

SAFE-SORRY:

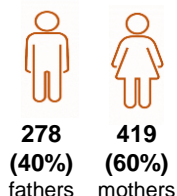
Preliminary results on the Italian sample

Between January and June 2023, 15 schools located in two Italian regions (i.e., Emilia-Romagna and Sicily) took part in the SAFE-SORRY project. The project was implemented thanks to the collaboration of the Universities of Ferrara, Catanzaro and Messina. A total of **697** Italian parents (**417** from Emilia-Romagna and **280** from Sicily) filled out a questionnaire composed of several scales assessing parents' involvement in their children's academic life, parents' perceived pressures and worries related to different aspects and challenges of society, among other things.

Parents could express their agreement to the items of the questionnaire on a Likert scale ranging from 1 = *Completely disagree* to 5 = *Completely agree*.

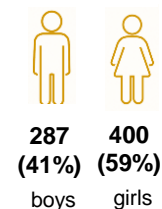
The sample

Parents



Mean age 51,16 years

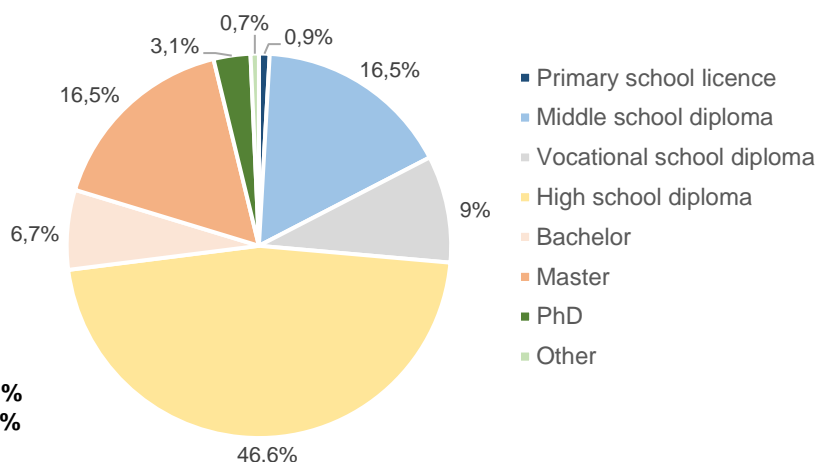
Adolescents



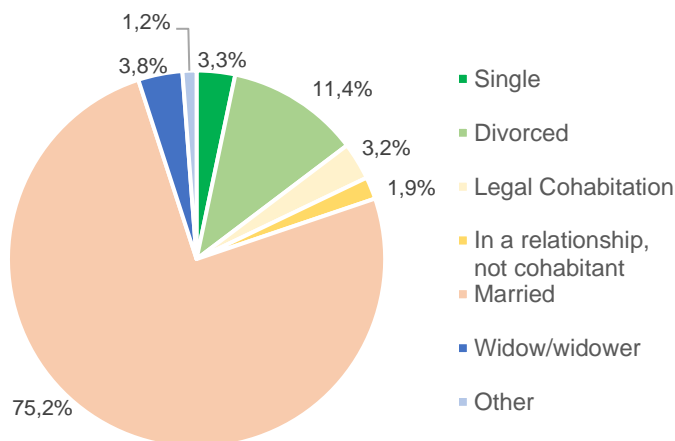
Mean age 18,16 years

Educational level of parents

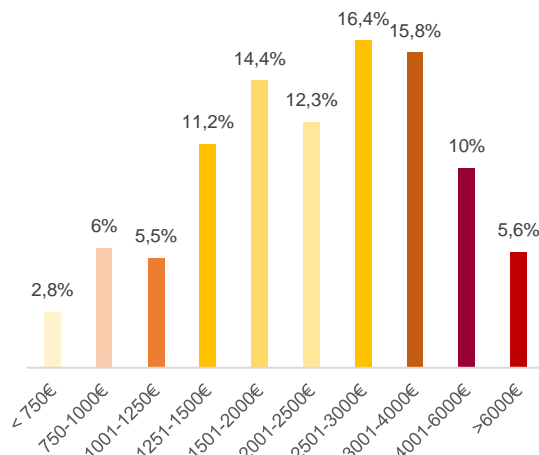
Employed **82%**
Homemaker **10%**
Unemployed **5%**
Retired **2%**
Student **1%**



