

digitising europe pulse

09 / 2020

Challenges in times of COVID-19

A survey of
European citizens



Study Design

Quantitative research

Method: Online questionnaire

Sample: 1,000 participants in each of the following 13 EU countries: Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden.
Divided by age, gender and region.

Summary

Impact of the crisis

Dealing with Covid-19 has been very different from country to country. Therefore, the EU is not seen as an effective manager of the crisis. Southern Europe has to face the biggest challenges.

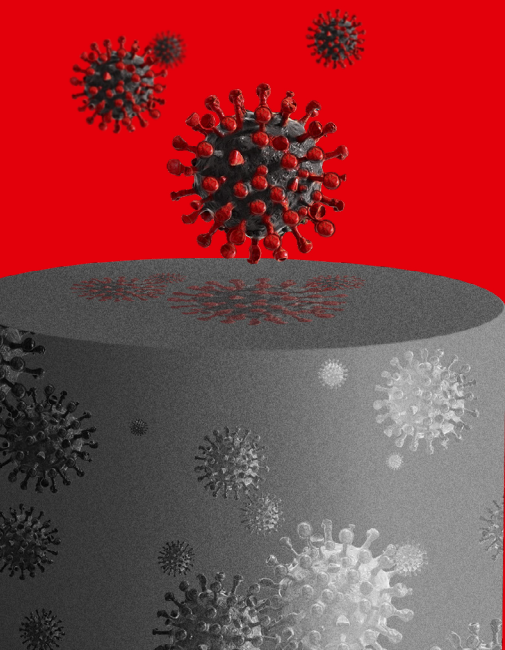
1 Overall, more than one third of EU citizens (36%) rate the crisis management of their national government as highly effective, while only a minority (13%) is very dissatisfied. Countries, that were highly affected by the virus outbreak such as Italy, France and Spain, are less often satisfied, although the national governments took very strict actions.

2 The crisis management of the EU is evaluated significantly more reluctant: Only 12% consider the EU actions as highly effective. Again, highly affected countries are more critical. All in all, the crisis management is mainly attributed to national governments, while the EU plays a subordinate role.

3 The national focus also has an impact on the cohesion of EU citizens: Overall, half of respondents (rather) agree that the solidarity within the EU is strengthened by the crisis, while only 8% totally agree.

4 A majority (68%) believes that the crisis will somehow have a limiting effect on their quality of life. Highest concerns among southern European countries like Italy, Spain, Portugal or Greece. Even though Greece and Portugal have not been heavily affected by the virus, the concerns may also be related to high dependency on tourism and a high vulnerability of those economies – as they are still recovering from previous crises.

5 The crisis already had a huge impact on the economic situation of citizens: 9% have already lost their jobs and 18% are on short-time work. More than every tenth (14%) have lost their savings. Higher impact again in southern countries Greece and Portugal.



Summary

The role of digital technology

Digital technologies have been very helpful to cope with social distancing. The majority expects digital innovations to have a significant positive impact for the containment of the crisis.

1 The majority (78%) is sufficiently equipped with digital technology at home to cope with self isolation, thereof 28% whose technical infrastructure seems to be totally fine. Best equipment level in Germany, Ireland and Portugal while Italians, Greek and Polish feel least equipped.

2 The vast majority of 75% also agrees that digital technology is (rather) helpful to the containment of the pandemic. Respondents assign the biggest potential (58%) to digitization in the field of education, e.g. e-learning infrastructures for educational institutions. About half expect helpful digital innovations in terms of health, society & community and economy.

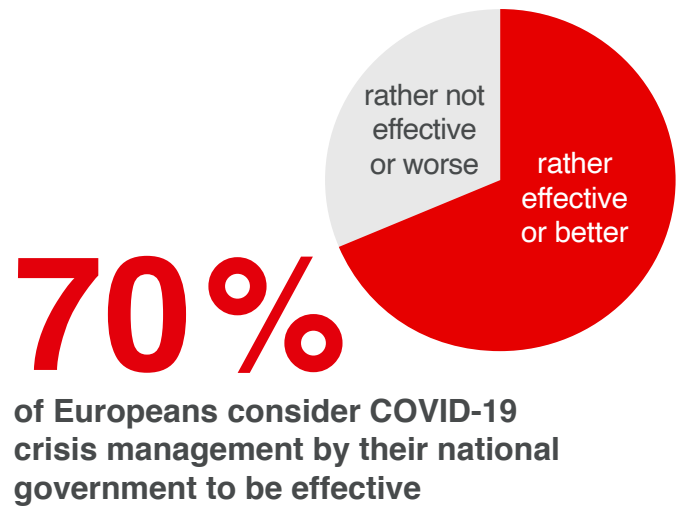
3 Most of the respondents (77%) have experienced the support of digital technology in dealing with the crisis by themselves. Especially tools for video calls and collaboration are perceived as very helpful to cope with the new situation and social distancing.

