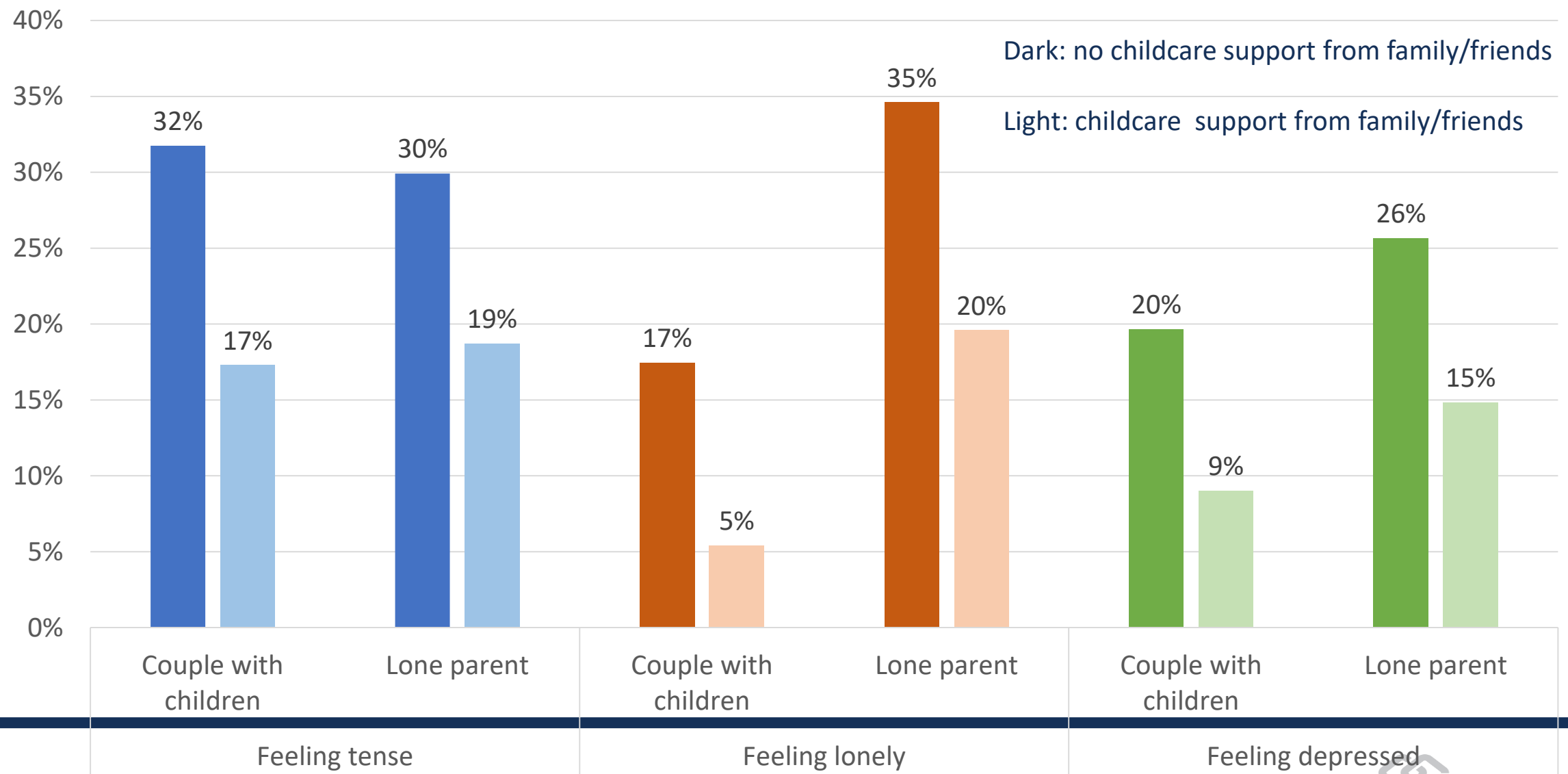
Intuitive findings, but all have high relevance when pandemic separated families and friend networks.