Civil status of parents

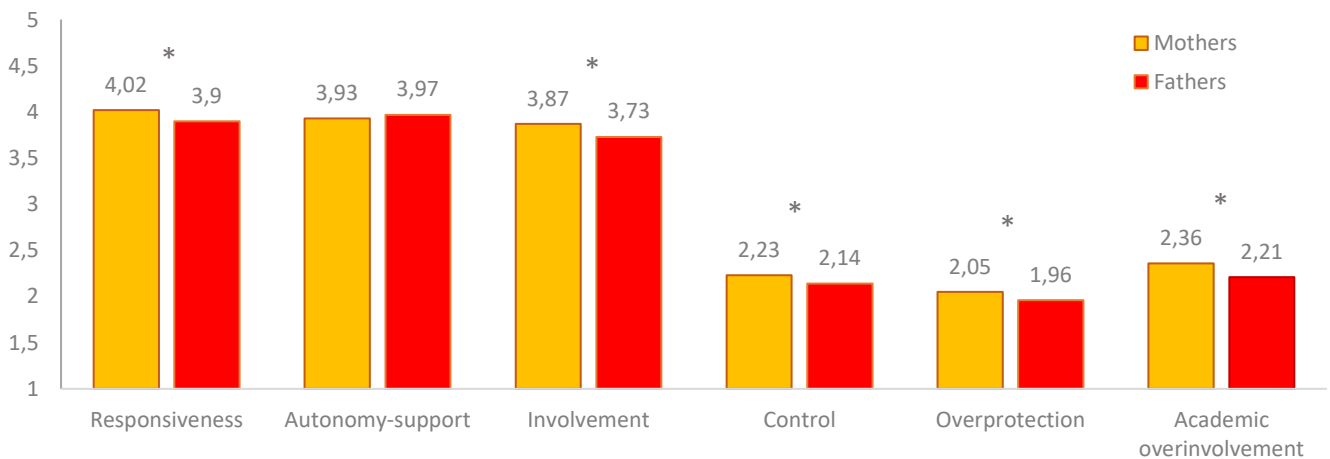


Monthly household income reported by parents



How do parents deal with their children's school life?

Participants replied to several questions about their parenting style and their involvement in their children's lives. As shown in the graph below, both mothers and fathers generally reported **high levels of responsiveness, autonomy-support, and involvement**. These three aspects refer to a pattern of behaviours aimed at responding appropriately to their children's needs, supporting children's autonomy at school, and showing interest in their school life. In addition, mothers reported higher levels of responsiveness and involvement than fathers. Participants also reported generally **low levels of controlling parenting, academic overinvolvement, and overprotection**. The first two dimensions indicate parental behaviours characterised by constant control, excessive monitoring and extreme concerns about children's school life. Overprotection refers to behaviours aimed at solving problems of their children instead of allowing them to face problems by themselves and protecting children from any possible difficulties. Again, mothers engaged more often in these behaviours than fathers.



Example questions

Responsiveness: «I make my child feel better after he/she talks over his/her worries with me»

Autonomy-support «I allow my child to decide things about his/her studying for himself/herself»

Involvement «I find the time to talk with my child»

Example questions

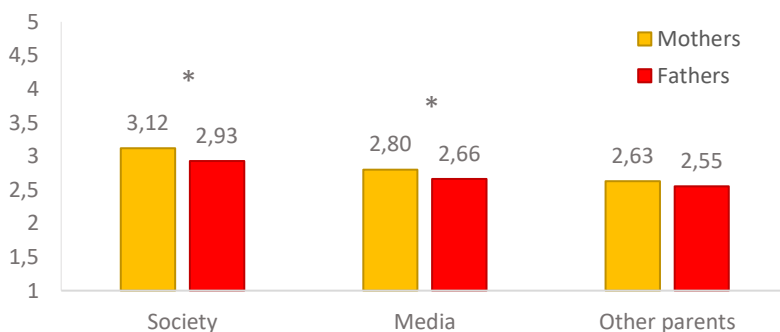
Control: «If my child is not studying as much as I think he/she should, I tell him/her of all the sacrifices I have made for him/her»

Overprotection: «I often take tasks out of my child's hands without giving him/her the chance to try him/herself first»

Academic Overinvolvement: «I am overly concerned about my child's academic performance»

Are parents under pressure?