4 Less than half (45%) have used e-health services during the crisis, most often online applications (27%). Nearly every fifth (18%) has replaced a doctor's visit by an online consultation. When it comes to sharing of data, citizens are even more cautious: Only 15% have shared health data with their doctor or authorities and 9% have made use of an electronic patient record.

5 A majority is generally open to use apps to contain the pandemic, most likely warning apps (66%). 60% would use advice apps, least acceptance for surveillance apps (57%). However, about one third is concerned about transparency and data privacy and would use apps only under strict conditions (e.g. anonymization, transparency of data use).



Crisis management by national government

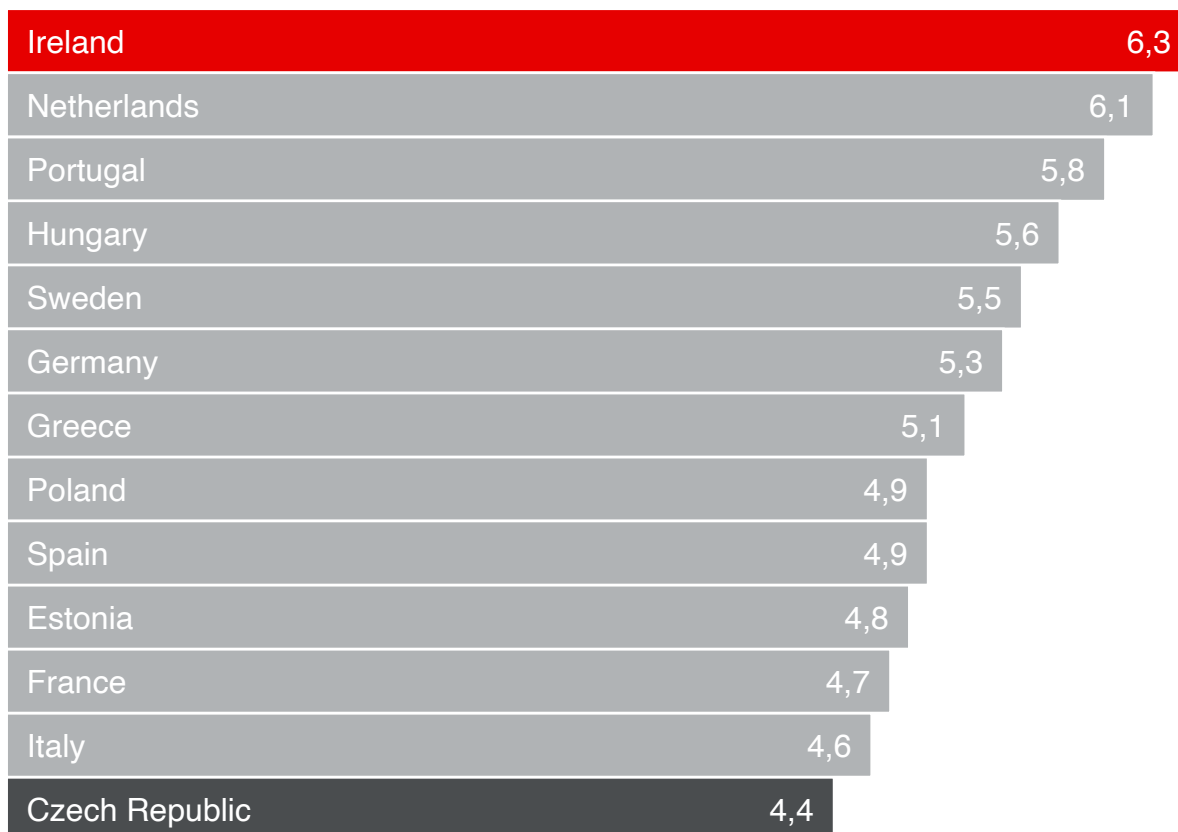


Agreement to national government and COVID-19 crisis management in different countries. From 0 (not effective) to 10 (highly effective):

