

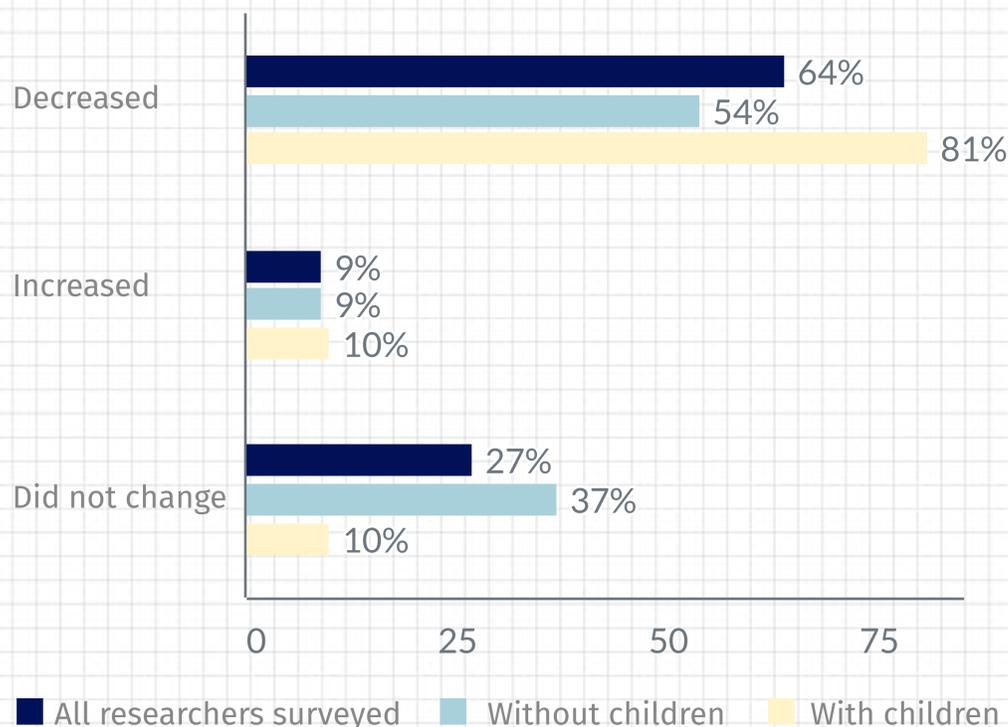
Impact of COVID-19

Survey Outcomes for Early Career Researchers*

Faculty of Science

Productive working hours

My productive working hours...



