

Report on the main results of the work-life balance survey at CFM

2nd May 2023

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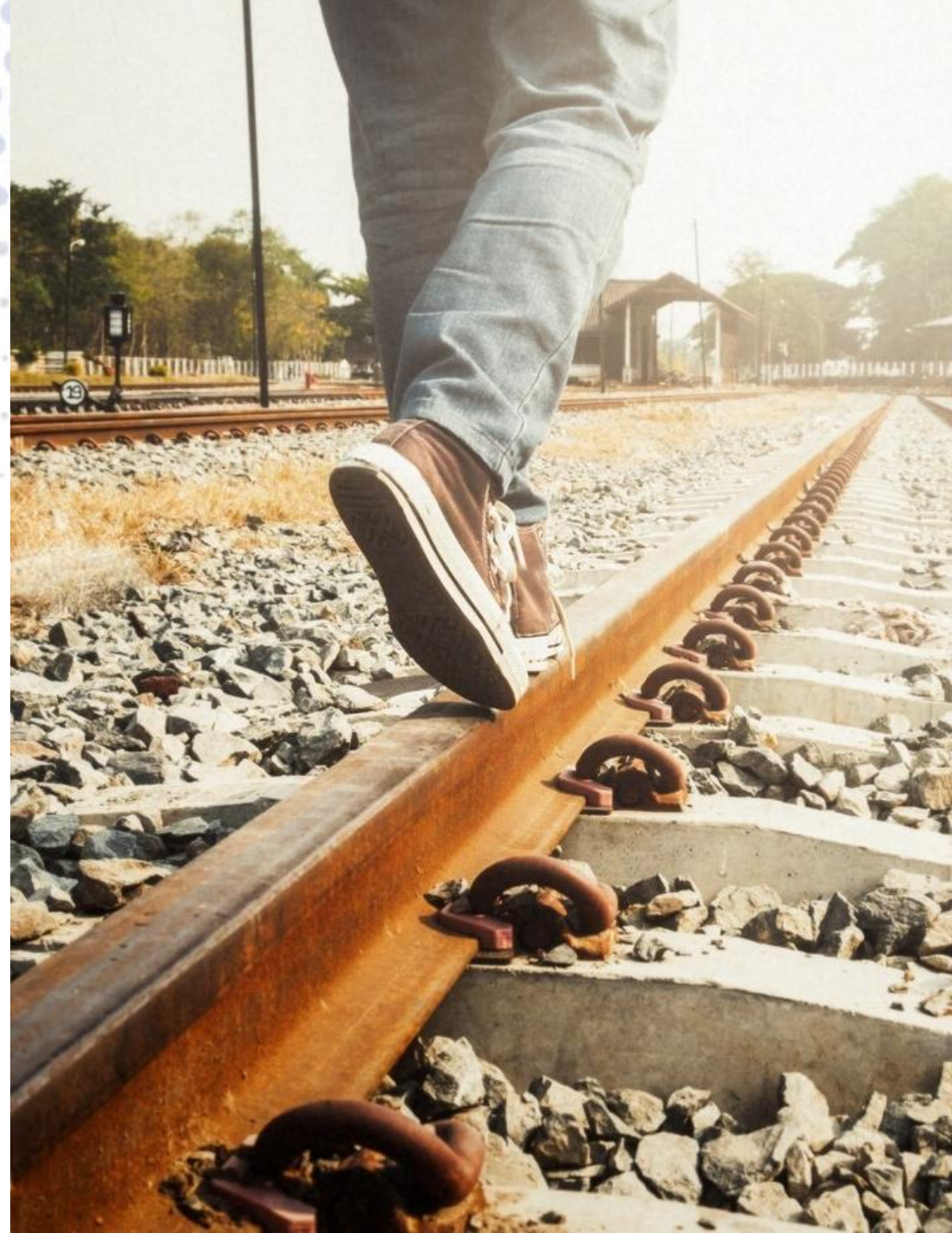
CFM
Materials Physics Center
Centro de Física de Materiales



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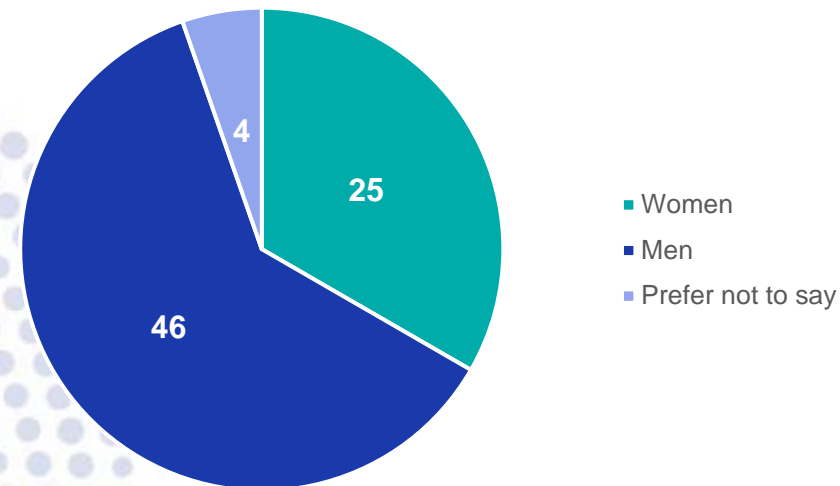
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Profile of the respondent

