

Parental Rights Survey 2019

(Formerly the Maternity and Paternity Rights Survey series)

Survey Report

Acknowledgements

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1 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

This report brings together the key findings from the 2019 Parental Rights Survey (formerly the Maternity and Paternity Rights Survey series), which was commissioned by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Government Equalities Office (GEO), with input from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Department for Education (DfE). It was carried out by BMG Research with expert advisers from the Institute for Employment Studies.

The principal objective of the 2019 Parental Rights Survey was to interview a 'core' representative sample of c. 2,000 mothers and c. 1,000 fathers (or second parents) of children born between May and September 2017 (so aged approximately 18-24 months).

In addition to the 'core sample' of mothers and fathers, to support the evaluation of the Shared Parental Leave and Pay (SPL&P) policy, the survey also included an additional boost sample of parents who had taken SPL.

The findings from this survey are therefore based on the following achieved interviews: 1,959 'core mothers', 1,062 'core fathers' and 336 parents from both the core and boost sample that took SPL (referred to in the report as 'SPL parents'). It should be noted that all fieldwork took place before the start of the pandemic, and therefore before hybrid-working had become common practice.

More details on the survey aims, background and methodology are contained within the introduction to this report, as well as in a separate technical report.

1.2 Chapter summaries

Following the introduction to the survey, a series of individual chapters present the main findings from the survey for the three groups of parents i.e., 'core mothers', core fathers' and 'SPL parents'. These chapters cover the following main areas, and at the end of each chapter a summary is presented to bring together the key findings:

- Chapter 3: The key characteristics of parents, including details of their employment before the birth/adoption of their child;
- Chapter 4: Awareness of entitlements, take up and experience of leave across the three parent groups;
- Chapters 5-7: Focus individually on Maternity Leave, Paternity Leave and then Shared Parental Leave (SPL);
- Chapter 8: Employment decisions made by parents following the birth or placement for adoption of their child;
- Chapter 9: Details parents' experience of the childcare support and flexible working arrangements available to them both before and after the birth/placement for adoption of their child.

1.3 Key Indicators

In the table below, for ease of reference we have brought together some of the key statistics from within the report concerning the take up of leave by parents and their return to work after the birth/placement for adoption of their child, for each of the three groups of parents:

Table 1.1: Key Indicators among mothers, fathers and parents that took SPL

		Core Mothers	Core Fathers	SPL parents
Not aware of laws for pregnant employees or fathers/partners, with regards to time off for antenatal appointments		27%	40%	12%
Leave taken	Maternity Leave	83%		
	Paternity Leave		59%	
	Shared Parental Leave (SPL)	1%	4%	
	Took time off but not categorised as statutory leave	6%	21%+	
	No time off	9%	18%+	
Of those that did not take SPL:	% that had not heard of SPL before birth/placement for adoption	33%	45%+	
	% that had heard of it but did not know what it was	15%+	11%	
Proportion of employees/workers that believed their employer lacked knowledge about their leave entitlements and benefits		10%+	7%	40%++
Proportion that experienced any unfair treatment from their employer because of their pregnancy		30%		

Return to work after birth	Returned & still in the same job ¹	54%	77%+	72%+
	Returned but left since & now started another job	7%	14%+	16%+
	Returned but left since & now not working	3%	2%	2%
	Did not return, but started new job	12%++	2%	6%+
	Did not return and not started another job	22%++	2%	3%
		Core Mothers	Core Fathers	SPL parents
Average income (per annum)	In last main job before birth	£17,200	£28,900+	£43,500++
	At time of interview (of those who returned to work)	£18,600	£30,650+	£45,000++
Worked part time hours (less than 30)	Before birth	34%++	8%	12%+
	At time of interview	50%++	6%	23%+
Occupation	In manager/senior official roles before birth	4%	9%	10%
	In manager/senior official roles after birth (of those who returned to work)	4%	8%	8%
Supervisory responsibilities	Had supervisory responsibilities before birth	26%	37%	55%
	Had supervisory responsibilities at	22%	34%	52%

¹ Employed parents who have been off work for 26 weeks or less (in aggregate) have a right to return to the same job; whereas employed parents who have been off work on parental leave for more than 26 weeks (in aggregate) have a right to return to the same job or a similar job if their job is no longer available.

	time of interview (of those who returned to work)			
	Any flexible arrangements offered by pre-birth employer	78%+	53%	91%++
	Any childcare/family support offered by pre-birth employer	53%	48%	96%++
Any flexible arrangements or childcare/family support offered	Any support or flexible arrangements on offer at time of interview	51%+	39%	93%++

+ = significantly higher at 95 per cent level of confidence than one other column

++= significantly higher than both other columns

Unweighted base: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336

In addition to the key indicators, and chapter summaries contained throughout the report, we have provided below a discussion on the key factors and trends concerning take up of leave among parents, bringing together findings from throughout the report, as well as from other sources.

1.4 Discussion on the key factors influencing take up of leave

1.4.1 Overview

Overall, awareness and take-up of Maternity Leave and Pay is relatively high, with four in five (83 per cent;) mothers reporting that they took Maternity Leave; this is to be expected since it is a relatively long-standing policy. Paternity Leave has been in place for around 20 years, and seven in ten employee fathers (70 per cent) took Paternity Leave; around three in five fathers overall from the core sample (59 per cent). Most recently (since 2015²), SPL has been available for eligible parents and fieldwork for this survey took place four years after its introduction. Estimates from this survey show take-up of SPL at 1 per cent of employee mothers and 5 per cent of employee fathers (4 per cent of fathers overall), with take-up of SPL slightly higher among first time parents (2 per cent for mothers and 8 per cent for fathers). This summary draws together the survey evidence about the factors linked to the take-up and use of different types of leave to inform understanding of what influences the decisions and choices new parents make.

There are patterns between household characteristics and the take-up of leave and family friendly arrangements throughout the data. These tend to reflect the varying attitudes to work and family in society, differing labour market positions and financial security. The survey evidence points to six inter-related factors influencing the take-up of leave, with finance at the

² Shared Parental Leave and Pay came into effect in December 2014 for parents of children who were due to be born or placed for adoption from 5 April 2015.

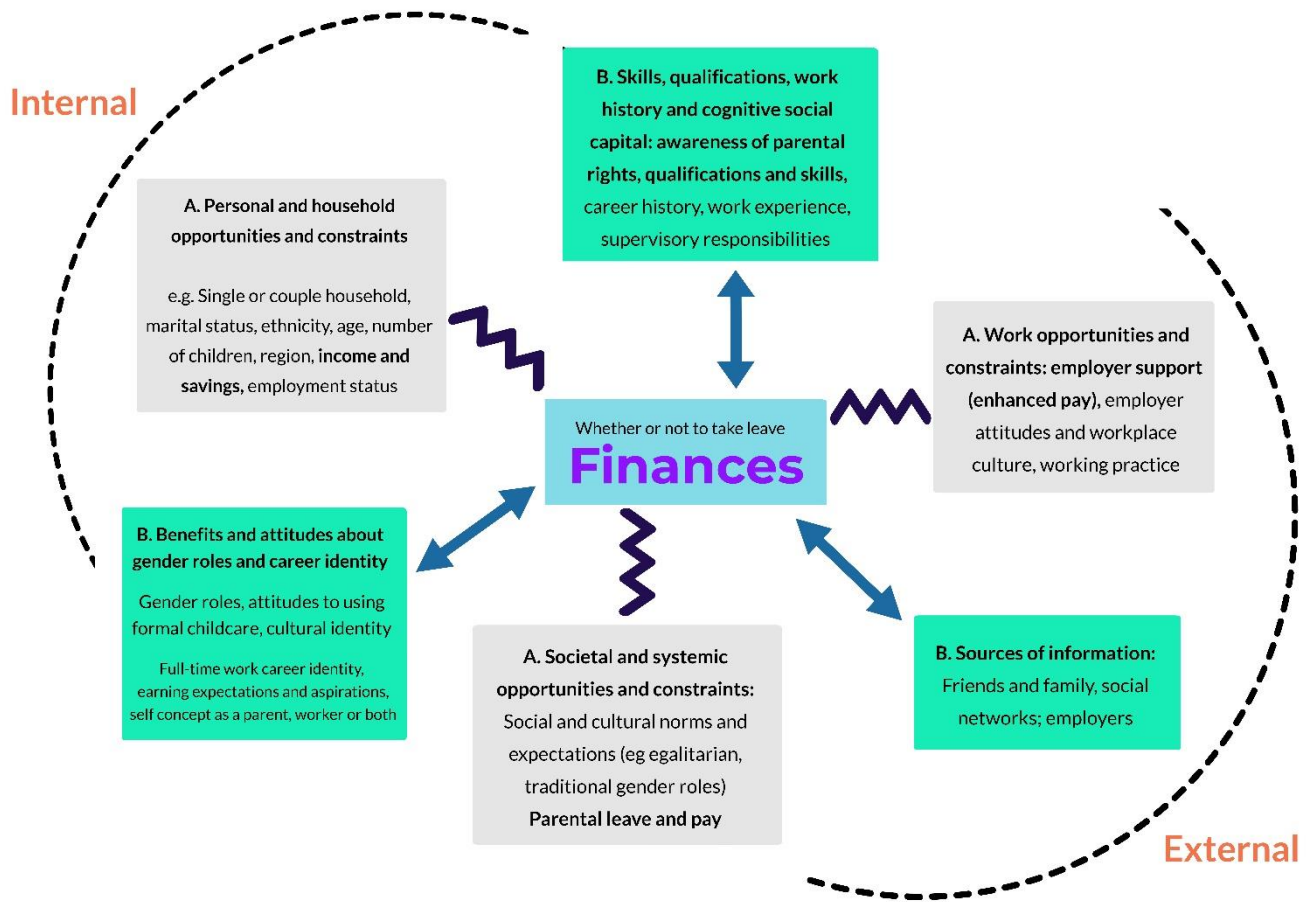
core, which is affected by personal circumstances, national legislation, and any employer benefits.

The factors affecting take-up of leave are depicted in Figure 1.1 which has two halves; towards the top and left are those that are more internal to the parent (i.e., their values and situation) and towards the bottom and right, are factors which are external (i.e., the wider environment).

Opportunities and constraints are shown in the grey boxes (labelled A); these tend to be factual, with the individual less able to control them, a relationship indicated with a zig-zag. These factors are personal and household opportunities and constraints; work opportunities and constraints; and social and systemic opportunities and constraints.

Green boxes (labelled B) illustrate sets of issues that individuals may also consider when they decide what parental leave to take. These are attitudes and beliefs about gender roles and career identity; education, skills, work history, and cognitive social capital (see section 1.4.4); and sources of information and support.

Figure 1.1: Factors affecting take-up of parental leave



Source: IES, 2021 adapted from Newton et al (2018) Rapid evidence assessment: parent’s decisions about returning to work and childcare responsibilities, Government Equalities Office

1.4.2 Personal and household characteristics, opportunities, and constraints

The relationship between the child’s parents and whether they are in a couple, or single parent household affects take-up of parental leave options. SPL may simply not be an option for some parents because of their relationship status. For example, one in four mothers are lone parents (25 per cent). This proportion increased significantly among mothers aged under 25 years (57 per cent) and mothers of Black ethnic groups (52 per cent). Even in coupled households, the take-up of SPL was significantly higher among parents who are married/ living in a civil partnership than those who are co-habiting (Figure 3). This suggests that security in the relationship is also an important determining factor.

The employment status of parents affects their entitlement to various parental rights, and the proportion of fathers that took no time off after the birth or adoption of their child is higher than average among fathers that were workers (38 per cent) or self-employed (44 per cent).

Other significant demographic differences in the pattern of take-up of SPL and Paternity Leave are likely to be explained by differences in the financial security and occupational position among parents, as well as differences in attitudes and beliefs. For example, the take-up of SPL was higher among parents who were older; two thirds of SPL parents were aged 35 and over (Figure 3.1). Parents who took SPL were more likely than both core mothers and core fathers to describe their ethnicity as White, indicating potential differences in cultural attitudes (Figure

3.2). The proportion of fathers who took no time off after the birth or adoption of their child was higher than average (18 per cent) among Black and Asian fathers (32 per cent and 29 per cent respectively); and those living inside London where living and housing costs tend to be greater (26 per cent; 16 per cent outside of London).

1.4.3 Attitudes to work and family: gender roles and career identity

There were differences in the level of agreement to gender attitude statements between mothers and fathers, and notably between parents who took SPL and those that did not. For example, while both mothers and fathers were much more likely to disagree than agree that 'a man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family', mothers were significantly more likely than fathers to be in disagreement (70 per cent; 58 per cent), and virtually all parents that took SPL disagree with this (96 per cent). Furthermore, the vast majority of both mothers and fathers (84 per cent and 86 per cent) agreed that men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children, and agreement was even higher among those that took SPL (94 per cent).

However, when reflecting the levels of agreement to these statements alongside statements presenting various forms of labour market participation among mothers, there is less uniform agreement. For example, around one in three mothers and fathers (32 per cent and 33 per cent) agreed that 'family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job', while fathers were more likely than mothers to agree that 'a pre-school child is likely to suffer if their mother works full time' (42 per cent; 31 per cent). Notably parents that took SPL were more likely than mothers and fathers generally to be in disagreement with each of these statements (74 per cent in each case). Among mothers, attitudes to gender roles differed particularly by ethnicity, with mothers from an Asian background significantly more likely to hold traditional attitudes towards gender roles than mothers from a White background. Whilst there was majority agreement that men should have as much responsibility as women for the home and children notably, when asked about the reasons why they did not take SPL, mothers said they did not want to share or take this leave (30 per cent) as did around one in five fathers (17 per cent). This indicates a gap between attitudes in general, and leave-taking in practice, although many other factors beyond gender role attitudes have a role in decision-making around parental leave.

Summarising levels of agreement to all the statements on gender role attitudes and reversing the scales so that a score of 4-5 indicates a 'progressive' or egalitarian attitude, while 1-2 indicates a more 'traditional' attitude, mothers were more likely than fathers to have progressive attitudes (63 per cent; 56 per cent), while SPL parents were even more likely to have progressive views on gender role attitudes (79 per cent).

Organising childcare is more likely to fall to mothers with seven out of 10 saying they are the main adult in their household responsible for planning and arranging childcare. For 1 in 4 mothers it is an equal combination of them and their partner (26 per cent). Just 8 per cent of fathers said they are mainly responsible for childcare and half said their partner is the main adult responsible for childcare arrangements. For parents that took SPL a much higher proportion than compared with mothers and fathers generally said that responsibilities for childcare arrangements are an equal combination of them and their partner (66 per cent). Mothers that took SPL were around half as likely as mothers generally to say they are the main adult responsible for childcare arrangements in their household (38 per cent; 71 per cent).

Parents were asked why they did not take more leave, and while financial considerations were most prevalent, there were significant differences between the groups relating to concerns about harming their career/business, by taking more leave. Agreement with this statement was

higher among fathers than mothers, and higher still among parents that took SPL, indicating stronger career identity.

1.4.4 Skills, education, work history and cognitive social capital

Prior qualification levels are a proxy for engagement with the labour market and a predictor of employment and earnings, as well as indicating dimensions of cognitive social capital.³ Cognitive social capital encapsulates shared representations, interpretations, and systems of meaning within a group or community, such as a shared understanding, shared culture, values, attitudes or beliefs. Cognitive social capital covers parents' awareness of their rights under legislation, where there is a shared language that provides the foundation for interaction and exchange. Data from across the survey found that prior levels of education was significantly related to the awareness and take-up of a range of parental leave entitlements among parents. For example, the proportion of fathers that took no time off after the birth or adoption of their child was higher than average among those with no formal qualifications (32 per cent compared with 18 per cent among fathers overall). While parents that took SPL were more likely than both mothers and fathers in general to hold higher-level qualifications. Nine in ten parents that took SPL had qualifications at degree level or above (88 per cent) and more than half were qualified to postgraduate level (54 per cent, compared with 16 per cent of core fathers and 13 per cent of mothers).

Other examples of cognitive social capital in the data relate to time off for antenatal appointments where fathers appeared less aware of the law compared with mothers, and awareness of this aspect of law for fathers/partners is highest among parents that took SPL. Just one in three mothers and fathers from the core sample were aware that the father or pregnant woman's partner has the right to unpaid time off work to go to two antenatal appointments. This compared with two thirds of parents that took SPL. Lastly, uncertainty over mothers' legal entitlement and the amount of leave offered by their employer was higher than average among mothers on lower incomes (under £20,000), with lower-level qualifications (below degree level), and where mothers were not at supervisory level or above.

More than half of the parents that had not taken SPL had heard of it when their baby was born or adopted (55 per cent of fathers, and 67 per cent of mothers), although there were varying degrees of understanding. Overall, only around one in seven mothers and fathers who had not taken SPL were aware of it and fully understood what it was (15 per cent and 13 per cent respectively), indicating greater awareness is needed to enable parents to make better informed choices.

1.4.5 Work opportunities and constraints

Where parents are in work, the policies and practices of their employer affect their decisions around taking parental leave. The characteristics of family-friendly employers are discussed in Chapter 9, but the willingness of parents to ask their employers about leave options varies according to personal characteristics. For example, younger mothers under the age of 25 were less likely to feel comfortable asking their employer about Maternity Leave (68 per cent; 81 per cent among mothers on average), as were mothers with a health condition (70 per cent), lone parents (72 per cent), those with no qualifications (69 per cent) and lower-level qualifications generally (79 per cent among mothers qualified below degree level; 87 per cent where they

³ Claridge, T. (2018) *Dimensions of Social Capital - structural, cognitive, and relational*, *Social Capital Research & Training*, Accessed: <https://d1fs2th61pidml.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Dimensions-of-Social-Capital.pdf>

were qualified to degree level or above). The proportion of mothers that felt comfortable was also lower among mothers in smaller companies (76 per cent among those who worked in companies with less than 50 staff); the hospitality sector (69 per cent) and in skilled, process and elementary occupations (72 per cent).

Fathers working in smaller companies (78 per cent where less than 50 were employed; 89 per cent in companies with 250+ staff) were also less likely to have felt comfortable asking their employer for Paternity Leave or leave for a same sex partner as well as fathers in skilled, process and elementary occupations (79 per cent).

Security with the employer-employee relationship seems key to parents feeling able and confident in making use of employment rights to parental leave and pay. Parents taking SPL seemed most likely to take advantage of other rights to time off work, for example, parents who took SPL were significantly more likely to take time off work to attend antenatal appointments (87 per cent) than mothers (63 per cent) and fathers overall (57 per cent).

There is evidence access to enhanced pay shapes the choices of parents. For example, close to half (46 per cent) of all mothers said that they could only afford to take time off while they were receiving Occupational Maternity Pay.

1.4.6 Sources of information

Parents have several sources of information to help inform their choices, including friends, family, colleagues and their employer. When asked about the factors that helped parents take the leave they took, mothers were more likely than fathers to cite support from family or friends as a factor (21 per cent), while parents that took SPL were more likely than both mothers and fathers in general to cite employer support, and the level of information provided.

Of the parents that took SPL, two in three felt very or fairly well-informed about the Shared Parental Leave and Pay arrangements provided by their employer (67 per cent), while one in five did not feel very well-informed, and around one in eight not at all well-informed (12 per cent). Among all core mothers and fathers who were employees or workers before birth (regardless of whether they took SPL or not) a much lower proportion felt informed about SPL arrangements offered by their employers, with around a third in each case that felt very or fairly informed. Just 8 per cent of mothers and 9 per cent of all fathers felt 'very well-informed' about the Shared Parental Leave and Pay arrangements provided by their employer.

1.4.7 Financial opportunities, and constraints

Income from work, work status, and the financial security of the household are all discussed by respondents. The financial impact and affordability of taking any type of parental leave is a main consideration for parents and at the heart of our diagram (Figure 1.1). It is central because it is influenced by individuals (household income and savings), society (parental rights and pay legislation), and employers if they enhance statutory pay.

The balance of these financial factors often prevents parents from taking up parental leave. For example, among the one in five fathers (22 per cent) who did not take their full Paternity Leave entitlement, the main reason was that they could not afford to (62 per cent). The National Minimum Wage at the time of the fieldwork (April 2019 to March 2020) for people aged 25 or over was £8.21, or £303.27 for a 37-hour week. Statutory Maternity Pay (after the first six weeks), Statutory Paternity Pay and Shared Parental Pay was £148.68 a week in 2019/2020, (or 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings, whichever is lower). The proportion of fathers that could not afford to take leave increased to more than one in four among fathers

who were in skilled, process or elementary occupations (28 per cent) and up to one in three among fathers where their household income was £20,000- £39,999 (32 per cent).

Financial reasons are also mentioned by mothers not taking leave, where one in ten mothers that took no leave at all or took other leave that was not statutory said they could not afford to take statutory leave following the birth or adoption of their child (11 per cent). Two in five mothers (41%), fathers (41%) and parents taking SPL (43%) said that they did not take more leave because they could no longer afford to remain on leave.

When asked about the reasons why they did not take SPL, the highest proportion of both mothers and fathers said that it would have a negative financial impact for the family (31 per cent of mothers and 34 per cent of fathers).

1.4.8 Conclusion

Whether or not parents take parental leave and if they do, which configuration they use is influenced by several factors. Financial considerations and affordability of the options are central. Some options are simply ruled out, meaning some parents do not take any leave upon the birth of a child, and many parents return to work when being on leave is no longer affordable. The security of household finances, whether an employer enhances pay, and the difference in earnings relative to statutory pay all feed into calculations. Furthermore, the security of parents in the labour market, and their confidence in their relationship with their employer stand out as important features. Parents earning less, and employees with various other indicators that may make them more disadvantaged in the labour market, such as being a lone parent or having a health condition, are less likely to feel confident talking to their employer about parental leave, or indeed taking it at all.

The situation of parents taking no leave, contrasts with the early adopters of SPL and the characteristics of these two groups vary strongly. Those who have taken SPL have been parents who hold egalitarian or progressive views with regards to gender roles, who are more likely to be married (and in a stable relationship), to be very highly qualified, and to be working in professional occupations, demonstrating a career orientation. They tend to have the financial means to adopt a household earning model that reflects their views and can absorb the costs of SPL where it does not maximise household earnings and are confident in making use of their rights and making requests of their employer. Between these two extremes, is a large group of coupled parents, some married and some co-habiting, as well as the one in four mothers who are lone parents. Their decisions are equally determined by the opportunities and constraints they face and who strike the best balance they can within these.

While attitudes suggest ambitions for more shared parenting, there is a gap in practice and some practical and systemic obstacles mean that traditional roles tend to prevail in decisions around the form and duration of leave. Household financial security takes priority as an enabler (or barrier) to sharing parenting in line with values, and this is linked to confidence to discuss options with an employer and job security. However, beyond these two factors working to increase awareness and understanding of rights are likely to be supportive strategies to increasing uptake, as is encouraging employers to enhance Maternity, Paternity and Shared Parental Pay where feasible.

There is a notable gap between the general attitudes of parents towards gender roles and their leave decisions in practice. The take-up of parental leave and pay is likely to be increased if all parents are aware of and understand their rights, but they must also feel that they will not be disadvantaged if they enact them and that they have financial security.

2 Introduction

This report presents the findings from the 2019 Parental Rights Survey.

The Parental Rights Survey, previously titled The Maternity and Paternity Rights Survey series (MPRS) and the Maternity Rights Survey, has been monitoring the take-up of maternity benefits and mothers' decisions relating to childcare and employment following the birth of the child since the late 1970s.

The Parental Rights Survey that is the subject of this report was carried out in the summer of 2019. The survey was commissioned by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Government Equalities Office (GEO), with input from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Department for Education (DfE). It was carried out by BMG Research with expert advisers from the Institute for Employment Studies.

Below we outline the main aims of the survey and present an overview of the survey methodology. A separate, full technical report is available where this information is outlined in more detail.

2.1 Policy background

Women's employment rate has increased over the last thirty years: from 53 per cent in 1971 to 73 per cent in early 2020 (ONS, 2020). This has included a rise in dual-earner households and the increased employment of lone parents (Working Families, 2017; ONS, 2019). However, there persist issues relating to pay and progression that have differential effects by gender. Using data from Understanding Society for 2009/10-2016/17 a recent study for GEO found that in heterosexual couples where both partners worked full-time before birth, women were more likely to work part-time or leave employment completely after having children, while men continued to work full-time. Furthermore, women who took a break from work after Maternity Leave were likely to return to a lower paid job. Over time, this combination of lower paid and part-time working contributes to the lower odds that mothers experience in relation to promotion and pay progression (GEO, 2019).

Alongside changes to labour market participation, there have been changes in societal attitudes to work and family. Analysing data from the British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey between 1987 and 2012 shows that societal attitudes have become steadily less gendered over time, with declining support for family arrangements where the mother has the main caring role (Scott and Clery, 2013, cited in Curtice et al, 2019). This attitudinal change has continued, with the proportion of people favouring the father as the sole or main breadwinner decreasing from around two-thirds (69%) in 2012 to a half (51%) in the latest BSA survey (Curtice et al, 2019).

Family decisions about how to combine work and parenthood are influenced by a complex interplay of factors. This includes views and attitudes towards parenting and the gender division of labour and work orientation, children's needs, as well as the availability and affordability of childcare and finding employment (Newton et al, 2018). This complexity and diversity of parents' views, expectations and circumstances have led to a range of policy responses to meet families' varied needs and the UK has a long tradition of supporting working families.

The introduction of maternity rights in 1975 induced a marked behaviour change to return to work in the first-year post-birth (Gregg et al, 2003), and the increase in the employment rate of women has been enabled by successive government policies since. Alongside this, for nearly twenty years, fathers and partners have had paternity entitlements. Childcare policy has also supported the increase in the employment rate - for example, free childcare places for three- and four-year olds contributed to a rise by almost 10 percentage points over the past two decades, from 56 to 65 per cent, in the proportion of mothers in employment with a youngest child aged between three and four (ONS, 2017).

The Maternity and Paternity Rights Survey series has monitored the take-up of maternity and family benefits and post-birth employment decisions since the late 1970s, with the last survey conducted in 2009-10. The 2019 edition provides an opportunity to provide insight into ongoing take-up of the rights that have remained unchanged since the last survey, such as:

- Employed pregnant women and mothers being able to take up to 52 weeks of Maternity Leave (leave is a 'day one' right) and up to 39 weeks of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) or Maternity Allowance (MA). The first six weeks of SMP are paid at an enhanced rate, and pregnant women and mothers receive 90 per cent of their average weekly earnings (with no upper limit) during this period. The remaining 33 weeks of SMP are worth up to £148.68 a week (2019/20). The Management and Wellbeing Practices survey 2018-19 found that just under one fifth (17 per cent) of workplaces paid more than the statutory minimum for part of the Maternity Pay period.
- Maternity Allowance (MA) is a benefit paid to working mothers (including self-employed mothers) who do not qualify for SMP. It is paid for up to 39 weeks and is worth up to £148.68 a week (2019/20).
- Employed fathers and partners (including same sex partners) who are eligible for Paternity Leave (PL) and Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) are entitled to take one or two weeks (their choice) of paid leave. SPP is worth up to £148.68 a week and fathers and partners do not currently have any statutory entitlement to a period of enhanced pay.

Alongside providing insight into these long-standing rights, the survey explores the take-up of several recent relevant legislative changes which aim to promote family-friendly and flexible working practices, led by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). One of these changes includes:

- In 2015, the introduction of Shared Parental Leave and Pay (SPL&P) which allows parents to share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay, and to take blocks of leave, interspersed with periods of work (each parent can take up to three blocks of leave, more if their employer allows, interspersed with periods of work). SPL&P rate is £148.68 a week (2019/20).

BEIS has made commitments to review and evaluate recent policy changes including the introduction of Shared Parental Leave and Pay scheme. This research, alongside other evidence, feeds into this assessment.

There are important questions about how policies have been implemented and managed in the workplace and whether and how organisations are fostering cultures that encourage employees to feel confident to work flexibly and use the rights bestowed. The survey provides insight into the take-up of SPL, as well as take-up of Maternity and Paternity Leave and benefits. It also provides evidence on mothers' and fathers' decision-making and experiences

of return to work; attitudes of parents towards family leave, childcare responsibility, and returning to work; and factors that enable both men and women to remain in work while playing a role in their child's upbringing from birth.

2.2 Survey aims

The aims of the 2019 Parental Rights Survey were to:

- Monitor take-up of maternity and paternity benefits and how this has changed;
- Understand the impact of key legislative changes in parental rights since 2009-10, including the introduction of Shared Parental Leave and Pay (SPL&P) and rights for fathers and partners to attend antenatal appointments;
- Examine the factors contributing to parents' decisions in this area and the factors that enable women to remain in work;
- Explore parental attitudes towards childcare responsibility and how this has changed;
- Provide a detailed, statistically representative, up-to-date picture of mothers' experiences and take-up of maternity rights and benefits;
- Examine changes in mothers' engagement and experience in the labour market prior to, and following, the birth of their child;
- Track changes (if any) for mothers since the 2009/10 survey;
- Identify differences in take-up and eligibility across key demographic, socioeconomic and occupation groups, and how these have changed (if at all) since 2009/10;
- Provide a detailed, statistically representative and up-to-date picture of fathers' take-up of Paternity Leave and Paternity Pay in order to collect robust data on the various provisions for fathers during and after the mothers' pregnancies;
- To track any changes (if any) for fathers since the 2009/10 survey;
- To explore the attitudes of both mothers and fathers on sharing childcare responsibilities.

2.3 Methodology

A brief summary of the survey methodology is outlined below. For a more detailed discussion please refer to the separate Technical Report.

2.3.1 Sample design

The principal objective of the 2019 Parental Rights Survey was to interview a representative sample of c. 2,000 mothers and c. 1,000 fathers (or second parents) of children born between May and September 2017 (so aged approximately 18-24 months), producing results that are as accurate as possible, for a wide number of survey stakeholders, under reasonable technical and resourcing constraints.

A combination of the Child Benefits Register (CBR) and Royal Mail's Postcode Address File (PAF) was used to ensure full coverage of parents in Great Britain with a child aged 18-24 months.

Only mothers (biological and adoptive) of children born between 29th May and 30th September 2017 (inclusive) who had worked in the previous 12 months were eligible to take part in the mothers' survey.

Fathers and partners were eligible for the survey if they were employed at the time of the child's birth and resided with the child. The approach taken in 2019 was gender neutral, meaning that same-sex couples were included in the survey. In the interest of comparability, parents who are not biological or adoptive mothers are referred to as 'fathers' throughout the remainder of this document (although parents self-identify their relationship to the child in the survey).

In addition to the 'core sample' of mothers and fathers, to support the evaluation of the Shared Parental Leave and Pay (SPL&P) policy, the survey also included an additional boost sample using HMRC's Shared Parental Pay records to achieve a minimum of 200 interviews with parents who have taken this option.

2.3.2 Questionnaire development

The mothers' questionnaire was based to an extent on the 2009/2010 questionnaire. Questions that were added to the questionnaire for 2019 were reviewed by an expert panel. The fathers' questionnaire involved more development, particularly to bring it more in line with the mothers' questionnaire and was subjected to cognitive testing. Additional questions were added to reflect the introduction of Shared Parental Leave since the previous iteration of the questionnaire; this was also subjected to cognitive testing with parents who had taken Shared Parental Leave.

The changes to the questionnaire sought to ensure the survey was fit for purpose in the 2019 context, maximise the level of insight that can be provided for different respondents through the inclusion of additional questions, and to act as a baseline for questions in future waves of the research.

2.3.3 Fieldwork

The majority of interviews were carried out in homes, via face-to-face interviewing, and then topped up with telephone interviews.

Face-to-face fieldwork was carried out by BMG's face-to-face interviewers between March 2019 and November 2019, and telephone fieldwork was carried out by BMG's telephone unit between May 2019 and November 2019. It should be noted that all fieldwork took place before the start of the pandemic, and therefore before hybrid-working had become common practice.

In the core sample a total of 5,779 valid household level contacts were issued, with at least one parent responding from 2,341 households – a response rate of 40.5% among face-to-face interviewing. The telephone fieldwork generated 196 completed interviews among mothers from a sample of 368 contacts, representing a response rate of 53%, and among fathers 210 interviews were completed from 725 contacts, representing a response rate of 29%.

Following completion of fieldwork and data cleaning this resulted in the following samples available for analysis:

- 1,959 mothers from the core sample – referred to in this report as ‘Core Mothers’
- 1,062 fathers from the core sample and other respondents who were not biological or adoptive mothers – referred to in this report as ‘Core Fathers’
- 336 – parents that took Shared Parental Leave (SPL) – this is made up of 33 mothers from the core sample, 36 fathers from the core sample, and the 267 additional boost interviews with parents that took SPL – referred to in this report as ‘SPL parents.’

2.4 Report structure and contents

The report aims to provide descriptive analysis of all topic areas covered in the questionnaire. However, due to the vast amount of information generated from the survey we have reported by exception i.e., focusing on key areas of interest and where particular differences have been noted in the data. The main body of the report covers the following themes, highlighting differences, where relevant, between the three sample groups of ‘core mothers’, ‘core fathers’ and ‘SPL parents’, and differences in responses within these three groups e.g., by parents of different ages, ethnicity or occupations:

- The characteristics of parents and their employment before the birth of the child that is the subject of the interview;
- Leave entitlements – parents’ awareness of their entitlements and their experiences of the leave they took (if any);
- Maternity Leave⁴ and Pay – focused on the leave taken and pay received by mothers;
- Paternity Leave and Pay – focused on the leave taken and pay received by fathers or same-sex partners;
- Shared Parental Leave and Pay – parents’ experience of taking SPL, as well as awareness and understanding of SPL among those that did not take SPL;
- Employment decisions after birth – including any changes compared with the job they were in prior to the birth of their child;
- Childcare and family-friendly arrangements – the availability and take up of flexible working arrangements, childcare support and other types of support available to families from employers, as well as who parents turn to for regular or one-off childcare needs.

2.4.1 Comparisons over time

As well as providing an analysis of the data from this most recent survey in 2019, this report also contains analysis, where possible, of the changes in key measures since the previous survey, conducted in 2009 of parents with children born in 2008.

⁴ Adoption leave is not covered due to the low base size of mothers that were adoptive parents (less than 1 per cent)

The figures from the 2009 survey have either been taken from the 2009 Maternity and Paternity Rights Survey report⁵ or from the 2009 SPSS data file – neither of which were produced by BMG Research.

In a number of cases where comparisons have been attempted, when data has been extracted from the SPSS file for 2009 it seems the questions have been asked of different respondents compared with 2019, or different filters have been applied, which means accurate comparisons have not been possible. For this reason, we have been quite limited as to the number of questions/variables we can compare, with a reasonable degree of confidence.

On the limited analysis that has been possible, it has been difficult to be sure that the figures outputted⁶ from the 2009 SPSS file are completely comparable with the most recent survey findings. Some caution is therefore needed as we cannot be certain that comparisons have been made on a like for like basis.

2.4.2 Multivariate analysis

In addition to the descriptive analysis contained in the report BMG has also conducted multivariate analysis to determine which factors were most strongly related to whether or not:

- Mothers took Statutory or Occupational Maternity Leave/Pay;
- Fathers took Paternity Leave;
- Mothers returned to work after Maternity Leave/Pay.

Three multivariate logistic regression models were produced, one for each of the above research questions. For each model, the relative importance of potential drivers plus their associated odds ratios (from the logistic regressions) are given in this report. Technical details for these models can be found in the technical report.

The key findings from these three models are contained within the relevant section and flagged (in the section titles) that this analysis is based on multivariate analysis rather than descriptive analysis.

2.5 Reporting Conventions

A number of reporting conventions have been used throughout the report which are summarised here:

- Throughout the report where differences in findings are mentioned, for example between mothers and fathers, or between mothers of different age groups, unless otherwise stated all these differences are statistically significant, at 95 per cent confidence interval or above.

⁵ Chanfreau, J. et al. (2011). *Maternity and Paternity Rights Survey and Women Returners Survey 2009/10*. Research Report No.777, DWP and BIS, London. Accessed from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maternity-and-paternity-rights-and-women-returners-survey-200910-rr777>

⁶ Figures in the analysis flagged with an asterisk are where the data has come from the SPSS file, rather than the published report, and therefore some caution is needed due to the issues outlined

- Tables presenting differences between sub-groups of respondents have symbols to highlight significant differences:
 - + or - means that the figure is significantly higher or lower than one other column in the table, or compared with the average among the total sample e.g., all mothers;
 - ++ means that the figure is significantly higher than both other columns in the table.
- All analysis in the report is based on questions that have been answered by at least 50 respondents or on sub-groups of respondents that exceed 50. No data/analysis is included where unweighted bases are below 50.
- For individual questions, in order to ensure no individual respondent can be identified through the results, only responses mentioned by more than 5 individuals have been included in the analysis presented in the report.
- Figures in some charts or tables may not add to 100% due to rounding, while in other cases only responses mentioned most frequently by respondents are included in charts – where this is the case it has been noted under the Figure. Where the percentages for responses have been removed or suppressed due to the low number of responses they are indicated by **.

3 Characteristics of parents and employment before birth

This first chapter of the main findings from the report describes the key characteristics of the three sample groups; core mothers; core fathers; and parents that took SPL (both mothers and fathers combined from the core and boost samples that took SPL). The chapter also highlights the key features of parents’ employment before the birth or adoption of their child.

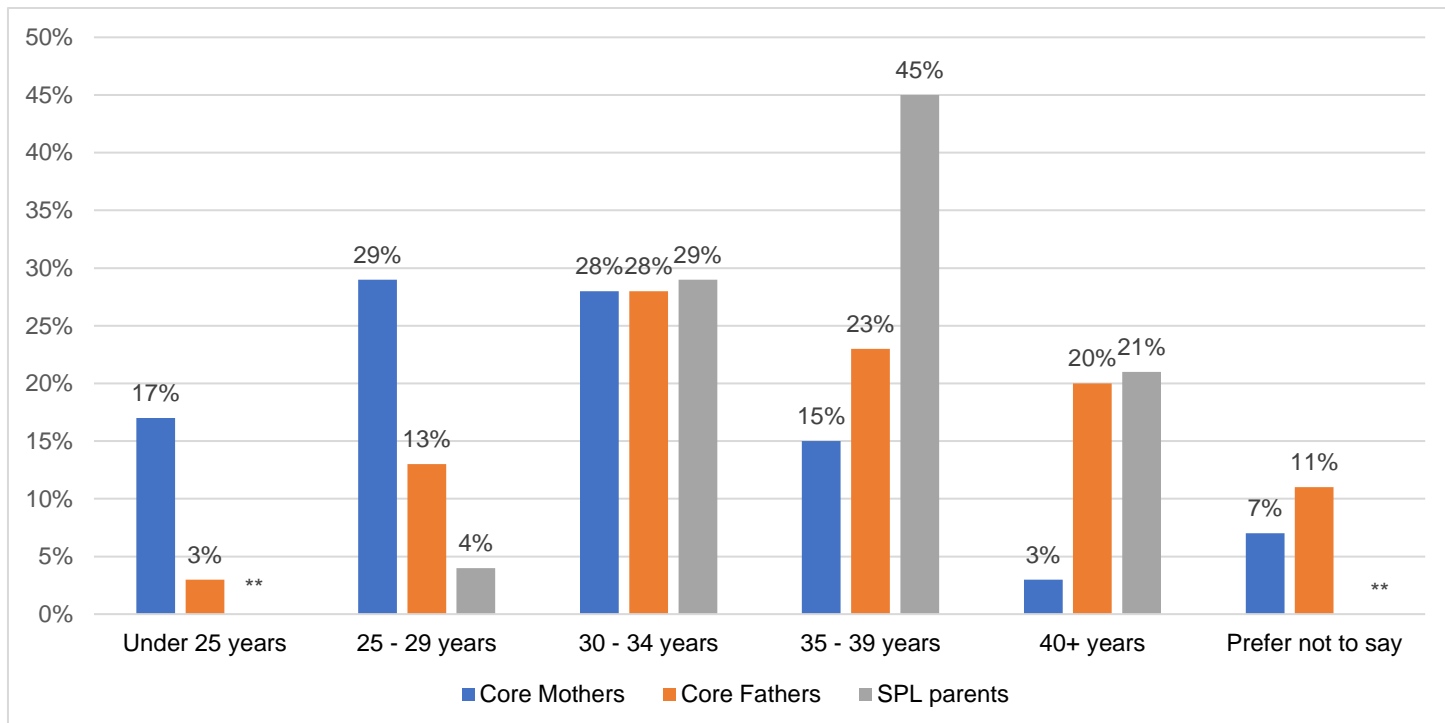
3.1 Key characteristics of parents

3.1.1 Age

The age profile of mothers is significantly lower than for fathers, with nearly half (46 per cent) of mothers aged under 30 years, compared with 16 per cent of fathers. Just 3 per cent of mothers with children born or adopted in May-Sept 2017 were aged over 40 years at the time of interview, compared with a fifth of fathers.

