
**Short survey about the potential unequal consequences of the COVID-19 crisis
for female lawyers with children and potential measures taken by Bars and Law Societies**

***Enquête rapide sur les inégalités potentielles dues à la crise de Covid-19
pour les avocates ayant des enfants et sur les mesures potentielles prises par les barreaux***

1) Are you aware of complaints from female lawyers who had considerably a more significant impact from the confinement and lockdown due to childcare and/or any other burden which their male colleagues were not (or less) confronted with? / <i>Avez-vous connaissance de plaintes d'avocates qui ont eu des conséquences considérablement plus importantes du fait du confinement en raison de la garde d'enfants ou de toute autre charge à laquelle leurs confrères n'étaient pas (ou étaient moins) confrontés ?</i>	
Austria	The Austrian Bar did not receive any complaints from female lawyers who had considerably a more significant impact from the confinement and lockdown.
Czech Republic	The Czech Bar Association has not received and is therefore not aware of any such complaints.
Denmark	No, we are not aware of such complaints.
Estonia	No such complaints have reached Estonian Bar Association. During the lockdown, the courts and justice system continued running (most of the judges etc. worked in home offices and hearings were conducted via video-conferences) and also most lawyers (both men and female) worked in home offices. Kindergartens were all open, so when really needed, children could go to kindergarten.
Finland	No. We launched a questionnaire about the consequences of the COVID-19 and it did not arise.
Hungary	No
Italy	<p>Following to your request, we have made a quick internal survey and we learned from the responses that in Italy there should be no formal complaints, and that minimal measures have been taken by some local Bars, where in general there has been limited care to the condition of the female / mothers lawyers during the pandemic crisis. However, we think it is interesting to report the comments received without providing names and places; they represent heterogeneous opinions on this sensitive issue. By avoiding personal comments, if one should summarize these positions, one might conclude that female lawyers need more support in general, and during this crisis this has only be confirmed.</p> <p>- "According to statistics and surveys, women generally take on three times more unpaid care work than men. For example, school closures and children at home are a major part of the reason for this and they have largely returned to accepting part-time work in terms of shorter working hours than before.</p>

	<p>The risk is that, because of the epidemic, gender equality will take a resounding step backwards. For example, the closure of schools and summer centres has penalised women with children and freelancers. Many lawyer friends and mothers of several children myself have had difficulty managing my time between my job and helping their children to manage distance education. What message is given to young women? To give up motherhood because it is not a country for mothers?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Female lawyers were confronted during the lockdown with the same problems which, more or less, any female employee faced in the same period, notably child care. In reality, the closure of the Courts and the possibility of working from home have made it possible for Lawyers to continue their professional activity in the limited areas where it was permitted." - "From a survey carried out among the Pif Companies it emerges that the lawyers with young children have had difficulty in working in smart working, especially if separated or divorced and therefore without being able to entrust the care of children to the other parent." - "Time is always a tyrant". - "From my observatory, I have not had a perception of more uncomfortable situations of female colleagues during lockdown. <p>On the contrary, I have seen colleagues of both genders surrounded by children at zoom conferences and it seemed a good thing.</p> <p>Perhaps a problem is emerging now because, with the less available summer centres, it is possible that some female colleagues may have found themselves dealing with the problem of their children while some husbands returned to work. And maybe not all of them shared the difficulty with their husband or partner. But I really couldn't say. I guess who could really have the pulse of the situation is the Equal Opportunities Committee."</p>
Liechtenstein	No, there are no such complaints addressed to the Liechtenstein Bar
Lithuania	Lithuanian Bar is unaware of gender based impact of COVID-19. There was a special support from social welfare system for the parents with children, so probably it has eased the impact.
Spain	<p>Please see the following news on the situation in Spain: https://www.abogacia.es/actualidad/noticias/la-abogacia-reclama-que-la-conciliacion-sea-un-elemento-esencial-en-las-inminentes-reformas-legales/</p> <p>Lawyers demand that "conciliation" (expression used in Spanish for measures on professional and personal life balance) be an essential element in the imminent legal reforms (automated revised translation). 19/6/2020</p>
Sweden	<p>As stated before, the Swedish Government has opted not to introduce any formal lock-down measures; however, government authorities have introduced certain recommendations aimed at containing the spread of the Corona virus, such as social distancing, to remain at home at all times when feeling even a tiny symptom of illness, to work from home when possible, to not gather in groups larger than 50, etc. Non-essential international travel is not advised until July 15. It is at this time not known when these recommendations will be changed.</p> <p>Certain lawyers (public counsels appointed by the Swedish courts) have been given a specific critical societal status (e.g. in terms of right to childcare in case the government or another principal may decide to close down schools and childcare services). We have, however, not received any indications from Swedish female lawyers in line with what you ask about under 1).</p>