- 61% respondents men and 33 % women.
- Most respondents Spanish nationality (76% of women and 67 % of men respondents).
- Mostly MPC or CSIC staff.
- All respondents are full-time workers, mostly researchers, and temporary contracts (56 % women, 58, 70 % men)



Hiring institution

	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
Other	2	8,00%	7	15,22%
CSIC	4	16,00%	11	23,91%
Prefer not to say		0,00%		0,00%
MPC	16	64,00%	19	41,30%
UPV/EHU	3	12,00%	9	19,57%
Total	25	100,00%	46	100,00%

Type of contract

	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
Temporary	14	56,00%	27	58,70%
Permanent	11	44,00%	19	41,30%
TOTAL	25	100,00%	46	100,00%

Working area

	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
Admin./ Services	4	16,00%	3	6,52%
Staff Researcher (including technicians)	21	84,00%	43	93,48%
TOTAL	25	100,00%	46	100,00%

Caring responsibilities and care-networks

- **40% of female respondents and 26% of male respondents are responsible of the care of someone.**



Caring network

Most respondents (40% of women, 59% of men) stated that they **distribute household and caring work among family and household members in a balanced and co-responsible way.**

The **highest gap between female and male respondents** was stating “I live with my partner family members or friends, but **the responsibility of household and caring works are mainly mine**” 28% of women vs. 9% men.

There are also a significant amount of people who live on their own, and therefore it is all under their responsibility (24 % women, 15 % men and 75% prefer not to reveal gender)



Stress-management and working culture

We presented 8 statements to rate on a 1 to 5 scale linked to the impact of stress in personal life, and the working habits of the community.

There were some gender differences in their responses. These are the issues that are mostly affecting CFM's staff:

- **I often neglect my personal needs due to the stress of my work.** 44% women and 48% men agree with this statement.
- **I return home from work too tired to try to do things I wish to do.** 44% women and 48% men agree with this statement.
- **I have difficulties to disconnect from work even during personal/family-time (check e-mail...etc).** 56% women and 48% men have this problem.
- **I think about work-related issues constantly, it has an impact in my sleep/res.** 44% women disagree (40% agree) whiles 43% men agree.

Mainly affecting women:

- **I often need to make difficult choices between my work and my personal life.** Most women and men disagree with it (44%, 41%) but there are another **44% women who agree with it.**

Mainly affecting men:

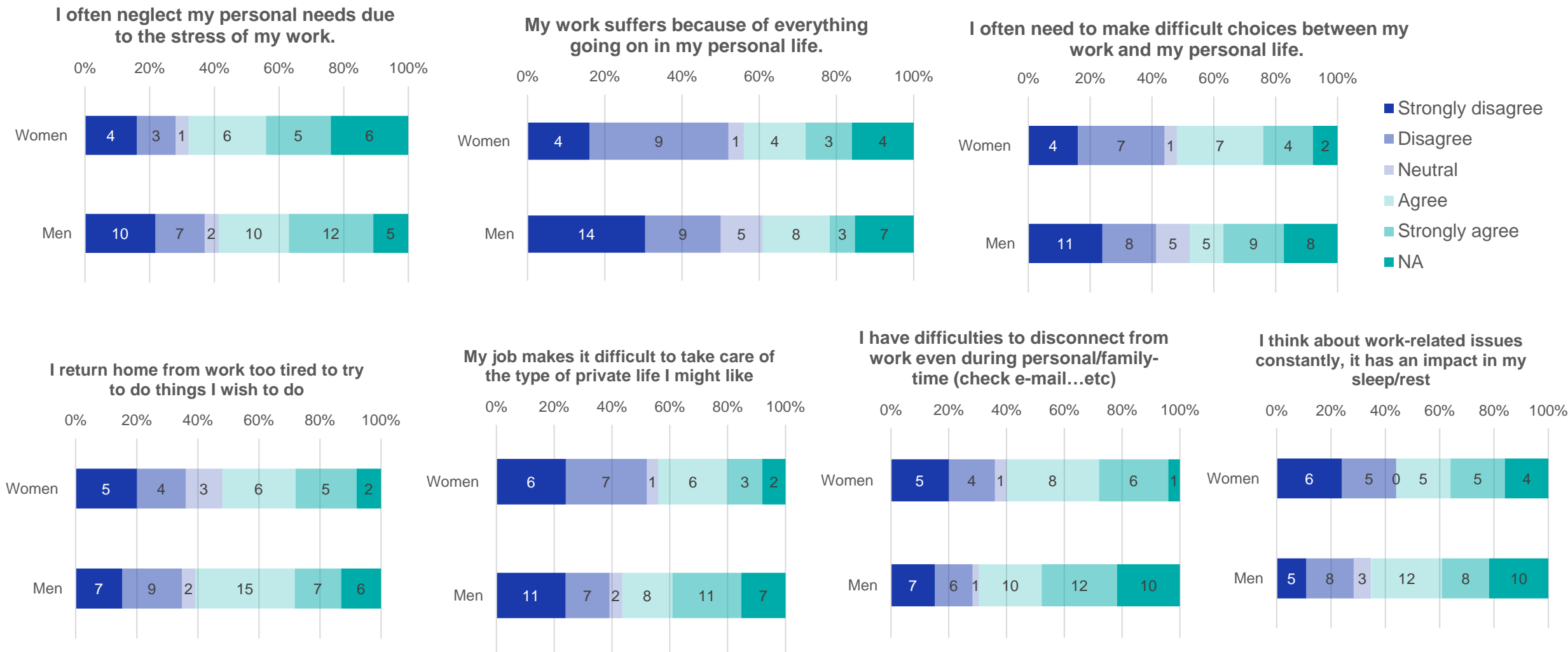
- **My job makes it difficult to take care of the type of private life I might like.** 52% women disagree whiles **48% men agree** with it.