Negative feelings during the pandemic, by household type

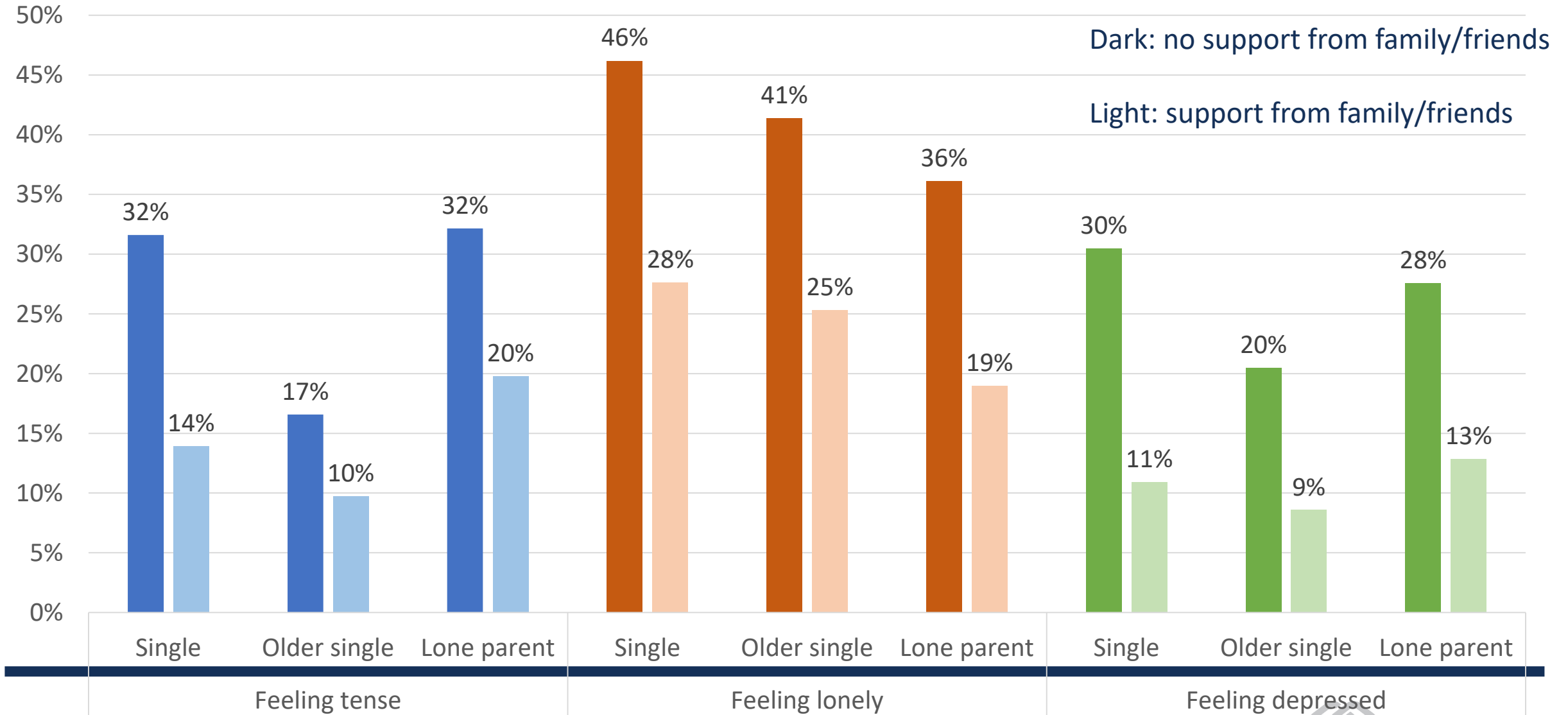
	Feeling tense		Feeling lonely		Feeling depressed	
	Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Spring 2020	Summer 2020
Single	17.5%	12.3%	31.6%	21.3%	15.1%	11.4%
Older single (65+)	10.7%	8.2%	28.3%	19.9%	10.6%	5.9%
Couple	14.5%	9.7%	8.2%	5.6%	8.4%	5.9%
Older couple (65+)	11.5%	4.0%	7.0%	4.2%	5.8%	3.2%
Couple with children under 18	20.2%	17.1%	7.7%	10.3%	11.1%	10.3%
Lone parent	22.6%	19.3%	22.2%	19.0%	16.2%	14.4%