Ireland	7,4
Greece	7,4
Portugal	7,2
Netherlands	7,2
Czech Republic	7
Germany	6,7
Sweden	6,6
Estonia	6,5
Italy	6,1
Hungary	5,7
Poland	5,2
France	5
Spain	5

Crisis management by EU government

Agreement to EU government and crisis management in different countries.
From 0 (not effective) to 10 (highly effective):



European solidarity

50%

of EU citizens agree that their solidarity and cohesion is strengthened by the crisis

European solidarity is strengthened by the COVID-19 crisis – agreement by country:

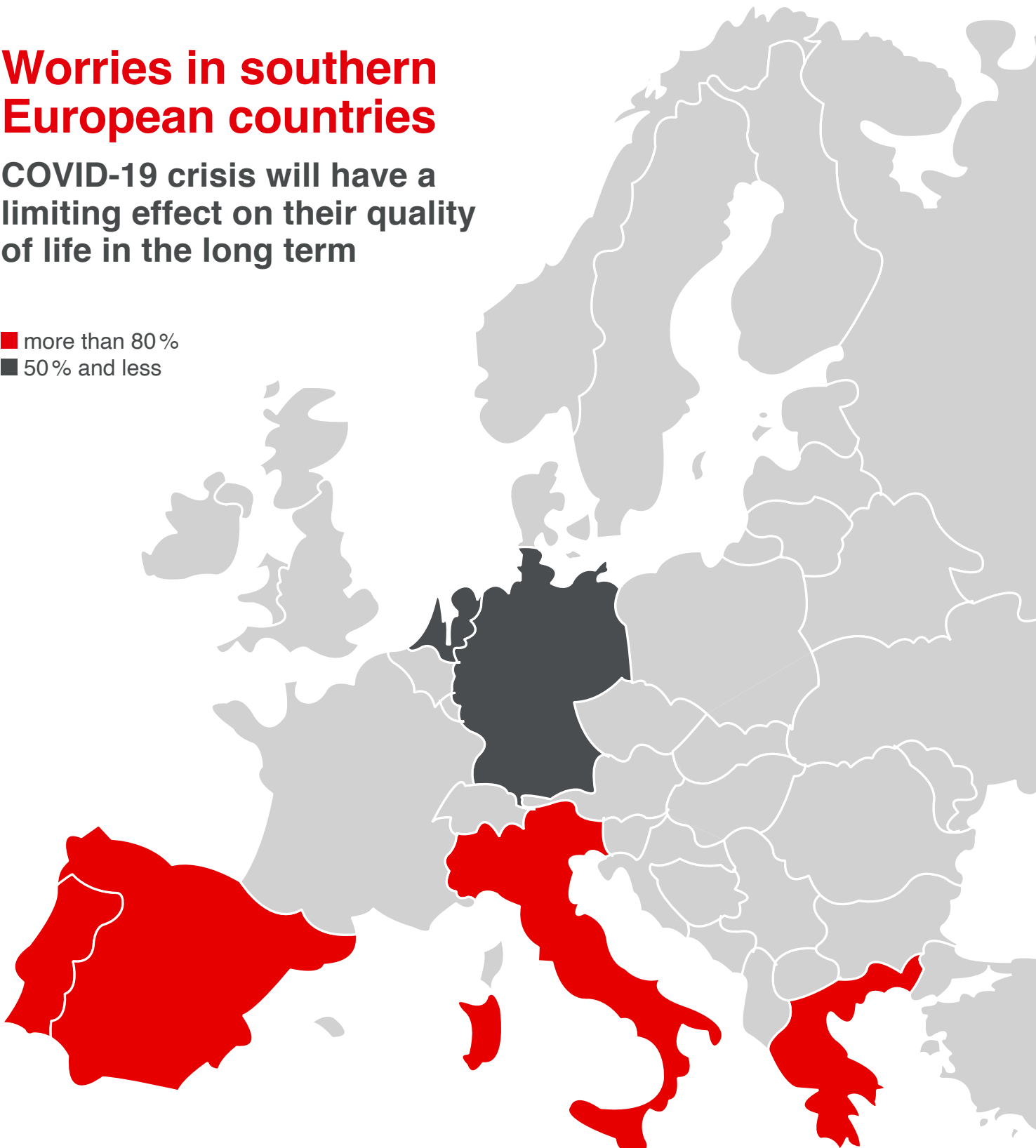
Portugal	69%
Hungary	59%
Ireland	59%
Greece	54%
Czech Republic	53%
Poland	53%
Germany	51%
Netherlands	50%
Spain	45%
France	43%
Italy	43%
Sweden	43%
Estonia	28%

