

Telework and Gender

**The future of (remote) work after Covid-19:
Reflections about the challenges and possibilities
connected to remote-work practices**

ETUI Workshop
19 November 2021

Dr Kalina Arabadjieva
Dr Paula Franklin

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Outline

1. Telework and Gender: Opportunities and Challenges
2. Future Directions and Solutions

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Can also call this 'future directions'? Or something like this

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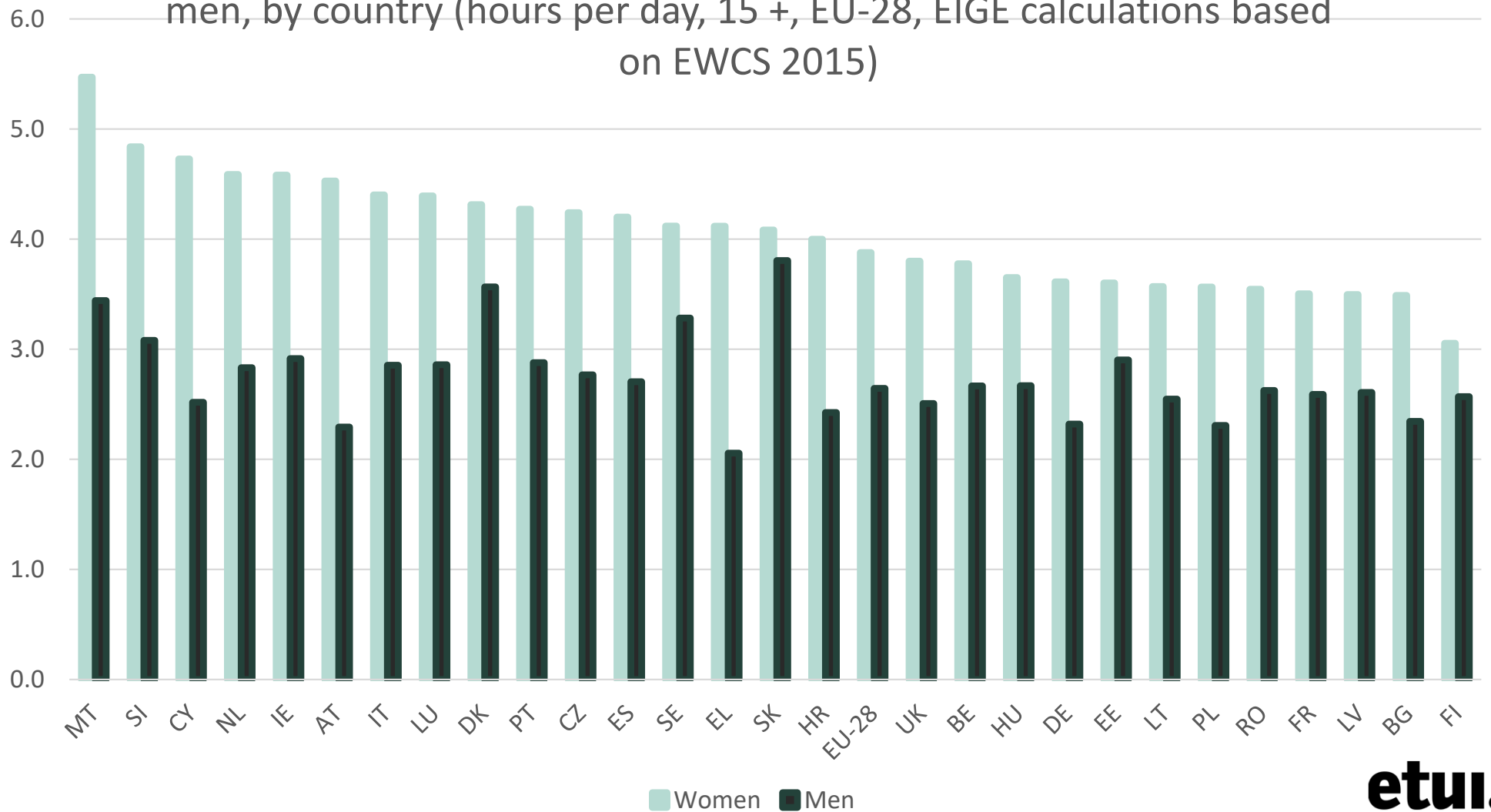
Let's change the 'Solutions' to 'Future Directions'

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Telework, unpaid care work and gender: Double-edged sword

- Telework offers possibilities for a better work-life balance, particularly important for those with caring responsibilities – workers under a ‘double burden’ of paid and unpaid work
- But also associated with increased availability, longer working hours, intensification of work and blurring of boundaries between work and private life, which exacerbate work-life conflicts
- **Women** continue to perform a(n often much) larger share of unpaid care work and have a higher double workload

Mean time spent on daily unpaid care work by employed women and men, by country (hours per day, 15+, EU-28, EIGE calculations based on EWCS 2015)



Telework, unpaid care work and gender: Double burden on women

The 'double burden' of paid and unpaid work affects women in various ways

- Mental and physical well-being
- Many women do not participate in the labour market for this reason – EU gender gap in employment at 11.8 pp in 2018
- Many women take up part-time, temporary or casual work, and/or career breaks – contributing to a gender pay gap (14.1% in EU27), as well as gender gaps in overall earnings and pensions

Telework, unpaid care work and gender: Opportunities

- Telework – in particular home-based, combined with flexible hours – could contribute to increasing women’s labour market participation, but also to equal sharing of care responsibilities
- 57% of those performing home-based telework, as opposed to 47% of workers in telework/ICT-based arrangements are women (Eurofound and ILO 2017)
- Share of women in teleworkable occupations (45%) is estimated to be higher than the share of men (30%) (Sostero et al. 2020)
- 41% of women as opposed to 37% of men started working from home during the pandemic (Eurofound 2020)

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So this might suggest that more women than men might take opportunities to work from home

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le telework could positively contribute to gender equality in employment and in pay; could be particularly beneficial to single parents or parents of children with disabilities, for example

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Telework, unpaid care work and gender: Challenges

As telework becomes increasingly available, women are likely to take advantage of opportunities to work from home, but ...

- Risk of entrenching gender stereotypes regarding care and distribution of unpaid care work
- Increased double workload; effects on productivity due to disruptions
- Increased risk of online harassment and domestic violence
- Gender gap in digital skills

- Plus risks affecting all teleworkers, regardless of gender

Reflections on future directions

- 1) *The impacts of gendered division of space into private and public*
 - home-based teleworkers remain disadvantaged
- 2) *Trust vs. surveillance*
 - challenge to the development and enforcement of health and safety provisions
- 3) *The importance of addressing psychosocial risks (PSR)*
 - The risk factors have direct and accumulative health impact
 - PSR must be addressed through collective preventative measures
- 4) *Some elements of sustainable and decent remote work*
 - Worker participation in how work is organised
 - Gender transformative approach

(Some) Solutions

- Gender mainstreaming in regulation of telework
- Right to disconnect – introduced in some EU Member States, discussions of action at EU-level
- Working time autonomy / flexible working hours
- Obligations to prevent risks to physical and mental health
- Holding up to framework agreements

- Promoting equal distribution of unpaid care work between men and women – family-friendly policies, care services, regulation of working time (Work-Life Balance & Working Time Directives)

THANK YOU!

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