The age profile of parents that took SPL is considerably older, than compared with core mothers and fathers. Two thirds of SPL parents were aged 35 and over.

Figure 3.1: Age of parents (All respondents)



Q11. Age of parents: Core Mothers: 1,959; Core Fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336 ** Suppressed due to low counts

The average age of mothers was 30 years, compared with 35 years for fathers and 36 years for SPL parents.

3.1.2 Gender

Virtually all mothers and fathers (99 per cent in each case) were biological parents to the child that was the subject of the survey with the remainder either adoptive parents, legal guardians or the spouse/partner to the baby's parent.

Almost all mothers in the survey said they identified as female, and all fathers said they identified as male.

3.1.3 Ethnicity

Mothers in the survey were more likely than fathers to describe their ethnic group as White (85 per cent; 70 per cent of fathers), while higher proportions of fathers described their ethnicity as Asian (17 per cent) or Black (8 per cent).

Parents that took SPL were more likely than both core mothers and core fathers to describe their ethnicity as White (92 per cent).

Four in five (80 per cent) mothers were born in the UK, compared with a significantly lower proportion of fathers (67 per cent).

Where parents were not born in the UK, mothers are most likely to have been born in Poland (18 per cent) and fathers are most likely to have been born in Pakistan or Bangladesh (13 per cent and 12 per cent respectively).

3.1.4 Health conditions or disability

Mothers were more likely than fathers to report that they have any physical or mental health condition lasting or expected to last 12 months or more (8 per cent; 6 per cent). While 5 per cent of mothers and 3 per cent of fathers reported that the child that is the subject of the survey has any physical or mental health condition.

In terms of caring responsibilities, the vast majority of mothers (93 per cent) and fathers (92 per cent) do not provide any help or support for anyone either living or not living with them who has a long-term physical or mental ill-health problem or disability, or problems relating to old age. While 6 per cent of mothers and 7 per cent of fathers said they provide such care for someone living with them.

3.1.5 Marital status & whether living with partner

Just under half (46 per cent) of mothers that had a child in 2017 said at the time of interview they were married and lived with their spouse, while the next highest proportion (28 per cent) were co-habiting with a partner and just under a quarter (23 per cent) said they were single (that is never married or never in a legally recognised Civil Partnership, and not currently cohabiting with a partner).

Parents that took SPL were more likely than core mothers and fathers to be married (81 per cent; 46 per cent of mothers and 71 per cent of fathers)

Overall, a quarter (25 per cent) of mothers were lone parents; and this proportion increases significantly among mothers aged under 25 years (57 per cent) and mothers of Black ethnic groups (52 per cent).

3.1.6 Other children in household

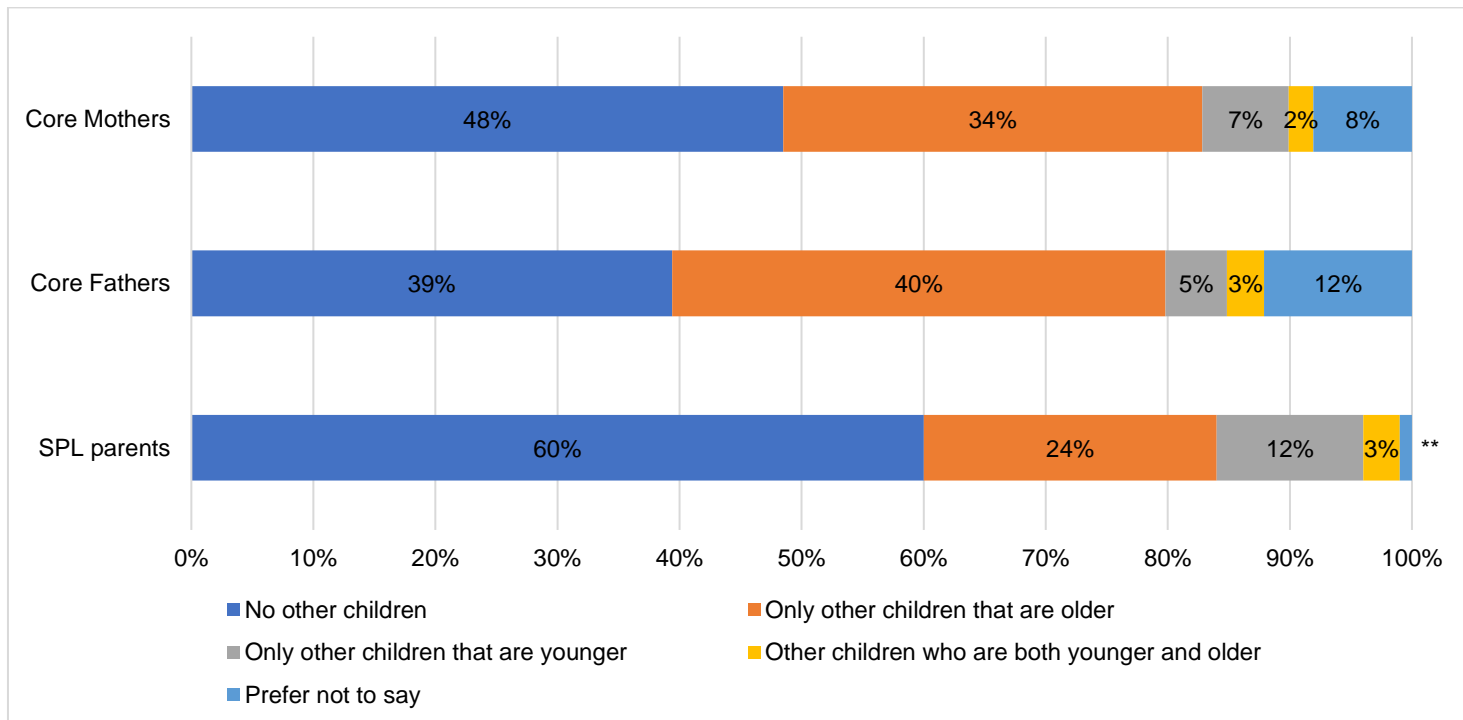
Just over two in five (44 per cent) mothers that had a child in 2017 had other children, as well as the one that was the subject of the survey, compared with a higher proportion of fathers (48 per cent).

In around four in five cases (78 per cent of mothers and 82 per cent of fathers) parents that had other children said they only had other children that were older than the child that was the subject of the survey, while in around one in five cases (21 per cent of mothers and 17 per cent of fathers) they had had another child since the birth/adoption of the child that is the subject of the survey.

Based on the full sample of mothers and fathers, this equates to around one in three (36 per cent) mothers who already had an older child at the time when the child who is the subject of the interview was born/adopted, and two in five (43 per cent) fathers. While, for more than half (56 per cent) of mothers and two in five (44 per cent) fathers the child that was the subject of the interview was their first child (i.e., as they have no other children, or only children that are younger).

Parents that took SPL were significantly more likely than core mothers and fathers to have had no other children (60 per cent).

Figure 3.2: Whether respondents have other children, and if so what age (All respondents)



Q23/24. Whether they have other children (apart from child that is the subject of the survey), and if so, what age are they: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336

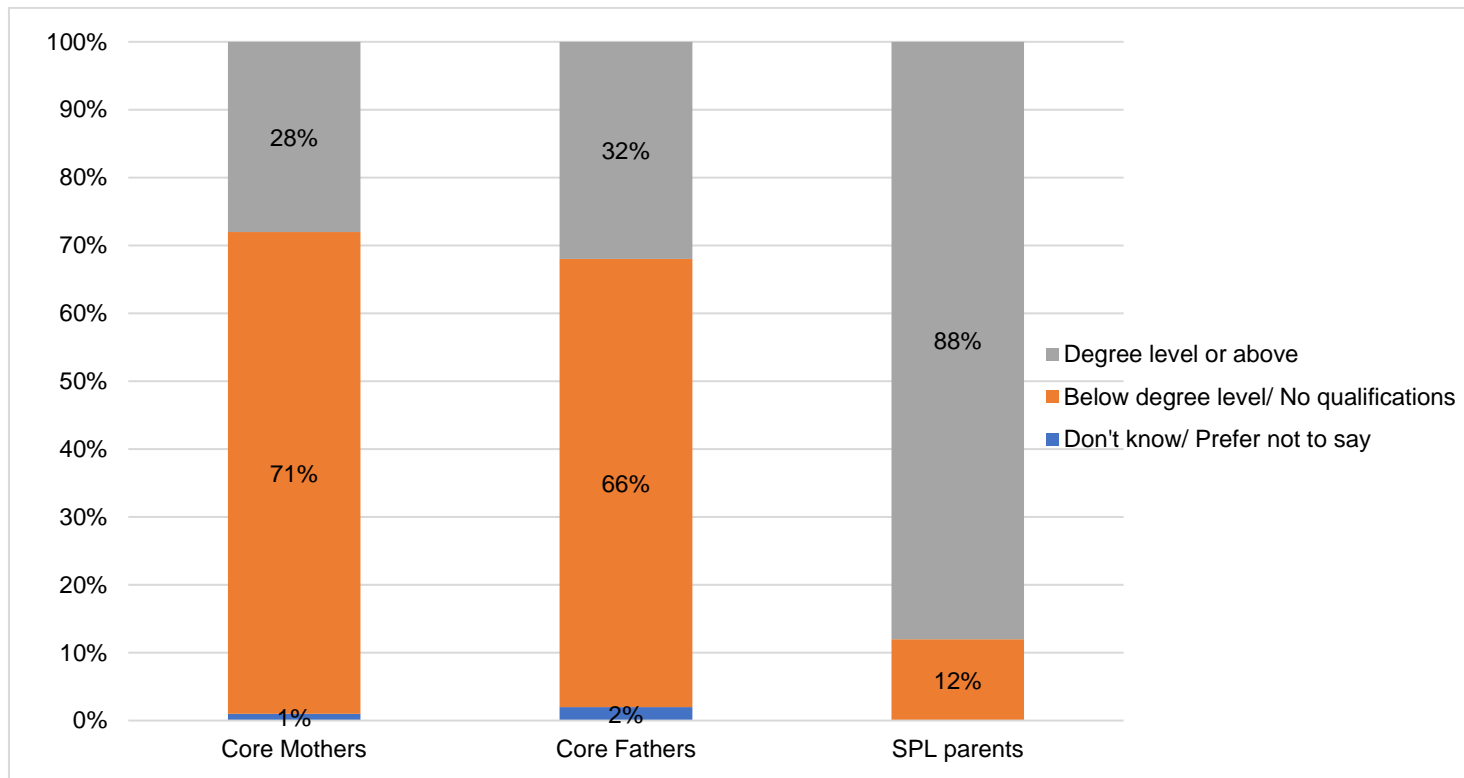
**suppressed due to low number of responses

N.B. some bars may not add to 100% due to rounding or suppression.

3.1.7 Education

Fathers were more likely than mothers to hold higher-level qualifications, with a third of fathers qualified to degree level or above (32 per cent; 28 per cent of mothers). While parents that took SPL were more likely than both mothers and fathers generally to hold higher-level qualifications – nine in ten parents that took SPL had qualifications at degree level or above (88 per cent).

Figure 3.3: Highest qualification (All respondents)



Q27. Highest qualification: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336
See Glossary for explanation of levels

3.1.8 Gender role attitudes

When asked for their level of agreement on a range of statements regarding gender roles, both mothers and fathers were much more likely to disagree than agree that ‘a man’s job is to earn money; a woman’s job is to look after the home and family’. However, mothers were significantly more likely than fathers to be in disagreement (70 per cent; 58 per cent), and virtually all (96 per cent) parents that took SPL disagreed with this.

The vast majority of both mothers and fathers (84 per cent and 86 per cent) agreed that men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children, and agreement was even higher among those that took SPL (94 per cent).

Around one in three mothers and fathers (32 per cent and 33 per cent) agreed that ‘family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job’, while fathers were more likely than mothers to agree that ‘a pre-school child is likely to suffer if their mother works full time’ (42 per cent; 31 per cent). Parents that took SPL were more likely than mothers and fathers generally to be in disagreement with each of these statements (74 per cent in each case).

Over half (56 per cent) of mothers and a similar proportion of parents that took SPL (60 per cent) believed that having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person, while fathers were less likely to be in agreement (47 per cent).

Table 3.1: Proportion that agreed/disagreed with each statement on gender role attitudes (All respondents)

		Core Mothers	Core Fathers	SPL parents
A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family.	Agree	15%+	26%++	**
	Disagree	70%+	58%	96%++
A preschool child is likely to suffer if their mother works full-time.	Agree	31%+	42%++	15%
	Disagree	53%+	41%	74%++
All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job.	Agree	32%+	33%+	16%
	Disagree	51%	47%	74%++
Men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children.	Agree	84%	86%	94%++
	Disagree	4%	4%	2%
Having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person.	Agree	56%+	47%	60%+
	Disagree	21%+	24%+	15%

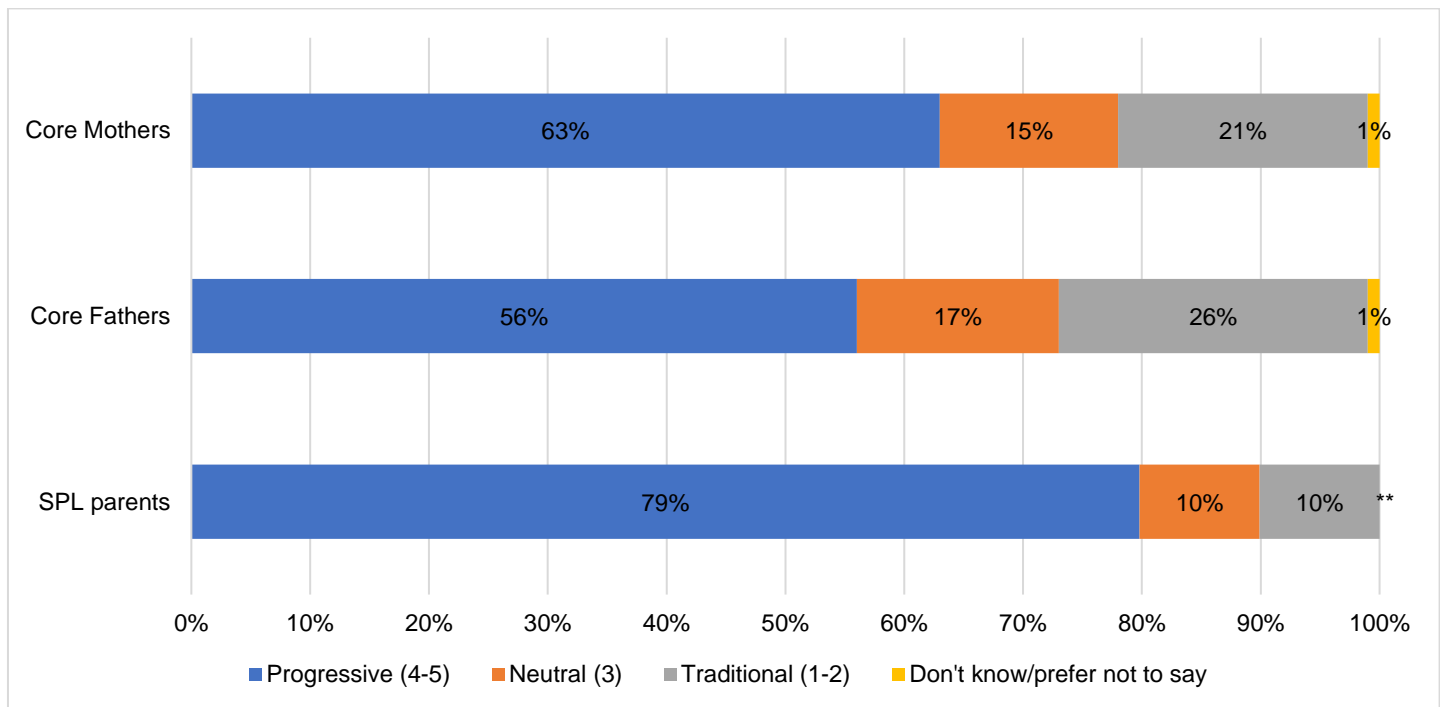
+ = significantly higher at 95 per cent level of confidence than one other column

++= significantly higher than both other columns

Q238-286. Level of agreement/disagreement with each statement: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336

Summarising levels of agreement to all the statements on gender role attitudes (in Figure 3.4) and reversing the scales so that a score of 4-5 indicates a 'progressive' attitude, and 1-2 indicates a more 'traditional' attitude reveals that mothers were more likely than fathers to have progressive attitudes (63 per cent; 56 per cent), while SPL parents were even more likely to have progressive views on gender role attitudes (79 per cent).

Figure 3.4: Summary of Gender Role Attitudes (All respondents)



Q238-286: Summary of agreement/disagreement to each statement: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336 ** suppressed due to low number of responses

Among mothers, attitudes to gender roles differ particularly by ethnicity, as well as by the type of childcare used, with mothers who do not use childcare more likely to have traditional views. Interestingly, mothers who were self-employed before birth were significantly more likely to hold traditional views, than compared with employees or workers.

Table 3.2: Summary of mothers' gender role attitudes (All core mothers)

		Progressive (4-5)	Neutral (3)	Traditional (1-2)
All core mothers (1,959)		63%	15%	21%
Ethnicity	White (1642)	64%+	16%	20%
	Black (84)	57%	13%	26%
	Asian (184)	56%	12%	30%+
Type of childcare used	Formal services (762)	70%+	13%-	16%-
	Informal services (816)	66%+	13%-	20%
	None (697)	56%-	19%+	24%+
Employment status before birth	Employee/worker (1,858)	64%+	15%	20%-
	Self-employed (101)	46%-	16%	33%+

+/- = significantly higher/lower than all mothers on average. Q238-286. Level of agreement/disagreement with each statement: Core mothers: 1,959. Other base sizes in parenthesis.

3.2 Employment before birth

3.2.1 Last and main job before birth

The vast majority of mothers (95 per cent), fathers (95 per cent), and parents that took SPL (94 per cent) had just one job, lasting at least a week, in the 10 months prior to the birth/adoption of their child.

Based on their 'last and main job' before birth just under nine in ten (88 per cent) mothers were employees and a further 8 per cent were workers, with the remaining 4 per cent self-employed.

The employment status of mothers varies in particular by region, with those in London more likely to be self-employed (8 per cent; 3 per cent outside London) and by ethnicity, with Asian mothers significantly more likely to be workers (17 per cent; 7 per cent of White and 8 per cent of Black ethnicities). The proportion of mothers that were self-employed before birth also increases with age (none among mothers aged 25 and under, up to 9 per cent among mothers aged 40+).

The vast majority (79 per cent) of fathers were also employees before birth and 6 per cent were workers, however they were more likely than mothers to be self-employed in the 10 months prior to their child's birth/adoption (15 per cent; 4 per cent of mothers).

Among parents that took SPL a significantly higher proportion (96 per cent), than compared with core mothers and fathers, were employees before birth.

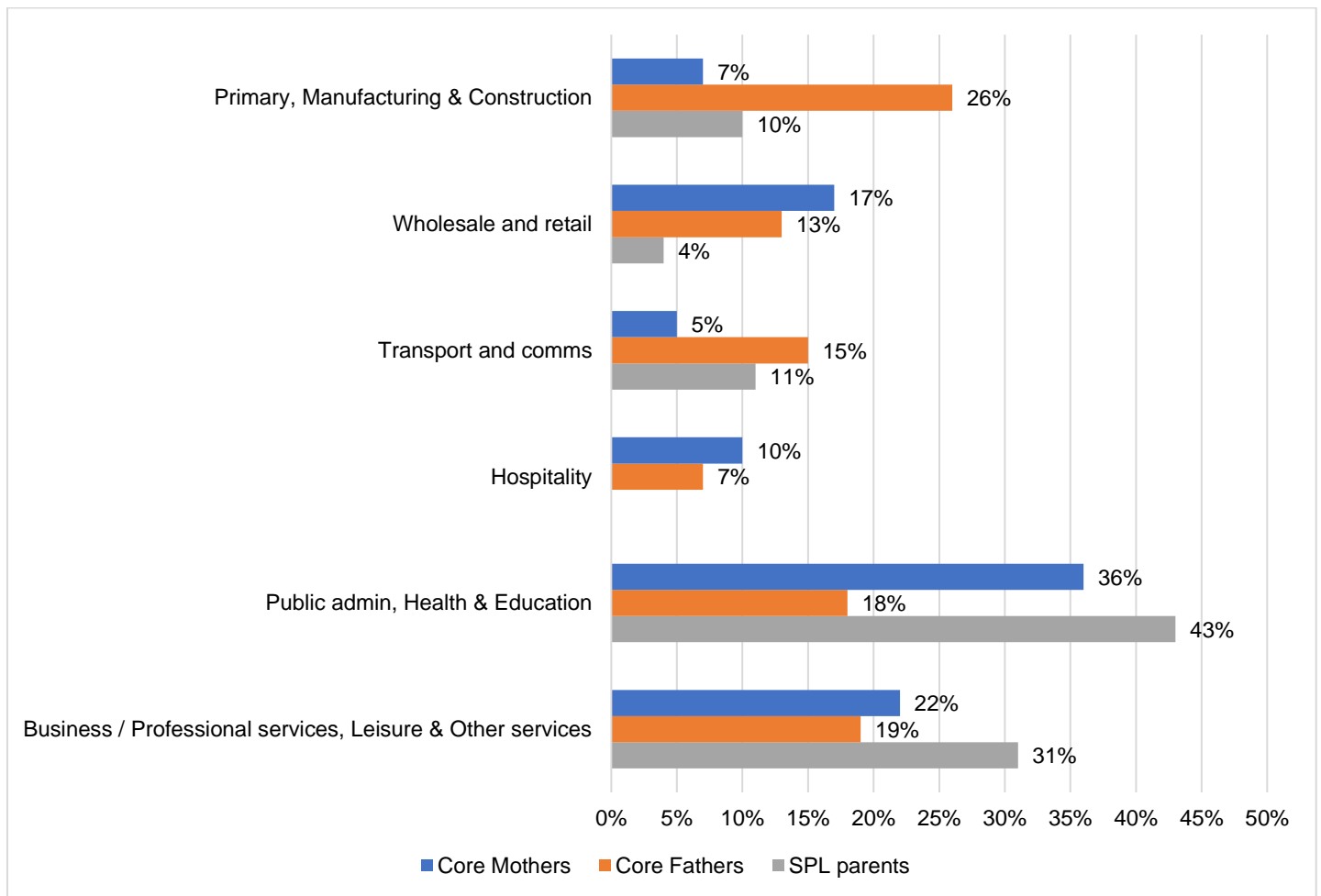
3.2.2 Sector and occupation before birth

The highest proportion (36 per cent) of mothers were working in public administration, health or education prior to the birth of their child. Business, professional and other services accounted for the next highest proportion (22 per cent), followed by wholesale and retail (17 per cent).

Fathers were most likely to be working in the primary, manufacturing or construction sector (26 per cent), while around one in five fathers worked in public administration, health or education (18 per cent) or in business, professional or other services (19 per cent).

Parents that took SPL were more likely than mothers and fathers in general to have been working in either public administration, health or education (43 per cent) or business, professional or other services (31 per cent), with these sectors accounting for around three quarters of all the parents that took SPL (74 per cent; 58 per cent of all mothers and 37 per cent of fathers).

Figure 3.5: Sector worked in before birth/adoption (All respondents)



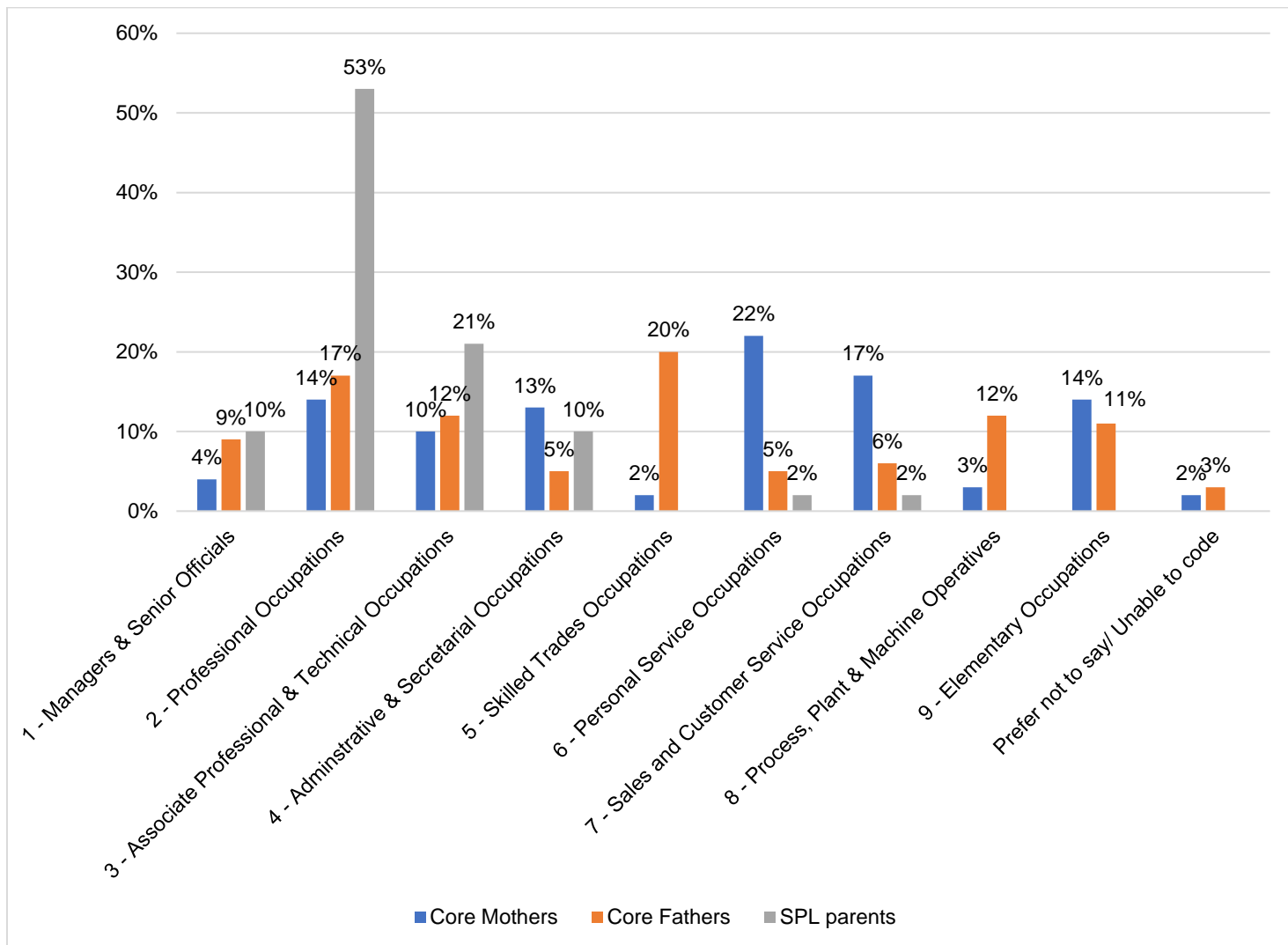
Q49. What the organisation they worked for made/did: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336 N.B. Bars may not add to 100% due to some response codes being suppressed because of low responses

In terms of occupational grouping, the highest proportions of mothers were working in personal service (22 per cent) or sales and customer service occupations (17 per cent) prior to the birth or adoption of their child and were significantly more likely than fathers to be in these occupations.

Skilled trades occupations accounted for the highest proportion of fathers (20 per cent; 2 per cent of mothers), while fathers were significantly more likely than mothers to have been in manager/senior official and professional occupations prior to birth/adoption (26 per cent of fathers; 18 per cent of mothers).

Parents that took SPL were more likely than mothers and fathers generally to have been working in more senior occupations, with nearly two thirds (63 per cent) in manager/senior official or professional occupations, compared with 18 per cent of all mothers and 26 per cent of all fathers.

Figure 3.6: Occupation: Prior to child's birth/adoption (All respondents)



Q50. What kind of work they did: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336 N.B. Bars may not add to 100% due to some response codes being suppressed because of low responses

3.2.3 Gender composition of organisation worked for

Around half of mothers (52 per cent), fathers (50 per cent) and parents that took SPL (51 per cent) were working in organisations composed of about equal proportions of men and women prior to the birth or adoption of their child. While just under two in five (37 per cent) mothers worked where employees were all/mostly women, and the same proportion (37 per cent) of fathers worked where all/most were men.

For SPL parents almost the same proportion (23 per cent) worked where employees were all/mostly women and around half worked in organisations of about equal proportions of men and women (51 per cent).

3.2.4 Size of organisation worked for

Two in five (39 per cent) mothers were working in small businesses, with fewer than 50 staff, in the 10 months prior to the birth/adoption of their child and were significantly more likely to be doing so than compared with fathers (29 per cent) and compared with parents that took SPL (12 per cent).

Fathers (45 per cent) and particularly parents that took SPL (72 per cent) were significantly more likely than mothers to be working in large businesses with over 250 staff.

Overall, just over a quarter (26 per cent) of parents that took SPL were working in SMEs, compared with just under half of all fathers (47 per cent) and nearly six in ten mothers (57 per cent).

Table 3.3: Size of employer: pre-birth job (Employees and workers)

	Core Mothers	Core Fathers	SPL parents
Under 50 employees	39% ⁺⁺	29%	12%
50-249 employees	18%	18%	15%
250+ employees	37%	45% ⁺	72% ⁺⁺
SME total:	57% ⁺⁺	47% ⁺	26%
Don't know/prefer not to say	6%	8%	2%

+ = significantly higher at 95 per cent level of confidence than one other column

++ = significantly higher than both other columns

Q56. How many employees worked in your organisation: Core mothers: 1,858; Core fathers: 900; Parents that took SPL: 330

3.2.5 Organisation type

The majority of mothers (71 per cent) and a higher proportion of fathers (80 per cent) were working for profit-making organisations prior to birth, while mothers were more likely than fathers to work in central government financed bodies (15 per cent; 10 per cent).

Interestingly, parents that took SPL were significantly more likely than both mothers and fathers generally to work in central government (30 per cent) and in charities/voluntary organisations (14 per cent). These differences are summarised in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Organisation type: pre-birth job (Employees and workers)

	Core Mothers	Core Fathers	SPL parents
MAINLY seeking to make a profit	71%+	80%++	49%
A charity or voluntary sector organisation or a social enterprise	3%	3%	14%++
A local-government financed body	9%	5%	6%
A central government financed body	15%+	10%	30%++

+ = significantly higher at 95 per cent level of confidence than one other column

++= significantly higher than both other columns

Q58. Would you classify the organisation as ...: Core mothers: 1,858; Core fathers: 900; Parents that took SPL: 330

3.2.6 Supervisory responsibilities before birth

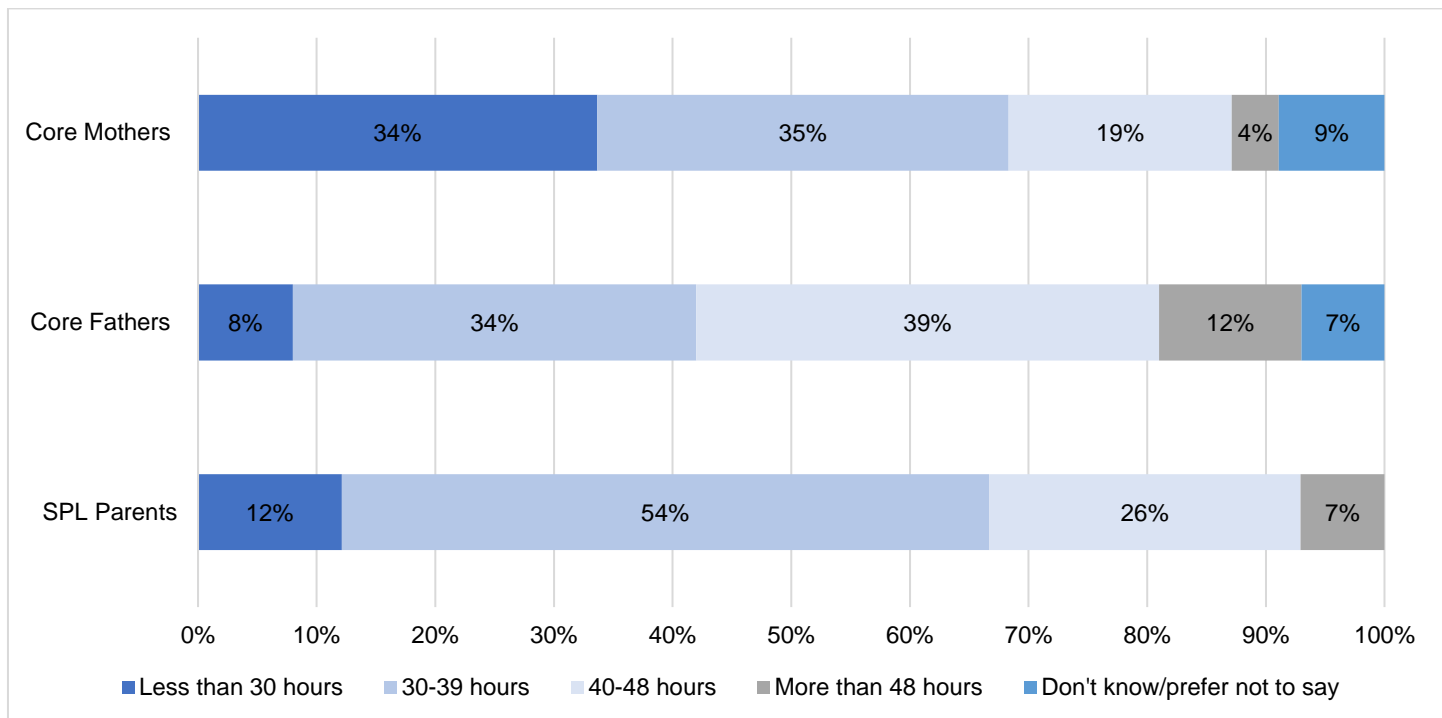
Around one in four (26 per cent) mothers had supervisory responsibilities in the job they were in prior to the birth/adoption of their child, compared with a significantly higher proportion (37 per cent) of fathers, and over half (55 per cent) of parents that took SPL.

3.2.7 Income and hours worked before birth

Mothers were more likely than fathers to be working part time hours (i.e., less than 30 hours per week) before the birth of their child, with a third (34 per cent) of mothers doing so, compared with 8 per cent of fathers. Fathers were more likely than mothers to be working between 40 and 48 hours per week (39 per cent; 19 per cent of mothers).

SPL parents were also less likely than mothers to be working part time before birth (12 per cent), and the largest proportion (54 per cent) worked between 30 and 39 hours per week.

Figure 3.7: Typical number of hours worked per week: pre-birth (All respondents)



Q60/61. Typical number of hours worked per week: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336 N.B. Bars may not add to 100% due to some response codes being suppressed due to low responses

On average mothers were working 31 hours per week before birth, compared with 39 hours per week for fathers and 37 hours per week among parents that took SPL.

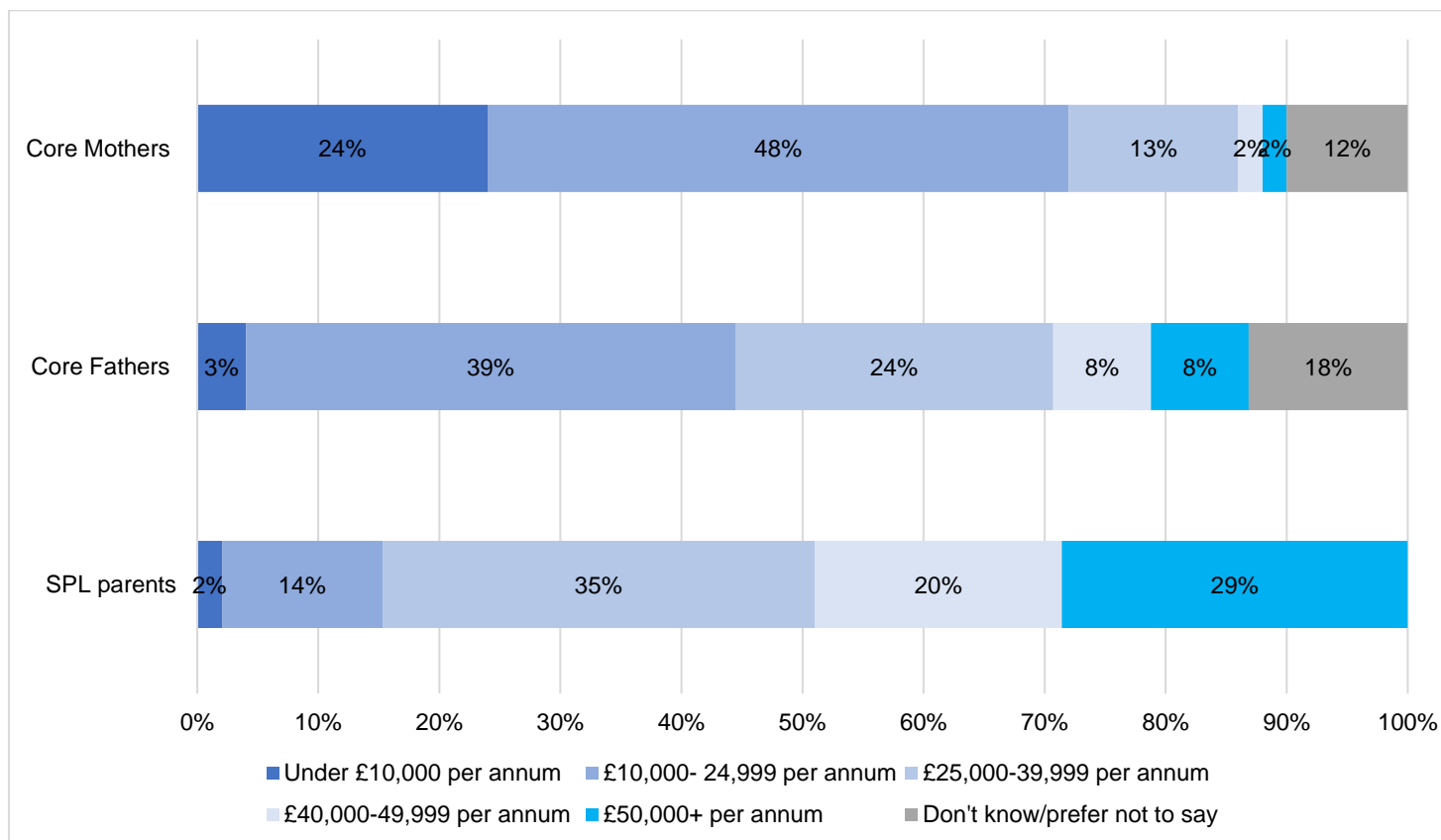
Based on their normal gross earnings before birth, mothers from the core sample were earning less than fathers. Parents that took SPL were significantly more likely to be on higher incomes, compared with both mothers and fathers in general.