Issues that are not affecting so many of the staff, but still need to be aware of:

- **My work suffers because of everything going on in my personal life.** Men and women mostly disagree (52%, 50%) but still affects 28% women and 24% men.
- **I have difficulties to concentrate on work due to my personal life issues.** 60% women and 39% men disagree with the statement, important to note that **43% men did not answer** this statement, and 16% women and 11% men agreed.

Working culture



Reconciliation of work, social life and caring responsibilities

- **48% women have difficulties to reconcile their current position with their caring responsibilities** while 74% men state to have no difficulties:
 - ✓ Most women with caring responsibilities (70%) say to have difficulties.
 - ✓ 82% men with caring responsibilities state to have no difficulties.
- **Most people** states to have no difficulties to reconcile their current position with social life (56% W and 61%M):
 - ✓ Most women with caring responsibilities (60%) say to have no difficulties.
 - ✓ 67% men with caring responsibilities state to have no difficulties.



Reconciliation of work, social life and caring responsibilities

- **57% men have missed a personal event in the last year because of work** while 52% women state they haven't:

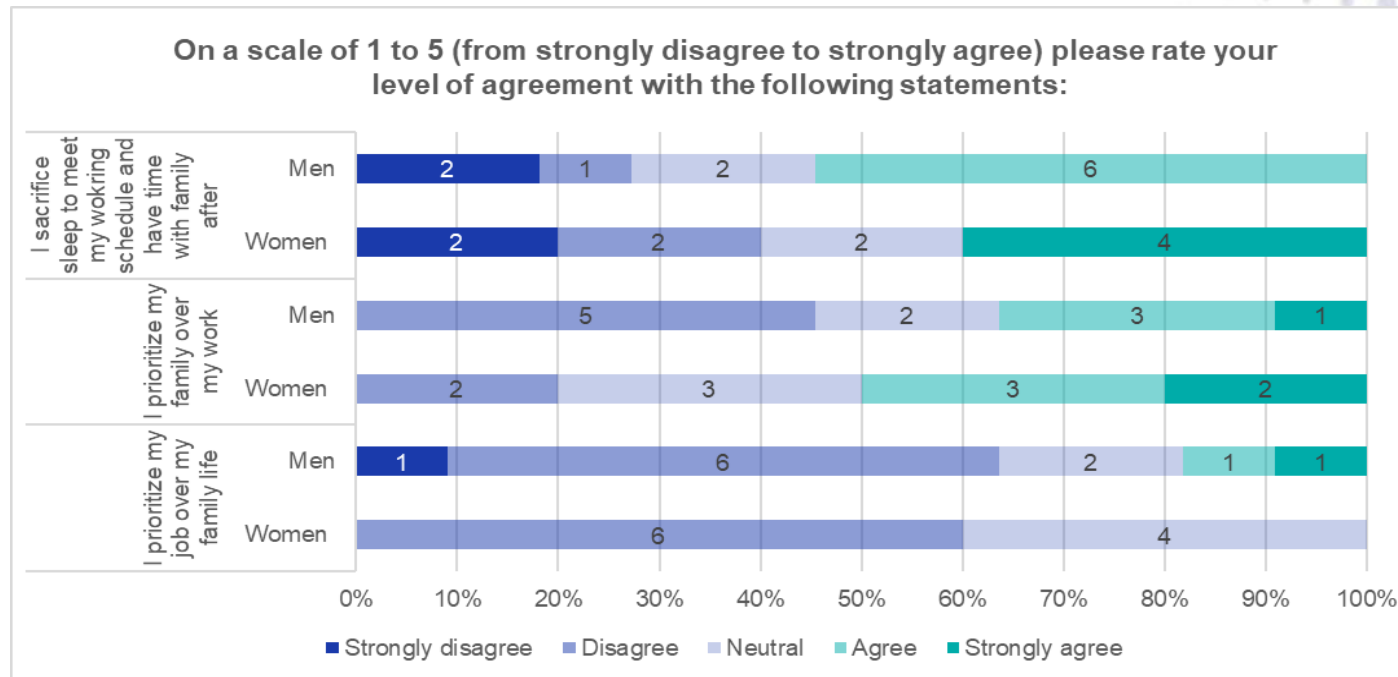
6- In the last year have you missed a personal event because of work?