Social support during the pandemic, by household type: childcare

(Spring 2020)



Social support during the pandemic, by household type: someone to talk to when feeling depressed *(Spring 2020)*

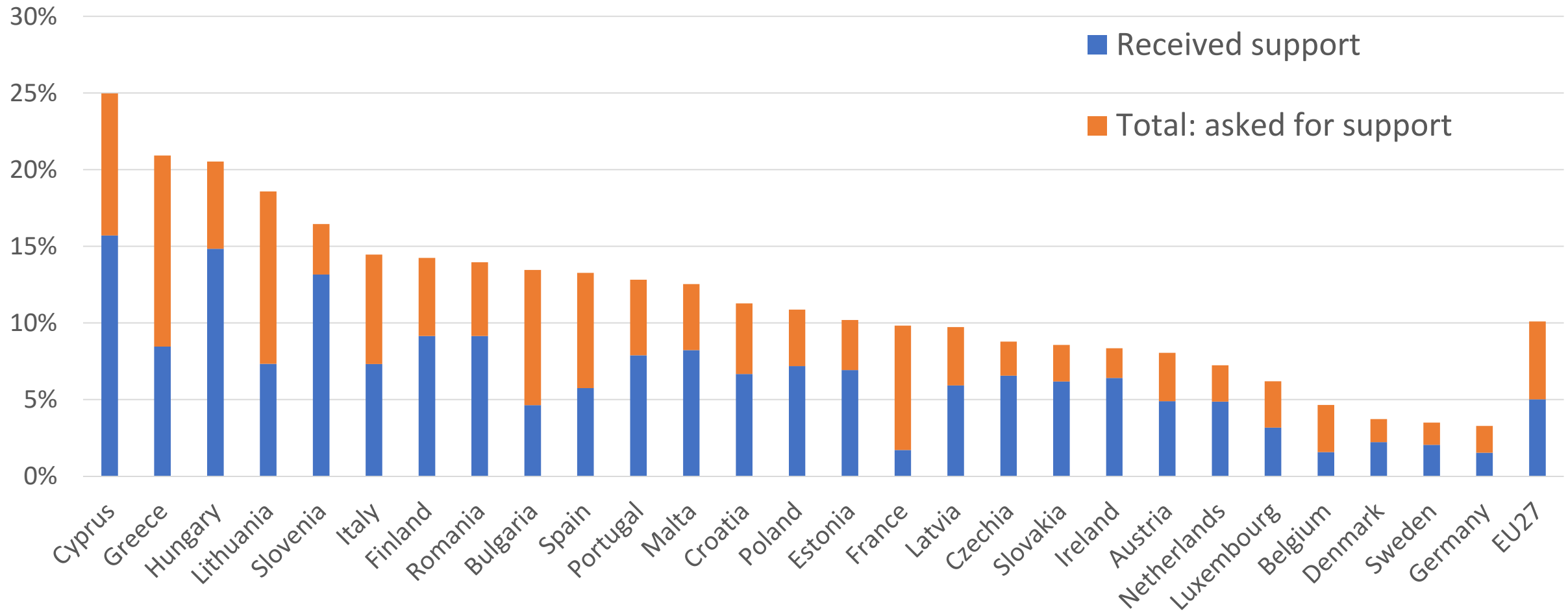


Institutional (financial) support during pandemic

	Received financial support (reduction of expenses)	Received financial support (benefits)	Received any informal support (NGOs, relatives, friends)
Single	4.0%	16.8%	20.9%
Older single (65+)	2.2%	6.0%	20.0%
Couple	3.3%	12.2%	11.0%
Older couple (65+)	1.6%	3.9%	11.6%
Couple with children under 18	8.0%	23.6%	19.0%
Lone parent	7.8%	23.4%	33.9%