United Kingdom	We have run 2 roundtable sessions inviting parents and carers to discuss the challenges of working from home alongside childcare, home schooling and/or caring for others. The attendees were mainly women with children facing challenges of parenting, shared parenting and work along with the loss of their support networks.
2) If this is the case, do you know about any initiatives or measures taken by Bars and Law Societies to support female lawyers and offer solutions to reduce such burden on their professional life? / <i>Si tel est le cas, avez-vous connaissance d'initiatives ou de mesures prises par les barreaux pour soutenir les avocates et leur proposer des solutions pour réduire cette charge sur leur vie professionnelle ?</i>	
Italy	<p>- No measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I am not aware, at this time, of any specific measures taken by Bars in Italy, but the Government adopted measures as the "babysitter bonus". - ... I understand that the support interventions of an economic nature made no difference in terms of gender. For example, the Bar of ... is preparing a call for proposals that includes, among the criteria, a score for those who have one or more minor children, but it is a direct call for proposals to all members. Even the calls for support from Cassa Forense - if I am not mistaken - are in any case directed to the members, without distinction of gender." - From a friend of mine I learned that our Bar has not taken any action for lawyers because the Italian government has put in place the "babysitter bonus". I am not aware of any initiatives by other local Bar - - My Bar (red COVID-19 area) has obviously not having at the moment provided support to colleagues during the lockdown; it has taken care to close its doors for two months... However, there is a good news, because thanks to the work of the Bar's Equal Opportunities Committee, together with the Municipality of and the local Court, the project to set up a kindergarten in front of the Court has just been approved, for the exclusive use of all those in charge of justice (lawyers, magistrates, chancellery staff). It seems that the work will begin in September, and therefore, when it is completed, the colleagues will have a good support during the working day. I do not know other dynamics of the initiative, that is if the service has a cost partially or totally charged to the Municipality (I doubt), or if it is paid by the user, but even in the latter case I think it is an excellent support to our difficult work.
Spain	<p>"The health crisis can no longer be an excuse for postponing legal reforms that would equate the conciliation of Spanish lawyers with the situation enjoyed by civil servants in the administration of justice". This was stated by the President of the Consejo General de la Abogacía Española, Victoria Ortega, following the suspension of the deadline for a lawyer from Ponferrada in an advanced state of pregnancy to present an appeal.</p> <p>In the opinion of the president of the Spanish lawyers, "reconciling personal and professional life is a right and a fundamental condition to guarantee equality in all professional areas". This is a right that, according to Ortega, cannot be left to the judges alone, but must be appropriately regulated. For this reason, the Spanish legal profession has proposed that in the coming months priority be given, among the reforms to be undertaken, to those of the Organic Law of the Judiciary (LOPJ), the Civil Procedure Law (LEC) and the Criminal Procedure Law (LECr).</p> <p>And specifically, these are some of the proposed changes:</p> <p>Amendment of Article 179 of the Civil Procedure Act to incorporate various cases regulating the suspension of proceedings, hearings and judicial actions for justified reasons related to leaves and permits. The cases contemplated include birth, custody for adoption purposes, shelter or</p>

	<p>adoption by a lawyer, as well as high-risk pregnancy, illness or accident requiring hospitalization, medical leave, or death, serious accident or illness of the spouse or first-degree relative.</p> <p>The Consejo General de la Abogacía Española considers that it is fair to standardise the right to conciliation of all legal professionals, a right from which lawyers cannot be excluded, regardless of whether they are employed or self-employed.</p> <p>Modification of Article 179 of the Organic Law of the Judiciary to include the establishment of two periods of judicial vacation: in the summer, between 1 and 31 August, inclusive; and at Christmas, from 23 December to 6 January, inclusive. This model of "judicial vacations" already exists in other European Union countries. In addition, the disqualification of days considered as "judicial vacations" should also be extended to the practice of acts of notification and communication.</p>
<p>United Kingdom</p>	<p>Following on from the roundtables we are arranging a meeting with employers / firms to feed back some of the challenges highlighted. We will also shortly be developing our flexible working guidance and the feedback from the roundtables will also feed into this too. My colleague, Heather McKendrick, has set up a series of virtual lunchtime drop in session for parents / carers which will initially run every 3 weeks which will provide a supportive environment for people to seek advice and share their frustrations in a safe setting</p> <p>We have also highlighted existing support that is available. One is our mentoring platform which is free to join, and allows participants to select a mentor to discuss any career related issues, as it can be helpful to have someone out with the office to confide in. We also have a well-being portal which signposts members to sources of help and support.</p>