	Women		Men		Prefer not to say		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	11	44%	26	57%	1	25%	38	51%
No	13	52%	19	41%	3	75%	35	47%
Prefer not to say	1	4%	1	2%		0%	2	3%
Total	25,00	1,00	46,00	1,00	4,00	1,00	75,00	1,00



Reconciliation of work, social life and caring responsibilities

- We asked about their work/family priorities to CFM staff with caring responsibilities
 - Most of women and men (60%, 55%) disagree with the statement ***I prioritize my job over my family life***; however, 18% men do agree with it.
 - ***I prioritize my family over my work***. 50% women (and 36% men) agree with this statement, 45% men (20% women) disagree with it.
 - ***I sacrifice sleep to meet my working schedule and have time with family after***. It is worrying to see that 40% women strongly agree with this statement and 55% men agree with it.



Working hours and itinerancy

Most repondets (84% women and 76% men) check e-mails after finishing their working hours or leaving the office.

- There are not major differences regarding caring responsibilities, and it seems to be a general issue, although more women tend to do it.

48% women and 41% men feel that itinerancy has an impact in their work-life balance.

- Caring responsibilities have an impact on this issue, the percentage grows to 60% women and 67% men when it comes to the people with caring responsibilities.
- Men mention things such as:
 - ✓ *You have to decicate the full time of a week to work, and none to your family and caring work, and the job you don't to during the congress must be done afterwards (weekends, vacation, etc...), with all the planning of family duties and stress that this involves (8)*
 - ✓ *Viajar supone alejarme de mi familia y la realidad es que no es algo que compense dicha ausencia. (4) Son dineros públicos (no necesariamente bajos) que son destinados a presentar un trabajo de entre 15-30 minutos. Me parece que la compensación es baja dado el esfuerzo físico, mental y de afectación al trabajo que requiere ir a una conferencia.*
 - ✓ *For example, if I need to travel to other cities for conferences and cannot go back in the same day, I don't have others who can look after the kids all the time. So I quit from most of the in-person conferences in the latest year.*
 - ✓ *Traveling helps me to rest from my family (1)*

10. Do you check emails after you finish your working hours/leave the office?								
	Women		Men		Prefer not to say		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	21	84%	35	76%	2	50%	58	77%
No	4	16%	11	24%	1	25%	16	21%
Prefer not to say		0%		0%	1	25%	1	1%
Total	25	100%	46	100%	4	100%	75	100%

11. Do you feel itinerancy (going to congresses, or any other work-related trips) has an impact on your work-life balance?								
	Women		Men		Prefer not to say		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	12	48%	19	41%	1	25%	32	43%
No	11	44%	25	54%	2	50%	38	51%
Prefer not to say	2	8%	2	4%	1	25%	5	7%
Total	25	100%	46	100%	4	100%	75	100%



Working hours and itinerancy

- Women mention things in the same sense, but more of them state that they do not travel due to caring responsibilities:

- ✓ *My children suffer when one of their parents are out for work. Moreover, the other parent left alone has to work at home in order to fulfill the working hours*
- ✓ *Experiencia vivida: después de mi ausencia de casa por trabajo, le generó a mi hij@ un miedo a la separación que tardó meses en superar*
- ✓ *Si estoy en un congreso o en un viaje relacionado con el trabajo es imposible dedicarme a los cuidados de las personas a mi cargo.*
- ✓ *Someone needs to take care of my children when we are not here*
- ✓ *Un poco al revés, el tener gente a mi cargo imposibilita que pueda asistir a eventos o que lo haga durante toda la duración del mismo*
- ✓ *Viajar implica mucha organización de horarios de extraescolares, recogida del colegio etc.*
- ✓ *En mi opinión hoy en día a los investigadores se les exige mucho, además de su labor propia de investigador. Tener resultados, publicar artículos, asistir a charlas, a conferencias, hacer trabajos para dar más visibilidad a la investigación. Demasiadas tareas diferentes para una misma persona que a veces no permite centrarte completamente en ninguna.*
Siento la necesidad de técnicos o personas que den más apoyo en el laboratorio y en eventos de outreach, que ciertamente se organizan muchas cosas y a la vez influye en nuestra principal labor, que es la investigación.)

