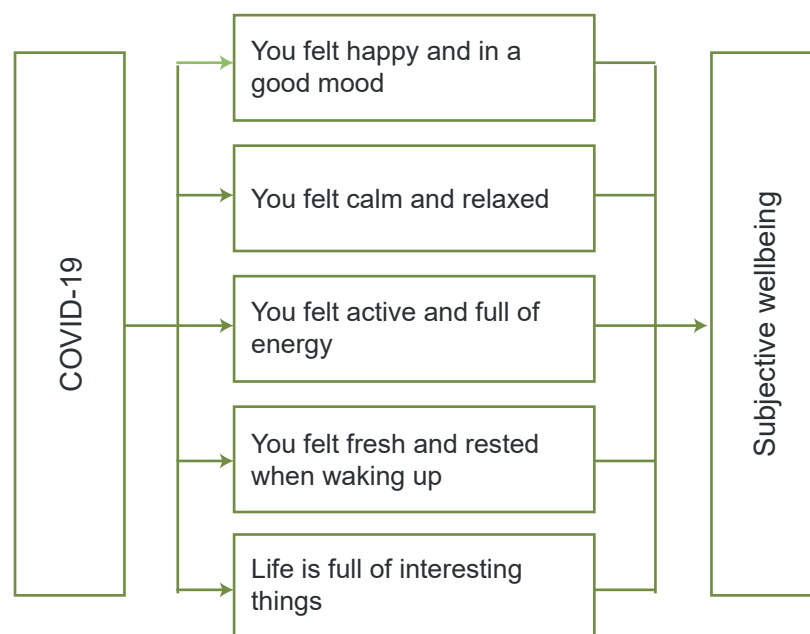


Wellbeing during pandemic in Romania

Shocks come in many forms, intensities, durations, and expansions. However, from the 2008 -09 economic crisis that affected the whole globe, no other shock was this wide-spread, unfolded this fast, and affected that many people as the health emergency that started in 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic was (and still is in 2021) one of the greatest medical challenges the world has faced. The severity of the disease coupled with its contagious nature has led to urgent measures. Unprecedented measures under the form of generalized lockdowns have led to an abrupt and significant shift in the way people conducted their lives. All individuals were forced to reduce their social contact to a minimum in order to contain and reduce the impact of the disease. All these actions have taken a significant toll on the individuals affecting especially their wellbeing. This case study looks at the effects the first wave of lockdowns had on the subjective wellbeing of individuals in Romania.

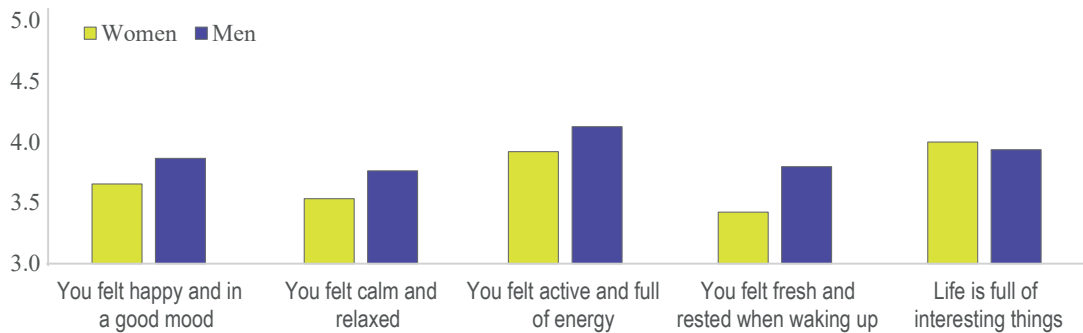
The current case study is based on the data that was collected in November 2020 at individual level. The current sample has 1201 respondents and is representative for Romania’s population. Among the 1201 participants 51.7% were women and 52.9% of participants were professionally active (either self-employed or employed). The participants’ age ranged from 18 to 84 with an average of 48.36 years (SD = 16.22 years). The presented analysis is based on the items and the aggregated score of the Well-being index (WHO-5) (World Health Organization, 1998).

Conceptualization of subjective wellbeing



Gender differences

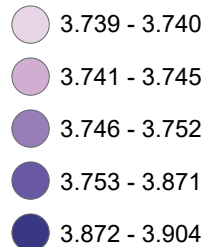
Generally, women have lower scores on all items, but the striking difference was found for the item measuring the quality of sleep, where women reported much lower scores indicating that they felt less well rested when waking up, compared to men. These findings are not surprising, as even before COVID-19, women were reported as having lower sleep quality and being prone to insomnia, a trend that has not changed during the pandemic (Cellini et al., 2021).



Regional differences

Women in the Centre Region of Romania have reported considerably lower levels of feeling happy and in a good mood, of feeling active and full of energy and of having a life filled with interesting things. This might be due to the fact that when data was collected, this region was among the most affected by COVID-19 cases in Romania and the levels of stress and anxiety were captured. By comparison, the highest scores were found among men and women from the South-East region, where, at the time, the number of COVID-19 cases was lower.

Happiness index (men and women)



Happiness index (men vs women)