Around one in four (24 per cent) mothers were earning less than £10,000 per annum in the last main job they were in before the birth of their child, compared with significantly fewer fathers (3 per cent) and parents that took SPL (2 per cent).

Just 4 per cent of mothers were earning £40,000 or more before the birth or adoption of their child, compared with four times as many fathers (16 per cent). Among parents that took SPL, half (48 per cent) were earning at least £40,000 per annum.

On average mothers were earning just under £17,200 per annum, compared with a significantly higher average of just under £28,900 among fathers, and an even higher average of just under £43,500 among parents that took SPL.

Figure 3.8: Normal gross earnings (per annum): pre-birth (All respondents)



Q63/68. Normal gross earnings in last main job before birth: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336 N.B. Bars may not add to 100% due to some response codes being suppressed due to low responses

3.2.8 Trade union presence in pre-birth employer

In one in three cases (33 per cent in each case) mothers and fathers that were employees or workers before birth/adoption had a staff association or trade union at their workplace, while among parents that took SPL the proportion is higher, at nearly half (46 per cent).

The presence of a staff association or trade union is noticeably higher among fathers based in Wales (48 per cent) and in the largest organisations (47 per cent where 250+ staff are employed; 16 per cent in SMEs), as well as among fathers in the transport and communications sector (40 per cent) and public administration, health and education (54 per cent).

Trade unions or staff associations were more likely to be reported among older mothers aged 30 years and over at their workplace, those with qualifications at degree level or above (51 per cent), with an income of £40,000 or more (56 per cent), mothers working in larger organisations (54 per cent where 250+ were employed), and in central government (70 per cent).

Overall, fifteen per cent of mothers and the same proportion of fathers that were employees or workers were members of a trade union or staff association, prior to the birth or adoption of their child, compared with just over one in five (22 per cent) SPL parents.

3.3 Chapter Summary

Some of the key points from this chapter, detailing the characteristics of core mothers, fathers and SPL parents with a child that was born or adopted in 2017, include:

- Mothers of children born or adopted in 2017 were significantly younger than fathers, by a difference of 5 years on average. Among mothers the average age was 30 years; compared with 35 years for fathers.
- Just under half (46 per cent) of mothers were married and living with their spouse. The next highest proportion were co-habiting with a partner (28 per cent). One in four (25 per cent) mothers were lone parents, and the proportion is significantly higher among mothers aged under 25 years (57 per cent) and mothers of Black ethnic groups (52 per cent).
- Mothers were more likely than fathers to have progressive attitudes towards gender roles, including that they were more likely than fathers to disagree that 'a man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family' and to agree that 'having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person'.
- In terms of their last main job before the birth or adoption of their child, the vast majority of mothers (88 per cent) and fathers (79 per cent) were employees before birth, with relatively few classed as workers (8 per cent of mothers and 6 per cent of fathers). Fathers were significantly more likely than mothers to be self-employed (15 per cent; 4 per cent).
- By sector, mothers were most likely to be working in public administration, health or education prior to the birth of their child (36 per cent), while fathers were most likely to be working in the primary, manufacturing or construction sector (26 per cent).
- Fathers were significantly more likely than mothers to have been in the most senior occupations i.e., working as managers/senior officials or in professional occupations prior to birth/adoption (26 per cent of fathers; 18 per cent of mothers).
- Mothers were less likely than fathers to be in supervisory roles before birth (26 per cent; 37 per cent), more likely to be working part time (34 per cent worked fewer than 30 hours per week; 8 per cent of fathers) and more likely to be on a lower income than compared with fathers (£17,200 per annum on average; £28,900 respectively).

A number of differences are apparent among SPL parents compared with core mothers and fathers including that SPL parents were significantly more likely:

- To be older (36 years on average);
- To be married (81 per cent; 46 per cent of mothers and 71 per cent of fathers);
- To describe their ethnicity as White (92 per cent; 85 per cent of mothers and 70 per cent of fathers);
- To hold higher-level qualifications (88 per cent were qualified to degree level; 32 per cent of fathers and 28 per cent of mothers);
- To hold progressive attitudes towards gender roles (96 per cent disagreed that 'a man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and family' and 94 per

cent agreed 'men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children');

- To be employees in their last main job before birth (96 per cent); to have been working in either public administration, health or education, or business, professional or other services (74 per cent; 58 per cent of all mothers and 37 per cent of fathers), and in the most senior occupations i.e., as managers/senior officials or in professional occupations (63 per cent; 18 per cent of all mothers and 26 per cent of all fathers);
- To have been on significantly higher incomes before birth (£43,500 per annum on average; £17,200 for mothers and £28,900 for fathers);
- To have had a staff association or trade union at their pre-birth workplace (46 per cent; 33 per cent of core mothers and fathers).

4 Leave entitlements: experience and impact

This chapter explores levels of awareness and take up among mothers, fathers and parents taking Shared Parental Leave, in terms of the leave and time off they were entitled to, both before and after the birth or adoption of their child, as well as the impact this leave has had on them.

4.1 Time off for antenatal appointments

Employers must give pregnant employees time off for antenatal care and pay their normal rate for this time off. Antenatal care is not just medical appointments - it can also include antenatal or parenting classes if they've been recommended by a doctor or midwife. The father or pregnant woman's partner has the right to unpaid time off work to go to 2 antenatal appointments.

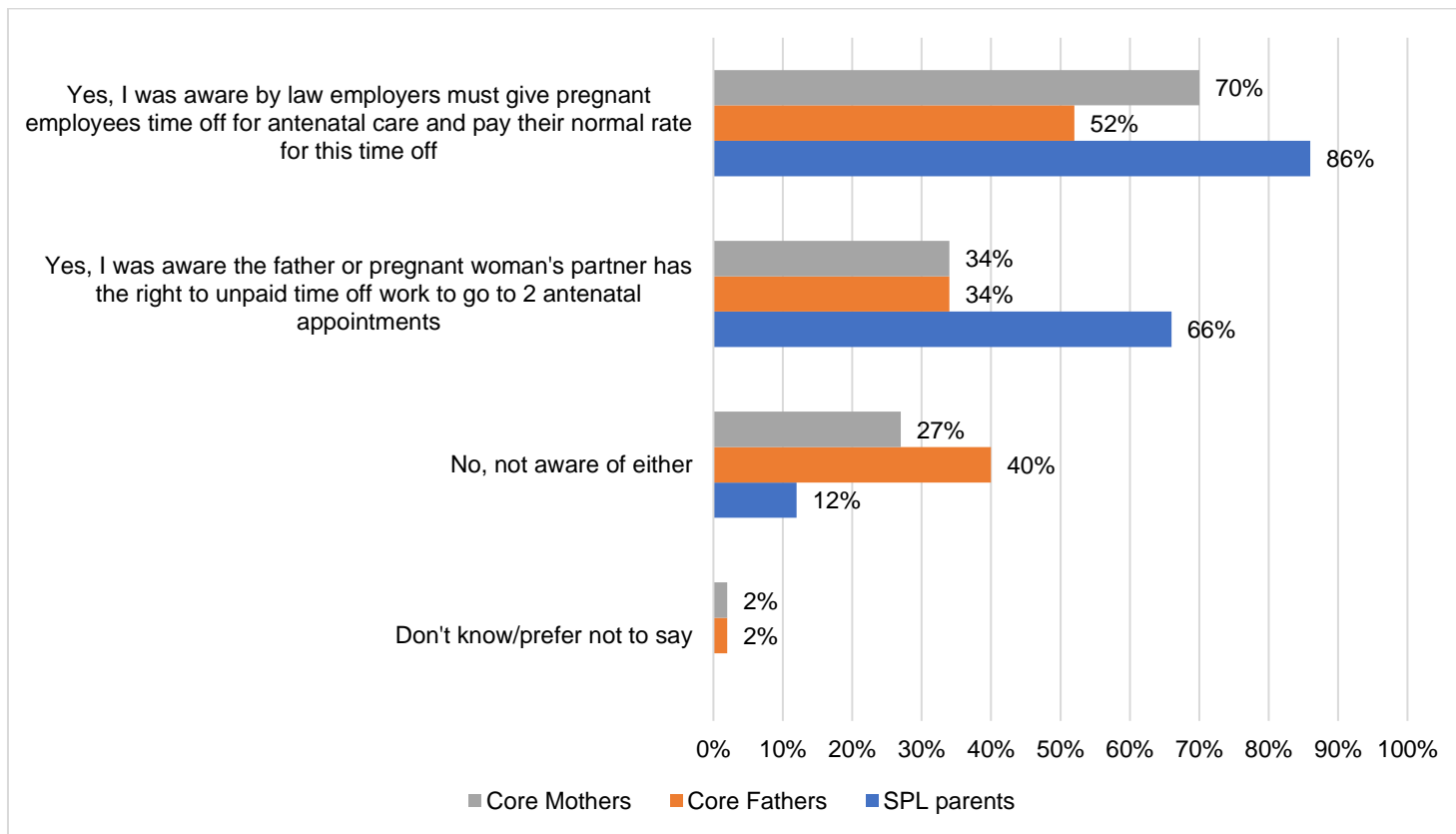
Fathers report lower awareness of the law with regards to pregnant employees having time off for antenatal appointments, than compared with mothers. While awareness of the law for both pregnant employees and for fathers/partners was highest among parents that took SPL.

Seven in ten (70 per cent) mothers were aware that by law employers must give pregnant employees time off for antenatal care and pay their normal rate for this time off compared with just over half (52 per cent) of fathers and nearly nine in ten (86 per cent) SPL parents.

Just one in three (34 per cent) mothers and fathers from the core sample were aware that the father or pregnant woman's partner has the right to unpaid time off work to go to 2 antenatal appointments. This compares with two thirds (66 per cent) of parents that took SPL.

Two in five (40 per cent) fathers admit to not being aware of pregnant women's nor father's/partner's rights to time off for antenatal appointments.

Figure 4.1: Awareness of the law for time off for antenatal appointments (All respondents)



Q153. Awareness of laws regarding time off for antenatal appointments: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336

Among mothers, awareness of the law with regards to antenatal appointments varies by age, ethnicity and whether the mother has a health condition, as well as by qualification level, the size of company they worked for before birth, job tenure and organisation type.

Around half (49 per cent) of mothers aged under 25 were not aware of either law concerning time off for pregnant employees or fathers/partners for antenatal care or appointments. The proportions that were not aware of either of these laws is also higher than average among mothers with a health condition, among mothers of all other ethnic groups combined, mothers with qualifications below degree or no formal qualifications, mothers working in SMEs and profit-making organisations.

Awareness of father's/partner's rights to time off for antenatal appointments, among mothers, is generally low across all sub-groups of the population, even in large companies employing 250+ staff (36 per cent) and among those working in local government (34 per cent) or central government (38 per cent) before birth.

Table 4.1: Awareness of the law with regards to time off for antenatal appointments (All mothers)

		Aware by law employers must give pregnant employees time off for antenatal care and pay their normal rate for this time off	Aware the father or pregnant woman's partner has the right to unpaid time off work to go to 2 antenatal appointments	No, not aware of either
All mothers (1,959)		70%	34%	27%
Age	Under 25 (130)	50%-	23%-	49%+
	25-29 years (418)	68%	36%	28%
	30-34 years (655)	76%+	40%+	20%-
	35-39 years (468)	76%+	40%+	20%
	40+ years (185)	79%+	34%	17%-
Ethnicity	White (1642)	71%+	35%+	26%-
	Black (84)	63%	18%-	34%
	Asian (184)	62%-	24%-	32%
Any physical or mental condition	Yes (154)	60%-	32%	37%+
	No (1797)	71%+	34%	26%-
Highest qualification	Degree level or above (692)	83%+	43%+	14%-
	Below degree/no qualifications (1241)	65%-	30%-	32%+
Size of employer – before birth	Less than 250 employees (SME) (996)	66%-	32%-	30%+
	250+ employees (757)	78%+	36%	19%-
Duration of main job before birth	Less than 2 years	44%-	25%-	54%+
	2 to 5 years	71%	37%+	26%
	More than 5 years	85%+	42%+	13%-
	Profit-making (1244)	65%-	32%	32%+

Organisation type	Charity/voluntary org. (66)	82%+	45%	17%
	Local government (175)	89%+	34%	9%-
	Central government (345)	82%	38%	15%-

+/- = significantly higher/lower than all mothers on average. Q153. Awareness of laws regarding time off for antenatal appointments: Core mothers: 1,959. Other base sizes are in parenthesis.

The level of the mother's seniority/occupational grouping also seems to have an influence on their awareness of the law, with more than eight in ten mothers in managers & senior official roles (82 per cent) and professional occupations (88 per cent) that said they were aware of pregnant employees' entitlement, compared with around two in three (65 per cent) in personal service occupations and around half (51 per cent) in elementary occupations. Nearly half (48 per cent) of mothers in elementary occupations said they were not aware of either pregnant employees' entitlement or the father/partner's rights, compared with 15 per cent of mothers in manager and senior official positions.

Just over two in three (63 per cent) mothers said they took time off work to attend antenatal appointments, compared with fewer fathers (57 per cent) and a significantly higher proportion of parents that took SPL (87 per cent).

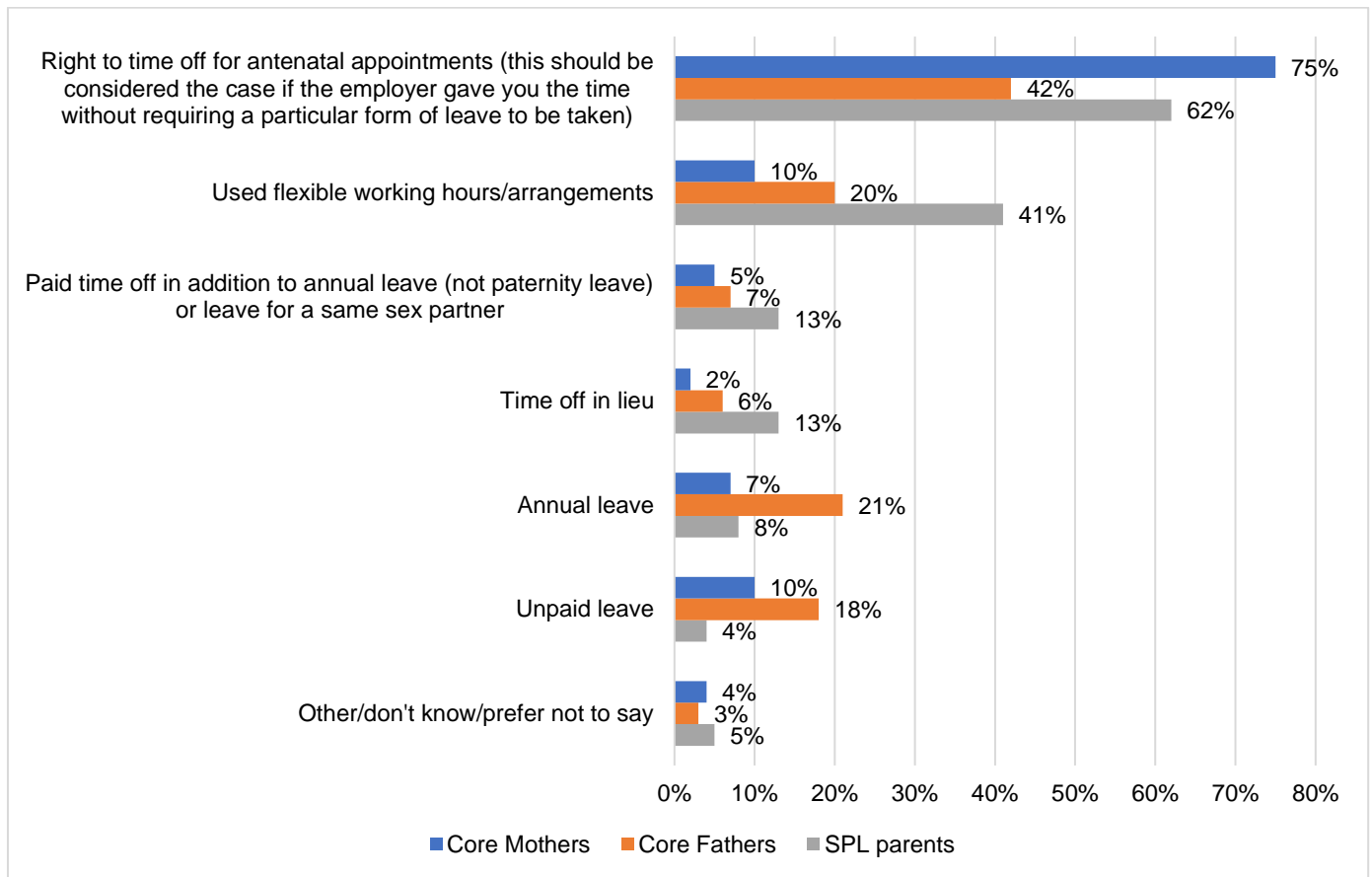
Among mothers, the proportion that took time off for antenatal appointments is lower than average among those aged under 25 (52 per cent), mothers of Asian ethnicity (56 per cent), those with a health condition (53 per cent), lone parents (49 per cent), mothers qualified below degree level or with no qualifications (58 per cent; and 54 per cent among mothers with no qualifications), and those working in smaller companies (56 per cent where less than 50 staff are employed). Levels are lower still among mothers earning less than £10,000 per annum (40 per cent), those in the hospitality sector (38 per cent), in skilled, process and elementary occupations (46 per cent) and particularly low among workers (28 per cent; 67 per cent of employees and 53 per cent of self-employed mothers).

Among fathers the take up of leave for antenatal appointments is notably lower among those qualified below degree level (54 per cent) or with no qualifications (49 per cent); 63 per cent at degree level or above; where the father worked part time (28 per cent), was a worker (45 per cent), earned under £20,000 per annum (46 per cent), worked in the wholesale and retail sector (46 per cent) and in lower occupational groups (52 per cent among those in skilled, process & elementary occupations).

On average mothers took time off from work to attend 6 antenatal appointments, as did parents that took SPL, while among core fathers the average is lower, at 4 appointments.

Where parents did take time off for antenatal appointments, mothers are most likely to have done so using the right to time off for antenatal appointments (75 per cent). The highest proportion of fathers and SPL parents also did so using their right to time off. However, fathers are more likely than mothers to have taken annual leave or unpaid leave. SPL parents are more likely than both mothers and fathers generally to have used flexible working hours, had time off in lieu or had paid time off, in addition to annual leave.

Figure 4.2: How time off for antenatal appointments was taken (Employees/workers that took time off for antenatal appointments)



Q156. How time off for antenatal appointments was taken: Core mothers: 1041; Core fathers: 477; Parents that took SPL: 254

4.2 Awareness of leave entitlements

At the time of the survey employed mothers were legally allowed up to 52 weeks as Maternity Leave, while the introduction of Shared Parental Leave and Pay in 2015 allowed parents to share up to 50 weeks of leave. All three groups of parents were asked, by law how much leave they thought they and their partner were entitled to have in total.

Parents that took SPL were the most likely of the three groups of parents to have a view as to the amount of leave they and their partner were legally entitled to, with 70 per cent that believed they were entitled to 52 weeks leave and just 5 per cent that did not know.

The highest proportion (37 per cent) of mothers also believed they and their partner were entitled to 52 weeks in total, while one in five (20 per cent) thought they were entitled to 39 weeks and a further one in five (19 per cent) were not sure or preferred not to say. Around one in eight (13 per cent) mothers believed they were entitled to more than a year's leave.

Fathers were the most uncertain, with the highest proportion (32 per cent) that said they don't know or preferred not to say what they thought their entitlement was, while one in five (20 per cent) believed they were entitled to 1-2 weeks, one in seven (14 per cent) thought they were entitled to 52 weeks, and 11 per cent that thought the entitlement was over a year in total for them and their partner.

Table 4.2: Amount of leave respondents thought they and their partner were allowed to have in total when their baby was born (All respondents)

	Core Mothers	Core Fathers	SPL parents
Up to 2 weeks	1%	20%++	
3-38 weeks	5%	8%	5%
39 weeks	20%++	7%	6%
40-51 weeks	5%	8%	4%
52 weeks	37%+	14%	70%++
More than 52 weeks	13%	11%	10%
Don't know/prefer not to say	19%+	32%++	5%

+ = significantly higher at 95 per cent level of confidence than one other column

++= significantly higher than both other columns

Q149. By law how much leave they thought they and their partner were allowed to have in total: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336

4.3 Leave taken

4.3.1 Summary of leave taken

The following table summarises the leave taken by mothers and fathers from the core sample, as well as SPL parents.

Table 4.3: Summary of leave taken (All respondents)

	Core Mothers	Core Fathers	SPL Parents
Maternity Leave	83%	N/A	47%
Paternity Leave	N/A	59%	43%
Shared parental leave	1%	4%	100%
Took time off but not statutory leave	6%	21%	19%
No time off	9%	18%	N/A

Q10. Which, if any, of the following types of statutory leave did you take in the 12 months after your child was born/adopted? Core Mothers: 1959; Core Fathers: 1062; SPL Parents: 336

Overall, just over four in five (83 per cent) mothers took Maternity Leave following the birth or adoption of their child, 6 per cent took time off but it was not categorised as a formal type of statutory leave; while 1 per cent took Shared Parental Leave, and 9 per cent did not take any time off.

The proportion of mothers that took Maternity Leave is higher than average among mothers aged 35 and over (88 per cent; 81 per cent among those under 35), mothers of White ethnicity (84 per cent; 78 per cent among all other ethnic groups combined), and mothers with higher-level qualifications (92 per cent among those qualified to degree or above; 80 per cent below degree level). Maternity Leave take-up was also most commonly reported among those who were employees (89 per cent; 36 per cent of workers and 61 per cent of self-employed mothers), worked full time hours (89 per cent; 76 per cent among part time), those who were on higher incomes (96 per cent among those on £40,000 or more; 81 per cent among those earning under £20,000), mothers working in public administration, health and education sectors (88 per cent) and in higher occupational groups (96 per cent among managers and senior officials; 70 per cent among mothers in skilled, process and elementary occupations). Where mothers had worked in their job for at least 2 years take-up of Maternity Leave was higher (47 per cent among those who had been in their job for less than 2 years; 90 per cent for 2 to 5 years and 96 per cent for more than 5 years).

The proportion of mothers that did not take any time off following the birth or adoption of their child is particularly high among mothers that had been in their job for less than 2 years (39 per cent) and increases to nearly one in four (23 per cent) among mothers under the age of 25. The proportion of mothers taking no time off is also higher than average among lone parents (19 per cent), Asian mothers (16 per cent), those with a health condition (22 per cent), and mothers with lower-level qualifications (11 per cent among those qualified below degree level; 5 per cent at degree level or above).

Mothers who were workers before the birth or adoption of their child were also much more likely to say they took no time off (41 per cent), as were self-employed mothers (18 per cent) compared with mothers who were employees before birth (6 per cent).

Income also appears to be a determining factor, with mothers that earned less than £20,000 per annum more likely than those on higher incomes not to have taken any form of leave (12 per cent; just 1 per cent among those earning £40,000 or more per annum). The proportion that did not take any time off is also higher than average among mothers who worked in the hospitality sector before birth/adoption (19 per cent) and those in skilled, process and elementary occupations (18 per cent).

Take up of Paternity Leave is lower than for Maternity Leave. Three in five (59 per cent) fathers took Paternity Leave following the birth or adoption of their child, while 4 per cent took Shared Parental Leave and one in five (21 per cent) took time off that was not categorised as a formal type of parental leave. Just under one in five (18 per cent) of all fathers said they did not take any time off, which is twice as high as the proportion among mothers (9 per cent).

Among the fathers that were employees before the birth of their child, the proportion that took Paternity Leave increases to 70 per cent, and 86 per cent took some form of leave.

Fathers that worked in larger organisations were more likely than fathers on average to have taken Paternity Leave (79 per cent where at least 250 were employed), as were fathers that worked in public administration, health or education (74 per cent), in professional occupations (78 per cent) or associate professional and technical occupations (75 per cent) and where they have worked in their job for more than 5 years (66 per cent).

The proportion of fathers that took no time off after the birth or adoption of their child increases significantly among Black and Asian fathers (32 per cent and 29 per cent respectively); among those with no formal qualifications (32 per cent); is higher among those living inside London than outside (26 per cent; 16 per cent) and among fathers that were workers (38 per cent) or self-employed (44 per cent).

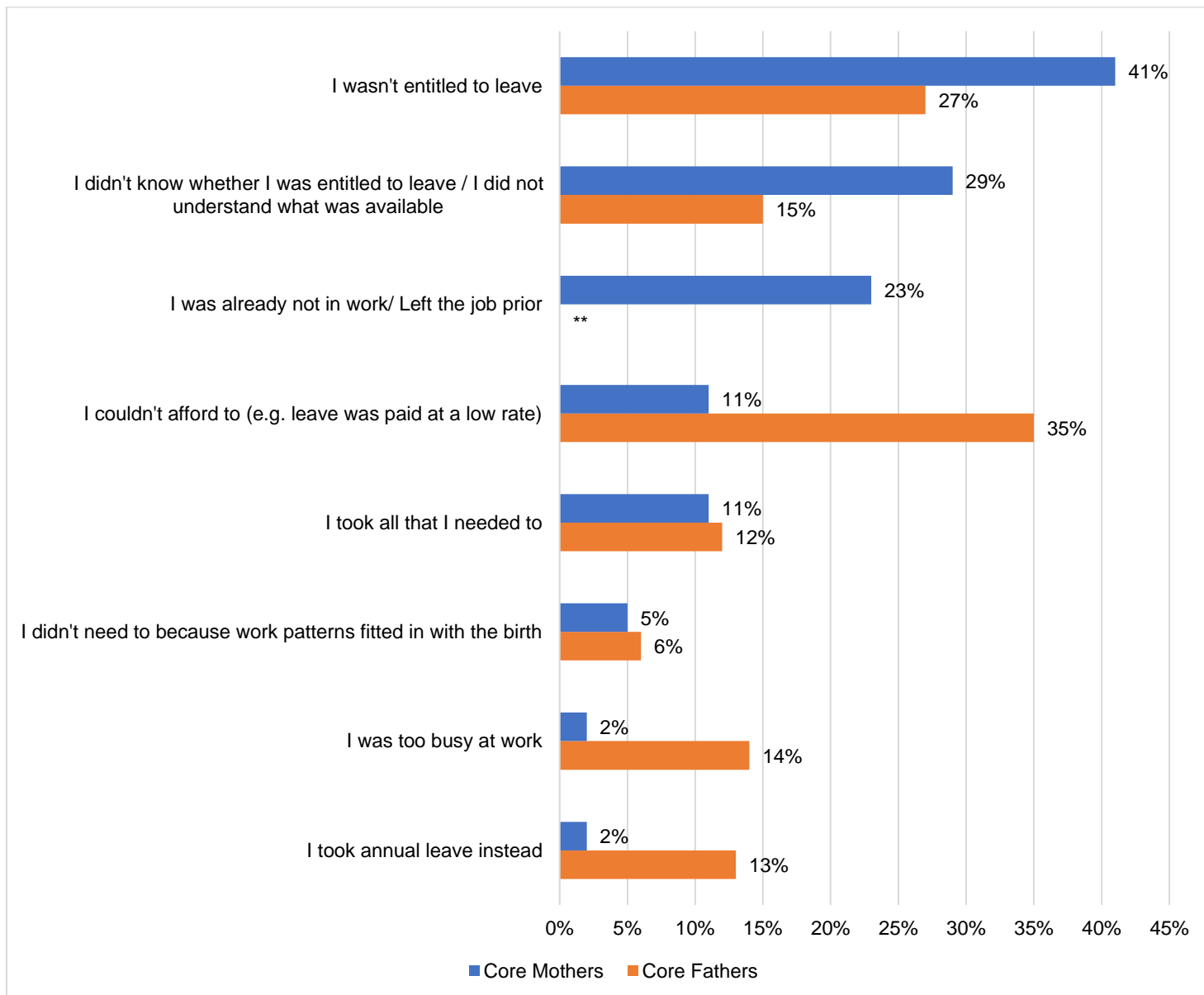
As with mothers, income also appears to be a factor among fathers; just over half (54 per cent) of fathers earning less than £20,000 per annum took Paternity Leave, compared with four in five (79 per cent) fathers earning at least £40,000 per annum. One in four (27 per cent) fathers on incomes below £20,000 took no leave at all, compared with 7 per cent of fathers on the highest incomes (£40,000 or more).

4.3.2 Reasons for not taking any statutory leave or any leave at all

Figure 4.3 shows that for mothers that took no leave at all or took other leave that was not statutory, the most frequently mentioned reason is the belief that they were not entitled to leave (41 per cent). More than one in four (29 per cent) did not know whether they were entitled to leave, and just under one in four (23 per cent) left work prior to the birth of their child. One in ten (11 per cent) mothers said they could not afford to take statutory leave following the birth or adoption of their child.

Fathers that did not take statutory leave were more than three times as likely as mothers to say this was because they could not afford to (35 per cent), with the next highest proportion (27 per cent) that said they were not entitled to any statutory leave. Around one in seven (15 per cent) fathers were not sure of their entitlements, or said they were too busy at work to take leave (14 per cent).

Figure 4.3: Reasons for not taking any statutory leave (Where no statutory leave was taken)



Q170. Why no statutory leave was taken when their child was born/adopted: Core mothers: 252; Core fathers: 381 – Only reasons most frequently mentioned are included. ** suppressed due to low number of responses.

Among mothers where no statutory leave was taken, uncertainty over what leave they were entitled to is higher than average among workers (43 per cent), as is the proportion that said they were not entitled to any leave (58 per cent). Uncertainty over their entitlement is also higher among mothers on lower incomes (34 per cent among mothers that were earning less than £20,000).

Among fathers where no statutory leave was taken, the proportion that thought they were not entitled to any leave is higher than average among those who were self-employed (38 per cent). While the proportion that could not afford to take leave increases to just under half (47 per cent) among fathers where their income was £20,000- £39,999.

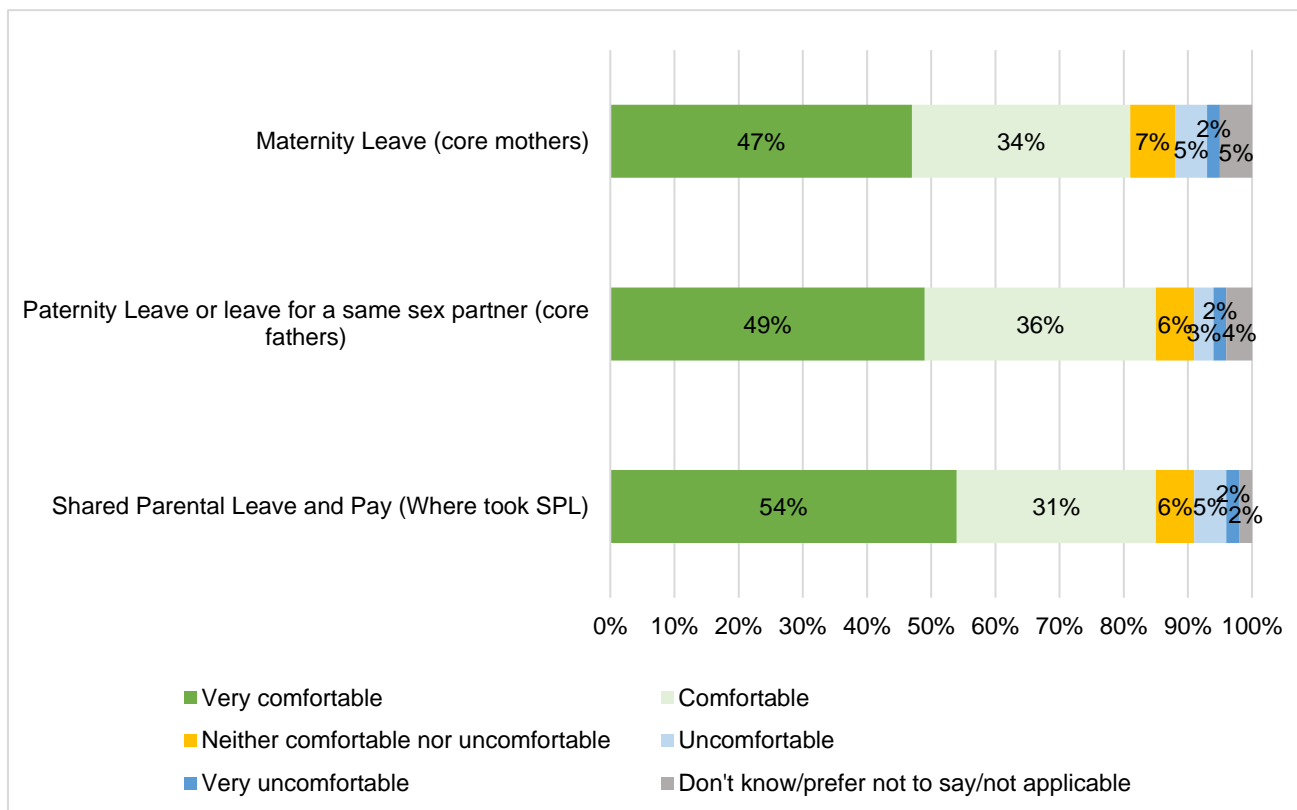
When fathers who did not take any time at all off (statutory or otherwise), from the time their baby was born to twelve months later were asked why this was, the highest proportion (31 per cent) said they were not entitled to any leave. The self-employed were more likely (41 per cent) to report not being entitled to any leave. The second most frequently mentioned (22 per cent) reason is that they could not afford to, and just under one in five (17 per cent) did not know

what their entitlement was. The share of fathers reporting they could not afford to take any leave was higher among fathers in skilled, process or elementary occupations (28 per cent) and where their household income was £20,000-£39,000 (32 per cent).

4.3.3 How comfortable parents felt asking their employer for leave and any difficulties they faced

The vast majority of mothers, fathers and parents that took SPL felt comfortable asking their employer for the type of leave available to them, with around half in each case that felt 'very comfortable'. Just 7 per cent of mothers, 5 per cent of fathers and 7 per cent of parents that took SPL felt uncomfortable at all about asking their employers for leave.

Figure 4.4: How comfortable parents felt asking for each type of leave (Employees and workers)



Q218. How comfortable did or would you feel asking your employer for each type of leave: Core mothers: 1844; Core fathers: 900; Parents that took SPL: 330

Younger mothers under the age of 25 were less likely to feel comfortable asking their employer about Maternity Leave (68 per cent; 81 per cent among mothers on average), as were mothers with a health condition (70 per cent), lone parents (72 per cent), those with no qualifications (69 per cent) and lower-level qualifications generally (79 per cent among mothers qualified below degree; 87 per cent where they were qualified to degree level or above). The proportion of mothers that felt comfortable is also lower among mothers who were workers (57 per cent) rather than employees (83 per cent) before birth; those who worked in smaller companies (76 per cent where less than 50 staff were employed); the hospitality sector (69 per cent) and in skilled, process and elementary occupations (72 per cent).

Mothers that were more likely to feel comfortable asking their employer for Maternity Leave include those working in public administration, health and education sectors (84 per cent),

central government (88%), professional occupations (86 per cent), where a trade union was present (87 per cent), in larger organisations (86 per cent where 250+ were employed) and those qualified to degree or above (87 per cent).

There is also a significant difference in how comfortable mothers felt based on how long mothers had worked in their job, with mothers who had worked in their job for less than 2 years significantly less likely to have felt comfortable asking for Maternity Leave (57 per cent; 85 per cent for mother that had been in their job for 2 to 5 years and 92 per cent where they had worked there for more than 5 years).

Among fathers, those that were more likely to feel comfortable asking for leave include those qualified to degree or above (88 per cent), working full time hours before birth (87 per cent; 77 per cent working part time hours), on higher incomes (94 per cent among those earning £40,000 or more), in larger organisations (89 per cent where 250+ were employed), in central government (95 per cent), in public administration, health and education sectors (91 per cent) and in professional (94 per cent) and associate professional and technical occupations (95 per cent), and where a trade union was present (92 per cent).

Fathers who were workers (58 per cent) rather than employees (87 per cent) were less likely to have felt comfortable asking their employer, as were those working in smaller companies (78 per cent where less than 50 were employed; 89 per cent in companies with 250+ staff) and fathers in skilled, process and elementary occupations (79 per cent).

Looking at specific problems that employees might have encountered with their employers when taking leave, the majority in each parent group experienced none. However, one in ten (10 per cent) mothers believed their employer lacked knowledge about their leave entitlements and benefits, compared with 7 per cent of fathers and a significantly higher proportion (40 per cent) of parents that took SPL.

Overall, fathers are most likely to say they had no difficulties with their employer relating to their leave (89 per cent; 83 per cent of mothers), while parents that took SPL are much less likely to state that they had no difficulties (56 per cent).

Table 4.4: Whether employees/workers experienced any of the following difficulties with employers (Employees/workers)

	Mothers	Fathers	SPL parents
My employer lacked knowledge about my leave entitlements and benefits	10%	7%	40%++
My employer was unhappy about letting me take my leave	5%	3%	7%+
I was put under pressure to hand in my notice	2%+	1%	2%
I was encouraged to take time off earlier than I would have liked	2%+	1%	3%+
Other difficulties	1%	1%	7%
I had no difficulties with my employer relating to my leave	83%+	89%++	56%

+ = significantly higher at 95 per cent level of confidence than one other column

++= significantly higher than both other columns

Q219. Did you have any of the following difficulties with your employer relating to your parental leave/before you stopped work to have/adopt your baby: Core mothers: 1,858; Core fathers: 900; Parents that took SPL: 330

Among mothers, those who have a health condition were more likely to indicate that their employer lacked knowledge about their leave entitlements and benefits (23 per cent; 9 per cent among mothers that do not have a health condition), as were mothers with no formal qualifications (20 per cent). Mothers with a health condition were also more likely to say their employer was unhappy about letting them take leave (13 per cent).

Among fathers the proportion that said their employer lacked knowledge about their leave entitlements and benefit is higher than average where they worked in an organisation composed of all or mostly women (17 per cent). This was also the case among parents that took SPL, with just over half (53 per cent) of parents that took SPL and worked in an organisation composed of all or mostly women that said their employer lacked this knowledge.

4.3.4 Reasons why more leave was not taken.

Financial reasons dominate as to why mothers, fathers and those that took SPL did not take more leave after the birth/adoption of their child. In around two in five cases no longer being able to afford to remain on leave was cited as the reason for returning to work.

The second main reason, and significantly more so for parents that took SPL, was that they were not entitled to any more leave. While around one in seven mothers, fathers and SPL parents wanted to go back to work.

Concerns about harming their career/business, by taking more leave, were higher among fathers than mothers, and higher still among parents that took SPL.