	7- How satisfied are you with your current working hours?	8- How often in a week do you work beyond your normal work hours (overtime, work on weekends, etc...)?	9- How often do you work on vacation?
Women	4,04	3,04	2,48
Men	3,91	3,76	2,83
Prefer not to say	2,75	3,25	2,50
TOTAL	3,89	3,49	2,69

- Women and men seem to be satisfied with their working hours.
- Men seem to work beyond their normal working hours a bit more often than women, although it does not happen often.
- It is rare for people to work on vacation.

Work/life balance satisfaction and the use of work-life balance measures

- In general, it seems that both men and women are satisfied with their work/life balance, and caring responsibilities have a positive impact in their responses

	1	2	3	4	5
Women	8,00	24,00	32,00	28,00	8,00
Men	6,52	30,43	15,22	32,61	15,22
Prefer not to say	25,00	0,00	75,00	0,00	0,00

- In general, people does not seem to miss work-life balance measures in CFM (48% W, 67% M)
- Most of them have neither used (at least conciously) those type of measures (64% W and 85% M responded no to the question)

14.- Have you ever used any of those measures?

Women	Men
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexibility to come and go (2) Work time reduction (2) Telework Parking option Flexibility to arrange medical appointments etc Free-choice of vacational periods Not payed maternal leave for some months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexibility of the working hours helps a lot to improve the work/life balance Telework

13.- Do you miss work-life balance measures at CFM?

Women	Men
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arranging e-mails to be sent during working hours. More restrictions in working hours "tener algún servicio de guardería.algún protocolo, regla, derechos, que nos permita saber cuáles son nuestros derechos en caso de necesitar conciliar. Working hours Schedule, defining flexibility: 4 day working week, compulsory presentality times, buying vacation days, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No knowledge of the actual measures (2) I personally would've liked if CFM would encourage some social events , spaces to get to know other PhD/post.docs Normalize that people do not work outside their working hours, on weekends or on holydays. (2) Se podrían sugerir algunas cuestiones como por ejemplo no mirar el correo fuera del horario laboral. A veces, los deadlines son muy ajustados y requieren trabajar los fines de semana. En este sentido, echo en falta una mejor planificación. The highly competitive schemes to get a position in the scientific career decimate the people that can stay in science and work the standard number of hours.

Work/life balance satisfaction and the use of work-life balance measures

15.- Do you know any interesting initiatives/experiences linked to work life balance, from your stays abroad or in other institutions?

Women	Men
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• En mi opinión de trabaja demasiado dependiendo del PI de tyu grupo. Debería haber medidas un poco más claras en general para el MPC. Posibilidad de teletrabajo, decisión en las vacaciones etc.• La falta de un parking, para poder aparcar el coche sin tener que pagar para ir a tu trabajo.• Flexible worktime, remote working, nursery at or close to workplace, long maternity leave (up to 3 years) also shared with partner...• I don't know about an official work-life balance measures at CFM. Are There?• Si, guarderías en los centros y babysisters que contrataban los centros en caso de necesidad, sobre todo cuando los niños estaban enfermos. De esta manera, permite a los padres estar cerca de sus hijos en todo momento, y facilita la conciliación• Ayuda económica para asistencia a congresos con menores a cargo"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children care for certain events, e.g., local congresses or similar events organized from the university.• El teletrabajo• El tema de la desconexión es fundamental.• Horarios fijos de trabajo para todo el mundo...a partir de una hora no queda nadie en el centro.• Possibility to work remotely as far as we are productive and succesfful at work.