Average decrease among respondents who reported a decrease

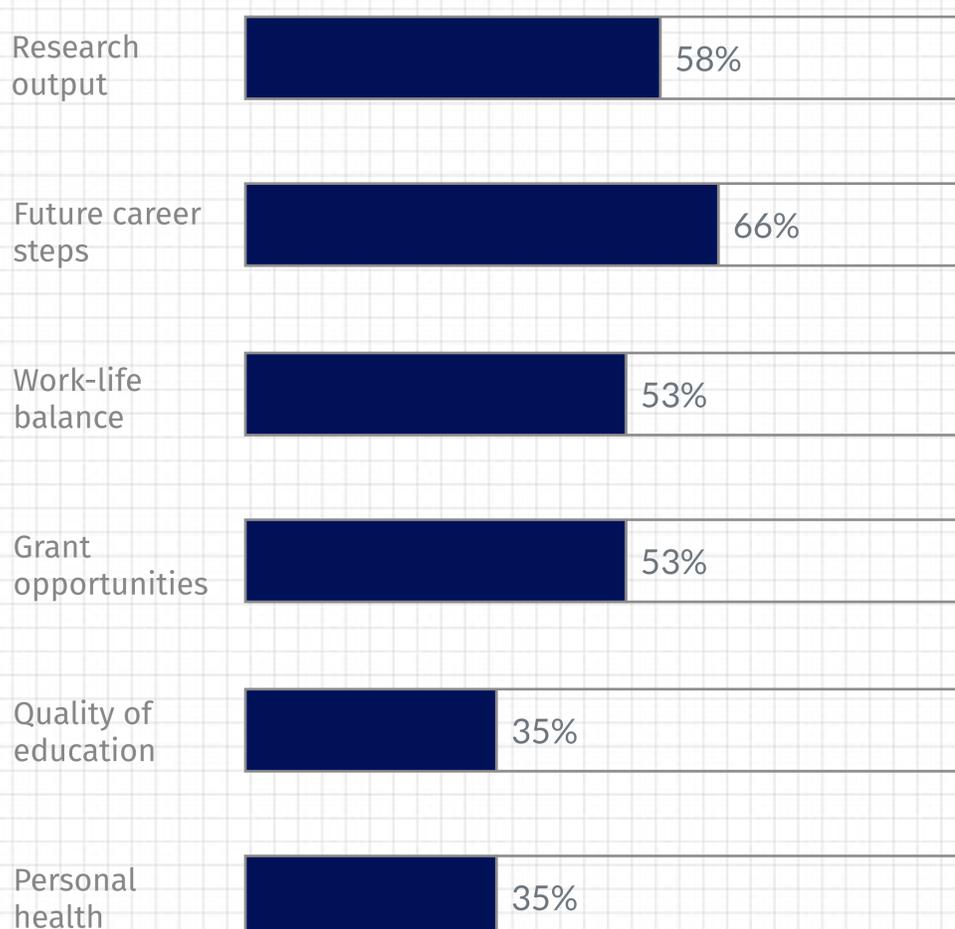
♥ 36%

Childcare, the inability to perform experiments, difficulties with focusing and a lack of a suitable home office are the main reported factors in the reduction in productive hours for early career researchers at the Faculty of Science.

- “No school, no daycare, and homeschooling the children.”
- “Lack of access to experiments.”
- “Lack of an office space increases the number of distractions which reduces productivity.”
- “Constant trouble trying to focus.”
- “I feel like none of my co-workers with older kids or without kids really get how hard this is.”

Current concerns

% of respondents that are highly concerned



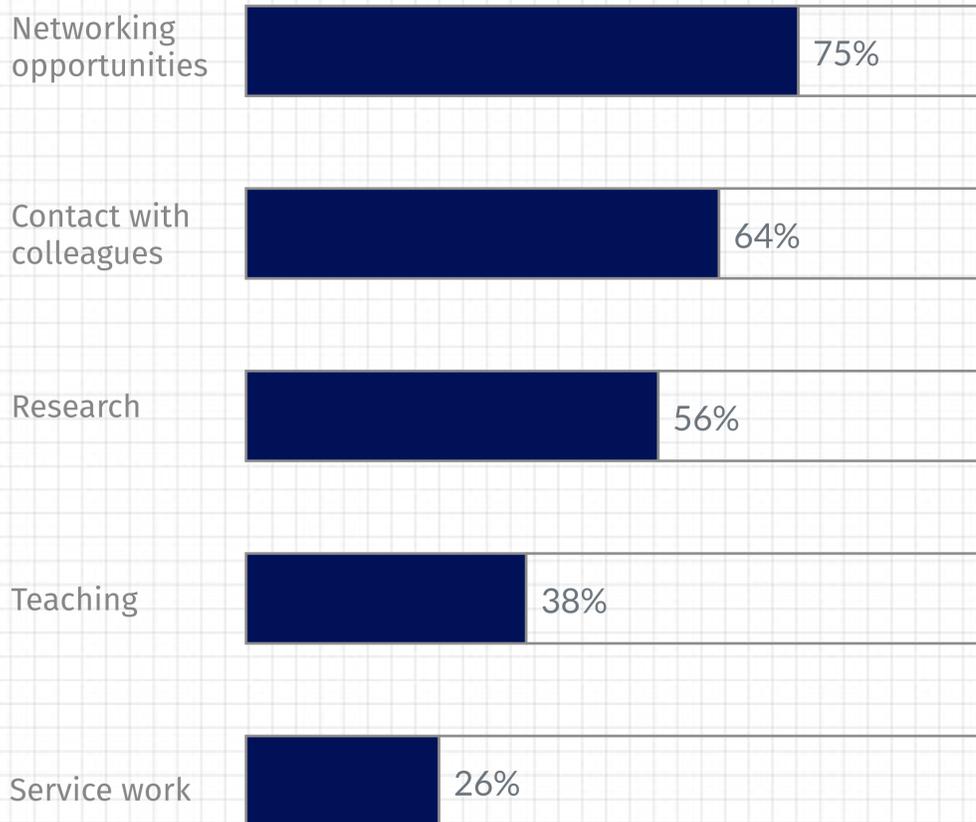
Less time for research, or the impossibility to perform any, leads many to expect a decrease in research output and fear its consequences. There are concerns about meeting grant deadlines, obtaining preliminary data, and a disproportional impact on the possibility for women to obtain grants. There is a strong wish for clarity on how this period of reduced productivity will be taken into account, and those whose contracts are about to end are highly worried that this may be the end of their careers. Many struggle with separating work and free time and report feelings of guilt when they take time for themselves. Stress levels are high and opportunities to relax are few. Teachers would like more support on didactics.

- “My contract is running out, positions are scarce and application procedures are halted.”
- “Though number or productive hours have decreased, it seems like I am working for more than 14 hours a day.”
- “The work-life balance issues have taken a huge toll on my personal health, which is suffering. The stress has been so severe that I’m now considering leaving the field.”
- “My tenure application will be impacted, and yet it is statistically likely that it will be judged by older male colleagues who do not fully appreciate this impact.”
- “I would be really worried about this [grants], if I had time to worry.”