Table 4.5: Top reasons for why more leave was not taken (All respondents)

	Mothers	Fathers	SPL parents
I could no longer afford to remain on leave	41%	41%	43%
I was not entitled to more leave/my leave came to an end	19%	22%+	34%++
I wanted to go back to work (general)	15%	14%	15%
I did not think I needed this time	10%	14%+	15%+
A longer break could have harmed my career/business	2%	5%+	11%++

+ = significantly higher at 95 per cent level of confidence that one other column

++= significantly higher than both other columns

Q220. Why did you not take more leave: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336

Among mothers living in Scotland the proportion that said they could no longer afford to remain on leave is significantly higher than average (68 per cent; 39 per cent in England and 40 per cent in Wales). Whilst by income before birth, mothers earning £20,000-£39,999 were most likely to say they could not afford to remain on leave (50 per cent; 40 per cent among those earning under £20,000 and 34 per cent among mothers earning £40,000 or more).

Fathers earning £20,000-£39,999 before birth were also more likely than fathers on higher or lower incomes to say they could not afford to remain on leave (48 per cent).

The proportion that said they could no longer afford to remain on leave is higher than average among fathers that have a health condition (60 per cent), and among fathers in skilled, process and elementary occupations (49 per cent).

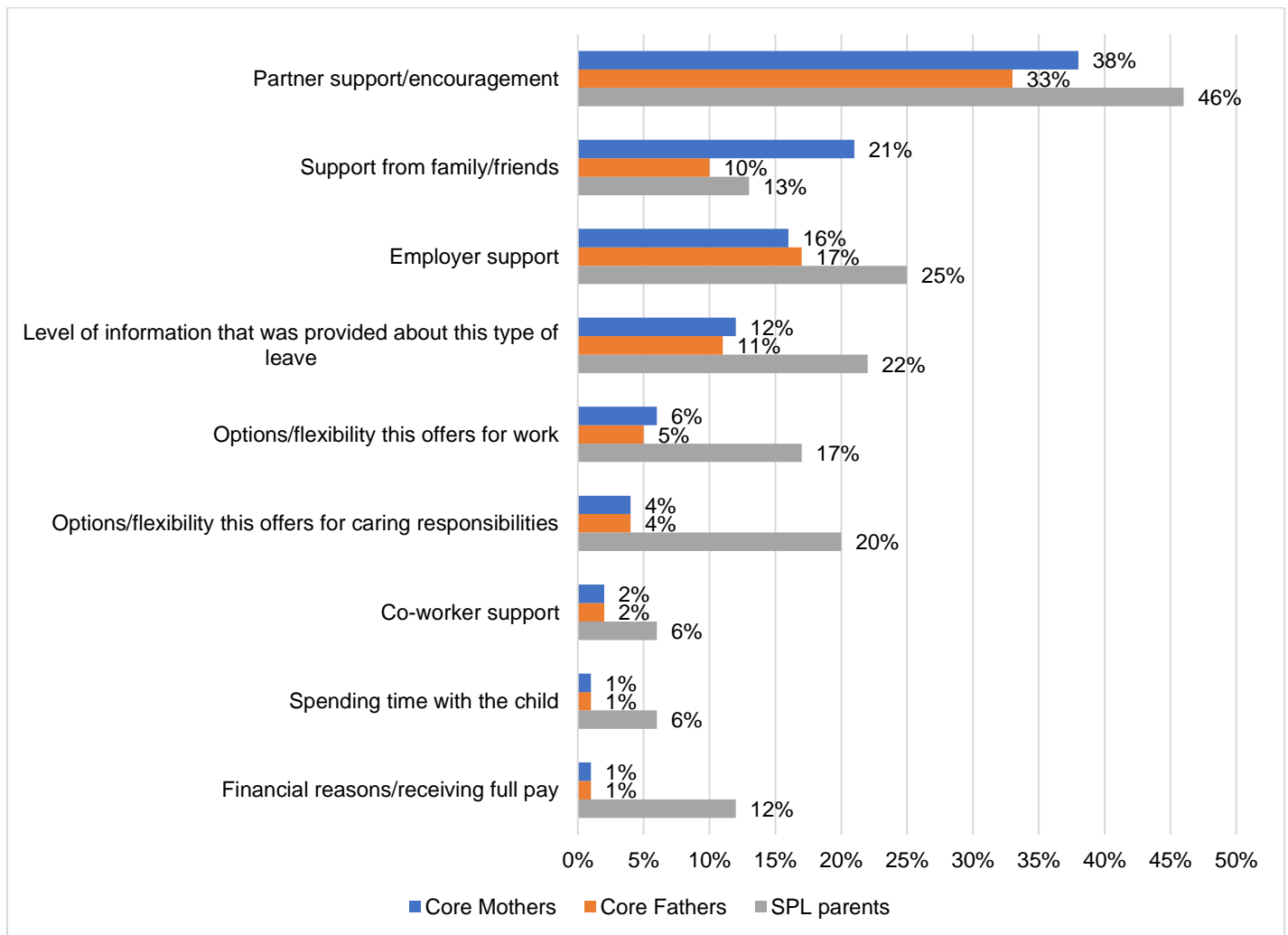
In terms of not being entitled to more leave, fathers in professional (31 per cent) and associate professional and technical occupations (35 per cent) were more likely than fathers on average to state this as a reason for not taking more leave, as were fathers on the highest incomes (43 per cent among those earning £50,000 or more).

4.3.5 Factors that helped parents take the leave they took.

When asked about the factors that helped parents take the leave they took, support or encouragement from partners appears to be the biggest influence, for both mothers (38 per cent) and fathers (33 per cent), and particularly parents that took SPL (mentioned by 46 per cent).

Mothers were more likely than fathers to cite support from family or friends as a factor (21 per cent), while parents that took SPL were more likely than both mothers and fathers in general to cite employer support, the level of information provided and the options/flexibility their leave offered for work or for caring responsibilities. Financial reasons/receiving full pay was also a factor more likely to be mentioned by parents that took SPL.

Figure 4.5: Factors that helped parents take the leave they took (All respondents)



Q221. What factors helped you take up the leave you took: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336 N.B. Only the most frequently mentioned reasons are included in the chart

4.3.6 Positive and negative consequences of leave taken.

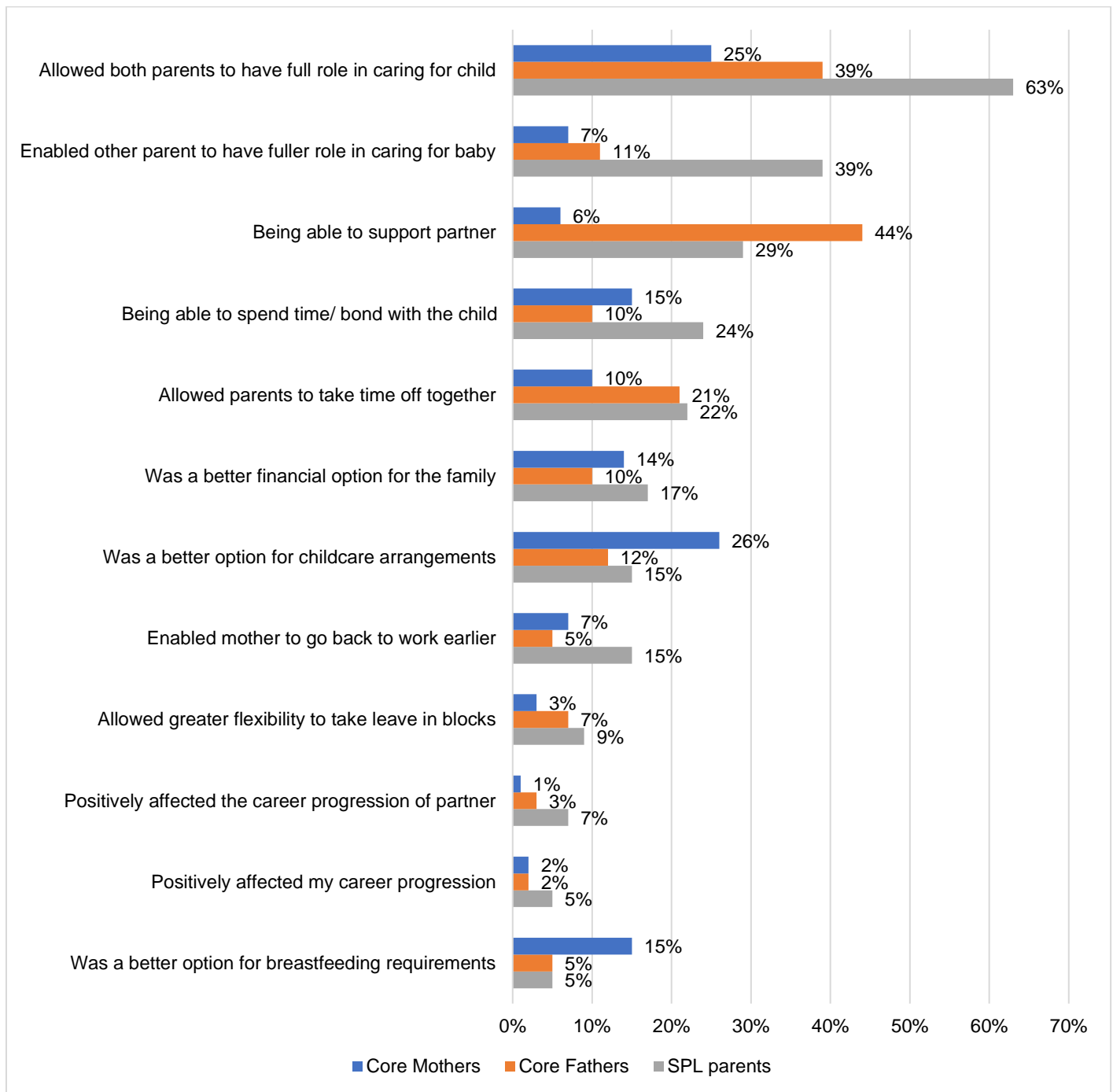
When asked to list the positive consequences of taking the leave that they took mothers were most likely to cite that it was a better option for childcare arrangements (26 per cent) or that it allowed both parents to have a full role in caring for the child (25 per cent).

Fathers were most likely to say that being able to support their partner was a positive consequence of the leave they took, while the next highest proportion said that it allowed both parents to have a full role in caring for the child, and this factor was mentioned more so by fathers than mothers (39 per cent; 25 per cent).

Parents that took SPL were even more likely to cite allowing both parents to have a full role in caring for the child as a positive consequence of the leave that they took (63 per cent). They were also much more likely to say that it enabled the other parent to have a fuller role in caring for the baby (39 per cent). Parents that took SPL also stand out for being more likely to mention that their leave enabled them to spend time/bond with their child (24 per cent) and that it enabled the mother to go back to work earlier (15 per cent).

A fifth of fathers and parents that took SPL listed allowing parents to take time off together as a positive consequence of the leave they took.

Figure 4.6: Positive consequences of taking leave (All respondents)



Q222. What have been the positive consequences of taking the leave you took: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336 N.B. Only the most frequently mentioned reasons are included in the chart.

When asked about the negative consequences of the leave they took fathers were most likely to say there are none (63 per cent, compared with 45 per cent of mothers and 46 per cent of parents that took SPL).

Two fifths (42 per cent) of mothers said that a negative consequence of the leave they took was that it has had a negative financial impact for the family, compared with around a quarter (24 per cent) of fathers, and a similar proportion (22 per cent) of parents that took SPL. Once again mothers earning £20,000-£39,999 before birth were most likely to cite the financial impact than compared with mothers on a higher or lower income (54 per cent; 40 per cent among those earning under £20,000, and 27 per cent among mothers earning at least £40,000

per annum). Mention of the negative financial impact was also higher than average among mothers who were in professional (52 per cent) or associate professional and technical occupations (53 per cent).

Parents that took SPL were significantly more likely than mothers and fathers in general to cite that a negative consequence from taking their leave was that it negatively affected the career progression of them (9%) or their partner (7%).

4.3.7 Whether leave type is recommended

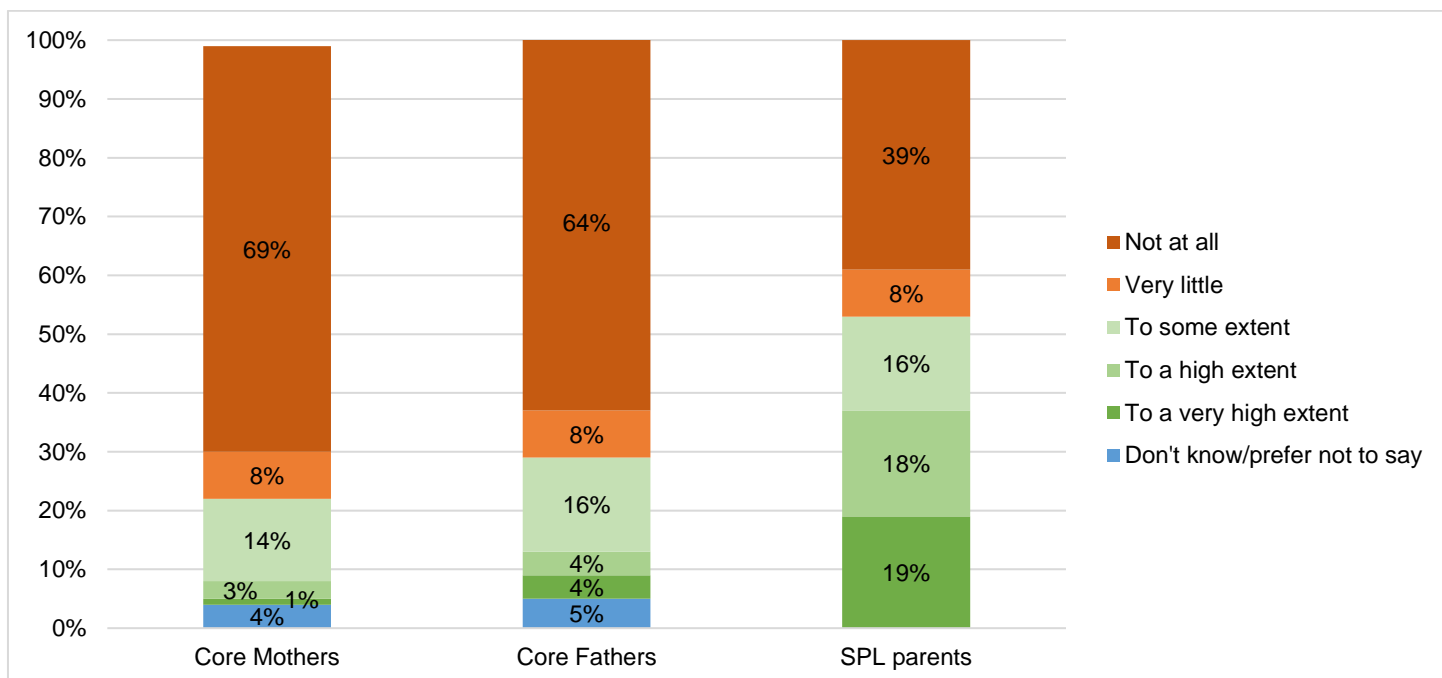
Overall, mothers were more likely than fathers to recommend taking the leave they took, although the vast majority did in both cases (91 per cent and 86 per cent respectively, and a further 5 per cent of mothers and 8 per cent of fathers said 'maybe').

Parents that took SPL were even more likely to say that they would recommend the leave they took to other families (97 per cent).

4.3.8 Whether experience of taking leave type has made any difference to how parents plan to share childcare in the next 12 months

When asked about the extent to which their leave has made any difference to childcare plans over the next 12 months, SPL parents are most likely to indicate that it has at least to some extent (53 per cent), compared with fewer mothers (19 per cent) and fathers from the core sample (24 per cent).

Figure 4.7: Whether leave taken has made any difference to how they plan to share childcare responsibilities in the next 12 months (All respondents)



Q225.Whether leave has made any difference to childcare plans: Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter on the types of leave that parents thought they were entitled to, and took off, before and after the birth or adoption of their child has highlighted the following key points:

- In terms of time off before the birth or adoption of their child, fathers appear less aware of the law regarding antenatal appointments, than mothers, while awareness is highest among parents that took SPL:
 - Seven in ten (70 per cent) mothers were aware that by law employers must give pregnant employees time off for antenatal care and pay their normal rate for this time off compared with just over half (52 per cent) of fathers and nearly nine in ten (86 per cent) SPL parents.
 - Just one in three mothers and fathers (34 per cent in each case) from the core sample were aware that the father or pregnant woman's partner has the right to unpaid time off work to go to 2 antenatal appointments compared with two thirds (66 per cent) of parents that took SPL.
 - Awareness of the law regarding antenatal appointments is lower among younger mothers, mothers from all other ethnic groups combined, those with a physical or mental health condition, mothers with lower-level or no qualifications, and those working in smaller organisations, in profit-making organisations, in lower occupational groups and among mothers who had been in their job for a shorter period of time.
- Overall, just over two in three mothers (63 per cent) said they took time off work to attend antenatal appointments, compared with fewer fathers (57 per cent) and a significantly higher proportion (87 per cent) of parents that took SPL. The proportion of mothers that took time off for antenatal appointments is particularly low among mothers that were earning less than £10,000 per annum (40 per cent), those in the hospitality sector (38 per cent), in skilled, process and elementary occupations (46 per cent) and among workers (28 per cent; 67 per cent of employees and 53 per cent of self-employed mothers).
- On average mothers took time off from work to attend 6 antenatal appointments, as did parents that took SPL, while among core fathers the average is lower, at 4 appointments. Where parents did take time off for antenatal appointments, mothers were most likely to have done so using the right to time off for antenatal appointments (75 per cent). The highest proportion of fathers and SPL parents also did so using their right to time off, however fathers were more likely than mothers to have taken annual leave or unpaid leave.
- Regarding time off after birth, there was a considerable degree of uncertainty with regards to the total amount of leave mothers and fathers thought they and their partner were entitled to; with one in three fathers, and one in five mothers that said they did not know or preferred not to say. SPL parents were most likely to give a response, with the highest proportion that thought the combined entitlement was 52 weeks (70 per cent; 37 per cent of core mothers and 14 per cent of core fathers).
- Overall, more than four in five (83 per cent) mothers took Maternity Leave, with take up higher than average among older mothers, those in full time employment, on higher incomes, working in public administration, health and education sectors, those who had

worked in their job for a longer period of time and in higher occupational groups. Take up of Maternity Leave was significantly lower among workers (36 per cent) and self-employed mothers (61 per cent), compared with mothers that were employees before birth (89 per cent).

- Three in five (59 per cent) fathers took Paternity Leave, which is significantly lower than the take up of Maternity Leave (83 per cent) although it does increase significantly among fathers that were employees before birth (to 70 per cent).
- One per cent of all core mothers and 4 per cent of fathers took Shared Parental Leave, while 9 per cent of mothers said they took no time off after the birth of their child, compared with twice as many fathers (18 per cent). Among both mothers and fathers, the proportions that took no time off increases particularly among workers, those who were self-employed, all other ethnic groups combined, those on lower incomes and with lower-level or no qualifications.
- Fathers that did not take statutory leave were more than three times as likely as mothers to say this was because they could not afford to (35 per cent; 11 per cent among mothers).
- The vast majority of mothers, fathers and parents that took SPL felt comfortable asking their employer for the type of leave available to them, with around half in each case that felt 'very comfortable'.
- Younger mothers under the age of 25 were less likely to feel comfortable asking their employer about Maternity Leave, as were mothers with a health condition, lone parents, those with no qualifications and lower-level qualifications generally, mothers who were workers rather than employees before birth; who worked in smaller companies, in the hospitality sector, in skilled, process and elementary occupations and had been in their job for less than 2 years.
- Fathers who were workers rather than employees were less likely to have felt comfortable asking their employer about Paternity Leave or leave for same sex partners, as were those working in smaller companies and those in skilled, process and elementary occupations.
- One in ten (10 per cent) mothers believed their employer lacked knowledge about their leave entitlements and benefits, compared with 7 per cent of fathers and a significantly higher proportion of parents that took SPL (40 per cent). Among mothers who have a health condition a significantly higher proportion indicated that their employer lacked knowledge about their leave entitlements and benefits (23 per cent).
- Financial reasons dominate as to why mothers, fathers and those that took SPL did not take more leave after the birth/adoption of their child. In around two in five cases no longer being able to afford to remain on leave was cited as the reason for returning to work. The second main reason, and significantly more so for parents that took SPL, was that they were not entitled to any more leave. While around one in seven mothers, fathers and SPL parents wanted to go back to work.
- Two fifths (42 per cent) of mothers said that a negative consequence of the leave they took was that it has had a negative financial impact for the family, compared with around a quarter (24 per cent) of fathers and a similar proportion (22 per cent) of parents that took SPL.

5 Maternity Leave and Pay

This section of the report focuses on mothers' experience of leave and pay following the birth or adoption of their child in 2017.

Due to the low base size of mothers in the survey that were adoptive parents, the section does not cover analysis of Adoption Leave or Pay.

Employed pregnant women and mothers are able to take up to 52 weeks of Maternity Leave and up to 39 weeks of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) or Maternity Allowance (MA). If they are eligible for SMP this is paid at 90 per cent of their average weekly earnings (AWE) with no upper limit in the first six weeks, thereafter it is paid at the lower of 90 per cent of their AWE or the statutory flat rate (£145.18 a week at the time of the survey). In addition, employers have the option to offer mothers an enhanced amount of pay via a contractual arrangement or Occupational Maternity Pay scheme.

5.1 Awareness and take up of Maternity Leave

5.1.1 Awareness of their entitlement

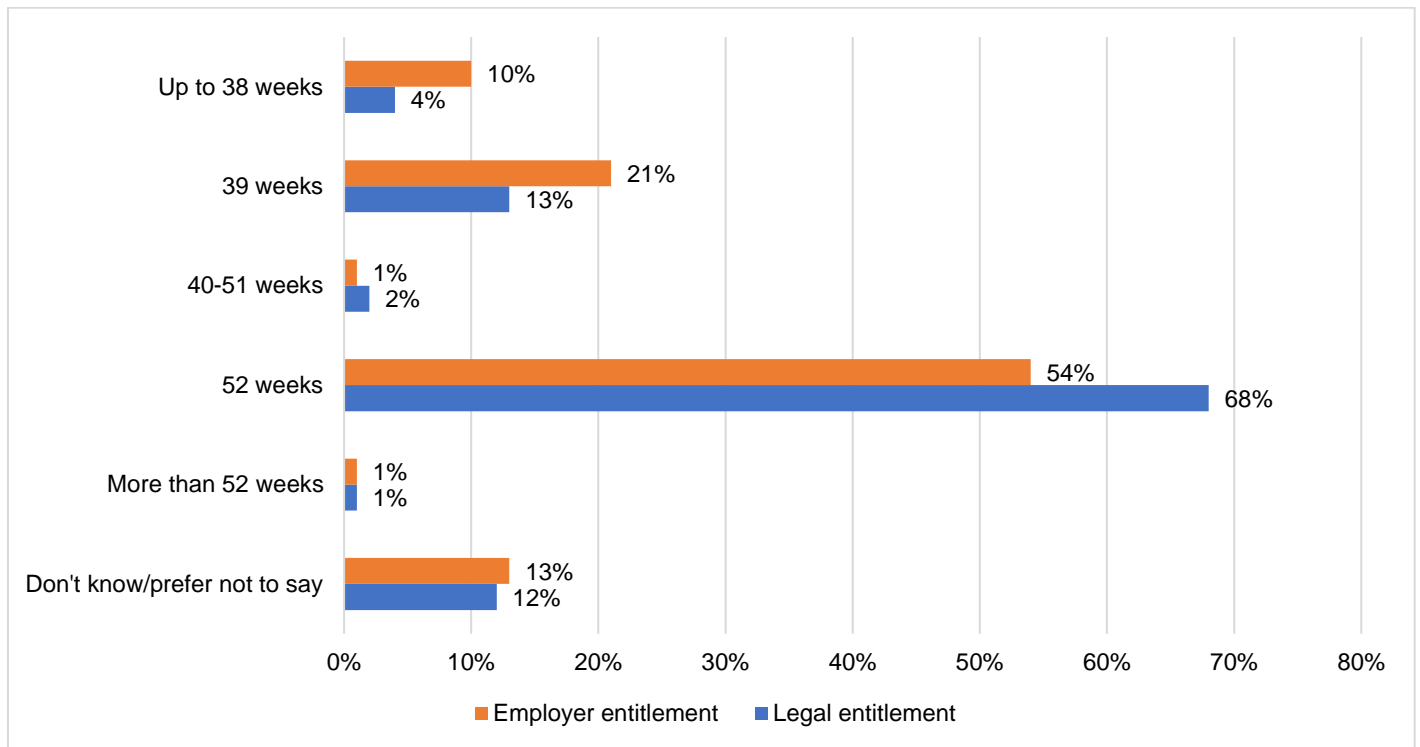
Awareness of mothers being entitled to a year off work by law remains stable - 68 per cent of mothers in the most recent survey suggested their legal entitlement was 52 weeks. This compares with 69 per cent of mothers with children born in 2008 and 61 per cent in 2006.

The next highest proportion (13 per cent) in the latest 2019 survey thought the legal entitlement was 39 weeks, and a similar proportion did not know (12 per cent).

Entitlements from employers also seem to have remained stable over time, with 54 per cent of mothers in the most recent survey that said their employer allowed a year, compared with 53 per cent in 2008 and 48 per cent in 2006.

The proportion of mothers that indicated that their employer offered the statutory amount of 52 weeks leave (54 per cent), is however considerably lower than the proportion that thought this was the legal entitlement. Nearly a third (31 per cent) of mothers indicated that their employer offered 39 weeks or fewer and one in eight (13 per cent) did not know.

Figure 5.1: Amount of leave mothers thought they were allowed by law and were offered by their employer (Mothers who were employees/workers and took maternity/adoption leave)



Q174. As far as you know, by law how much maternity leave were you allowed to have when baby was born?/Q175. Employers offer different amounts of maternity leave, how much paid and/or unpaid leave did your employer offer you around the time you had baby? Unweighted base: 990

Uncertainty over mothers’ legal entitlement and the amount of leave offered by their employer is higher than average among mothers on lower incomes (under £20,000), with lower-level qualifications (below degree level), those with a health condition, mothers who were working in smaller workplaces, where there was no trade union presence, as well as in profit-making businesses, where mothers had been in their job for less than 2 years and where mothers were not at supervisory level.

The actual amount of leave offered by employers appears to increase among mothers with higher incomes, and higher-level qualifications (degree level and above), in larger companies, among mothers who were supervisors, who had been in their job for more than 5 years, and those that worked in central government. The number of weeks Maternity Leave offered by employers is significantly lower than average in workplaces with no trade union presence.

This is summarised in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Awareness of how many weeks Maternity Leave they are allowed by law, and how much they were offered by their employers (All mothers)

		Legal entitlement		Offered by employer	
		Mean (no. of weeks)	Don't know/prefer not to say	Mean (no. of weeks)	Don't know/prefer not to say
All mothers (990)		49.5	12%	44.7	13%
Income before birth	Under £20K (533)	48.8	14%+	44	16%+
	£20,000-39,999 (344)	50.6+	7%-	46.5+	8%-
	£40K+ (71)	51.1	1%-	47.8+	3%-
Any physical or mental condition	Yes (76)	49	21%+	47.2	21%+
	No (911)	49.5	11%-	44.5	12%-
Highest qualification	Degree level or above (405)	50.2	5%-	46.3+	9%-
	Below degree level/no qualifications (575)	49.2	14%+	43.9-	15%+
Size of employer – before birth	Less than 50 employees (298)	47.1-	18%+	47.1-	18%+
	50-249 employees (181)	49.4	6%-	45.4	9%
	250+ employees (468)	51.3+	9%-	46.4+	9%
Whether supervisor before birth	Supervisor (358)	50.2	7%-	45.9+	8%-
	Not a supervisor (632)	49.1	14%+	44	15%+
Duration of main job before birth	Less than 2 years (89)	46.8	35%+	42	37%+
	2 to 5 years (338)	49.8	10%	44.8	11%
	More than 5 years (392)	50.2	7%-	46.2+	6%-
Organisation type	Profit-making (647)	48.9	13%+	44.3	15%+
	Local government (97)	48.7	8%	45.8	11%
	Central government (200)	50.6	7%-	46.5+	9%-
Whether pre-birth workplace had trade union	Trade union (432)	51.1+	6%-	45.7+	7%-
	No trade union (476)	48.0-	16%+	43.7-	17%+

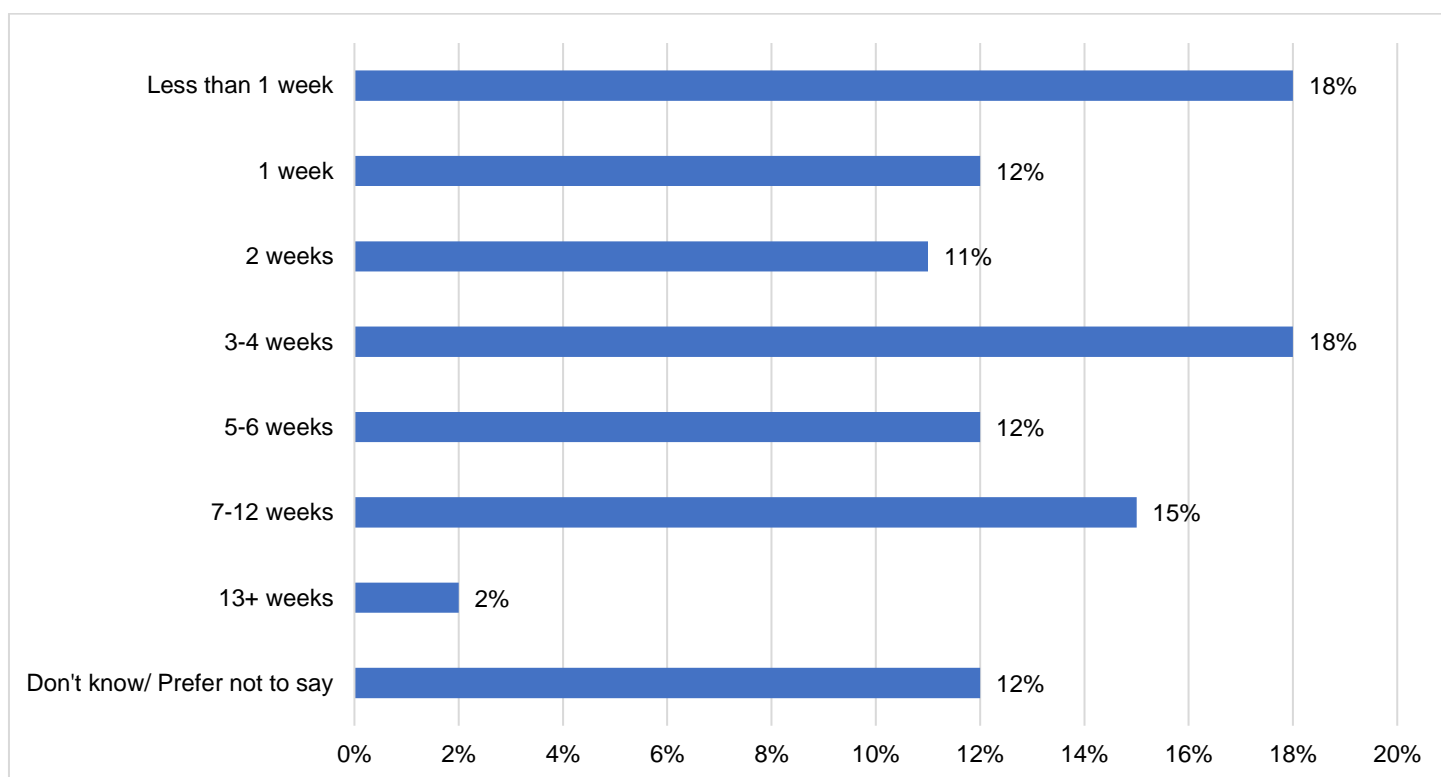
+/- = significantly higher/lower than all mothers on average

Q174. As far as you know, by law how much maternity leave were you allowed to have when baby was born?/Q175. Employers offer different amounts of maternity leave, how much paid and/or unpaid leave did your employer offer you around the time you had baby? Unweighted base: 990

5.1.2 Stopping work before birth

Three in ten (30 per cent) mothers started their Maternity Leave within a week before giving birth, a similar proportion (29 per cent) between two and four weeks before, and a similar proportion (29 per cent) five or more weeks before.

Figure 5.2: Number of weeks started Maternity Leave before child's birth (Mothers who were employees/workers and took maternity/adoption leave)



Q176. Number of weeks started maternity leave before child's birth. Unweighted base: 1,006

On average mothers started their Maternity Leave just under 4 weeks before the birth or adoption of their child (3.7 weeks).

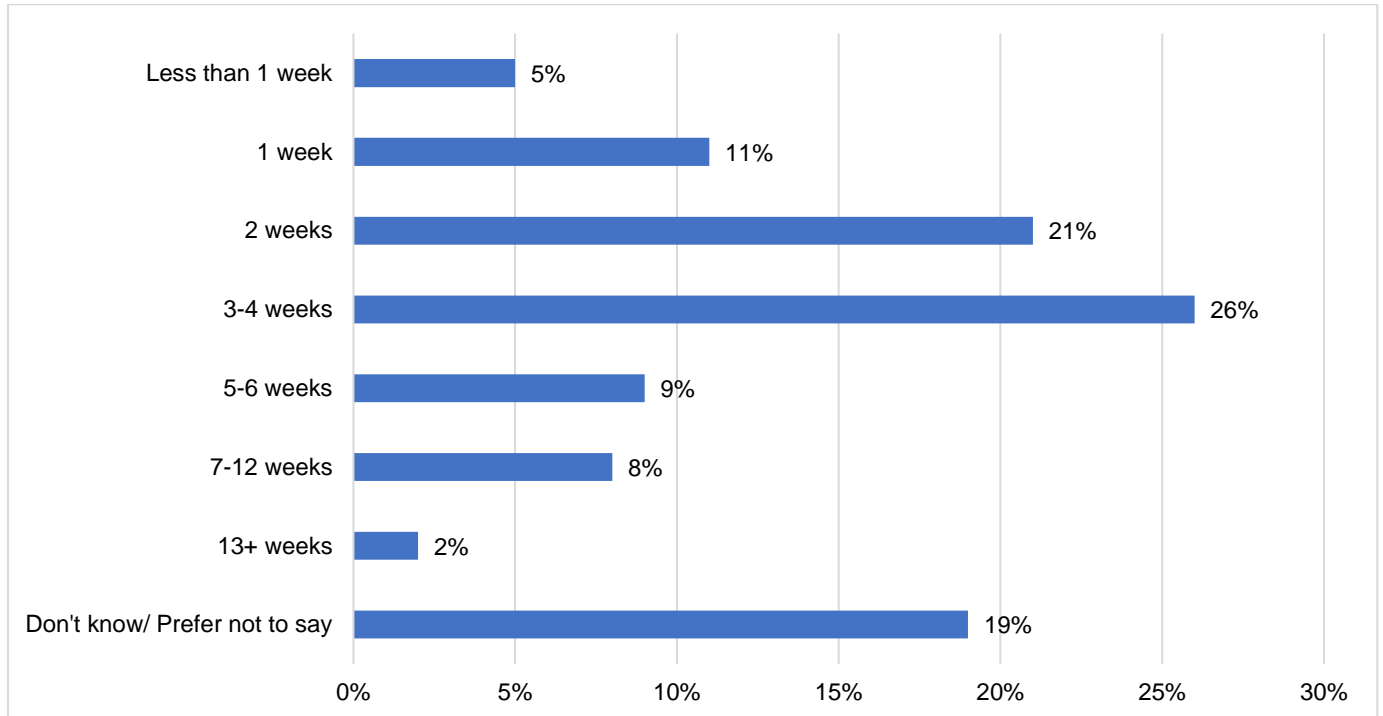
5.1.3 Stopping work before maternity leave began

More than two fifths (44 per cent) of all mothers stopped working prior to the start of their Maternity Leave, using annual leave, emergency leave or other leave, and this was more likely to be the case among mothers with a health condition (62 per cent), those working for large employers with 250+ employees (55 per cent) and less likely to be the case among those working for local government (32 per cent) and those in receipt of MA (31 per cent).

Where mothers had stopped work before their Maternity Leave, over three in five (63 per cent) stopped working up to four weeks before their Maternity Leave began. One in five (20 per cent) stopped working more than four weeks before their Maternity Leave began, while a similar

proportion did not know or preferred not to say. On average mothers stopped working just under 4 weeks before their Maternity Leave started.

Figure 5.3: Number of weeks before Maternity Leave they stopped working (Mothers who were employees/workers and stopped work before Maternity/Adoption Leave)



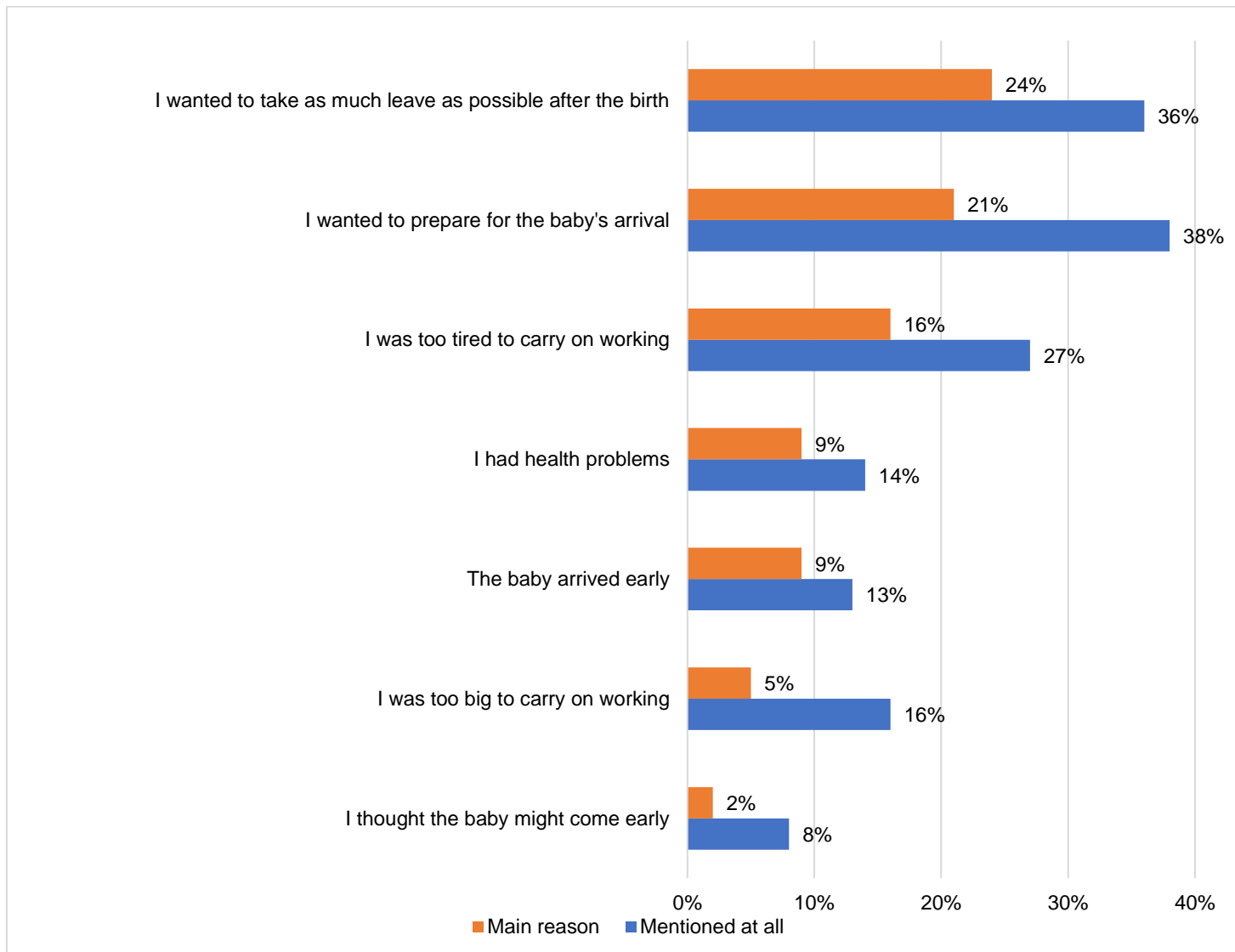
Q177/178. Number of weeks before maternity/adoption leave they stopped working. Unweighted base: 440

Three quarters (77 per cent) of mothers who stopped working before their Maternity Leave began did so using annual leave/holiday entitlement and one in six (15 per cent) took sick leave. For one in twenty (4 per cent) the baby arrived early, and 2 per cent took emergency leave.