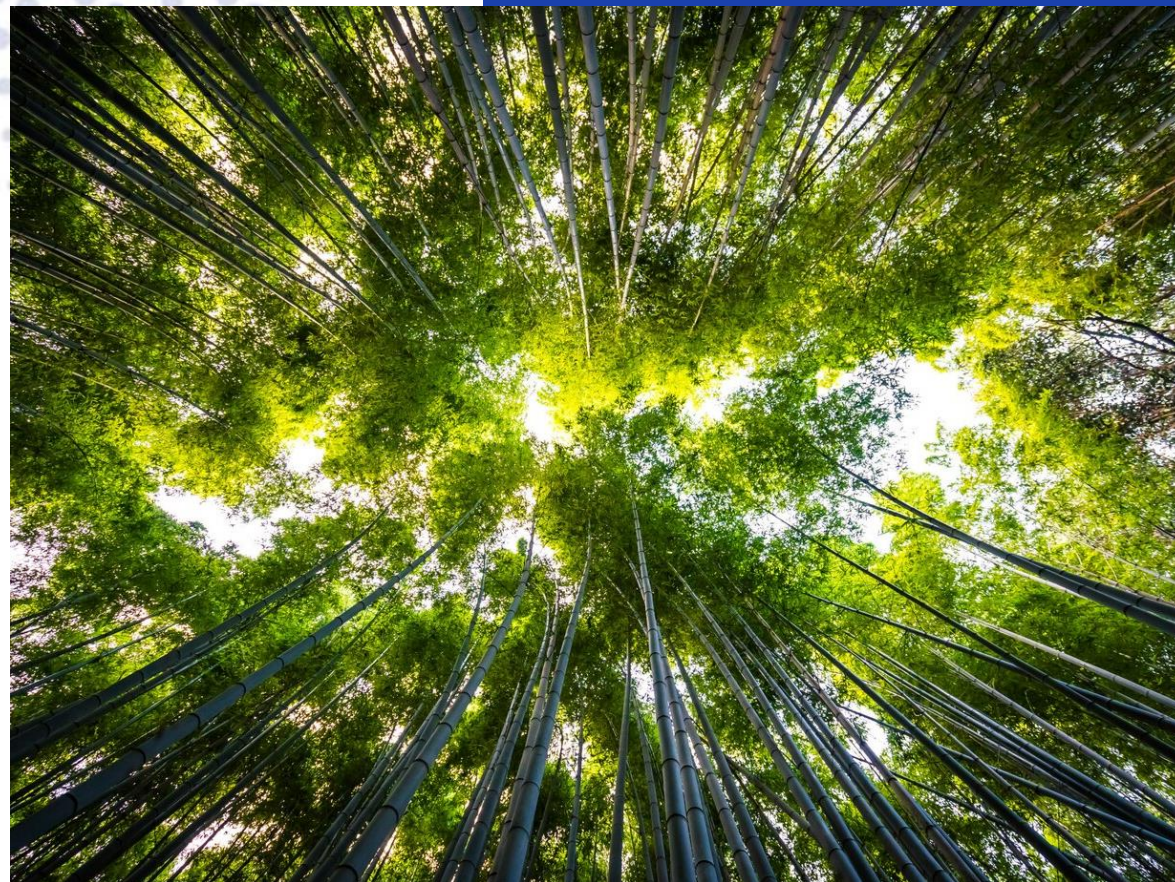
Personal life

- **Most women (52%) spent time with their family, friends, on their own yesterday, while most men (52%) last week.**

✓ If we look at people with caring responsibilities percentages vary, 80% women spent time yesterday, and 33% men last week or yesterday.

18.- When was the last time you took care of yourself or doing something that you like, without having to worry about taking care of others or work?

	Women		Men		Prefer not to say	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yesterday	8	32%	13	28%	1	25%
Last week	6	24%	20	43%	1	25%
A month ago	3	12%	3	7%		0%
More than a month ago	6	24%	8	17%	1	25%
One year ago		0%	1	2%		0%
Other?	1	4%		0%	1	25%



Vacation

- **44% women and 30% men took a long vacation in the last 3 months; 32% women and 37% men in the last 6 months.**
 - ✓ People with caring responsibilities had higher percentages.



Would you add something?

Agradecería que desde el CFM se incentivaran políticas de desconexión y de conciliación.

Creo que hay que buscar una forma de establecer un "código" de comportamiento entre la gente que trabaja en el CFM. Hay grupos enteros que solo se llevan bien por estar en un grupo, pero entre ellos he sabido de roces graves. En trabajos de alta concentración, manipulación de materiales tóxicos y/o delicados, las relaciones interpersonales no deberían ser un problema. Lo que quiero decir es que no podemos estar de los nervios nuestros colegas de trabajo, porque diariamente pasamos más tiempo con ellos que con nuestras propias familias.

Creo que sería útil implementar la atención psicológica como una medida de prevención y no solo de actuación.