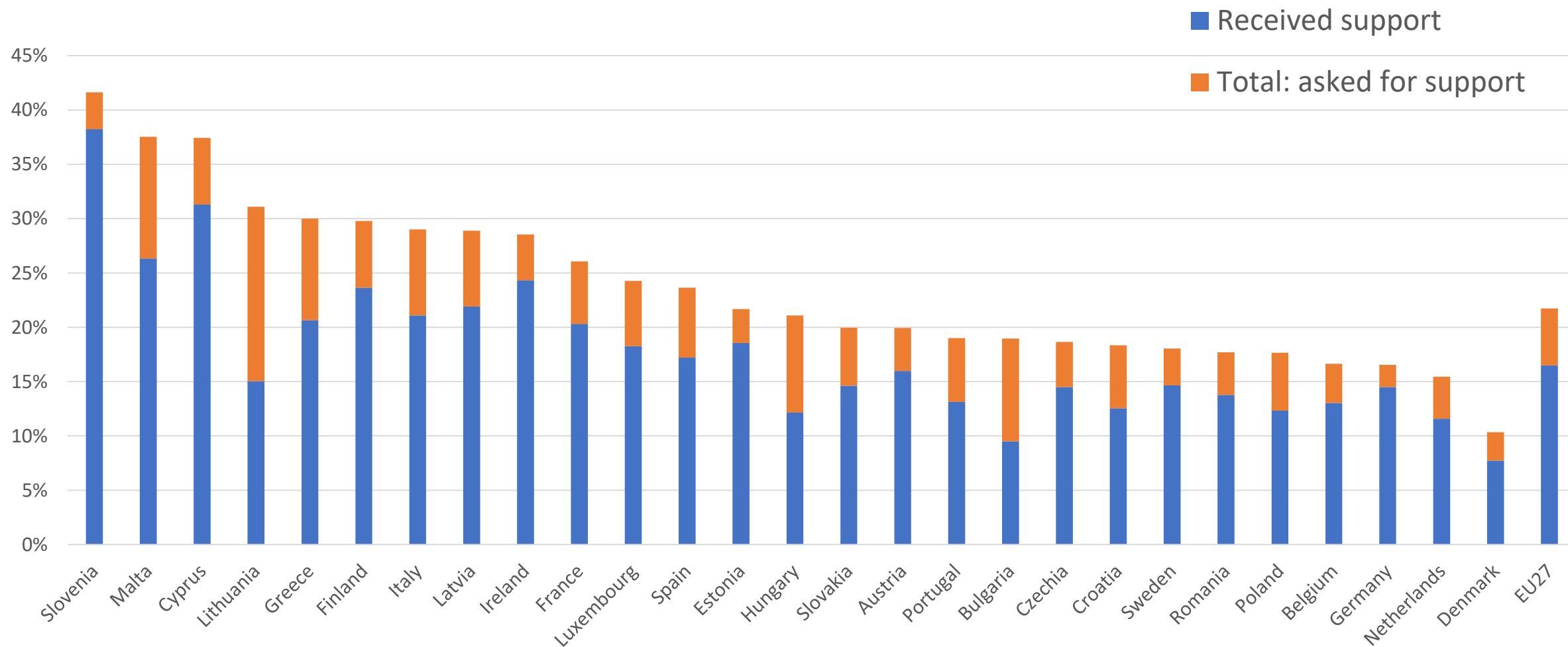
Respondents who asked for and received support: deferral/reduction/cancellation of payments

(Summer 2020)



Respondents who asked for and received support: unemployment benefit, wage support, paid sick/care leave

(Summer 2020)



Data sources

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

Round 1: April 2020

Round 2: July 2020

Currently in progress -

Round 3: February-March 2021 – please take part and share:

<http://eurofound.link/survey001>

More information: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/data/covid-19>

Data can be requested for research purposes by sending an application and a research outline to Eurofound