The primary reasons for mothers starting their Maternity Leave when they did were the desire to take as much leave as possible after the birth (24 per cent), wanting to prepare for the baby's arrival (21 per cent) and being too tired to carry on working (16 per cent).

In addition to these primary reasons, over one in ten mentioned being too big to carry on working (16 per cent), health problems (14 per cent) and an early arrival (13 per cent).

Figure 5.4: Reasons for starting Maternity Leave when they did (Mothers who were employees/workers and took Maternity/Adoption Leave)



Q180. And for which of the following reasons did you start your formal maternity/adoption leave/stop working to have your baby when you did? Q181. And what was your main reason? Unweighted base: 1,006 N.B. Only the most frequently mentioned reasons are included in the chart

There were some differences between mothers living with a partner or spouse and lone mothers, with the former more likely to mention a desire to take as much leave as possible after birth (26 per cent compared to 16 per cent), and the latter more likely to mention being too tired (25 per cent compared to 13 per cent) and having health problems (15 per cent compared to 8 per cent). This is summarised in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Mothers' main reason for starting Maternity/Adoption Leave when they did – by parental status (Where took Maternity/Adoption Leave)

	All mothers	Parental status	
		Living with a partner/spouse	Lone parent
I wanted to take as much leave as possible after the birth	24%	26%+	16%-
I wanted to prepare for the baby's arrival	21%	22%	18%
I was too tired to carry on working	16%	13%-	25%+
The baby arrived early	9%	9%	8%
I had health problems	9%	8%-	15%+
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>1,006</i>	<i>848</i>	<i>157</i>

+/- = significantly higher/lower than all mothers on average. Q181. And what was your main reason? Unweighted base: 1,006

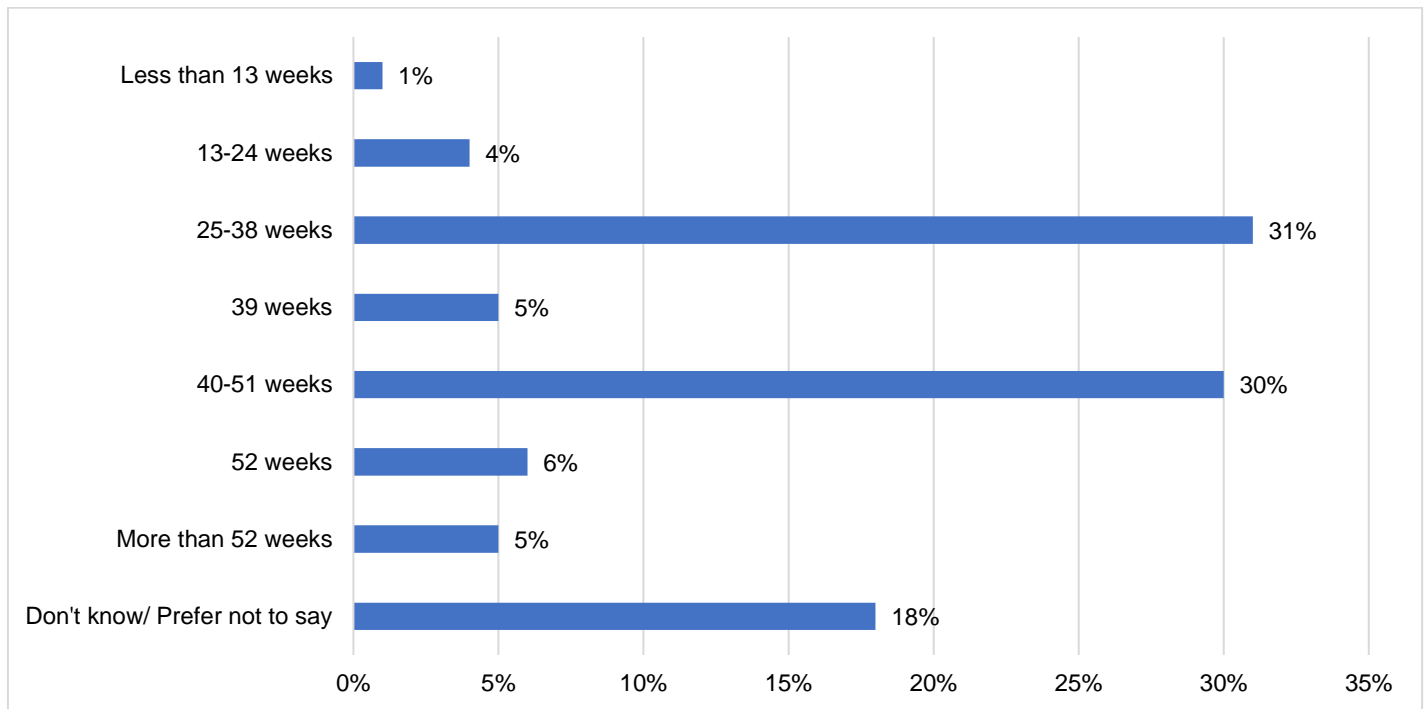
5.1.4 Maternity Leave duration

In terms of the number of weeks after birth Maternity Leave ended, few mothers (5 per cent) had Maternity Leave that lasted less than 24 weeks after the birth of their child, and a similarly low proportion (5 per cent) say their Maternity Leave ended 39 weeks after birth.

Three in ten (31 per cent) said their Maternity Leave ended between 25 and 38 weeks after birth, and the same proportion (30 per cent) had Maternity Leave that ended 40 to 51 weeks after birth. One in ten (11 per cent) had maternity leave of a year or more after birth.

On average mothers' Maternity Leave ended 40 weeks after the birth of their child.

Figure 5.5: Number of weeks after birth Maternity Leave ended (Mothers who were employees/workers and took Maternity/Adoption Leave)



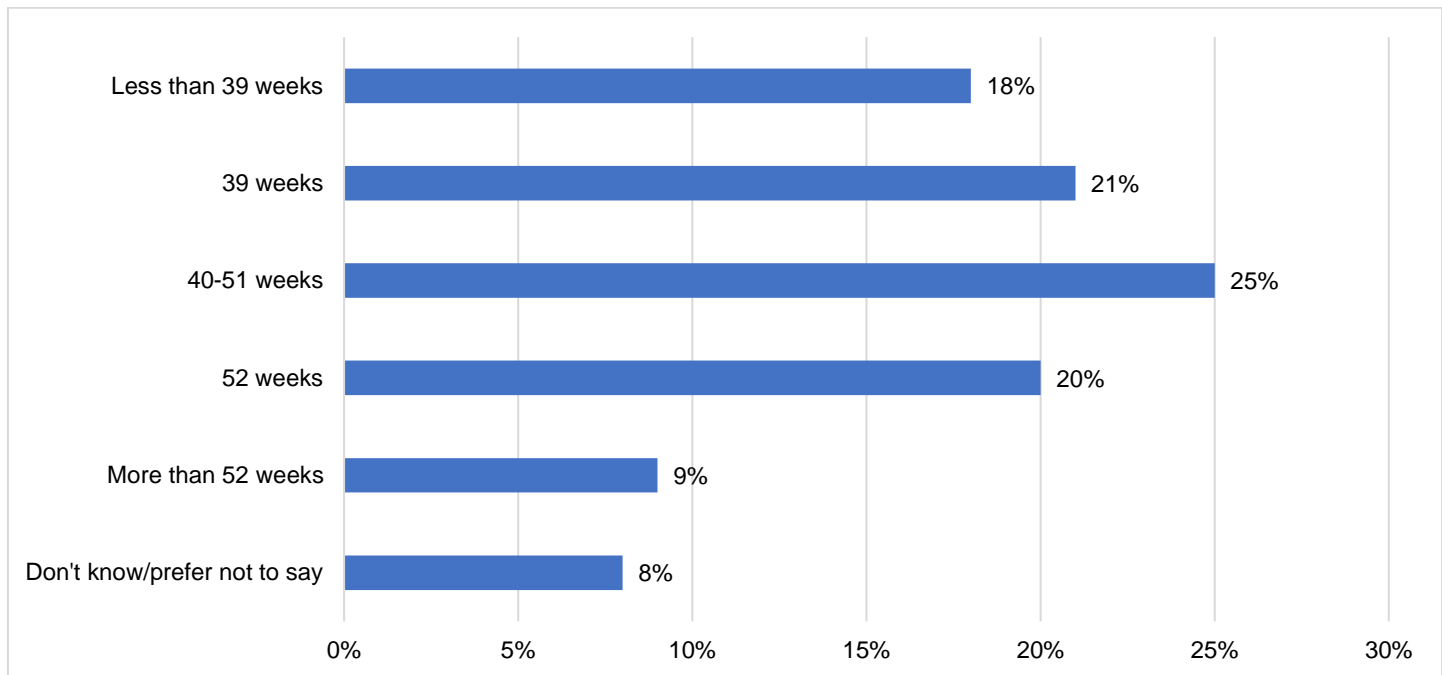
Q182. Number of weeks after child's birth maternity leave ended. Unweighted base: 1,006

In relation to statutory amount of leave, overall, three quarters (75 per cent) of mothers took 39 weeks or more, which includes close to half (45 per cent) that took 40 weeks to a year, and one in ten (9 per cent) that took over a year. Just under one in five (18 per cent) mothers took fewer than 39 weeks Maternity Leave.

On average mothers' Maternity Leave lasted for nearly 44 weeks (43.7). This represents an increase over time, from an average of 32 weeks in 2006, to 39 weeks in 2008.

3

Figure 5.6: Total number of weeks of paid or unpaid Maternity Leave (Mothers who were employees/workers and took Maternity/Adoption Leave)



Q176/Q182/Q185/Q186. What was the total number of weeks of paid or unpaid maternity leave that you took (or planned to take)? Unweighted base: 1,006

Compared with mothers overall, mothers working in the largest organisations (82 per cent where 250+ are employed), where a trade union was present (80 per cent) and in the transport and communications sector (90 per cent) were more likely to have taken 39 weeks or more leave.

Carers (62 per cent), those working in the smallest organisations (67 per cent where fewer than 50 are employed) and in either manager or senior official occupations (60 per cent) or skilled, process and elementary occupations (67 per cent) were less likely than mothers overall to have taken 39 or more weeks leave.

There were relatively few significant differences between different sub-groups of mothers in relation to the total number of weeks of paid or unpaid Maternity Leave that they took, with the exceptions that it increases with size of employer, is higher among those in receipt of OMP, and among Asian mothers. Also, the number of weeks taken decreases as the number of children in the household increases. This is summarised in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Total number of weeks of paid or unpaid Maternity Leave taken (Mothers who were employees/workers and took Maternity/Adoption Leave)

		Mean (no. of weeks)
Total (1,006)		43.7
Size of employer – before birth	Less than 50 employees (291)	42.3-
	50-249 employees (177)	44.1
	250+ employees (461)	44.8+
Type of pay received	SMP (856)	43.9
	MA (114)	43.4
	OMP (211)	45.2+
Ethnicity	White (872)	43.4-
	Asian (73)	47.3+
	All other ethnic groups combined (134)	46.3+
Number of children in household	1 child (446)	44.4+
	2 children (366)	43.2
	3 or more children (122)	41.4-

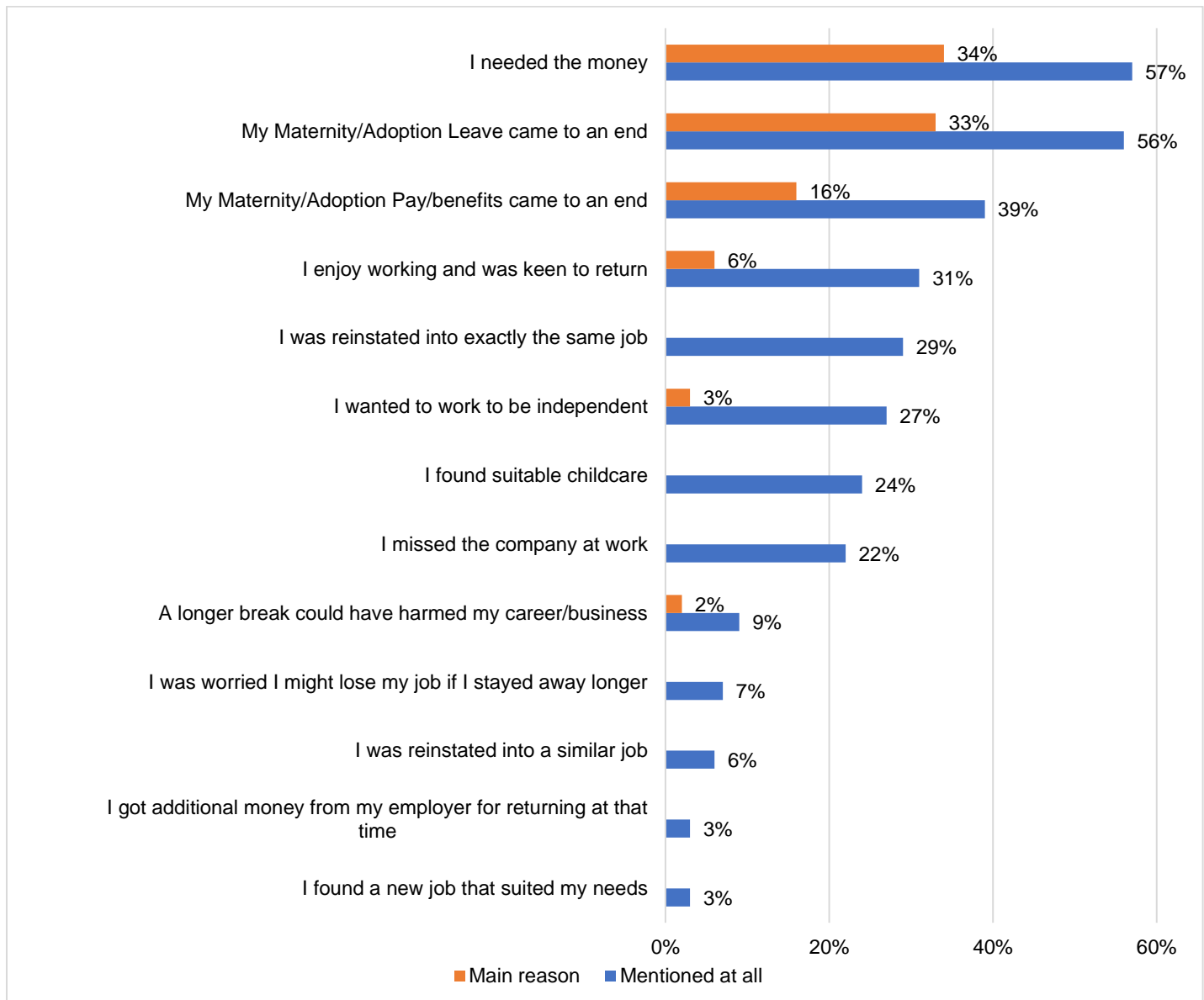
+/- = significantly higher/lower than all mothers on average. Q176/Q182/Q185/Q186. What was the total number of weeks of paid or unpaid maternity leave that you took (or planned to take)? Unweighted base: 1,006

5.2 Reasons for returning to work when they did

Looking specifically at mothers, Maternity Leave coming to an end and needing the money are the main reasons for mothers returning to work when they did; one in three mothers cited each of these as their main reason for returning.

Aside from their primary reasons, at least one in five mothers wanted to return to work because they missed the company at work (22 per cent), they wanted to work to be independent (27 per cent) or they enjoy working and were keen to return (31 per cent). However very few mothers considered these factors their main reason for returning.

Figure 5.7: Reasons for mothers returning to work (Mothers who were employees/workers and took Maternity/Adoption Leave)



Q183. And for which of the following reasons are you returning/did you return to work at that time? Q184. And what is/was your main reason? Mothers who took maternity/adoption leave & provided a response. Unweighted base:727 N.B. Chart only includes figures for where reasons were mentioned by at least 2 per cent

The financial pressure to return to work, because they needed the money was greater among those with lower-level qualifications or no qualifications (37 per cent mention needing the money as their main reason; 30 per cent at degree level or above), and mothers located in the South East (43 per cent).

Mothers on the highest incomes were significantly less likely to have said their main reason for returning to work when they did is either because their leave came to an end or they needed the money, and significantly more likely to have said they returned because they enjoy working and were keen to return. This is summarised in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Mothers' main reason for returning to work after Maternity/Adoption Leave – by income before birth (Where took Maternity/Adoption Leave)

	All mothers	Income		
		Under £20K per annum	£20,000 - £39,999	£40K+
Needed the money	34%	35%	36%	20%-
Maternity/Adoption Leave came to an end	33%	36%+	29%	19%-
Maternity/Adoption Pay/benefits came to an end	16%	15%	18%	15%
Enjoy working and was keen to return	6%	4%-	8%	19%+
<i>Unweighted bases</i>	<i>727</i>	<i>335</i>	<i>283</i>	<i>69</i>

+/- = significantly higher/lower than all mothers on average. Q184. And what is/was your main reason?
Unweighted base:727

5.3 Unfair treatment because of pregnancy

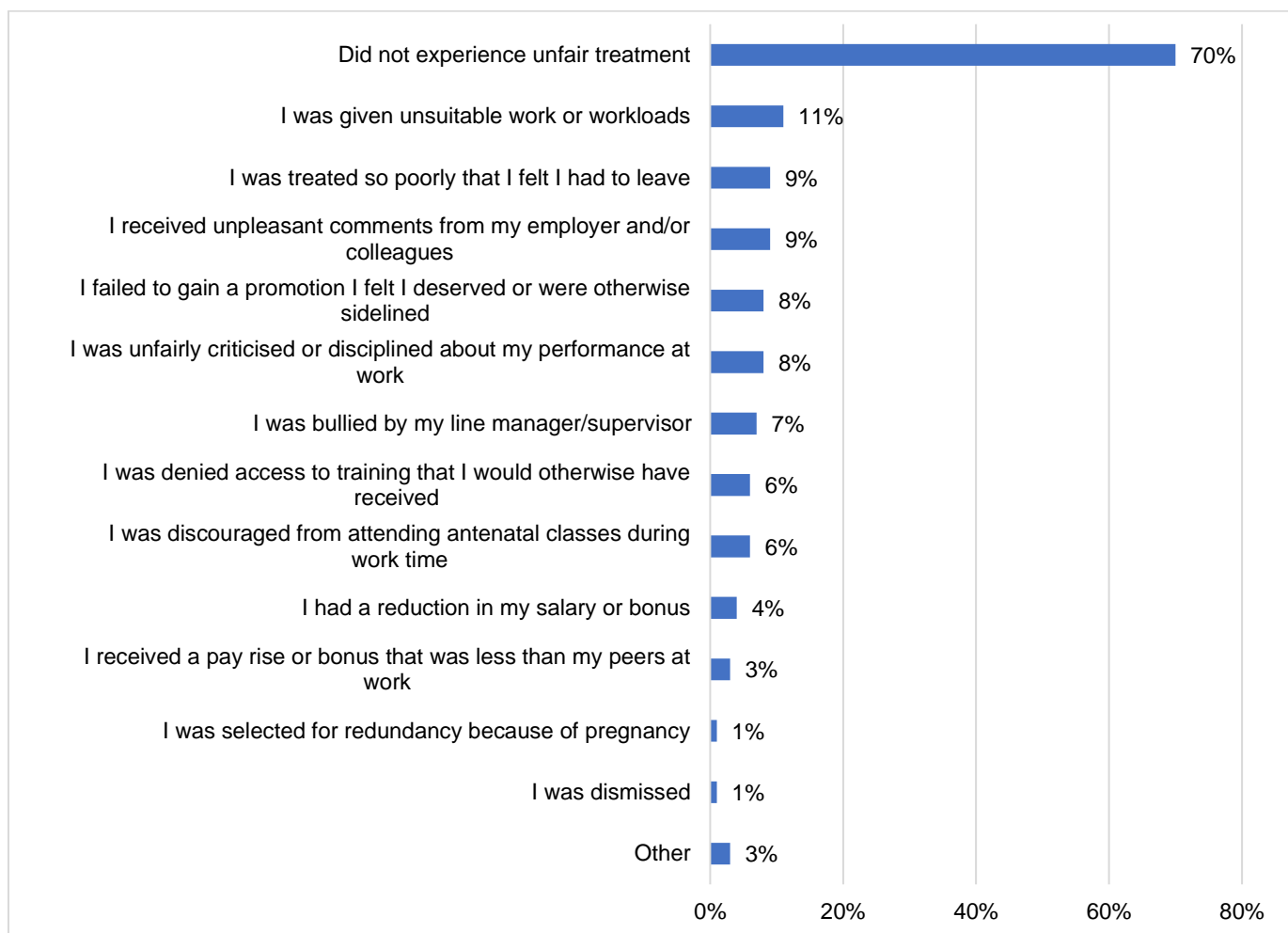
Seven in ten (70 per cent) mothers who took Maternity or Adoption Leave and were in work when their child was born/adopted reported that they had experienced none of the unfair treatments listed in Figure 5.8 either during pregnancy, parental leave or on their return to work.

In the 2009 report it noted that there may have been some questionnaire changes which explained the drop between 89 per cent of mothers with babies born in 2006 reporting no unfair treatment, compared with 82 per cent in 2008. The way this question was asked in 2019 is slightly different again to the previous survey, however the difference of 12 percentage points does suggest there has been an increase in the proportion of mothers that have experienced unfair treatment.

One in ten mothers in 2019 reported being given unsuitable work or workloads (11 per cent), being treated so poorly they felt they had to leave (9 per cent) and that they received unpleasant remarks from their employer and/or colleagues (9 per cent).

Of mothers who were employees/workers and took Maternity/Adoption Leave, 1 per cent reported being dismissed, and the same proportion reported being selected for redundancy because of the pregnancy.

Figure 5.8: Whether treated unfairly at work because of pregnancy (Mothers who were employees/workers and took leave)



Q187. Do you believe you were treated unfairly at work because of your pregnancy in any of the following ways?
Unweighted base: 994

For all of the instances in the chart above it is during pregnancy/adoption that mothers were more likely to report experiencing unfair treatment.

Considering this at an overall level, the following groups of mothers were more likely than average (30 per cent) to report being treated unfairly at work because of their pregnancy:

- Mothers that were supervisors before birth (34 per cent);
- Where they worked in associate professional or technical occupations (37 per cent);
- Mothers that worked full time hours (35 per cent; 17 per cent among those who worked part-time);
- Those who felt uncomfortable asking for leave (68 per cent, compared to the average of 30 per cent);
- Those on lower pay compared to pre-birth (41 per cent) and those with less responsibility than pre-birth (39 per cent);
- Carers (41 per cent);
- Those in the East Midlands (42 per cent) and the South West (44 per cent).

5.4 KIT days

Over half (54 per cent) of all mothers had some form of work-related contact or communication with their employer (KIT days) before their Maternity Leave ended.

Asian mothers were less likely than average to have had some form of work-related contact (40 per cent), as were younger mothers under 25 years (43 per cent), lone mothers (49 per cent), those whose highest qualification was below degree level (49 per cent) and those working for private business/profit-making employers (48 per cent).

The likelihood of having had KIT days increased with income (from 48 per cent of those with an income of under £20k, to 78 per cent of those with an income of £40k or more), and by size of employer (from 47 per cent of those working for employers with up to 49 employees, to 61 per cent of those working for employers with 250 or more employees). Likelihood was also higher among those with supervisory responsibilities (68 per cent, compared to 48 per cent of those without such responsibilities) and among those that had worked in their job for a longer period of time (64 per cent among mothers that had worked in their pre-birth job for more than 5 years; 28 per cent where they had worked there for less than 2 years).

Three in five (60 per cent) mothers were aware that women on Maternity/Adoption Leave are entitled to 10 KIT days, which means they can do some work for their employer without affecting their Maternity/Adoption Leave or Pay. This compares with almost the same proportion (59 per cent) in the 2009 survey.

Awareness of KIT day entitlements increased with age (from 45 per cent of those aged under 25, to 71 per cent of those aged 40 or over), with income (from 52 per cent of mothers earning under £20k to 84 per cent of those with an income of £40k or more), and by size of organisation (from 52 per cent of those working for employers with up to 49 employees, to 69 per cent of those working for employers with 250 or more employees). Awareness was also higher among mothers in manager or senior official occupations (76 per cent) and in professional (85 per cent) and associate professional and technical occupations (76 per cent). Awareness was also higher among mothers working in public administration, health and education (70 per cent) and business/professional/other services (66 per cent), where a trade union was present (72 per cent) and where mothers had worked in their pre-birth job for more than 5 years (76 per cent; 39 per cent where they had worked there for less than 2 years).

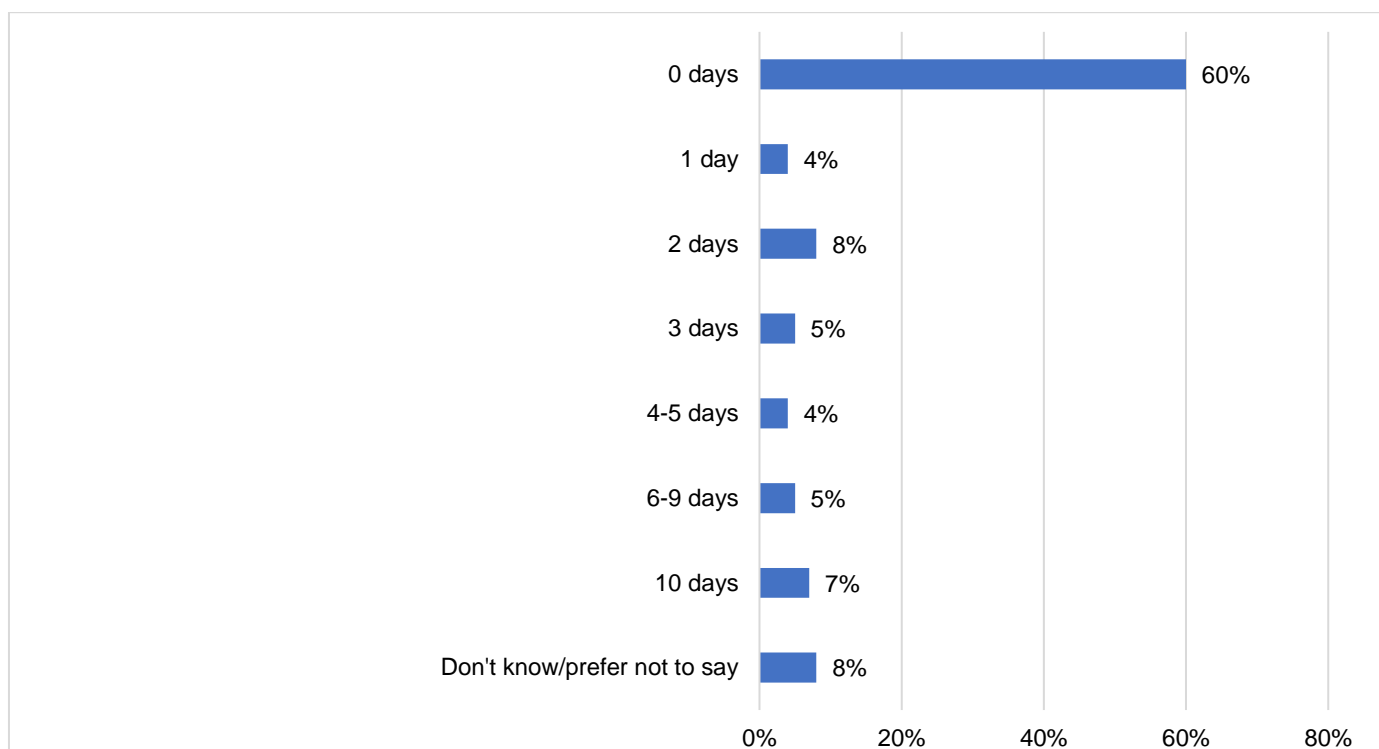
Awareness of entitlement to KIT days was lower among the following groups:

- Asian mothers (46 per cent);
- Those with a physical or mental condition (50 per cent);
- Those with three or more children (53 per cent);
- Lone mothers (45 per cent);
- Those qualified below degree level or with no qualifications (53 per cent);
- Those in the East Midlands (51 per cent), the North West (53 per cent) and Yorkshire and Humberside (51 per cent);
- Those working in private/profit-making businesses (54 per cent);
- Those in workplaces without a trade union presence (55 per cent);

- Those working in skilled, process and elementary occupations (32 per cent).

One in three (33 per cent) mothers reported that at least one of the day's work or training they did during their Maternity Leave was a KIT day, while three in five (60 per cent) reported that none were.

Figure 5.9: Number of KIT days (Mothers who were employees/workers and took Maternity/Adoption Leave)



Q199. How many of the day's work or training that you did during your maternity/adoption leave were KIT days?
Unweighted base: 1,604

Over four in five (83 per cent) of those who did take KIT days reported being paid for them, and in almost all of these cases (97 per cent) they were paid for all of them.

Almost all of those who took KIT days (96 per cent) reported no problems with their employer with regard to the work they did or the training they received during their Maternity/Adoption Leave.

Three in five (63 per cent) mothers who took KIT days undertook regular work activities as part of this, a third (33 per cent) received training, a quarter (26 per cent) had handover meetings with colleagues, and one in eight (13 per cent) had discussions with Human Resources.

5.5 Type of Maternity Pay received

Virtually all mothers (96 per cent) and those taking Shared Parental Leave (SPL) (99 per cent) were eligible for Maternity Allowance.

Seven in ten (70 per cent) biological mothers received Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) when they had their child, while one in seven (14 per cent) received Maternity Allowance (MA) and a similar proportion (13 per cent) received Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP).

One in six (16 per cent) reported receiving none of these, and this figure was higher among the following groups:

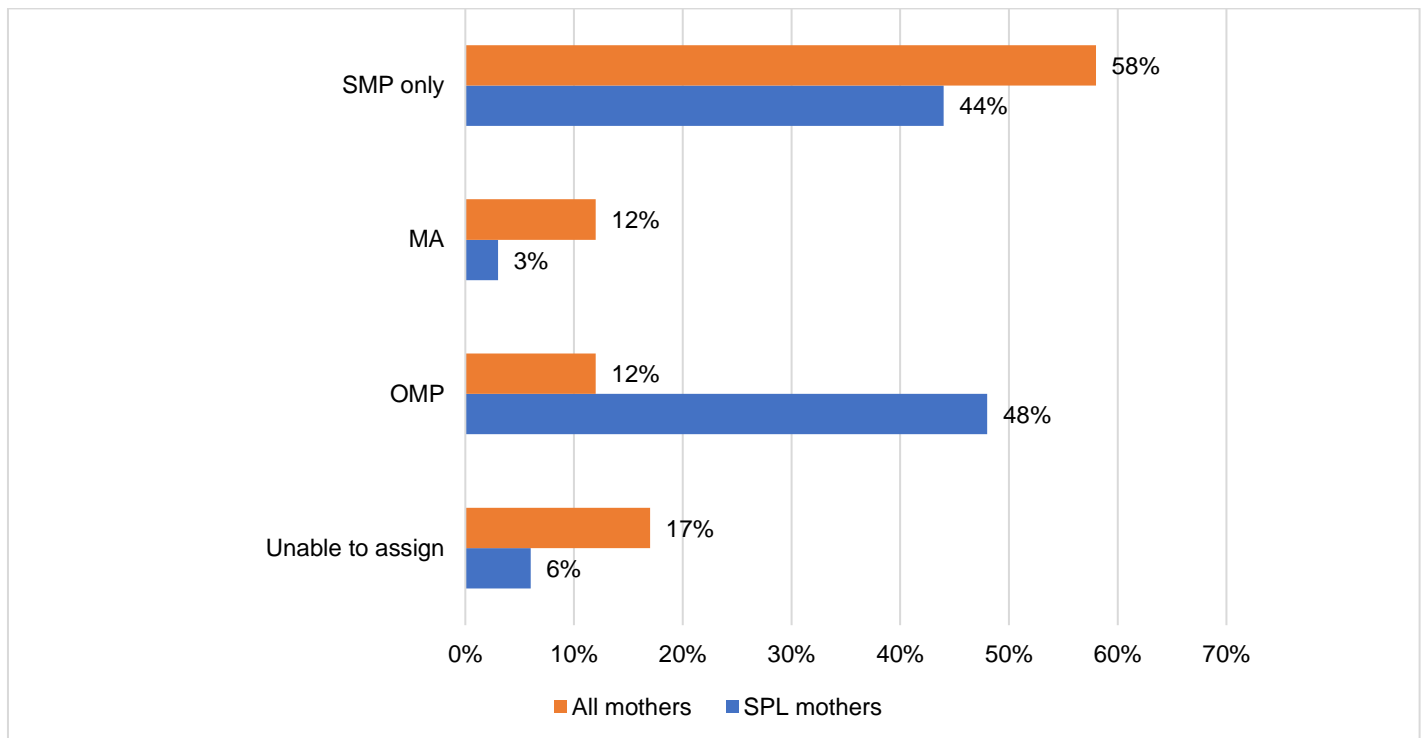
- Mothers that had worked in their pre-birth job for less than 2 years (47 per cent);
- Those aged under 25 (34 per cent);
- Asian mothers (25 per cent);
- Those with a physical or mental condition (31 per cent);
- Those with three or more children (22 per cent);
- Carers (26 per cent);
- Those with no qualifications or qualified below degree level (19 per cent);
- Those living in London (25 per cent) and the North West (22 per cent);
- Those with an income below £10,000 (29 per cent);
- Lone parents (30 per cent);
- Those in skilled, process and elementary occupations (30 per cent).

Among mothers taking SPL, nine in ten (89 per cent) received SMP, half (49 per cent) received OMP, while less than one in ten (7 per cent) received MA. Less than one in twenty (3 per cent) reported receiving none of these.

Where mothers had received OMP, almost all (96 per cent of all mothers and 98 per cent of those taking SPL) received this in the form of regular payments.

Overall, close to three in five (58 per cent) of all biological mothers, and 44 per cent of those taking SPL received SMP only. One in ten of all biological mothers also received MA and OMP (12 per cent in both instances), while close to half (48 per cent) of those taking SPL also received OMP.

Figure 5.10: Type of Maternity Pay received (Biological mothers)



Type of Maternity Pay (TOMP). Unweighted bases: Mothers: 1,945; Mothers that took SPL: 177 N.B. Figures do not add to 100% due to rounding.

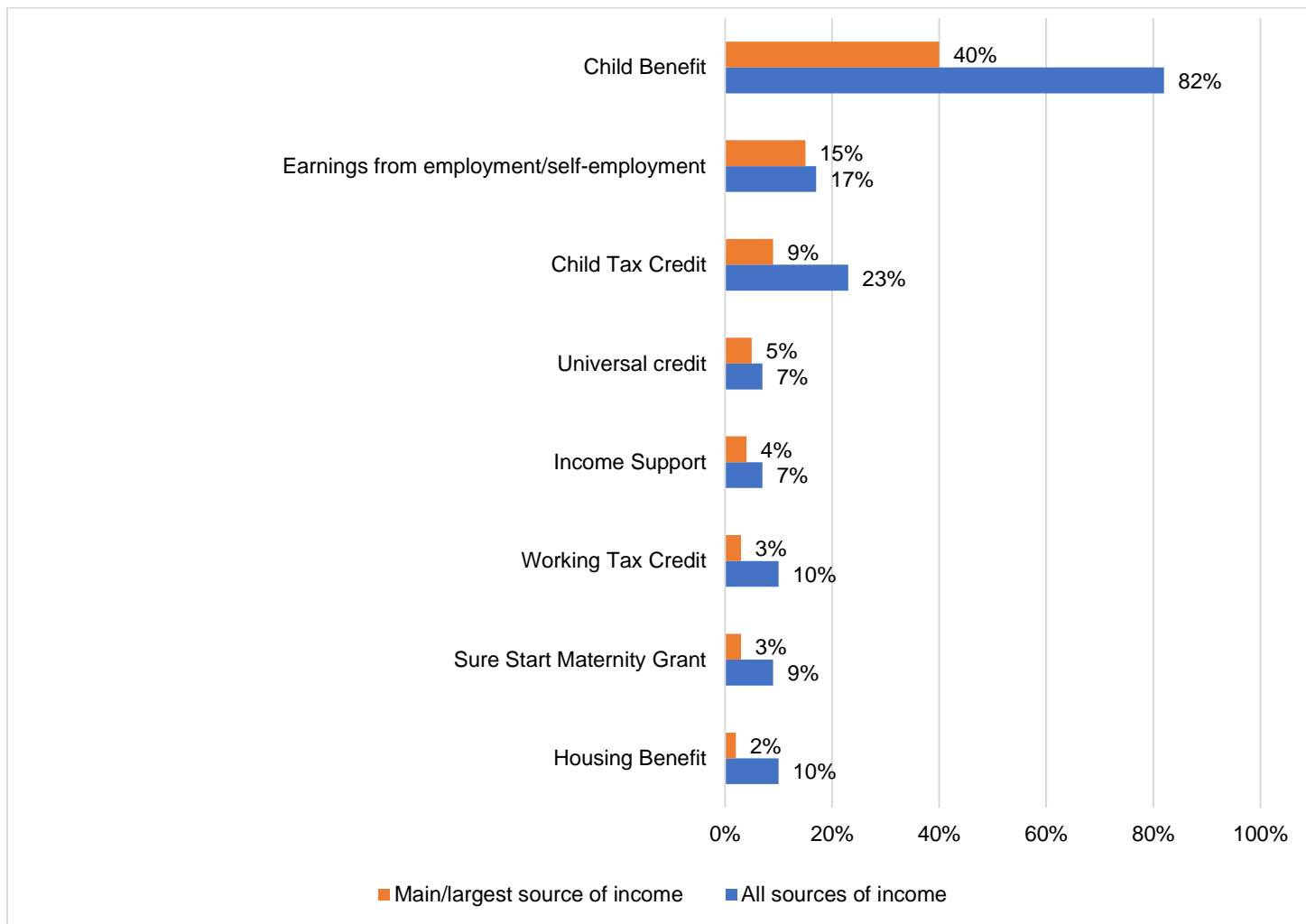
In terms of comparisons in Maternity Pay over time, the 58 per cent of mothers receiving SMP only in this latest survey, compares with a much lower proportion, of 42 per cent for mothers with a baby born in 2008. Analysis suggests the proportion receiving OMP at all has fallen over time from 36 per cent* in 2009 to 12 per cent in 2019, while the proportion receiving MA is stable (11 per cent; 12 per cent in 2019).

Where mothers did not get SMP, the main reason was because they were unemployed (43 per cent). Other reasons included not having worked for long enough (20 per cent), giving up work too early (15 per cent), and a lack of awareness of SMP (15 per cent), being self-employed (9 per cent) and not earning enough (6 per cent).