El problema no son las medidas particulares de conciliación, que son muy deseables y hay que aplaudirlas. Éstas pueden existir y ser maravillosas y suficientes sobre el papel. El problema es la presión y expectativas del trabajo en su conjunto, no en este centro en particular. Si uno termina percibiendo que el hecho de usarlas te puede volver menos competitivo y te puede dejar fuera de poder estabilizarte a medio/largo plazo, terminan no usándose o usándose menos de lo que se debiera. La presión psicológica de tener que ir saltando de trabajo en trabajo a lo largo de la geografía española en el mejor de los casos, con la consiguiente decisión dura de llevarte la familia a cuestras (pareja, prole, etc.) o mantenerlos lejos de ti, es lo que angustia. En esa angustia es donde uno termina tomando la decisión "voluntaria" de echar más horas, mirar emails fuera de horas, negligir (auto)cuidados, etc. más allá de lo sanamente deseable con la esperanza de que esto marque la diferencia en un mar de competidores aspirantes a los mismos puestos. Y esto por no mencionar problemas tipo síndrome del impostor, depresión, etc. . Esto es un denominador muy común en la investigación. Lo he visto tanto aquí como en otros centros en el extranjero, sobre todo en el personal no fijo y estudiantes. Hasta qué punto pueden paliar esto instituciones aisladas con medidas aisladas, no lo sé. Quizás ofrecer atención psicológica, o detección de los casos peores para recomendar dicha asistencia, o visibilizar el problema con presentaciones que hablen de nuestras expectativas, estado de la profesión, herramientas a nuestro alcance, etc..

Employment schemas for scientists has to change a lot to create real work-life balanced possibilities.

I appreciate the flexibility of my work time and I hope it will stay so. The way to conciliate family and work is to organize our time to meet both needs depending on the daily work load and the needs of our families.

I highly appreciate support from the MPC and ask to understand and promote remote work as a possible solution if needed.

La conciliación es un tema muy interesante, pero también puede llegar a generar situaciones muy desfavorecidas entre compañeros.

Me parece muy bien este tipo de trabajo por parte del CFM. Ójala que haya más!

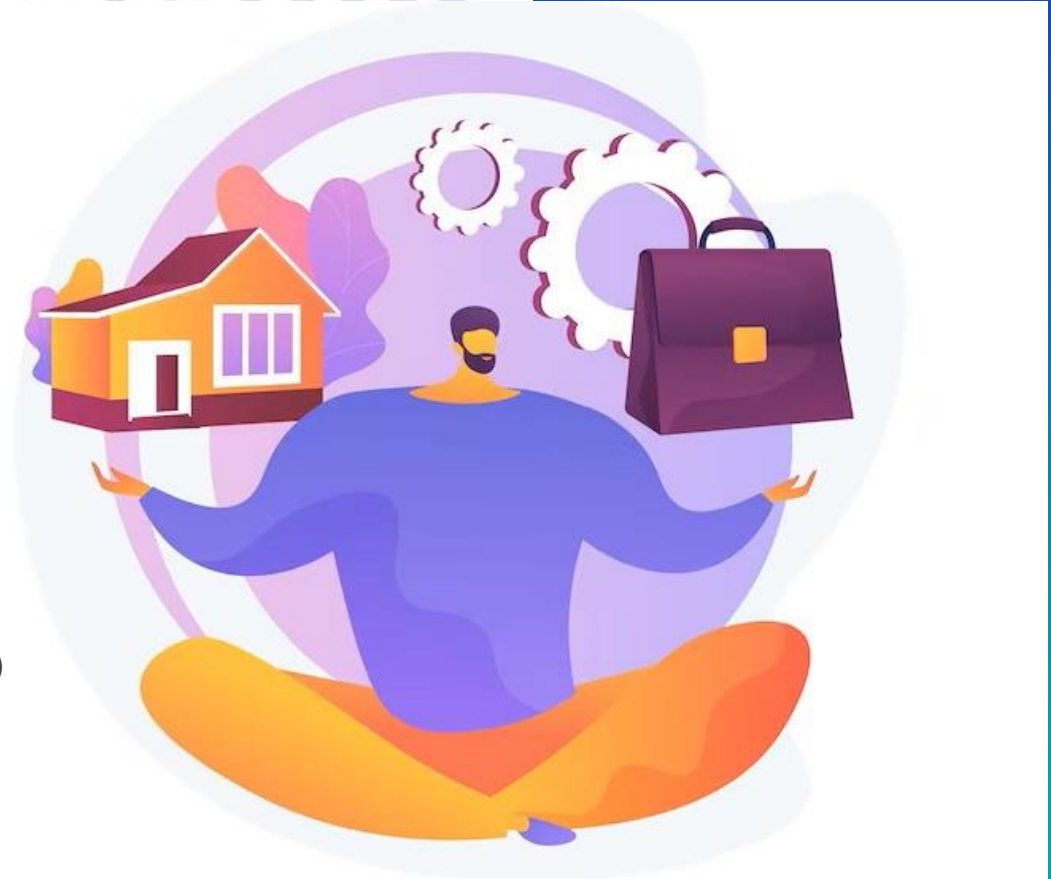
Para mí hay un fallo sistémico en cómo se hace investigación a día de hoy: la carga laboral es enorme a todos los niveles, de estudiantes a PIs. La solución no me parece trivial, y no sé hasta qué nivel una institución como el CFM puede resolver este problema. Aun así, me parece muy bien que se hagan estas encuestas. El primer paso para solucionar un problema es darse cuenta de que hay un problema.