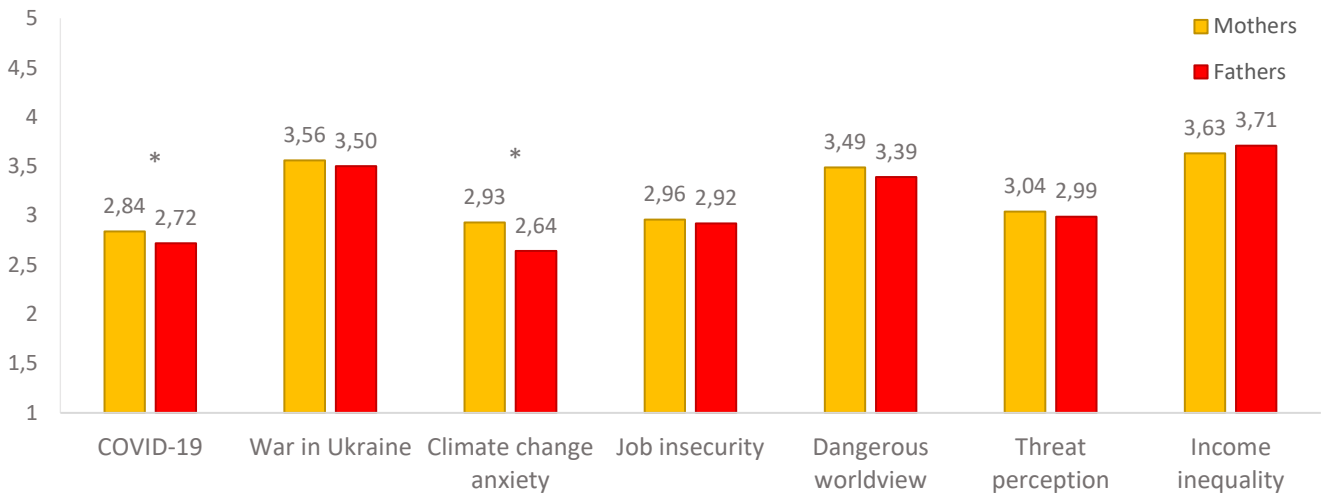
Some parents may feel that they have to meet high standards when it comes to their parenting skills, and that they are expected to be perfect as parents. If parents perceive they do not meet these standards, they may experience feelings of uncertainty, doubt and anxiety. In this regard, participants replied to questions such as "Society expects me to be a perfect parent", which represents the **pressure to be a perfect parent** derived from society. In the study, the pressure derived by the media and other parents was measured as well using similar questions.



As shown in the graph, parents especially experience **pressure to be perfect parents from society**, as compared to the pressure coming from media and other parents. Furthermore, **mothers perceived more social pressure** from society and media than fathers.

Are parents worried for their children's future?

The tendency to become too involved in children's lives and to overly control children may increase when parents perceive their children to face danger and difficult challenges. These challenges may come from several aspects of society or from disruptive societal events that may have an indirect impact on the children's future. In this regard, the study measured **participants' concerns about possible consequences of relevant social phenomena** (i.e., the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and climate change) and their **perceptions of several aspects of society** (e.g., perceived job insecurity; society perceived as dangerous) that may impact the children's future development and stability.



Example questions:

Covid-19 pandemic: «I am worried that the pandemic poses a societal danger.»

War In Ukraine: «I am worried that the war in Ukraine may lead to economic problems.»

Climate change anxiety: «When I think about climate change, I feel anxious.»

Job insecurity: «In Italy, there is a general feeling that many people will soon lose their jobs.»

Dangerous worldview: «There are many dangerous people in our society who will attack someone out of pure meanness, for no reason at all.»

Threat perception: «It makes me nervous to think about all the dangers kids are exposed to these days.»

Income inequality: «In Italy the gap between rich and poor people is big.»

According to our results, mothers and fathers reported to be **worried about** possible social, economic, and political consequences of the **war in Ukraine**, whereas mothers reported more concerns about the consequences **of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change** than fathers. As for worries related to Italian society, parents generally perceived **Italian society to be unequal** (i.e., income inequality), and they also expressed some **worries related to the labor market** (i.e., job insecurity). In addition, most of the mothers and fathers indicated considering **society more dangerous than before**, and **children more at risk of facing challenges than before**.

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More questions on the project?

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or go to www.safesorry.be