One in ten (9 per cent) mothers who did not receive SMP had applied for Maternity Allowance. Among the nine in ten (87 per cent) who did not, three in five (59 per cent) thought they were ineligible, and two in five (43 per cent) did not know about it.

Among all biological mothers, Child Benefit was the main source of other income while on Maternity Leave for two in five (40 per cent), followed by earnings from employment (15 per cent) and Child Tax Credit (9 per cent). These three sources of income were also the most commonly reported sources of income overall.

Figure 5.11: Other types of income received while on Maternity Leave (Biological mothers)



Q245. Did you personally receive any of these benefits or other types of income while you were on Maternity or Shared Parental Leave/in the first six months after your child was born/adopted? Q245A. And which of these was your (individual) main/largest income source while you were on Maternity or Shared Parental Leave? Unweighted base: 1,945

Among biological mothers taking SPL, while two thirds (64 per cent) mentioned Child Benefit as one of their sources of income, this reduced to two in five (37 per cent) for those who mentioned it as their main source of income. A similar proportion of mothers taking SPL mentioned earnings from employment or self-employment as both their main source (38 per cent) and as one of their sources of income (40 per cent).

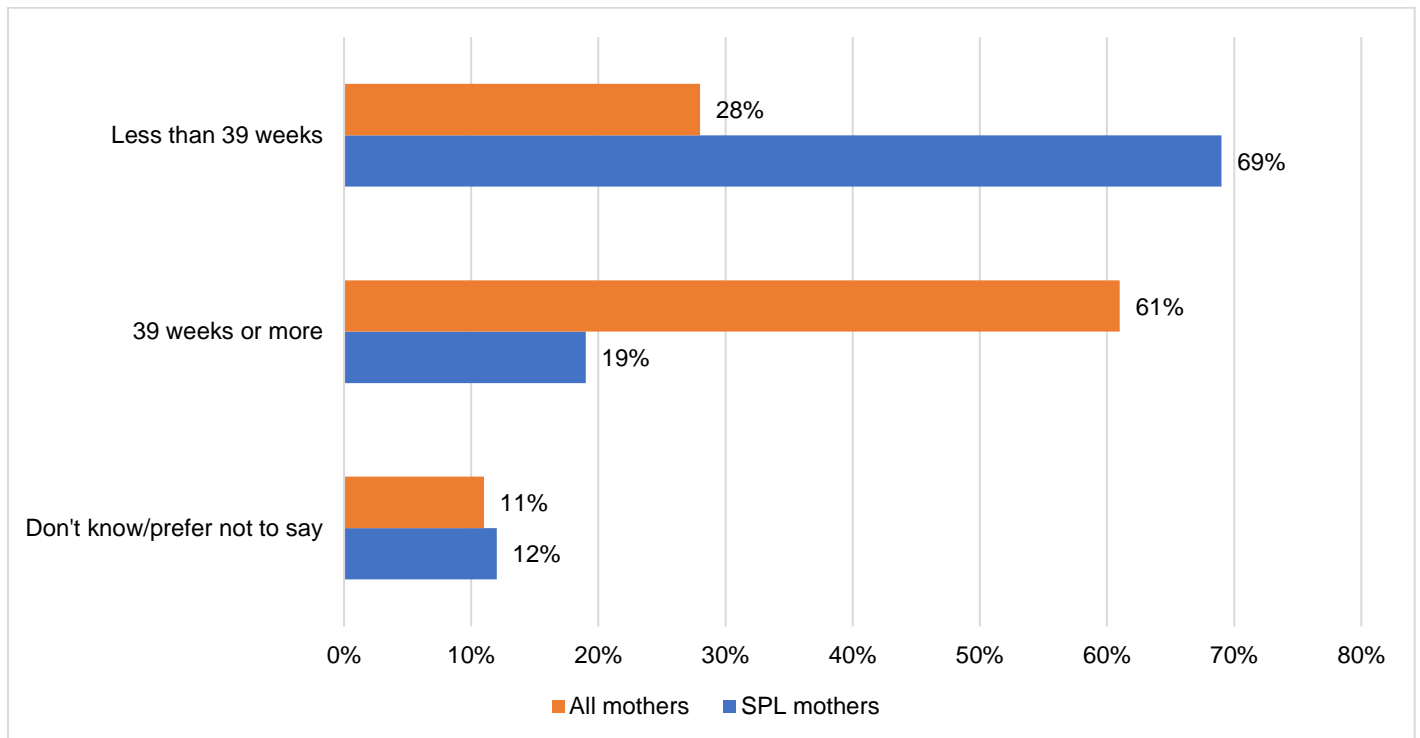
A quarter (26 per cent) of all mothers and two in five (43 per cent) mothers taking SPL reported that this other income exceeded what they received through statutory payments such as Maternity Pay, Shared Parental Pay, or Maternity Allowance.

5.5.1 Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)

Over half (52 per cent) of all mothers in receipt of Statutory Maternity Pay received it for 39 weeks, and one in ten (10 per cent) for longer than this; which overall equates to 61 per cent that received it for at least 39 weeks. By contrast, one in five (19 per cent) of those taking SPL received SMP for at least 39 weeks.

On average mothers received SMP for just under 37 weeks (36.8).

Figure 5.12: Total number of weeks received Statutory Maternity Pay (Mothers in receipt of Statutory Maternity Pay)



Q246/Q247/Q249. Number of weeks receiving Statutory Maternity Pay. Unweighted bases: All mothers: 1,130; Mothers that took SPL: 77

The findings from this survey seem broadly consistent with the 2009 survey when it was reported that 47 per cent of mothers received Maternity Pay for 39 weeks, including 51 per cent where they received SMP and 41 per cent where they received MA (compared with 52 per cent and 44 per cent respectively in 2019).

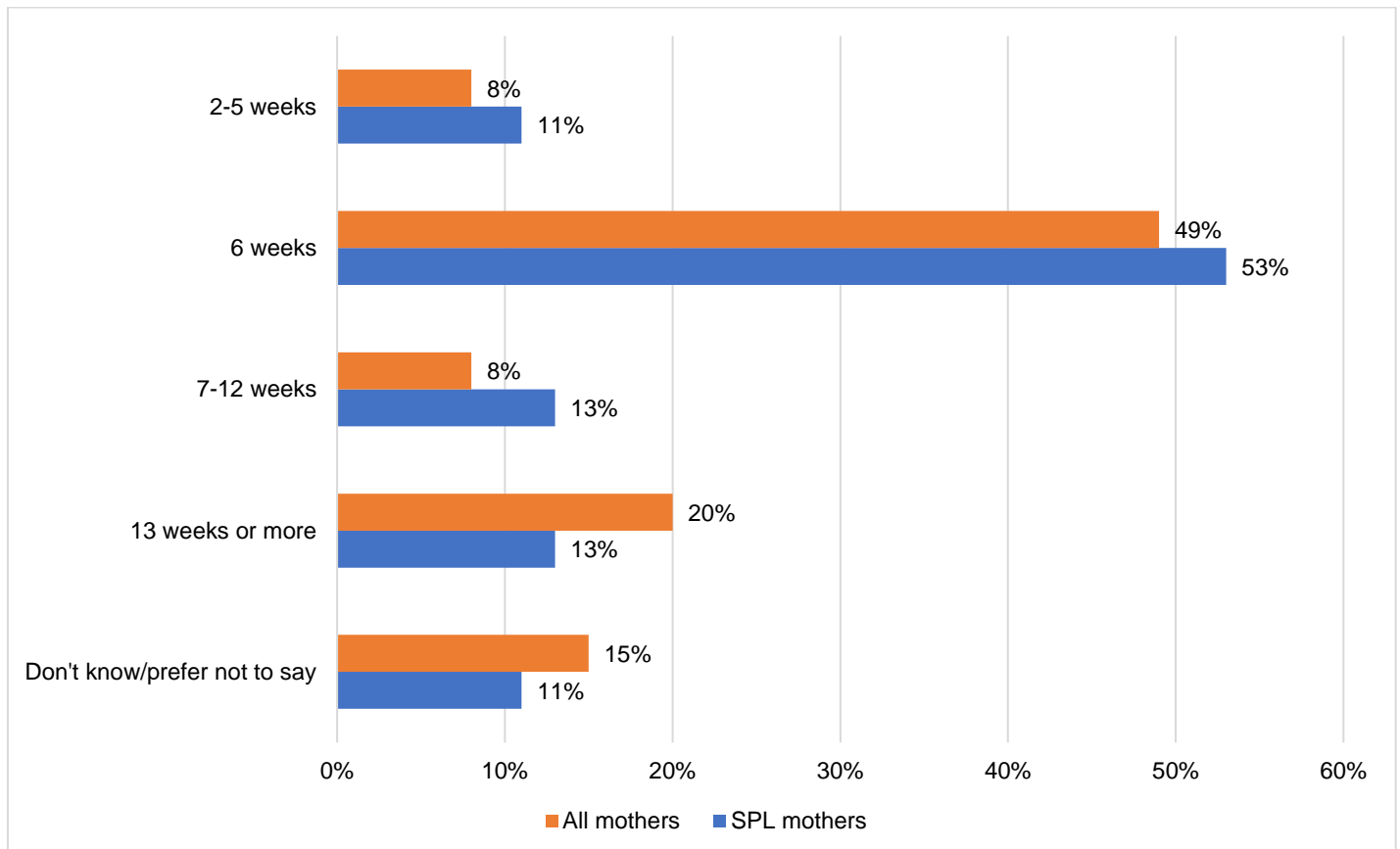
Among all mothers the main reasons provided for receiving less than the statutory 39 weeks were the need to return to work early for financial reasons (36 per cent), a lack of awareness that it was possible to get it for 39 weeks (15 per cent), and a general desire to return to work early (15 per cent).

For mothers taking SPL, the main reasons were that their partner had the rest of their entitlement (58 per cent), and a desire to return to work early (17 per cent).

Where mothers received SMP, three quarters (73 per cent) received 90 per cent of their average earnings for at least some of the time, although this rises to 94 per cent of those taking SPL.

Most commonly mothers generally, and those taking SPL, received 90 per cent of their earnings for 6 weeks (49 per cent and 53 per cent respectively). The average number of weeks mothers received 90% of their earning was 10 weeks among mothers overall, and 8 weeks among SPL mothers.

Figure 5.13: Total number of weeks received 90% of earnings (Mothers in receipt of 90% for some of the time)

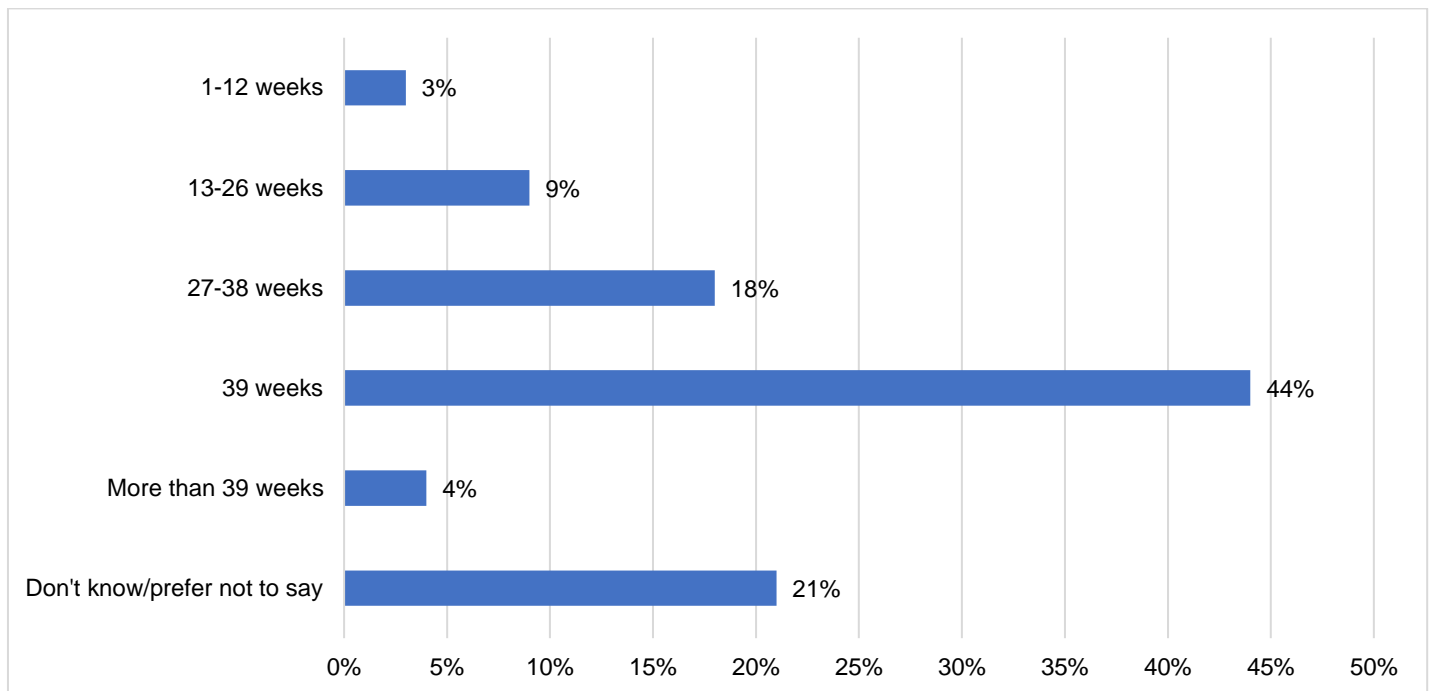


Q252. For how many weeks or months did you get 90 per cent of your earnings? Unweighted bases: Mothers: 818; Mothers that took SPL: 72

5.5.2 Maternity allowance

Among the 14 per cent of mothers who received MA, close to half (48 per cent) received it for 39 weeks or more, while three in ten (30 per cent) received it for less than 39 weeks. On average MA was received for 36 weeks.

Figure 5.14: Total number of weeks received MA (Mothers in receipt of MA)



Q255/Q256/Q258. And for how many weeks did you receive Maternity Allowance? Unweighted base: 230

Among the group that received MA for less than 39 weeks, the main reasons for not getting the statutory 39 weeks were a lack of awareness of the possibility (18 per cent), a need to return to work for financial reasons (18 per cent) and a desire to return to work early (12 per cent).

When asked if they knew why they received MA, the main reasons provided were because they had not worked long enough for their employer (17 per cent), they did not earn enough (14 per cent), they were self-employed (12 per cent), or because they were unemployed (10 per cent).

Close to nine in ten (87 per cent) reported having no problems applying for MA, with less than one in twenty mentioning specific problems with the DWP/Jobcentre Plus, such as the lack of provision of useful information and a lack of help in filling out the Maternity Pay form.

Similarly, close to nine in ten (88 per cent) reported having no problems with the DWP/Jobcentre Plus with the payment of MA, with one in twenty or less mentioning late payments (5 per cent), or other issues.

5.5.3 Occupational Maternity Pay

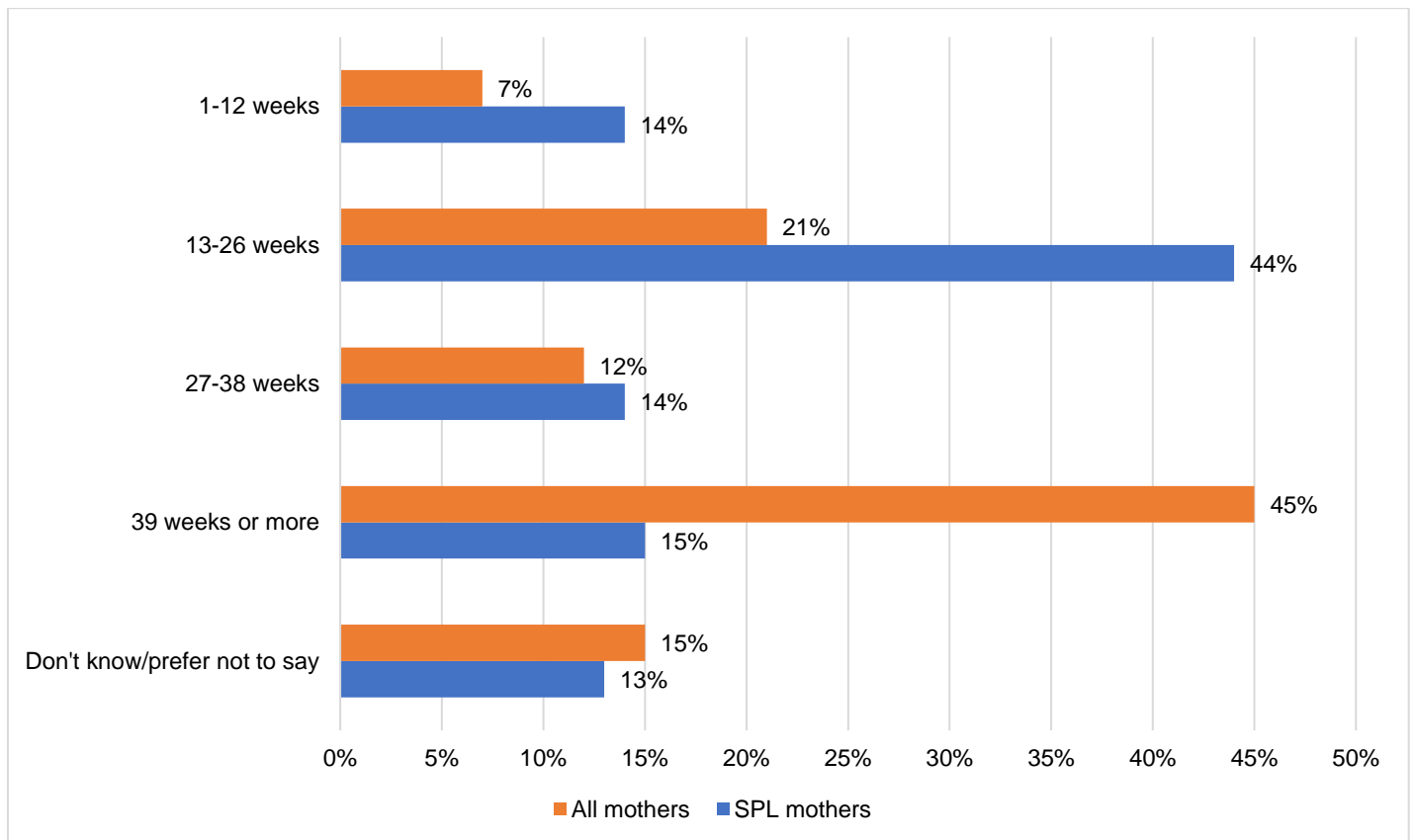
Of the 13 per cent of all mothers who received OMP, more than two in five (45 per cent) received it for 39 weeks or more, and two in five (40 per cent) for a shorter period. On average mothers received OMP for 33 weeks.

For those who received OMP for fewer than 39 weeks, the main reasons for this were a need to return to work for financial reasons (21 per cent), and a desire to return to work early (12 per cent).

By contrast, of the 49 per cent of mothers taking SPL who received OMP, one in six (15 per cent) received it for 39 weeks or longer, while close to half (44 per cent) received it for 13 to 26 weeks. On average SPL mothers received OMP for 25 weeks.

For mothers taking SPL who received OMP for less than 39 weeks, the key reason was that their partner had the rest of the entitlement (48 per cent), followed by a desire to return to work early (16 per cent).

Figure 5.15: Number of weeks received OMP (Mothers in receipt of OMP)



Q264/Q265/Q267. And for how many weeks did you receive Occupational Maternity Pay? Unweighted bases: All mothers: 303; mothers that took SPL: 85

A large proportion of all mothers did not know or preferred not to say what the enhanced percentage of their normal pay they were paid was (57 per cent). Where mothers did offer a response, one in ten (12 per cent) said the figure was up to 80 per cent, while three in ten (31 per cent) said it was greater than this.

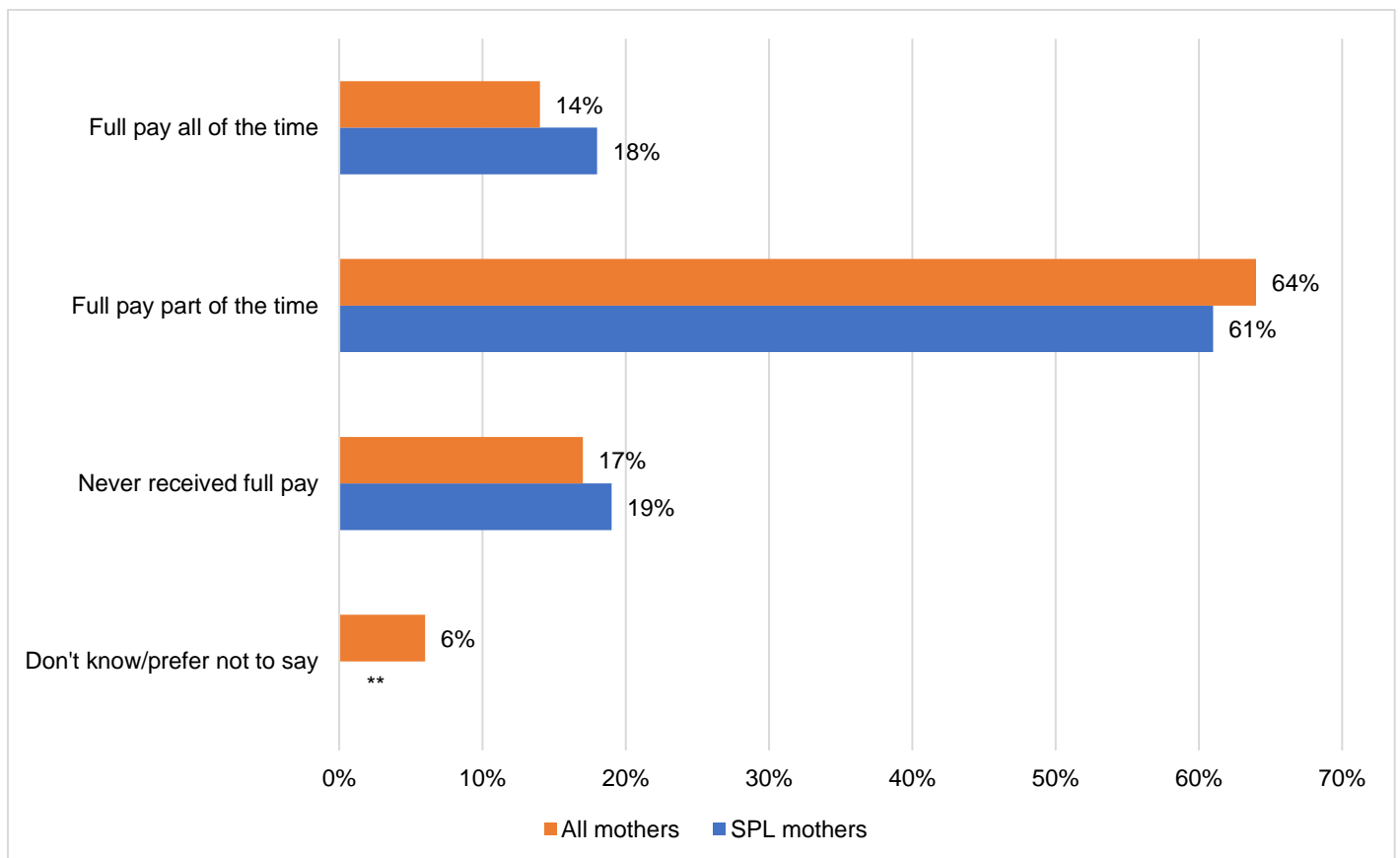
Among mothers taking SPL while a quarter (28 per cent) did not provide a response, a similar proportion (26 per cent) said they received less than 50 per cent of their normal pay, nearly

one in five said it was between 51 and 90 percent (18 per cent), and one in four (28 per cent) said it was over 90 per cent.

Both mothers overall, and those taking SPL, were most likely to report receiving their normal full pay for part of the time they were getting their maternity benefit (64 per cent and 61 per cent respectively).

One in seven (14 per cent) of all mothers that received OMP and 18 per cent of those taking SPL received full pay all of the time, while close to one in five in both instances never received full pay (17 per cent and 19 per cent respectively).

Figure 5.16: Whether received normal full pay (Mothers in receipt of OMP)



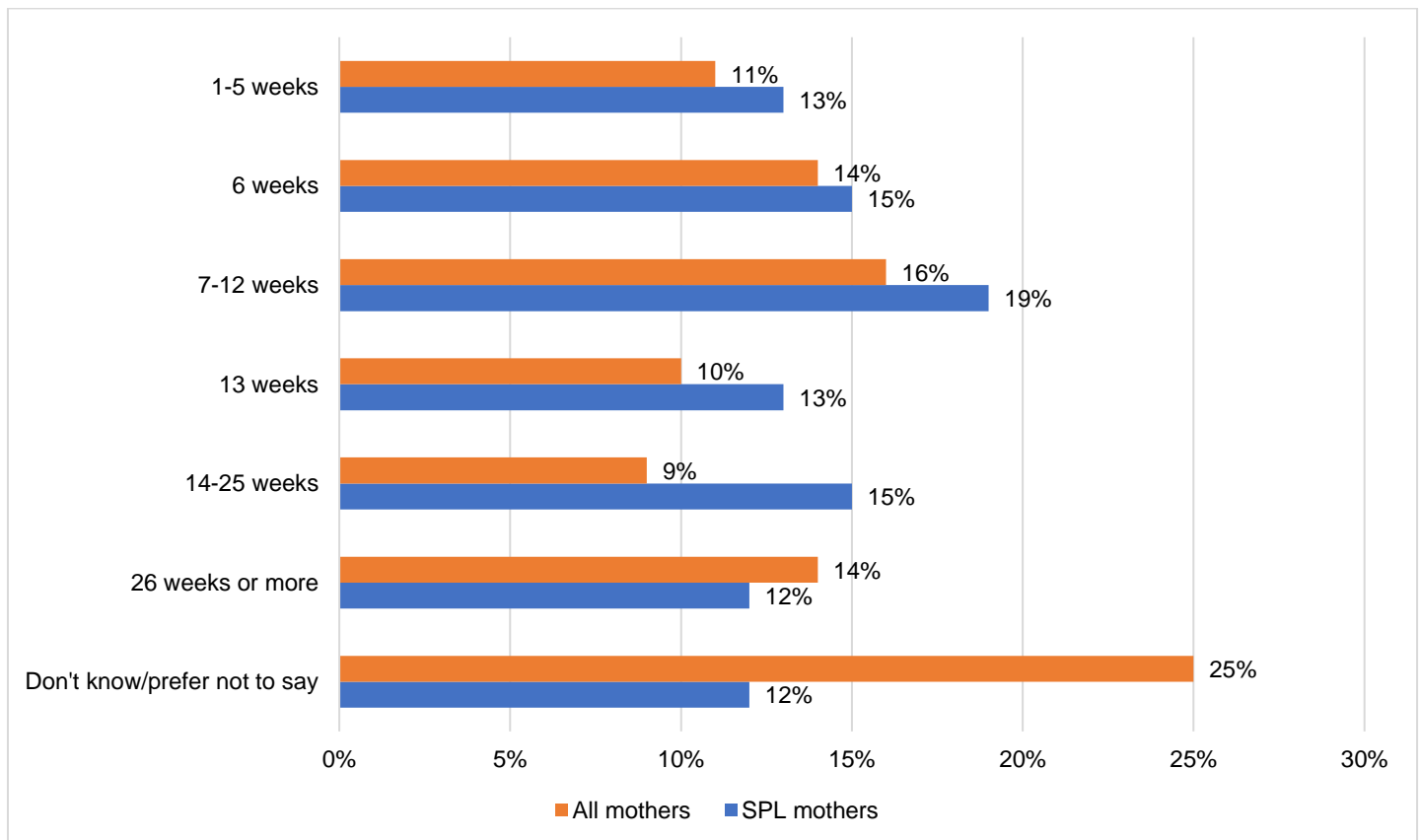
Q270. And did you receive your normal full pay for all, part or none of the time you were getting your maternity pay? Unweighted bases: All mothers: 303; Mothers that took SPL: 85

Two in five (42 per cent) mothers in receipt of OMP who received full pay part of the time had full pay for up to 12 weeks, one in five (19 per cent) for 13 to 25 weeks, and one in seven (14 per cent) for longer than this.

Mothers in receipt of SPL were more likely than mothers generally to provide a response to this question, with close to half (48 per cent) reporting they received full pay for up to 12 weeks, three in ten (28 per cent) for 13 to 25 weeks, and one in ten (12 per cent) for longer than this.

On average mothers received full pay for 13 weeks and SPL mothers for 12 weeks.

Figure 5.17: Number of weeks received full pay (Mothers in receipt of OMP who received full pay part of the time)



Q271. For how many weeks or months did you receive full pay? Unweighted bases: All mothers: 199; Mothers that took SPL: 52

On average mothers received part pay for 17 weeks and SPL mothers for 14.5 weeks.

5.5.4 Whether occupational pay made a difference to the time mothers returned to work.

Close to half (46 per cent) of all mothers said that they could only afford to take time off while they were receiving OMP, compared to 29 per cent of those taking SPL, while around one in ten of both groups (12 per cent and 9 per cent respectively) said they were obliged under the scheme to return to work after a certain amount of time.

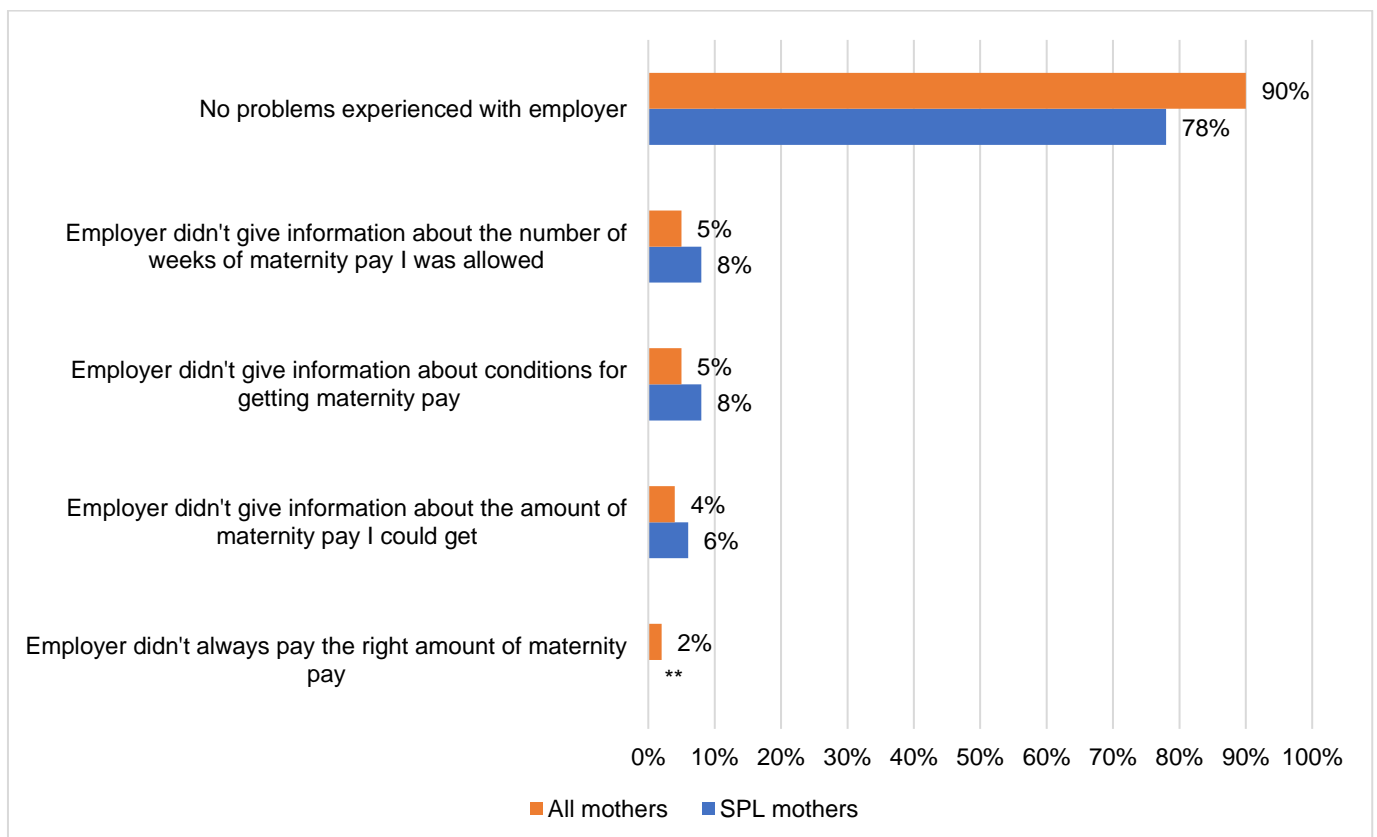
Three in ten (31 per cent) mothers reported that receiving OMP made no difference to the time they returned to work, as did half (51 per cent) of those taking SPL.

5.5.5 Any problems experienced with employer in claiming entitlements

Nine in ten (90 per cent) mothers experienced no problems with their employer in relation to SMP, compared to three quarters (78 per cent) of those taking SPL.

The most commonly mentioned problems for both groups, albeit at relatively low levels, were that the employer did not provide information on the number of weeks of Maternity Pay they were entitled to and that they did not provide information about the conditions for getting Maternity Pay (5 per cent of all mothers, and 8 per cent of those taking SPL in both instances).

Figure 5.18: Whether experienced problems with employer with SMP (Mothers in receipt of SMP)



Q254. Did you experience any of the following problems with your employer with your Statutory Maternity Pay?
 Unweighted bases: All mothers: 1130; Mothers that took SPL: 77

5.6 Key determinants of taking maternity leave/pay (Multivariate analysis)

BMG conducted analysis to determine which factors were most strongly related to whether or not mothers took Statutory or Occupational Maternity Leave/Pay. The definition of the variable we were trying to explain is:

- took Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) OR;
- took Maternity Allowance (MA) OR;
- took Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP);

- Versus none of the above

The list of potential drivers was extensive – too many to include in a multivariate logistic regression model. We therefore conducted a series of preliminary bivariate regression models and used significance testing and R-squared values to determine which of the potential factors should be included in the multivariate model.

The table below shows the relative importance of factors as derived from the final multivariate regression model.

Table 5.5: The relative importance of key drivers of “Mothers taking Maternity Leave/Pay”

Mothers’ Maternity Leave/Pay	Relative Importance
Q14. Ethnicity	5%
Q12. Health conditions	3%
Q13. Provide any help or support for others	3%
Q18. Live alone	5%
Q63. Net Income	7%
Q60. Hours Worked	7%
Q47. Duration in job	41%
Q64. Trade Union	11%
Q72_1. Childcare vouchers or other help with paying for childcare (including tax-free childcare)	5%
Q72_3. Help with childcare arrangements during school holidays	4%
Q72_8. "Keep in touch" scheme offered by employer during maternity or shared parental leave	9%

By far the biggest driver of taking Maternity Leave/Pay was duration in job. This was followed by “*Mothers whose workplace had recognised staff associations or trades union groups*” and “*Mothers for whom a ‘Keep in touch’ scheme is offered by employer during maternity.*”

The next table gives the odds ratios – if an odds ratio is greater than 1 then that group is more likely to take Maternity Leave/Pay, if it is less than 1 the group is less likely to. The size of each group (frequency) should also be taken into account; sometimes the odds ratio shows a big difference but it only applies to a small percentage of the total population. Several iterations of the model were run in order to optimise the groups within any particular variable.

Table 5.6: Odds ratios for “Mothers taking Maternity Leave/Pay”

Mothers' Maternity Leave/Pay	Frequency	Odds ratio
<u>Constant</u>	1986	
<u>Q14. Ethnicity</u>		
All other ethnic groups combined	310	0.553
White	1676	1.000
<u>Q12. Health conditions</u>		
Yes	155	0.536
No	1831	1.000
<u>Q13. Provide any help or support for others</u>		
Yes	141	0.547
No	1845	1.000
<u>Q18. Live alone</u>		
Single	363	0.590
Cohabiting	1623	1.000
<u>Q63. Net. Income</u>		
£15,000-£24,999	498	2.001
£25,000+	564	1.830
Under £15,000	756	1.000
<u>Q60. Hours Worked</u>		
Up to 17 hours	219	0.641
More than 17 hours	1619	1.000
<u>Q47. Duration in job</u>		
2 to 5 years	544	5.490
5+ years	689	6.942
Less than 2 years	190	1.000
<u>Q64. Trade Union</u>		
No	1018	0.435
Yes	766	1.000
<u>Q72 1. Childcare vouchers or other help with paying for childcare (including tax-free childcare)</u>		
Yes	755	2.259
NOT	1231	1.000
<u>Q72 3. Help with childcare arrangements during school holidays</u>		

Yes	70	7.150
NOT	1916	1.000
<u>Q72 8. "Keep in touch" scheme offered by employer during maternity or shared parental leave</u>		
Yes	847	2.876
NOT	1139	1.000

Looking firstly at the key drivers, the odds of a mother taking some form of Maternity Leave/Pay were:

- Nearly five times higher for mothers who had worked at a job for over 2 years and almost seven times higher for mothers in a job more than 5 years (both compared to those who had worked less than 2 years)
 - Note: to qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay, an employee needs to have worked for the same employer continuously for 26 weeks at the “relevant week” (the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth).
- Over twice as high for mothers whose workplace had recognised staff associations or trades union groups (reciprocal of 0.435 = 2.3)
 - Note: the way to read this from the tables is that the odds ratio for those who had recognised trade unions is 1.000 and the odds ratio for those who didn’t is 0.435; so the odds of a mother taking some form of maternity leave/pay were 2.3 times as likely (=1/0.435) for the former compared to the latter.
- Nearly three times as high for mothers for whom a ‘Keep in touch’ scheme is offered by their employer during maternity.

The latter point could represent a general theme of employers who offer, communicate and promote support and/or benefits. The survey asked a number of such benefits (Q72. “*To the best of your knowledge, does/did your employer offer/provide to employees any of the following types of support?*” and two more of them (labelled Q72 in the table) came out as significant in the regression model.

The odds of mothers taking maternity leave/pay were also significantly higher for:

- White mothers (compared to all other ethnic groups combined);
 - Although we collected a full classification of ethnic groups, the base sizes were too small in any other single group to be robust in a regression model)
- Mothers who have a physical or mental health condition;
- Mothers who do not provide help or support for others (compared to those who do);
- Mothers who are cohabiting with a spouse/partner (compared to single);
- Mothers who earn over £15,000 p.a. (compared to less than);
- Mothers who work over 17 hours a week (compared to up to 17 hours);

- Mothers for whom childcare vouchers (or similar help) is offered by their employer;
- Mothers whose employers offer help with childcare arrangements during school holidays (only a small percentage of mothers said 'yes' to this).