*All results and quotes in this infographic are from researchers working at the Faculty of Science

Impact on areas of work

% of respondents that reported a 'high impact'

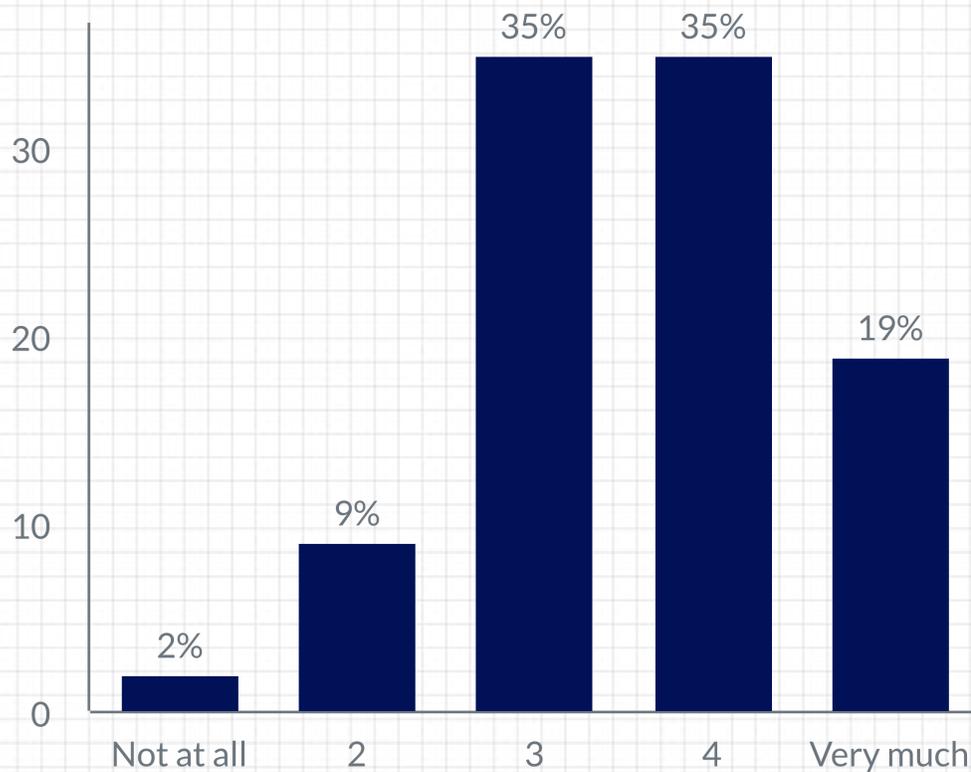


Significant time investments into online teaching and lack of access to crucial facilities like labs have greatly impacted research. Networking opportunities have dried up with the cancellation of scientific meetings. Some do appreciate online alternatives but many state that it's harder to network online. Contact with colleagues is no longer spontaneous and in many cases infrequent; lag in connection makes online meetings awkward. Non work-related discussions are sorely missed. Those who can (emotionally) support their colleagues and students do so without complaint, but do note it takes a lot of time.

“Supervising students now is also about monitoring their wellbeing (more than normal).”
 “I have taken on a larger role in maintaining the social network of the institute.”
 “At this point, I’m clinically burnt out.”
 “There is literally no time for it [research]. Full stop. All of my work time has gone into teaching.”
 “I don’t know how to network via Skype.”
 “All conferences are canceled, very limited opportunities to look for future positions elsewhere.”

University's support

Do you feel supported by Leiden University?



What can Leiden University do to support you better?

- Extending temporary contracts;
- Providing clarity on how this period of reduced output will be accounted for in evaluations for contract renewals and tenure decisions;
- Come up with an action plan to reduce inequalities that may now increase, especially between those with and without childcare duties.

“There’s too little general support for most researchers when it comes to didactics for online courses.”
 “The focus is on current education, where transfer to Brightspace will become a huge problem coming summer, without proper support of educational developers.”
 “Recognition that this crisis will have a huge impact on some and no impact on others.”
 “Maybe introduce some psychological support to isolated people, especially expats as they are far from their families.”
 “Compensation for lost productivity and networking opportunities in one form or another.”

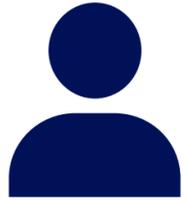
Positive experiences

“I think parts of the online experience should stay. Especially regarding symposia and conferences online.”

“I am able to spend more time with my daughter than ever before and ever will.”
 “I am very grateful for the care and communication of all kinds of parties within Leiden University, thank you!”

Demographics

Number of respondents

 59

Gender

 42%

Children at home

 37%

Assistant professor or Postdoc

 97%

Temporary contract

 73%



YAL