Quality of life

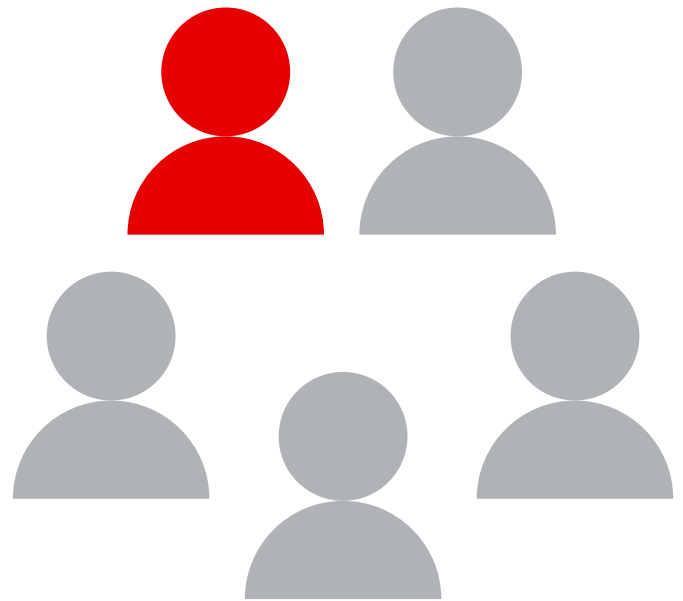
Worries in southern European countries

COVID-19 crisis will have a limiting effect on their quality of life in the long term

- more than 80%
- 50% and less



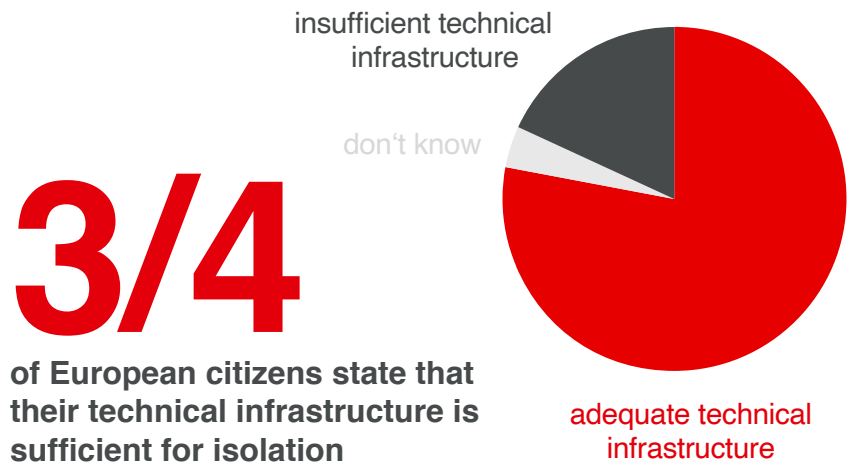
Personal economic impact



1/5 is on short-time work

because of the economic impact of COVID-19

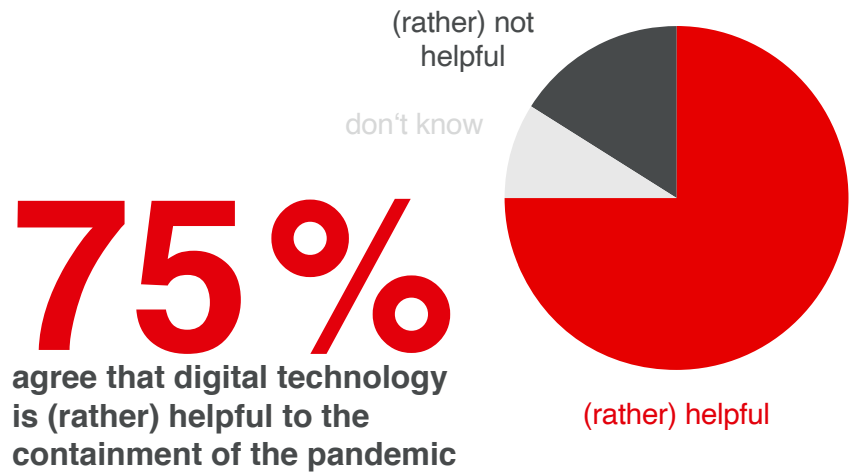
Technical infrastructure



The technical infrastructure to isolate is as much as possible in the medium term – agreement by country:

Portugal	87%
Germany	86%
Ireland	83%
Spain	83%
Hungary	83%
Sweden	82%
France	82%
Netherlands	78%
Italy	75%
Czech Republic	72%
Greece	71%
Estonia	71%
Poland	66%

Impact of technology



Digital technologies can make a positive contribution to the containment of the Corona pandemic – agreement by country:

Portugal	92%
Greece	83%
Ireland	83%
Italy	82%
Estonia	81%
Spain	79%
Hungary	78%
Czech Republic	70%
Sweden	69%
Germany	67%
Netherlands	67%
Poland	66%
France	61%

Innovative potential of digital technologies

In which sectors do you think that digitization will create innovations that have a significant positive impact on the containment of the Corona pandemic?

58%

Education

53%

Health

50%

Society & Community

49%

Economy

43%

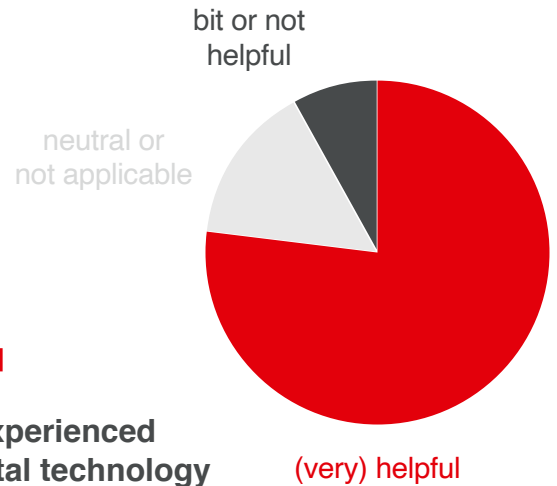
Public Life

9%
No positive impact

Personal impact of technology

3/4

Europeans have experienced the support of digital technology in dealing with the crisis by themselves



Digital technologies are helpful to overcome social distancing and stay connected – agreement by country:

Portugal	91%
Spain	88%
Italy	84%
Greece	83%
Hungary	83%
Estonia	81%
Ireland	77%
Poland	73%
Czech Republic	72%
France	71%
Germany	68%
Sweden	68%
Netherlands	62%

Importance of digital technologies

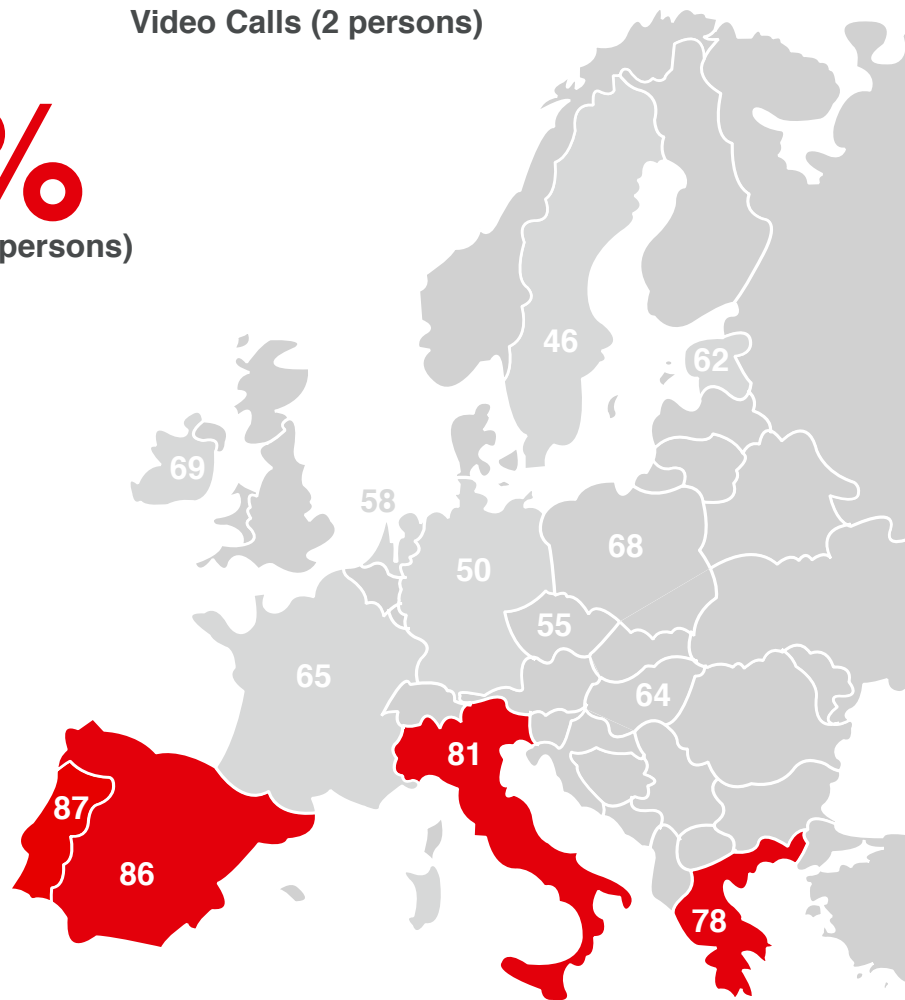
Which tools are most helpful to cope with the new situation during the shutdown:

67%
Video Calls (2 persons)

61%
Video Calls (>2 persons)

58%
Collaboration & Community tools

55%
E-Learning Tools / Apps



Video calls have had an even bigger impact among Southern European countries.

E-Health

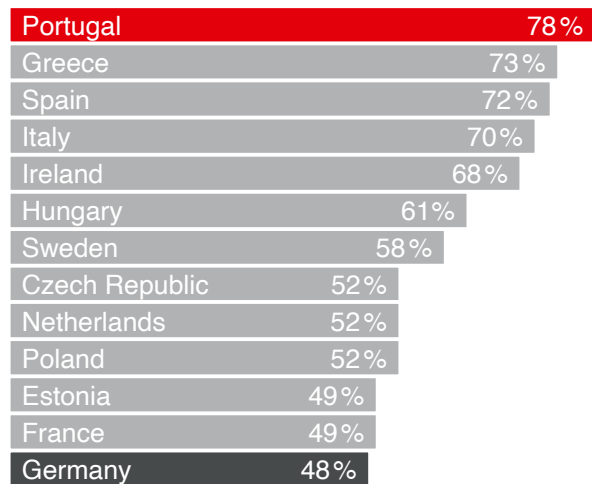


**1/5 has replaced a
doctor's visit by an
online consultation**

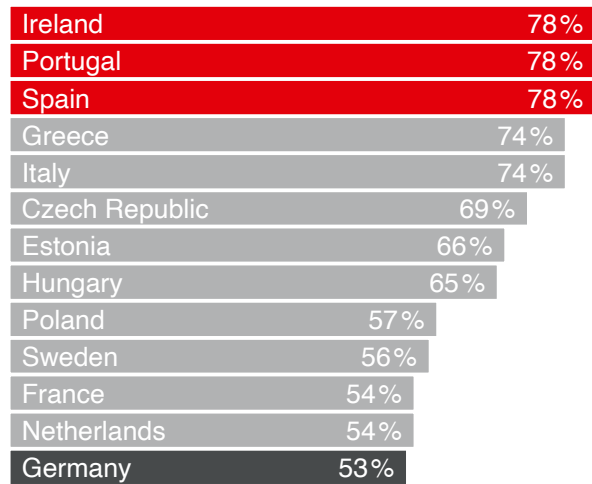
Acceptance of Tracking Apps

Yes, I would certainly use this app (but only under strict conditions):

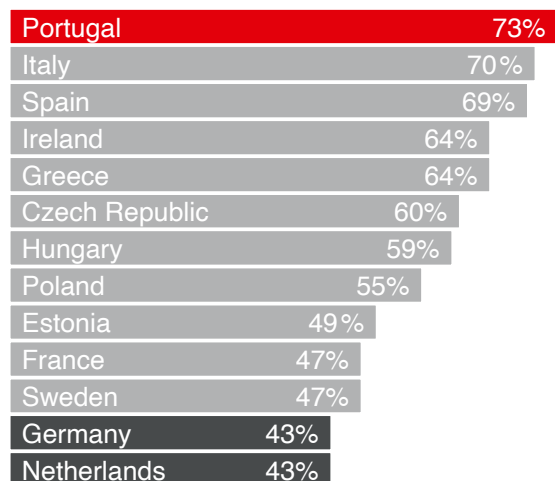
Information and advice apps, including tools like selfdiagnosis questionnaires



Warning apps, giving alarm after potential contact with infected people according to your movement profile



Surveillance apps, controlling self-quarantine in case of infection



Imprint

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