5.7 Chapter Summary

In terms of the key findings with regards to awareness and take up of Maternity Leave and Pay:

- When asked about the amount of Maternity Leave they thought they were legally allowed, just over two in three (68 per cent) mothers correctly believed the legal entitlement was 52 weeks. The next highest proportion (13%) thought the legal entitlement was 39 weeks, and a similar proportion (12%) did not know.
- Compared with the legal entitlement, a significantly lower proportion (54 per cent) of mothers indicated that their employer offered the statutory amount of 52 weeks paid and/or unpaid leave, while nearly a third (31%) of mothers indicated that their employer offered 39 weeks or fewer, and one in eight (13%) did not know.
- Uncertainty over mothers' legal entitlement and the amount of leave offered by their employer was higher than average among mothers on lower incomes (under £20,000), with lower-level qualifications (below degree level), those with a health condition, mothers who were working in smaller workplaces, where there was no trade union presence, as well as in profit-making businesses, where mothers had been in their job for less than 2 years and where mothers were not at supervisory level.
- The actual amount of leave offered by employers increased among those with higher incomes, and higher-level qualifications (degree level and above), in larger companies, among mothers who were supervisors, who had been in their job for more than 5 years and worked in central government. The number of weeks Maternity Leave offered by employers was significantly lower than average in workplaces with no trade union presence.
- On average mothers started their Maternity Leave just under 4 weeks (3.7 weeks) before the birth or adoption of their child. Whilst more than two fifths (44 per cent) of all mothers stopped working prior to the start of their Maternity Leave, using annual leave, emergency leave or other leave, and this was more likely to be the case among mothers with a health condition (62 per cent) as well as those working for large employers with 250+ employees (55 per cent).
- The primary reasons for mothers starting their Maternity Leave when they did were the desire to take as much leave as possible after the birth (24 per cent), wanting to prepare for the baby's arrival (21 per cent) and being too tired to carry on working (16 per cent).
- Overall, three quarters (75 per cent) of mothers took the statutory amount of leave, of 39 weeks or more. Just under one in five mothers (18 per cent) took fewer than 39 weeks Maternity Leave. On average mothers' Maternity Leave lasted for nearly 44 weeks.
- Carers, those working in the smallest organisations and in either manager or senior official occupations, or skilled, process and elementary occupations were less likely than mothers overall to have taken 39 or more weeks leave.

- Maternity Leave coming to an end and needing the money are the main reasons for mothers returning to work when they did. Mothers on the highest incomes before birth were significantly less likely to say their main reason for returning was either because their leave came to an end or they needed the money and were significantly more likely to say they returned because they enjoy working and were keen to return.
- Three in ten mothers reported experiencing some form of unfair treatment as a result of their pregnancy. The way this question was asked in 2019 is slightly different again to the previous survey in 2009, however a difference of 12 percentage points does suggest there has been an increase over time in the proportion of mothers that have experienced unfair treatment.
- Over half (54 per cent) of all mothers had some form of work-related contact or communication with their employer (KIT days) before their Maternity Leave ended. Three in five (60 per cent) mothers were aware that women on Maternity/Adoption Leave are entitled to 10 KIT days. One in three (33 per cent) mothers reported that at least one of the day's work or training they did during their Maternity Leave was a KIT day, while three in five (60 per cent) reported that none were KIT days.
- Seven in ten (70 per cent) biological mothers say they received Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) when they had their child, while one in seven (14 per cent) received Maternity Allowance (MA) and a similar proportion (13 per cent) received Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP). One in six (16 per cent) reported receiving none of these types of maternity pay; and this proportion was particularly high, at closer to a third, among mothers under 25 years of age, those with a physical or mental condition, lone parents, those with the lowest incomes and in the lowest occupational groups. The proportion that received none of these types of pay or benefit increases to nearly half among mothers that had worked in their job for less than 2 years.
- Among mothers taking SPL, nine in ten (89 per cent) received SMP, half (49 per cent) received OMP, while less than one in ten (7 per cent) received MA. Less than one in twenty (3 per cent) reported receiving none of these.
- Overall, three in five (58 per cent) biological mothers, and 44 per cent of those taking SPL received SMP only. One in ten of all biological mothers also received MA and OMP (12 per cent in both instances), while close to half (48 per cent) of those taking SPL also received OMP.
- Where mothers did not get SMP, the main reason was because they were unemployed (43 per cent). Other reasons included not having worked for long enough (20 per cent), giving up work too early, and a lack of awareness of SMP (both 15 per cent), being self-employed (9 per cent) and not earning enough (6 per cent).
- Three fifths (61 per cent) of all mothers in receipt of Statutory Maternity Pay received it for 39 weeks or more, while one in four did so for less than 39 weeks (28 per cent). Among the mothers who received MA, close to half (48 per cent) received it for 39 weeks or more, while three in ten (30 per cent) received it for less than 39 weeks. Of all mothers who received OMP, more than two in five (45 per cent) received it for 39 weeks or more, and two in five (40 per cent) received OMP for a shorter period.
- Multivariate analysis revealed that by far the biggest driver of taking Maternity Leave/Pay was duration in job. This was followed by "Mothers whose workplace had recognised staff associations or trades union groups" and "Mothers for whom a 'Keep in touch' scheme is offered by employer during maternity."

6 Paternity Leave and Pay

This section of the report focuses on the take up of Paternity Leave and Pay among fathers, as well as other forms of leave taken by fathers following the birth or adoption of their child.

Employed fathers and partners (including same sex partners) can qualify for up to two weeks of paid Paternity Leave. The leave and pay must be taken in the first 8 weeks of the child's birth or placement for adoption (special rules apply in the case of early births). To qualify for leave and pay an employee needs to meet a continuity of service test (Paternity Leave is not a "day 1" right). If the father/partner is eligible for Statutory Paternity Pay they are paid at the lower of 90 per cent of their average weekly earnings or the statutory flat rate (£145.18 a week at the time of the survey).

6.1 Leave before birth

The 2009 survey suggested 66 per cent* of fathers took some time off before their baby was born, for reasons to do with the pregnancy (not including antenatal appointments), with 33 per cent* that took no leave and just over 1 per cent* not sure or who preferred not to say. In this latest survey a significantly higher proportion of fathers say they took no time off during the pregnancy of their child (61 per cent), and 6 per cent were not sure or preferred not to say, leaving just a third that did take time off (34 per cent).

6.2 Whether fathers took any leave, and if so what type

Analysis suggests the proportion of fathers taking no time off after the birth of their baby has also increased.

In the 12 months after their child was born or adopted, three in five (59 per cent) fathers from the core sample said they took Paternity Leave and 4 per cent took SPL. One in five (21 per cent) fathers took time off but it was not statutory leave and just under one in five (18 per cent) took no time off. The 2009 survey suggested 9 per cent of fathers took no time off.

In addition to SPL, just over nine in ten (92%) SPL fathers also took Paternity Leave.

Table 6.1 Leave taken by fathers following the birth of their child

	All fathers	SPL fathers
Paternity Leave or leave for a same sex partner	59%	92%
Shared Parental Leave	4%	100%
Other time off	21%	17%
No time off	18%	-

Q10. Which, if any, of the following types of statutory leave did you take in the 12 months after your child was born/adopted? Core Fathers: 1,062; SPL Fathers: 155

Based on fathers who were employees before the birth or adoption of their child the take up of Paternity Leave increased to 70 per cent, compared with just 38 per cent among fathers that were workers before birth and 12 per cent among self-employed fathers.

Take up of Paternity Leave was also significantly higher than average among the following groups of fathers:

- Fathers of White ethnicity (64 per cent; 49 per cent among fathers from all other ethnic groups combined);
- Those educated to degree level or above (69 per cent; 55 per cent among those below degree level) or with no qualifications (47 per cent);
- Fathers on the highest incomes (79 per cent among those earning £40,000 or more per annum before birth; 54 per cent among those earning less than £20,000);
- Those working in larger organisations (79 per cent in organisations with 250+ employees; 52 per cent where less than 50 are employed);
- Those working in central government (84 per cent) and in public administration health or education (74 per cent); and in professional (78 per cent) or associate professional or technical occupations (75 per cent).
- Fathers that had worked in their pre-birth job for more than 5 years (66 per cent).

Take up of Paternity Leave was lower than average among fathers that worked in skilled, process or elementary occupations (51 per cent); those that worked in the primary, manufacturing or construction sectors (52 per cent), and among fathers of all other ethnic groups combined (49 per cent).

Fathers that worked in organisations with flexible working arrangements and with childcare support before birth were also more likely to have taken Paternity Leave (74 per cent and 82 per cent respectively) and to have taken SPL (7 per cent and 8 per cent).

Fathers that worked in organisations composed mostly of women were more likely to have taken SPL (14 per cent took SPL; 2 per cent where their organisation was composed mostly of men).

Take up of any leave was higher among fathers aged 25-29 (91 per cent), fathers of White ethnicity, with higher level qualifications, in larger organisations and on higher incomes, among others.

Table 6.2: Proportion of all fathers that took any leave following the birth of their child

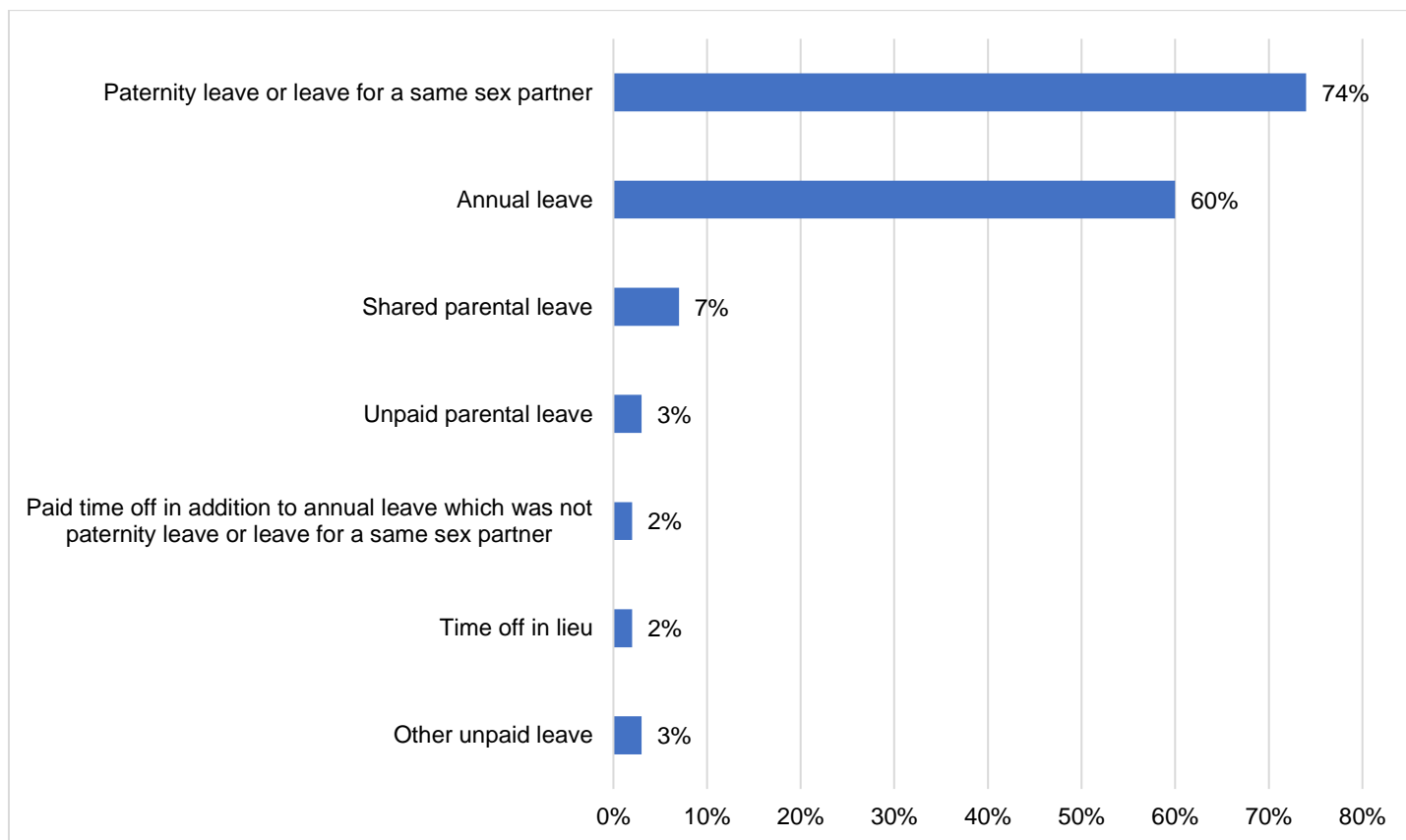
		Any leave
Total (1,062)		79%
Ethnicity	White (772)	85%+
	All other ethnic groups combined (283)	66%-
Qualifications	Degree level or above (348)	84%+

	Below degree level/no qualifications (698)	77%-
Size of employer – before birth	Less than 50 employees (291)	76%
	50-249 employees (177)	82%
	250+ employees (461)	93%+
Status before birth	Employee (840)	86%+
	Worker (60)	62%-
	Self-employed (162)	50%-
Supervisory responsibilities before birth	Supervisor (350)	91%+
	Not a supervisor (548)	81%
Income before birth	Under £20,000 (276)	71%-
	£20,000 - £39,999 (412)	87%+
	£40,000 or more (184)	92%+

+/- = significantly higher/lower than all mothers on average. Q10. Which, if any, of the following types of statutory leave did you take in the 12 months after your child was born/adopted? (TOFFIN)

Of all the fathers who took any type of leave and were employees, three quarters (74 per cent) took Paternity Leave, three in five (60 per cent) took annual leave, and 7 per cent took SPL.

Figure 6.1: Type of leave taken by fathers who took any leave and were employees before birth



Q161. Types of leave taken. Unweighted bases: All fathers that took leave and were employees: 737;

The proportion of fathers that opted to take annual leave increased with income; to 75 per cent among fathers earning £40,000 or more before birth. Take-up of annual leave was also higher than average among those who worked in central government (71 per cent), in the primary, manufacturing or construction sector (68 per cent), and as managers or senior officials (75 per cent). The proportion of fathers that took annual leave also varies significantly by:

- 67 per cent among White fathers; 41 per cent among fathers from all other ethnic groups combined;
- Whether fathers lived inside London (44 per cent) or outside of London (65 per cent);
- 69 per cent where they worked in organisations with 250+ employees; 49 per cent where less than 50 staff were employed;
- 67 per cent among fathers who were supervisors before birth; 56 per cent who were not;
- 68 per cent where employers offered some form of childcare support; 51 per cent where they did not.

In terms of comparisons over time, of the employee fathers that took leave after the birth of their baby analysis suggests use of Paternity Leave is stable – the 74 per cent in the 2019 survey compares with 73 per cent in 2009.

However, it does appear that an increased proportion of fathers are now taking additional forms of paid leave, as well as Paternity Leave. The report from 2009 suggested 49 per cent of fathers only took Paternity Leave; 18 per cent only took other paid leave; 5 per cent only took unpaid leave and 25 per cent took a combination of Paternity Leave and other paid leave. Similar figures have been found in the SPSS file for 2009. As shown in Table 6.3, fewer

fathers only took Paternity Leave (26 per cent) in 2019 and nearly twice as many in the latest survey took a combination of Paternity Leave and other paid leave (46 per cent).

Table 6.3: Type of leave taken

	2009*	2019
Paternity Leave only	47%	26%-
Other paid leave only	18%	14%-
Other non-paid leave only	6%	3%-
Paternity Leave and other paid leave	24%	46%+

+/- significant increase/decrease, at 95% level of confidence compared with 2009

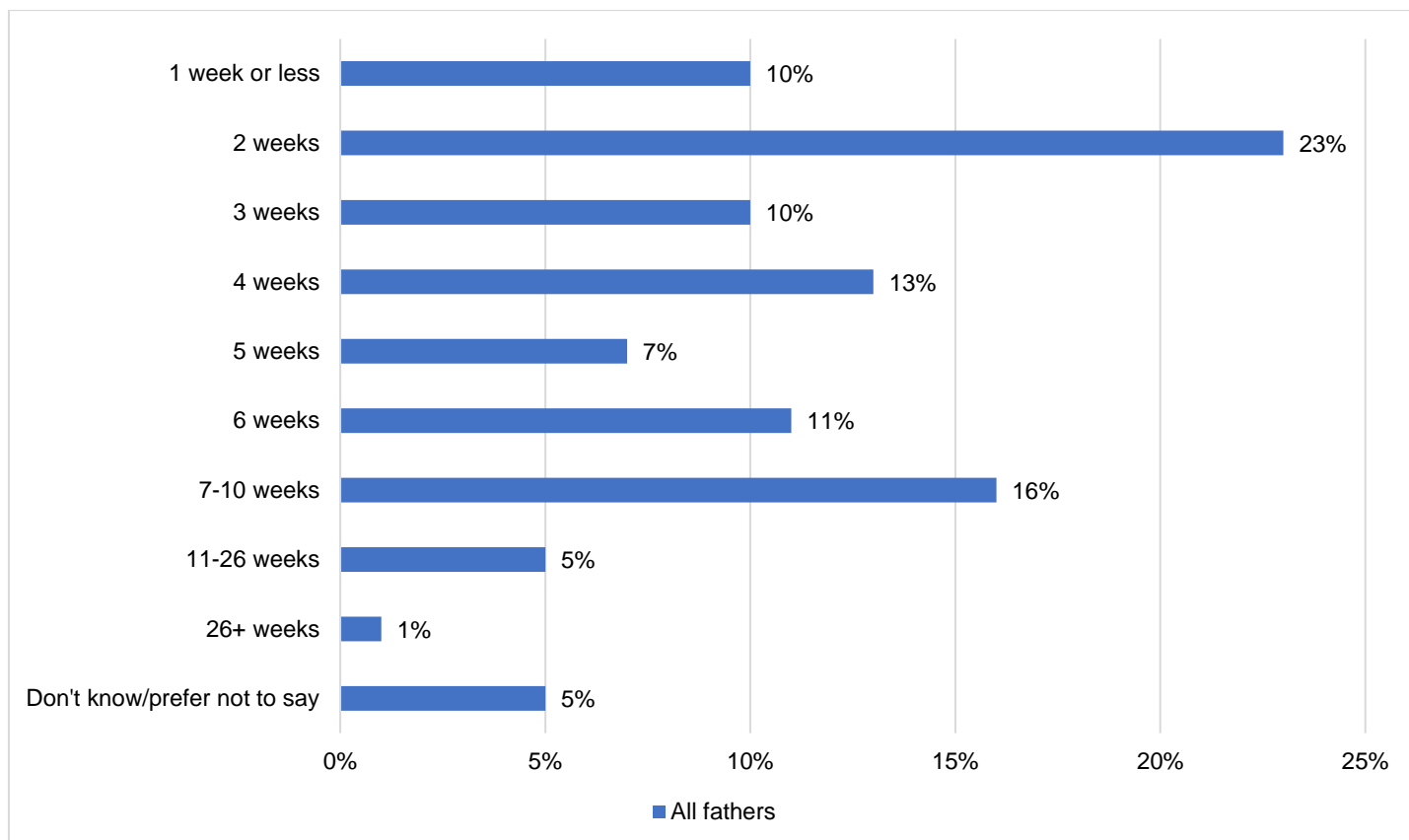
Q161, unweighted base 737 2019; 1,056 2009.

6.3 Duration of fathers' leave

Across all forms of leave, among fathers that did take some time off following the birth or adoption of their child, one in ten (10 per cent) took a week or less, and around a quarter (23 per cent) took 2 weeks off. In total a fifth (22 per cent) of fathers that took some form of leave took 7 or more weeks off between the time their child was born and when they were 12 months old. This compares with a significantly higher proportion (87 per cent) among fathers who took SPL taking 7 or more weeks off.

The mean number of weeks taken among all fathers was 4.8 weeks, and for fathers who took SPL it was considerably higher, at 17.4 weeks.

Figure 6.2: Number of weeks fathers took as time off from birth to 12 months old (Fathers who took time off work)



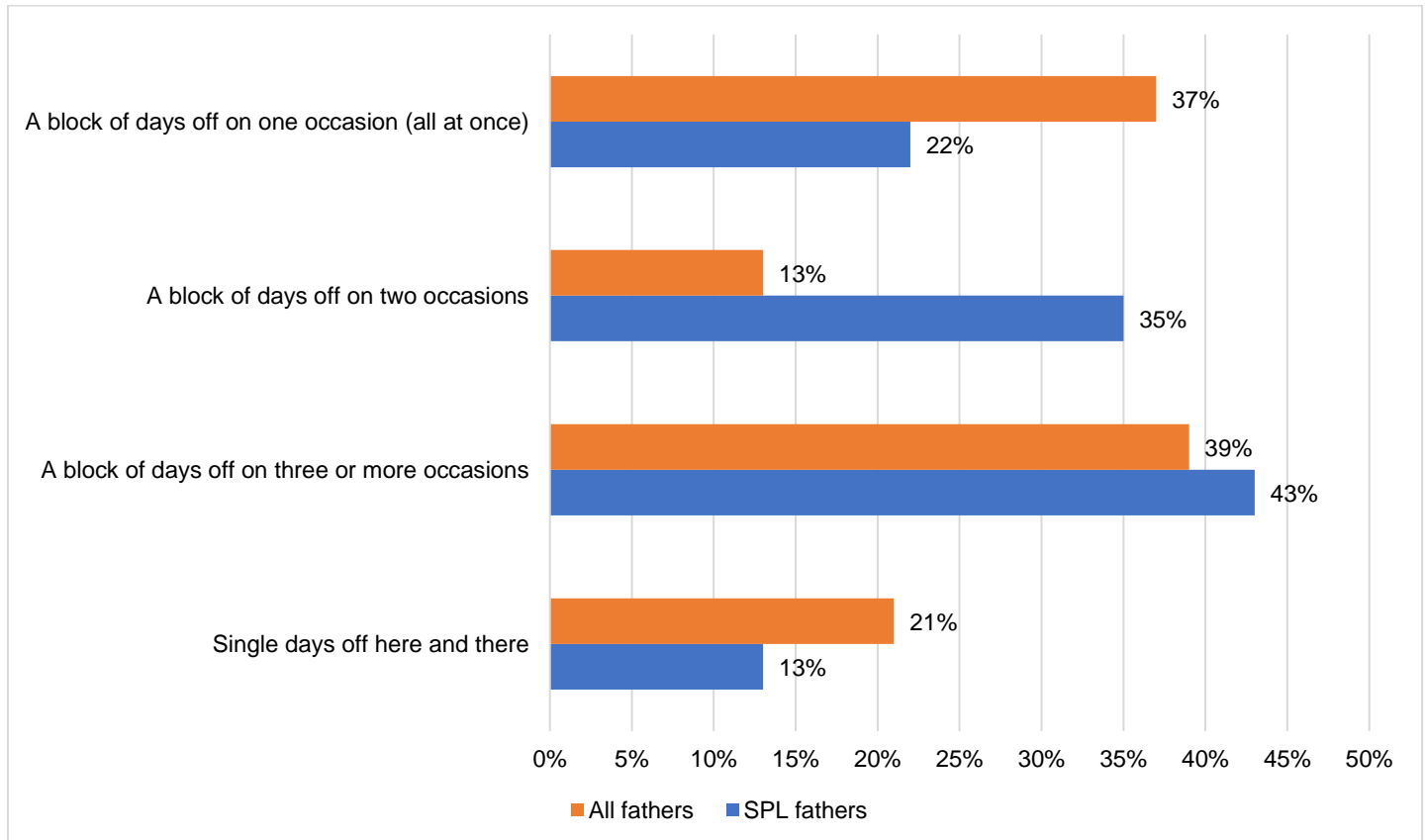
Q159. How many weeks did you take off between the time your child was born/adopted and when they were 12 months old? Unweighted bases: All fathers: 856.

The mean number of weeks taken off by fathers increased with age; from 4.2 weeks among fathers aged 25 to 29, to 5.8 weeks among those aged 40 or older, and was also higher than average among those that had worked in their pre-birth job for at least 2 years. The mean also differs particularly by:

- Income - from 3.7 weeks among those with an income up to £20,000, to 8 weeks among those with an income of £50,000 or more;
- Ethnicity – 3.8 weeks among Asian fathers, up to 5.1 weeks among White fathers;
- Qualification-level - 4.1 weeks among fathers qualified below degree level or with no qualifications; 6.5 weeks for those at degree level or above;
- Whether fathers were self-employed (3.9 weeks) or employees/workers (4.9 weeks);
- Size of organisation worked for – from 3.6 weeks where less than 50 staff worked, up to 6 weeks where 250+ staff worked;
- Type of organisation worked for – 4.5 weeks in private businesses; 8.3 weeks in central government organisations;
- Sector worked in – lower than average in primary, manufacturing and construction (4 weeks) and wholesale and retail (3.8 weeks); higher than average in public administration, health and education (6.6 weeks);
- Occupation – highest in professional (6.2) and associate professional and technical (6.5 weeks), and lowest in skilled trades, process and elementary occupations (3.8 weeks).

Among all fathers, the time they did take off was more likely to be taken on one occasion (i.e., all at once), than compared with fathers that took SPL (37 per cent, compared to 22 per cent). Fathers taking SPL were more likely than fathers generally to take their leave in blocks of two or more occasions (78 per cent; 53 per cent of all fathers from the core sample who took time off).

Figure 6.3: How time off was taken (Fathers who took time off work)



Q160. How did you take this time off? Unweighted bases: All fathers: 856; Fathers that took SPL: 155

Table 6.4 shows the mean number of weeks taken of the various types of parental leave, and indicates that, as well as taking more Shared Parental Leave on average, SPL fathers also took more time on average than all fathers in general in the form of Paternity Leave and unpaid parental leave.

Table 6.4: Mean number of weeks taken (Fathers who took time off work and were employees)

	All fathers	SPL fathers
Annual leave	2.5	2.9
Paternity Leave or leave for a same sex partner	1.7	2.12+
Shared Parental Leave	0.8	13.9+
Unpaid parental leave	0.1	0.4+

+/- = significantly higher/lower than all fathers on average. Q161. How many weeks did you take as the following types of leave? Unweighted base: All fathers: 737; Fathers that took SPL: 153

From the time their child was born to the time he/she was two months old, close to three in five (63 per cent) of all fathers who took time off work as Paternity Leave took between one and two weeks while 9 per cent took less time than this, and one in five (20 per cent) took more.

Among fathers who took SPL, four in five (81 per cent) took between one and two weeks, one in twenty (4 per cent) took less time than this, and around one in eight (13 per cent) took more.

Overall fathers that took Paternity Leave, took an average of just under 16 days from the time their child was born to the time he/she was two months, compared with just under 17 days for fathers that also took SPL.

Figures from the 2009 report on the number of weeks taken as Paternity Leave by fathers who took any Paternity Leave suggest an increase over time in the number of weeks taken: with fewer fathers in 2019 that took 7 days or less, and a higher proportion that took more than 7 days.

Table 6.5: Number of days/weeks taken as Paternity Leave (Where fathers have taken Paternity Leave)

	2009*	2019
Less than 7 days	6%	2%-
7 days	21%	7%-
1-2 weeks	57%	63%+
More than 2 weeks	16%	20%
Don't know/prefer not to say	N/A	7%

Q162 unweighted bases: 2009: 823; 2019: 604

+/- significant increase/decrease, at 95% level of confidence compared with 2009

6.3.1 Whether full Paternity Leave entitlement was taken

Three quarters (76 per cent) of all fathers that took Paternity Leave and almost all (97 per cent) fathers taking SPL took up their full Paternity Leave entitlement.

Among the one in five (22 per cent) fathers that did not take their full Paternity Leave entitlement, the main reason was that they could not afford to (62 per cent). A quarter (24 per cent) said it was because they took annual leave instead, and one in eight (12 per cent) said that they were too busy at work and slightly fewer (9 per cent) that they took all the leave they needed to.

6.4 Whether experienced any problems with employer.

In terms of treatment by employers, fewer fathers in 2019 compared with 2009 appear to have experienced any problems or difficulties with regards to the leave they took (just 3 per cent compared to 9 per cent in 2009*). The vast majority (95 per cent) of all fathers in 2019 reported having no problems or difficulties with their employer in terms of their leave.

6.5 Pay received during Paternity Leave

Six in ten (58 per cent) fathers received full pay throughout their Paternity Leave, while a quarter (23 per cent) did not receive full pay at all.

By contrast, among fathers that took SPL as well as Paternity Leave, seven in ten (70 per cent) received full pay throughout their Paternity Leave, while one in eight (14 per cent) did not receive full pay at all. Compared with 2009, findings suggest that in 2019, fathers that did take Paternity Leave are likely to have received full pay for a longer period of time, with significantly fewer receiving full pay for less than 7 days and a significant increase particularly in the proportion that received full pay for more than 2 weeks.

Table 6.6: Number of days/weeks taken as Paternity Leave on full pay, 2009 and 2019

	2009*	2019
0 days	20%	23%
Less than 7 days	31%	2%-
7 days	7%	12%+
1-2 weeks	40%	43%
More than 2 weeks	1%	13%+
Don't know/prefer not to say	2%	8%+

+/- significant increase/decrease, at 95% level of confidence compared with 2009

Q167 unweighted bases 643 2019; 826 2009.

Where fathers took some Paternity Leave/leave for same sex partners that was not at full pay, two thirds (64 per cent) were paid at the statutory rate per week at the time of the survey (i.e., 90 per cent or £145.18 per week for up to 2 weeks) and one in ten (9 per cent) were paid a proportion or percentage of their salary.

6.6 Key determinants of taking Paternity Leave (Multivariate analysis)

BMG conducted analysis to determine which factors were most strongly related to whether or not fathers took Paternity Leave. The definition of the variable we were trying to explain is:

- fathers who took Paternity Leave (or Adoption Leave)
- versus not

The list of potential drivers was extensive – too many to include in a multivariate logistic regression model. We therefore conducted a series of preliminary bivariate regression models and used significance testing and R-squared values to determine which of the potential factors should be included in the multivariate model.

The table below shows the relative importance of factors as derived from the final multivariate regression model.

Table 6.7: The relative importance of key drivers of “Fathers taking Paternity Leave”

Fathers' Paternity Leave	Relative Importance
Q14. Ethnicity	9%
Q18. Live alone	4%
Q36/37. Childcare help available	9%
Q60. Hours Worked	6%
Q47. Duration in job	14%
Q56. Size/Public/Private	9%
Q64. Trade Union	6%
Q72_1. childcare vouchers or other help with paying for childcare (including tax-free childcare)	26%
Q72_9. "Shared Parental Leave in touch" (SPLIT) days	16%

The biggest driver of taking Paternity Leave was whether or not childcare vouchers (or similar help) is offered by the employer. This could represent a general theme of employers who offer, communicate and promote support benefits. The survey asked a number of such benefits (*“To the best of your knowledge, does/did your employer offer/provide to employees any of the following types of support?”*) and two came out the most important drivers in the regression model; childcare vouchers and SPLIT days. The third key driver was duration in job.

The next table gives the odds ratios – if an odds ratio is greater than 1 then that group is more likely to take Paternity Leave, if it is less than 1 the group is less likely to. The size of each group (frequency) should also be taken into account; sometimes the odds ratio shows a big difference but it only applies to a small percentage of the total population. Several iterations of the model were run in order to optimise the groups within any particular variable.

Table 6.8: Odds ratios for “Fathers taking Paternity Leave”

Fathers Paternity Leave	Frequency	Odds ratio
<i>Constant</i>	1004	1.177
<i>Q14. Ethnicity</i>		
All other ethnic groups combined	241	0.575
White	763	1.000
<i>Q18. Live alone</i>		
Single	23	0.380
Cohabiting	981	1.000
<i>Q36/37. Childcare help available</i>		
Yes (any at Q36, Q37)	826	1.808
NOT	178	1.000
<i>Q60. Hours Worked</i>		
Up to 25 hours	53	0.508
More than 25 hours	899	1.000
<i>Q47. Duration in job</i>		
2 to 5 years	262	2.277
5+ years	387	3.357
Less than 2 years	47	1.000
<i>Q56. Size/Public/Private</i>		
Private - Less than 500 employees	420	0.566
Private - More than 500 employees	283	0.849
Public/Charity	233	1.000
<i>Q64. Trade Union</i>		
No	594	0.633
Yes	349	1.000
<i>Q72 1. childcare vouchers or other help with paying for childcare (including tax-free childcare)</i>		
Yes	391	2.886
NOT	613	1.000
<i>Q72 9. "Shared Parental Leave in touch" (SPLIT) days</i>		
Yes	213	3.964
NOT	791	1.000

Looking firstly at the key drivers, the odds of a father taking Paternity Leave were:

- Nearly three times as high for fathers whose employers offer childcare vouchers (or similar help) – compared with those whose employers do not;
- About four times as high for fathers whose employers offer Shared Parental Leave in touch" (SPLIT) days – compared with those whose employers do not;
- Over twice as high for fathers who had worked at a job for over 2 years (compared to those who had worked less than 2 years). Over three times higher for fathers in a job more than 5 years;

- Note: to qualify for Statutory Paternity Leave and Pay fathers/partners need to work for their current employer continuously for 26 weeks at the “relevant week” (the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth) and continue to work for that employer up to the date that their child is born.

The odds of fathers taking Paternity Leave were also significantly higher for:

- White fathers (compared to fathers from all other ethnic groups combined);
 - Although we collected a full classification of ethnic groups, the base sizes were too small in any other single group to be robust in a regression model);
- Fathers who said they knew people who could help with childcare (compared to those who didn't);
- Fathers working in the public sector or for charities. In the private sector, fathers working for large firms (of more than 500 employees) were more likely to take Paternity Leave than those in smaller ones;
- Fathers whose workplace had recognised staff associations or trades union groups.

The table also shows odds ratio differences for other variables (live alone, hours worked), but the size of the subgroups for these variables are very small.

6.7 Chapter Summary

Overall, three in five (59 per cent) fathers said they took Paternity Leave and 4 per cent took SPL. One in five (21 per cent) fathers took time off but it was not statutory leave and just under one in five (18 per cent) took no time off.

Take up of Paternity Leave increased to seven in ten (70 per cent) among fathers that were employees before birth and was significantly lower among those who were workers (38 per cent) and who were self-employed (12 per cent).

Fathers that worked in organisations with flexible working arrangements and with childcare support before birth were more likely to have taken Paternity Leave and to have taken SPL.

The proportion of fathers that took Paternity Leave was lower than average, falling to around half, among fathers that worked in skilled, process or elementary occupations; those that worked in the primary, manufacturing or construction sectors, fathers from all other ethnic groups combined, fathers with no qualifications or qualified below degree level, where they worked in smaller organisations (where less than 50 were employed), and were on lower incomes.

Fathers less likely to have taken any forms of leave include those with lower-level or no qualifications, fathers from all other ethnic groups combined, fathers that worked in smaller organisations, as workers or were self-employed, and were on lower incomes are less likely to have taken any form of leave.

The average number of weeks taken among all fathers (across all forms of leave) was 4.8 weeks, compared with a considerably higher average of 17.4 weeks among fathers who took SPL. Paternity Leave was taken for an average of 1.7 weeks and annual leave for an average of 2.5 weeks.

Three quarters (76 per cent) of all fathers that took Paternity Leave and almost all (97 per cent) fathers taking SPL took up their full Paternity Leave entitlement.

Among the fathers that did not take their full Paternity Leave entitlement, the main reason was that they could not afford to (62 per cent).

Six in ten (58 per cent) fathers received full pay throughout their Paternity Leave, while a quarter (23 per cent) did not receive full pay at all. By contrast, among fathers that took SPL as well as Paternity Leave, seven in ten (72 per cent) received full pay throughout their Paternity Leave, while one in eight (13 per cent) did not receive full pay at all.

Multi-variate analysis revealed that the biggest driver of taking Paternity Leave was whether or not childcare vouchers (or similar help) is offered by the employer. This could represent a general theme of employers who offer, communicate and promote support benefits. The survey asked a number of such benefits (*“To the best of your knowledge, does/did your employer offer/provide to employees any of the following types of support?”*) and two came out the most important drivers in the regression model; childcare vouchers and SPLIT days. The third key driver of taking Paternity Leave was duration in job.

7 Shared Parental Leave and Pay

This chapter of the report focuses on all parents from the survey that indicated they took Shared Parental Leave (SPL) – whether they were from the core samples of mothers or fathers or the boost sample that was recruited based on them having taken up SPL.

The chapter also then looks at parents from the core sample that did not take SPL, to examine their awareness of SPL and whether or not this form of leave was considered.

SPL and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) are “created” from unused maternity entitlements. If the mother does not intend to use her full entitlement to 52 weeks of Maternity Leave and 39 weeks of Statutory Maternity Pay, the weeks that she does not intend to use can be taken by the mother or father/partner as Shared Parental Leave and Pay (subject to the parents meeting eligibility requirements). Up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay are potentially available to eligible parents. Parents can use the scheme to be off work together for up to 6 months or alternatively stagger their leave and pay so that one of them is always at home with their child in the first year. The same principles apply to employees who qualify for adoption entitlements.

7.1 SPL take-up

7.1.1 Share of parents that took SPL and their characteristics

Among the core sample of mothers just 1 per cent of all mothers and mothers that were employees took SPL. The proportion that took SPL was higher than average among those aged 35 and over (3 per cent), mothers that live in the North East of England (10 per cent), those earning at least £40,000 before birth (12 per cent), qualified to degree level or above (4 per cent) and among managers and senior officials and professional occupations (4 per cent in each case).

For fathers from the core sample 4 per cent of fathers overall and 5 per cent that were employees took SPL. The proportion was higher than average among those aged 40 and over (7 per cent), those qualified to degree level or above (10 per cent), fathers on higher incomes (9 per cent among those earning at least £40,000), among professional (9 per cent) and associate professional and technical occupations (12 per cent), and particularly high among fathers that worked in central government (20 per cent). Take up of SPL was also higher among fathers that worked in organisations composed mostly of women (14%) and where a trade union or staff association was in place (11 per cent).

Looking at all parents from the core sample and from the boost sample together that took SPL and summarising the key points from the earlier chapter on the characteristics of parents, those that took SPL were more likely than mothers and fathers in general to be:

- Older – 65 per cent are aged 35 and over; 18% of mothers in general and 43 per cent of fathers;
- White (92 per cent);
- Married (81 per cent; 46 per cent of all mothers and 71 per cent of fathers);

- Better qualified – 88 per cent are qualified to degree-level and above, compared with 28 per cent of all mothers and 32 per cent of fathers;
- Employees (rather than workers or self-employed) before the birth/adoption of their child (96 per cent);
- Working at supervisory-level (55 per cent; 37 per cent of all fathers and 26 per cent of mothers);
- On higher incomes – earning an average of just under £43,500 before birth, compared with just under £17,200 per annum for all mothers and just under £28,900 for all fathers.