Please, do something. Consider to change the system from the top, not from bottom... Workers are suffering from the system, not responsible...

Yo personalmente no tengo claras cuáles son las medidas de conciliación específicas del CFM. No sé dónde o con quién se pueden consultar. No sé si son extensivas a todas las personas que trabajan en el CFM o si varían dependiendo de quién sea la entidad que te contrata (MPC, CSIC, EHU, DIPC, etc) o incluso el tipo de contrato. Agradecería que la información relativa a este tema estuviese disponible para consultar de forma anónima (ya sea porque se reciba en un mail general o porque se pueda consultar en la intranet) y que se especifique a quién van dirigidas y si hay que cumplir ciertas condiciones.

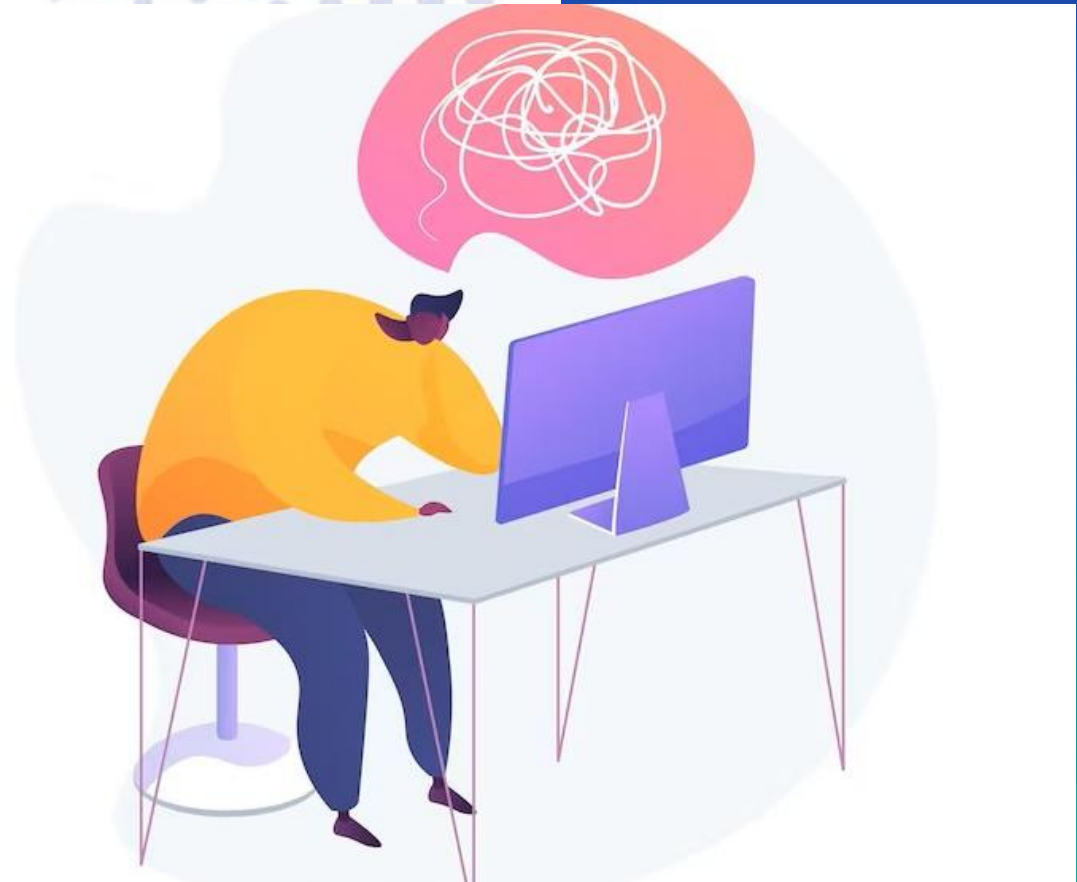
Main conclusions

- ✓ Most respondents (40% of women, 59% of men) stated that they distribute household and caring work among family and household members in a balanced and co-responsible way.
- ✓ A significant number of men stated that their job **makes it difficult to take care of the type of private life the might like; and most women and** men have difficulties to disconnect from work even during personal/family-time (check e-mail...etc).
- ✓ Mainly women have difficulties to reconcile their current position with their caring responsibilities.
- ✓ Men and women agree on the fact that itinerancy has an impact in their work-life balance, to the point (specially women) tend to avoid travelling, going to conferences... due to the hazard it implies, the lack of support.
- ✓ In general, it seems that both men and women are satisfied with their work/life balance, and caring responsibilities have a positive impact in their responses.
- ✓ Women seem to spend more time with their friends and relatives, a bit more often than men.



ANNEX

- [CSIC work-life balance measure document](#)
- [UPV/EHU work-life balance measure document](#)



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