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The European Commission's annual review of Employment and Social Developments in Europe outlines some of the key effects of the pandemic on jobs, employment conditions and social dialogue. It identified uneven regional impacts with the more resilient regions sharing characteristics such as high regional productivity, high level of skilled population levels, big investment in research and development, quality local public institutions and solid digital infrastructure. The impact on national social dialogue and collective bargaining varied with countries with strong social dialogue institutions favouring the early involvement of social partners in setting up measures such as short-time work schemes. In some EU countries, health concerns limited traditional collective bargaining procedures, while in others the involvement of social partners increased in the light of urgent public interventions. The review found that the pandemic highlighted long-standing gender inequalities with women experiencing a steeper fall in working hours than men in the second quarter of 2020 and continuing to take on the largest share of caring responsibilities and faced challenges in balancing work and private life.

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