SPL parents were also more likely than mothers and fathers in general to have worked before the birth/adoption of their child in:

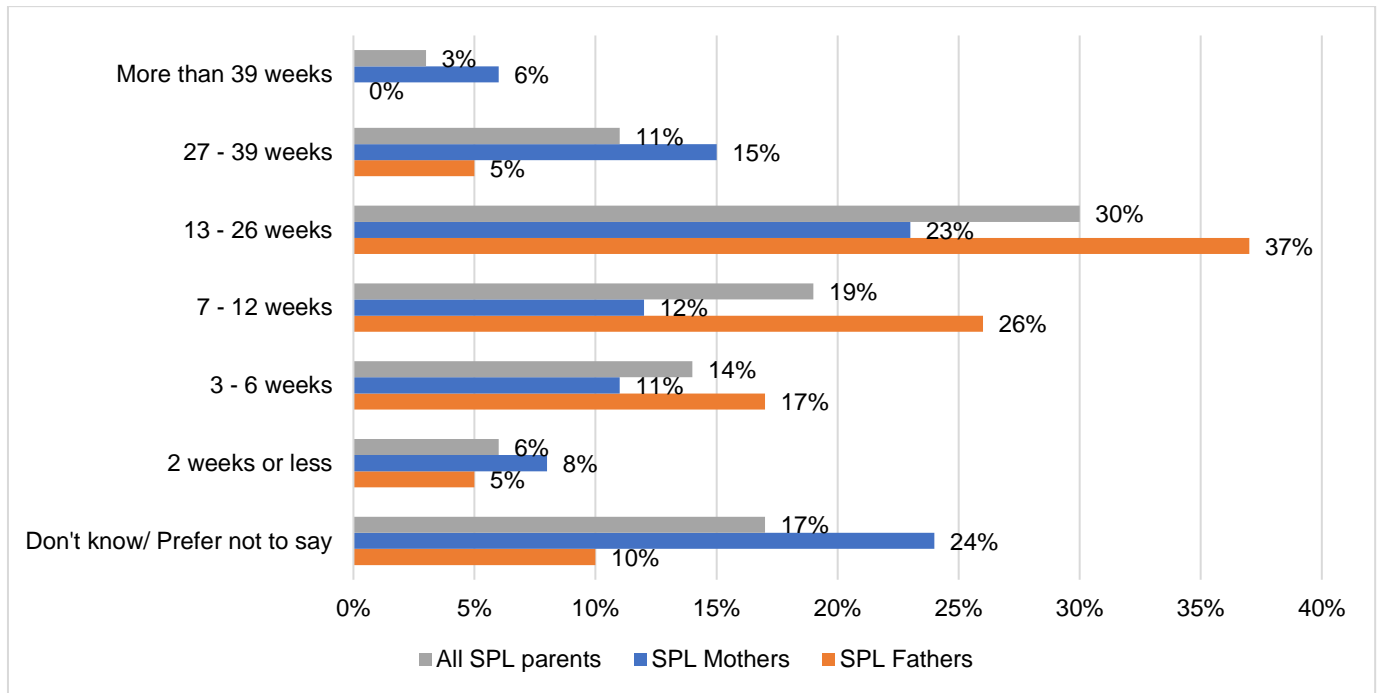
- Public administration, health or education sectors (43 per cent) and business, professional or other services (31 per cent);
- Manager and senior official or professional occupations (63 per cent; 18 per cent of all mothers and 26 per cent of all fathers);
- Central government (30 per cent) and in charities/voluntary organisations (14 per cent)
- And in larger organisations, with 250+ employees (72 per cent; 37 per cent of all mothers and 45 per cent of all fathers).

7.1.2 Number of weeks taken as SPL

One in five parents (20 per cent) that took SPL at all, took 6 or fewer weeks as SPL, and a further one in five (19 per cent) took between 7 and 12 weeks. Around one in three (30 per cent) SPL parents, and the highest proportion of SPL mothers (23 per cent) and SPL fathers (37 per cent) took between 13 and 26 weeks as SPL.

An average of just over 16 weeks were taken among all SPL parents, and the average was significantly higher among mothers (19 weeks) than fathers (14 weeks).

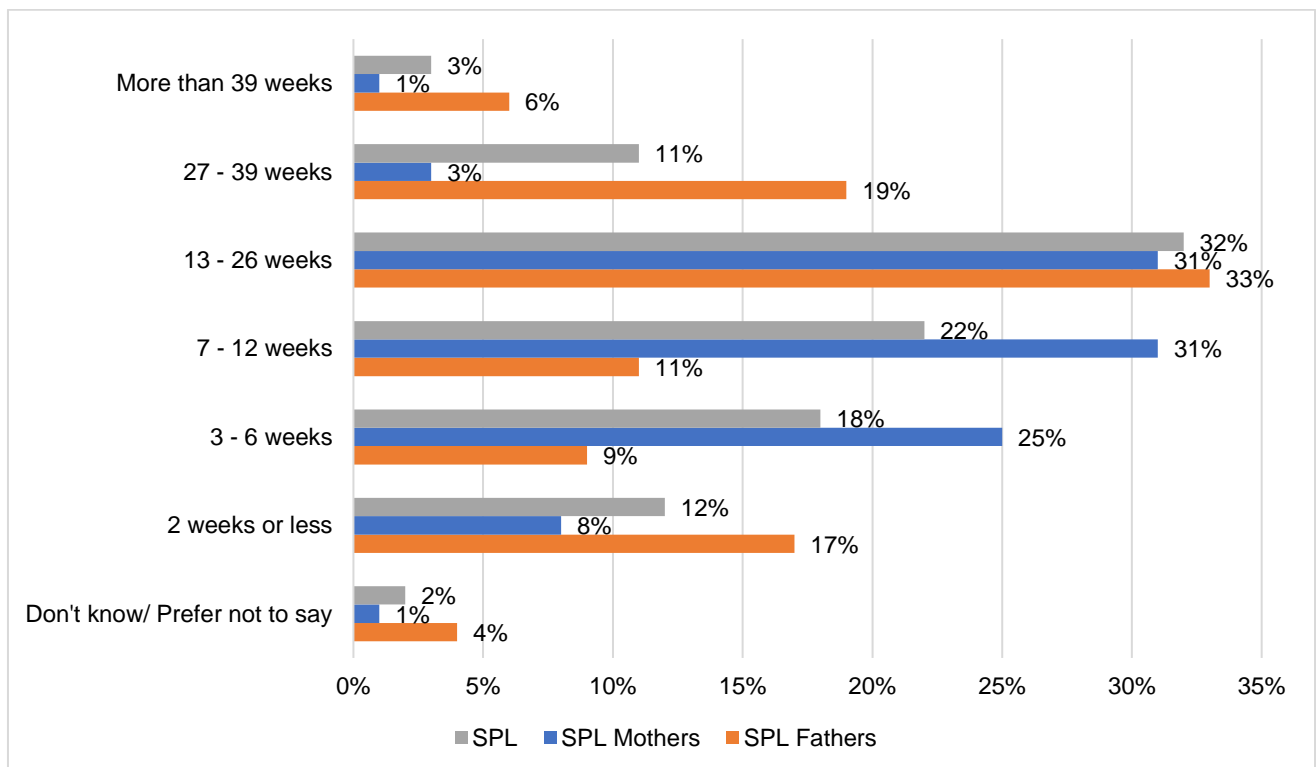
Figure 7.1: Number of weeks respondent took as SPL (Employees and workers that took SPL)



Q202. Number of weeks taken between birth/adoption of child and when they were 12 months, as Shared Parental Leave: All SPL parents: 330; SPL mothers: 175; SPL fathers: 155

When asked about how many weeks their partner took as SPL, the average number of weeks among all SPL parents was 15 and significantly higher among fathers (18.5 weeks; 12 weeks among mothers).

Figure 7.2: Number of weeks their partner took as SPL (Employees and workers that took SPL)



Q203. Number of weeks their partner took between birth/adoption of child and when they were 12 months, as Shared Parental Leave: All SPL parents: 330; SPL mothers: 175; SPL fathers: 155

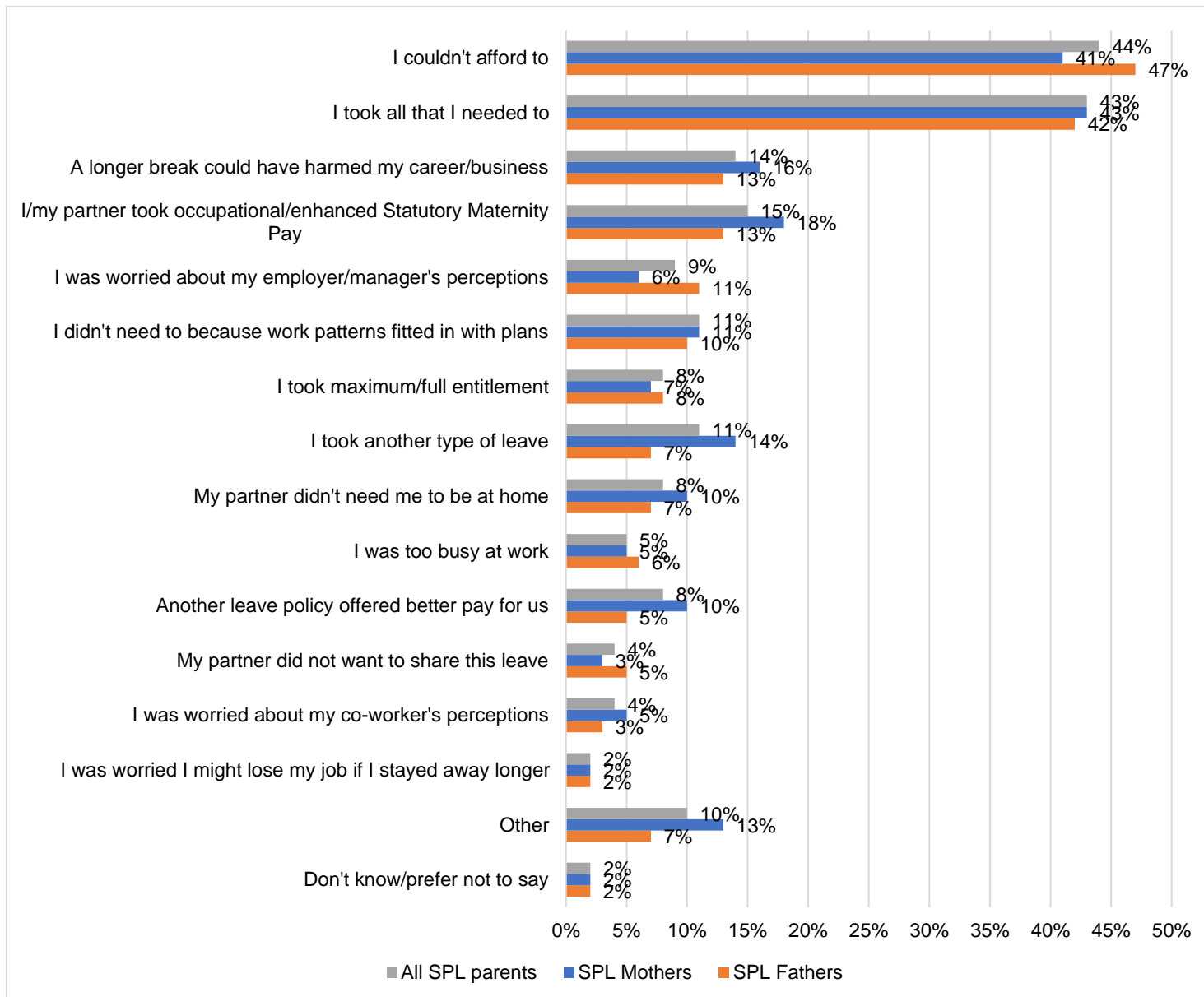
In the majority of cases (83 per cent) SPL was taken 'all as one' rather than in blocks (15 per cent).

There was greater variation in terms of whether the leave was taken at the same or different times to their partner. In just over one in three (35 per cent) cases SPL was taken at the same time as their partner, while a higher proportion (45 per cent) of parents took their SPL at different times to their partner, and for just under one in five (18 per cent) SPL parents some of their leave was at the same time as their partner and some at a different time.

7.1.3 Reasons for taking less than 50 weeks SPL

When those who took less than 50 weeks SPL were asked why they did not take more time as SPL, the main reasons given, which are each cited by around two fifths are either that they could not afford to, or they took all the leave that they needed, and there is little variation between fathers and mothers. Around one in seven parents were worried about harming their career/business or said they or their partner took occupational or enhanced SMP.

Figure 7.3: Reasons for not taking more SPL (Employees and workers that took less than 50 weeks SPL)



Q206. Reasons why they did not take more SPL: All SPL parents: 261; SPL mothers: 125; SPL fathers: 136

7.1.4 Shared Parental Leave and Pay

On average SPL parents were paid at full pay for nearly 6 weeks (5.7) of their SPL, which was just over a third (37 per cent) of their time on leave, on average. Among fathers, the percentage of their SPL that was at full pay was higher than among mothers that took SPL (42 per cent on average; 31 per cent).

For two fifths (40 per cent) of all parents on SPL none of their leave was at full pay and around one in four (23 per cent) did not know or preferred not to say.

Parents on SPL received Statutory Shared Parental Pay for an average of 7 weeks, which was equivalent to just over two fifths (44 per cent) of their time on leave, on average. Mothers

received statutory pay for a higher proportion of their time on leave than fathers (53 per cent on average; 37 per cent).

The vast majority (71 per cent) did not receive an enhanced rate of pay for any of their SPL, and on average enhanced pay was received for less than a week.

For just over half (55 per cent) of parents on SPL none of their leave was unpaid, while on average parents were unpaid for nearly 3 weeks (2.7) of their leave, which equates to 14 per cent of their leave on average.

Table 7.1: Breakdown of pay types while on SPL (All parents that took SPL)

	Full pay	Statutory rate	Enhanced rate	Unpaid
0 weeks	40%	29%	71%	55%
1-6 weeks	11%	18%	2%	7%
7-13 weeks	14%	15%	2%	11%
14-26 weeks	11%	9%	1%	3%
27-39 weeks	1%	3%	0%	<0.5%
40 - 52 weeks	0%	<0.5%	0%	0%
Don't know/ Prefer not to say	23%	26%	25%	24%
Average no. of weeks	5.7 weeks	7.1 weeks	0.7 weeks	2.7 weeks
Average % of time on leave	37%	44%	3%	14%

Q209. Of the weeks of SPL you took, for how many weeks did you receive... All SPL parents: 330

7.1.5 Shared Parental Leave in touch (SPLIT) days

All parents that took SPL were asked: Before your Shared Parental Leave began, were you aware you can work up to 20 days during Shared Parental Leave without bringing it to an end. These are called 'Shared Parental Leave in touch' (SPLIT) days. These days are in addition to the 10 'keeping in touch' (KIT) days available to those on Maternity or Adoption Leave.

Half (51 per cent) of all parents that took SPL were aware of this and there was little difference between mothers and fathers (49 per cent and 53 per cent).

Despite this level of awareness, nearly three quarters (73 per cent) of parents that took SPL did not take any SPLIT days. Just 3 per cent took up to 1 SPLIT day, around one in ten (11 per cent) took between 2 and 5 SPLIT days and a similar proportion (10 per cent) took 6 or more days. On average 1.75 SPLIT days were taken by SPL parents.

7.2 Where SPL was not taken

7.2.1 Awareness of SPL

All parents from the core sample that did not take SPL were told that:

By law, eligible parents are entitled to Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP). This means you can share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay between you and your partner. You can use SPL to take leave in blocks separated by periods of work or take it all in one go. You can also choose to be off work together or stagger the leave and pay.

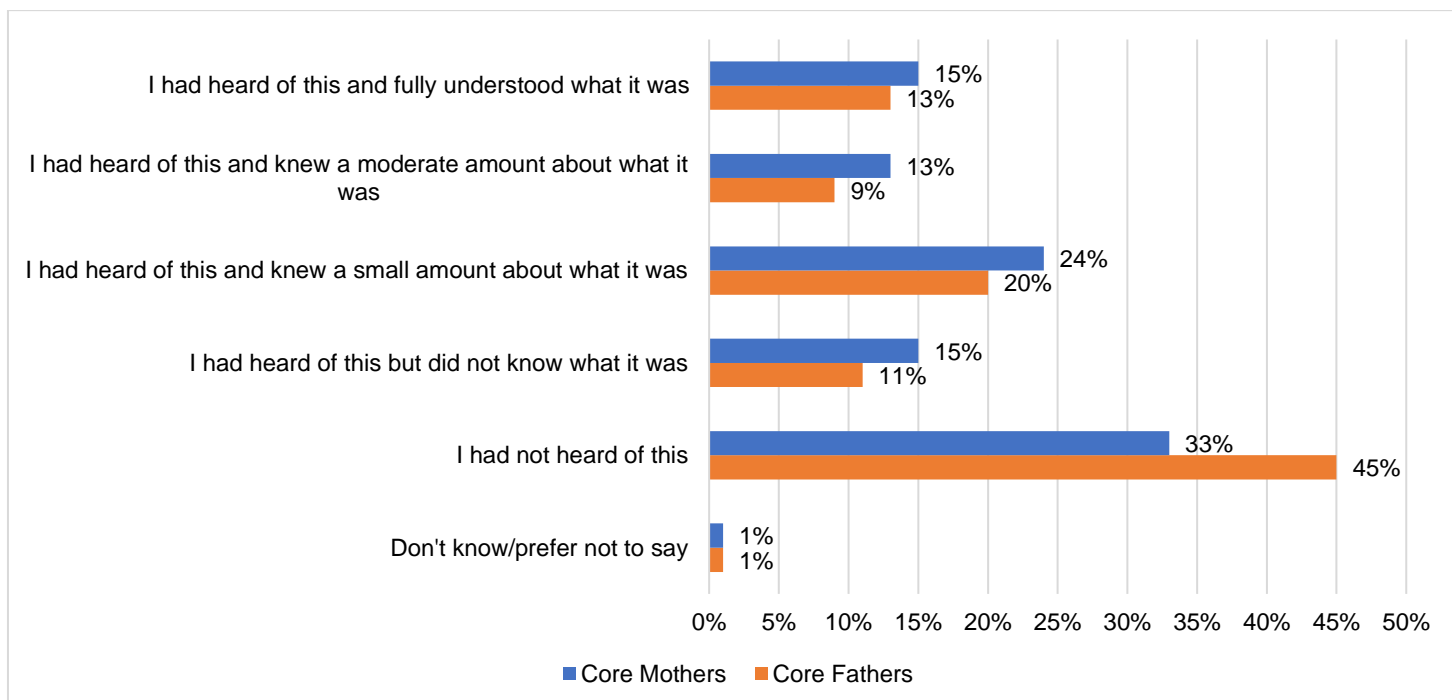
If Shared Parental Leave is taken, mothers are still required to take a minimum 2 weeks off after the birth (or 4 weeks if they work in a factory).

Parents were asked to what extent they were aware of Shared Parental Leave and Pay when their baby was born.

In response, a third (33 per cent) of all mothers from the core sample who did not take SPL had not heard of SPL at all when their baby was born or adopted, and the proportion was closer to half (45 per cent) among all fathers that did not take SPL. A further 15 per cent of mothers had heard of SPL but did not know what it was, and around one in ten (11 per cent) fathers.

Overall, only around one in seven mothers and fathers who had not taken SPL were aware of it and fully understood what it was (15 per cent and 13 per cent respectively).

Figure 7.4: Awareness of SPL (Where SPL was not taken)



Q226. To what extent were you aware of Shared Parental Leave and Pay when your baby was born/adopted:
 Core mothers that did not take SPL: 1,926; Core fathers that did not take SPL: 1,026

Among core mothers that did not take SPL, the proportion that had not heard of SPL at all was particularly high among the following mothers:

- Those aged under 25 years of age (45 per cent);
- Asian mothers (44 per cent);
- Mothers with a health condition (50 per cent);
- Mothers reporting no formal qualifications (61 per cent);
- Those living in the North West of England (53 per cent);
- Workers (53 per cent);
- Mothers reporting the lowest incomes (51 per cent among those earning less than £10,000 per annum before birth);
- Those who had worked in their pre-birth job for less than 2 years (54 per cent; 22 per cent where they had worked in their job for more than 5 years);
- Mothers working in skilled trades, process and elementary occupations (57 per cent);
- And those working in the hospitality sector (52 per cent).

Among fathers that did not take SPL, awareness of SPL was noticeably lower among Black fathers (60 per cent) and Asian fathers (56 per cent). Lower awareness of SPL is also reported among fathers with no qualifications (72 per cent) or qualifications below degree level (52 per cent), in the North West of England (68 per cent) and among workers (74 per cent), those on lower incomes (63 per cent among those on incomes below £20,000), and in skilled, process and elementary occupations (61 per cent).

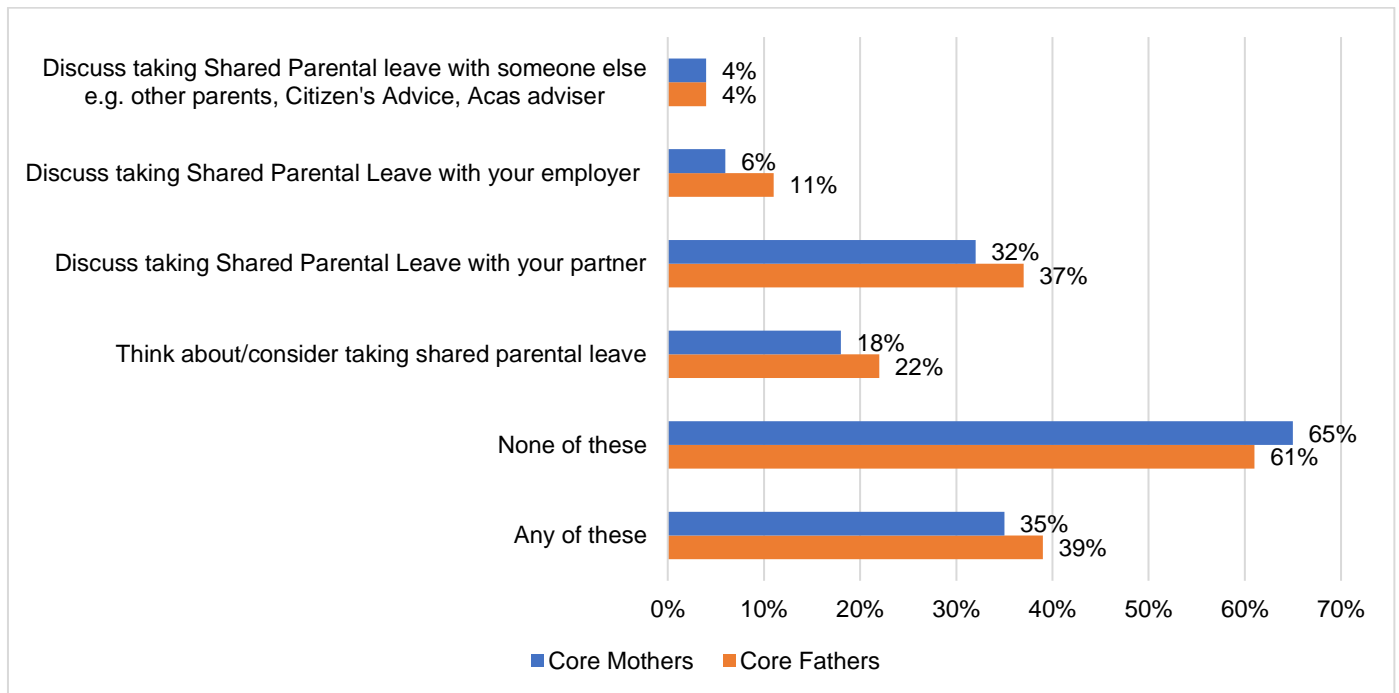
7.2.2 Whether SPL&P was considered or discussed

Mothers and fathers from the core sample that had not taken SPL but had at least a small amount of knowledge about it were asked whether or not they considered taking SPL.

In response, around one in five mothers (18 per cent) and fathers (22 per cent) indicated that they considered taking SPL.

Around one in three mothers (32 per cent) and fathers (37 per cent) did discuss taking SPL with their partner, while around one in twenty (6 per cent) mothers and one in ten (11 per cent) fathers discussed taking SPL with their employer.

Figure 7.5: Whether parents considered taking SPL (Where SPL was not taken, but parents had at least a small amount of knowledge about it)



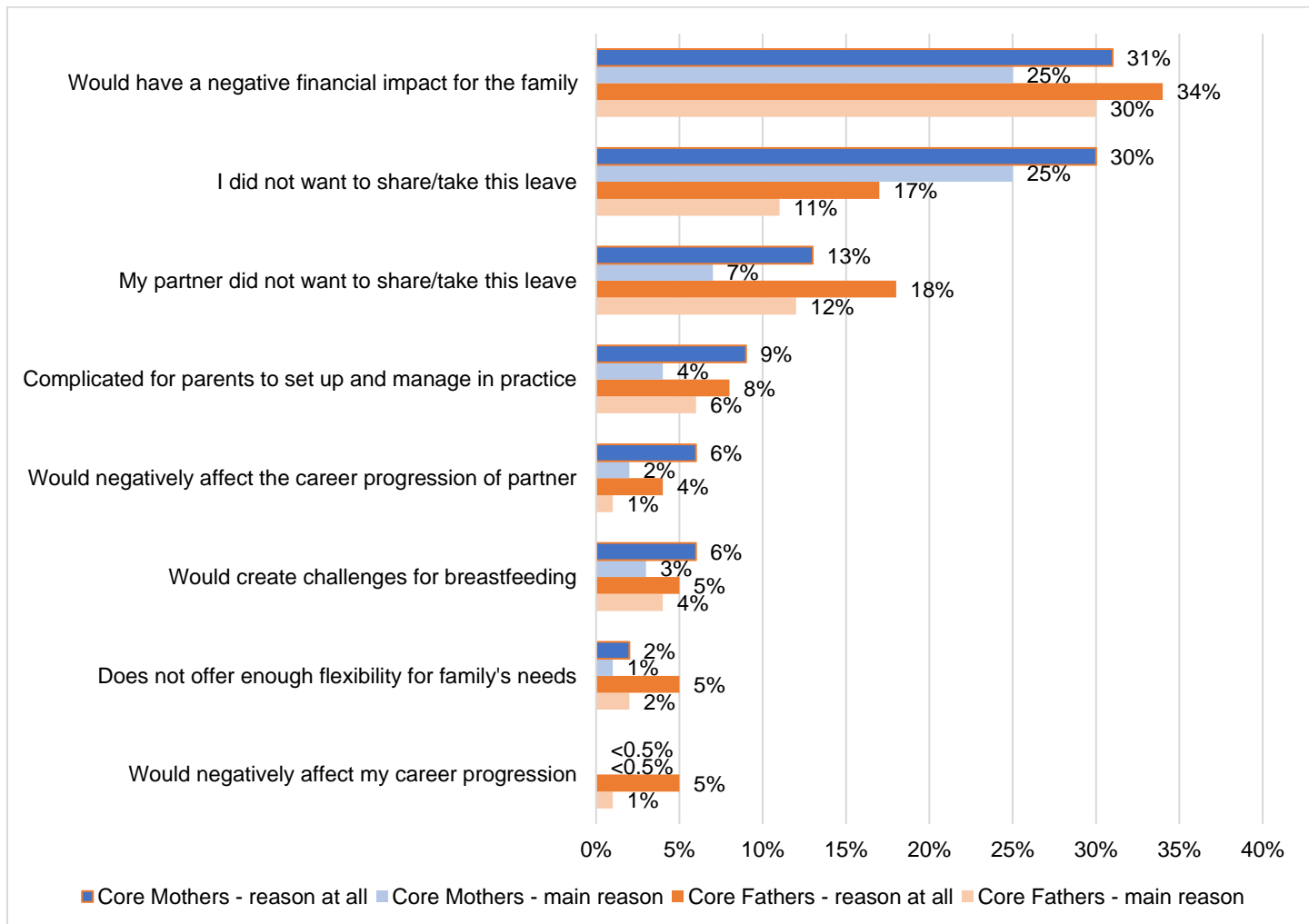
Q231. Did you... Core Mothers: 1056; Core Fathers: 429

For eight in ten (79 per cent) mothers that had some knowledge of SPL, but did not take it, they believed this knowledge made no difference at all to how they planned to share childcare responsibilities, and for only around one in ten (11 per cent) it made a difference to at least some extent. Among fathers a higher proportion (20 per cent) felt their knowledge of SPL made a difference to at least some extent, although two thirds (66 per cent) felt it made no difference.

7.2.3 Reasons for not choosing to take SPL

When asked about the reasons why they did not take SPL, the highest proportion of both mothers (31 per cent) and fathers (34 per cent) said that it would have a negative financial impact for the family. Almost the same proportion (30 per cent) of mothers and around one in five (17 per cent) fathers said they did not want to share or take this leave. Nearly one in five (18 per cent) fathers and one in eight (13 per cent) mothers said their partner did not want to share or take this leave.

Figure 7.6: Reasons for not taking SPL (Where parents did not take SPL, but had at least a small amount of knowledge about SPL law)



Q233. Why did you choose to not take Shared Parental Leave? Q234. And what was the main reason? (Only reasons by at least 5% are included) Core Mothers: 1,056; Core Fathers: 429

The negative financial impact of SPL was mentioned as a reason for not taking SPL among a higher-than-average proportion of mothers who are aged 30-34 (38 per cent) or 35-39 year (37 per cent); in associate professional and technical occupations (40 per cent); and where their partner’s income was at least £50,000 per annum at the time of birth (56 per cent), or their household income at least £40,000 (41 per cent).

Among fathers, the proportion that said they did not take SPL due to the financial impact was higher than average among those qualified below degree level (42 per cent); living outside of London (41 per cent), who were at supervisory level (43 per cent) and in skilled, process and elementary occupations (41 per cent).

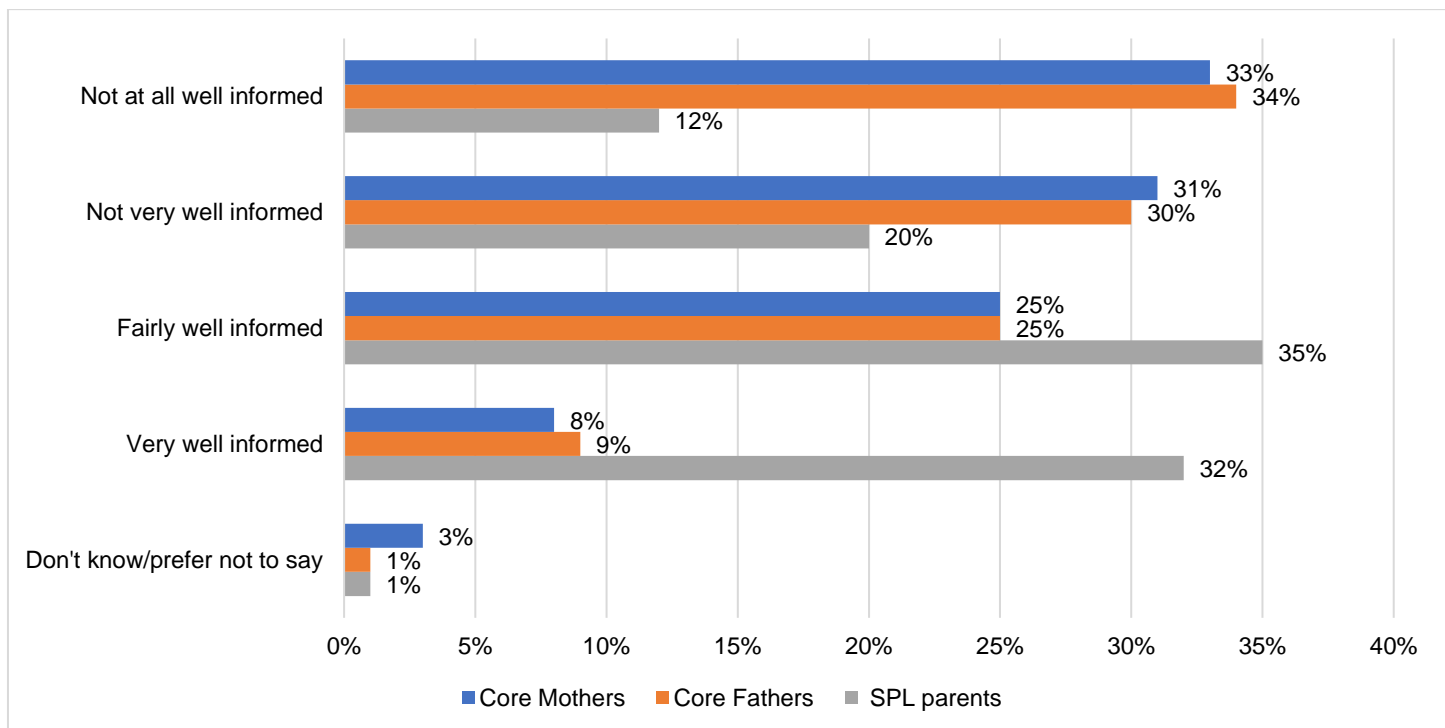
When asked which of the reasons mentioned in Figure 7.6 was their main reason, for one in four mothers and closer to one in three fathers the negative financial impact was the main reason for not taking SPL.

7.3 How well-informed all parents felt about SPL arrangements provided by their employer

Of the parents that took SPL, two in three (67 per cent) felt very or fairly well-informed about the Shared Parental Leave and Pay arrangements provided by their employer, while one in five (20 per cent) did not feel very well-informed, and around one in eight (12 per cent) not at all well-informed.

Among all core mothers and fathers who were employees or workers before birth (regardless of whether they took SPL or not) a much lower proportion felt informed about SPL arrangements offered by their employers, with around a third in each case that felt very or fairly well-informed. Just 8 per cent of mothers and 9 per cent of all fathers felt ‘very well-informed’ about the Shared Parental Leave and Pay arrangements provided by their employer.

Figure 7.7: How well informed they felt about Shared Parental Leave and Pay arrangements provided by their employer (Employees and workers)



Q227. How well informed did you feel about Shared Parental Leave and Pay arrangements provided by your employer? Core mothers: 1,858; Core fathers: 900; SPL parents: 330

Among mothers from the core sample who were employees or workers, the proportion that felt ‘not at all’ well-informed of their employer’s SPL arrangements increased to at least half among mothers aged 25 or under, those with a health condition, those living in the North West of England or in Wales, and those working in the hospitality sector before birth.

Among fathers who were employees or workers the proportion that felt ‘not at all’ well-informed about SPL arrangements was higher than average among fathers from Black ethnic groups, fathers in the North West of England, in Wales, among workers and those on lower incomes (under £20,000 per annum).

7.4 How comfortable parents would feel asking for SPL&P

In terms of asking their employer for Shared Parental Leave and Pay, overall, three in five mothers and fathers from the core sample who were employees or workers before birth said they would feel comfortable (58 per cent and 57 per cent respectively), while 8 per cent of mothers and a higher proportion (12 per cent) of all fathers said they would feel uncomfortable. Around one in five mothers and fathers gave a neutral response and said they would feel neither comfortable nor uncomfortable, and the remainder did not know or thought the question did not apply to them.

Younger mothers under the age of 25 were more likely to say they would feel uncomfortable asking their employer for SPL (14 per cent), as were mothers with a health condition (17 per cent), and those with a household income under £10,000 (17 per cent).

Among fathers, the proportion that would feel uncomfortable was higher than average in the West Midlands (21 per cent) and among those working in the smallest organisations, with less than 50 staff (16 per cent) and in the primary, manufacturing and construction sector (19 per cent).

Among the parents that took SPL nine in ten felt comfortable to any degree about asking their employer for SPL, including two thirds that felt 'very comfortable' (66 per cent).

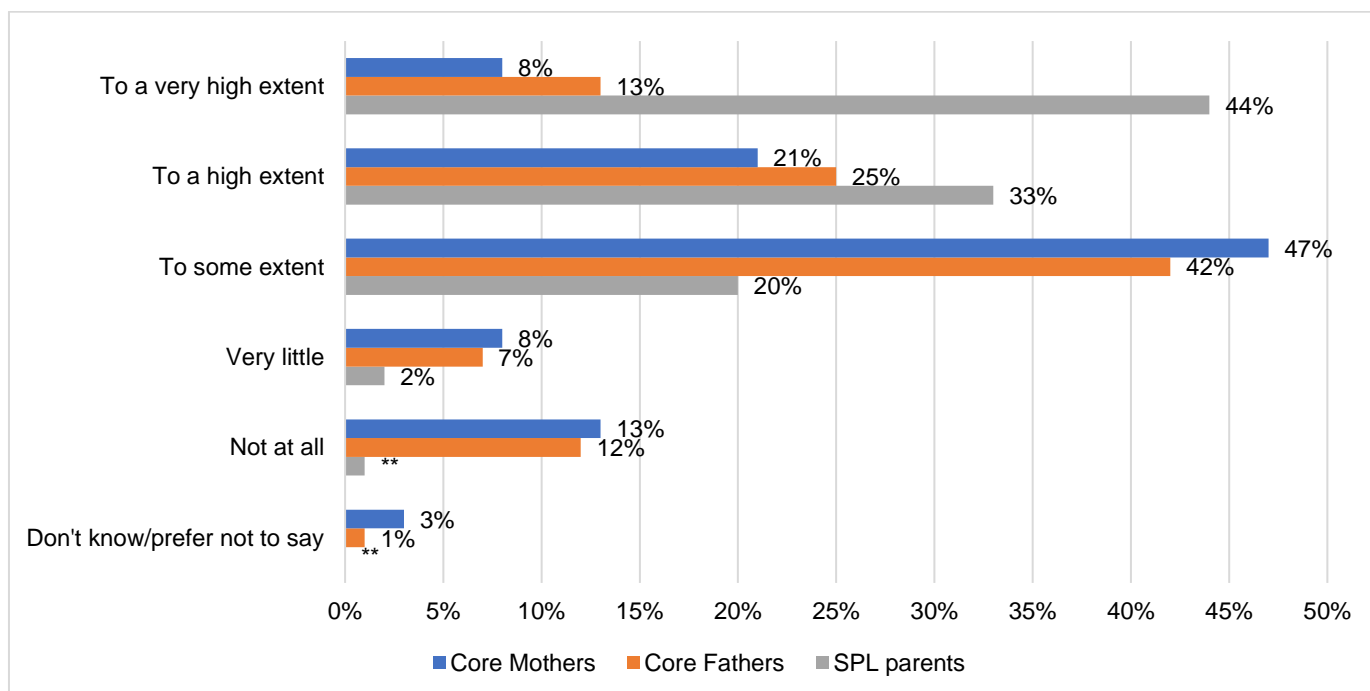
7.5 Views on the flexibility provided by SPL

Parents that took SPL or did not take SPL but had at least a small amount of knowledge about SPL law were asked about the extent to which they agree that SPL provides parents with greater flexibility in taking leave.

Overall, around 3 in 10 (29 per cent) mothers (from the core sample) who had some knowledge of SPL agreed that SPL offers flexibility to a 'very high' or 'high' extent, while fathers were significantly more likely to agree that this is the case (38 per cent).

Among the parents that took SPL around three quarters (77 per cent) agreed to a 'very high' or 'high' extent that SPL provides flexibility for parents taking leave, and only 3 per cent of those that took SPL believed SPL offers 'very little' or 'no flexibility at all.'

Figure 7.8: Extent to which parents think SPL provides parents with greater flexibility in taking leave (Where took SPL or know at least a small amount about SPL law)



Q228. Extent to which you would agree SPL provides parents with greater flexibility in taking leave: Core mothers: 1089; Core fathers: 465; All SPL parents: 336.

7.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter focusing on the parents that did, and did not take SPL has highlighted the following key findings:

- Just 1 per cent of all mothers and 4 per cent of fathers from the core sample took SPL, although the proportion increased among older parents, those on higher incomes, parents qualified to degree level or above, and among higher occupational groups.
- Overall, parents that took SPL are more likely than mothers and fathers in general to be older, of White ethnicity, married, better qualified, employees (rather than workers or self-employed) and on higher incomes (earning an average of just under £43,500 before birth, compared with just under £17,200 per annum for all mothers and just under £28,900 for all fathers). Parents that took SPL are also more likely to have worked before the birth/adoption of their child in public administration, health or education sectors, or in business, professional or other services, and to have worked as managers, senior officials or in professional occupations and in larger organisations.
- An average of just over 16 weeks was taken as SPL, and the average is significantly higher among mothers (19 weeks) than fathers (14 weeks).
- When those who took less than 50 weeks SPL were asked why they did not take more time as SPL, the main reasons were either that they could not afford to, or they took all the leave that they needed.
- On average SPL parents were paid at full pay for nearly 6 weeks of their SPL, which was just over a third of their time on leave. For two fifths of all parents on SPL none of their leave was at full pay. Parents on SPL received statutory pay for an average of 7

weeks, which is equivalent to just over two fifths of their time on leave, and the vast majority did not receive an enhanced rate of pay for any of their SPL (71 per cent).

- A third (33 per cent) of all mothers from the core sample who did not take SPL had not heard of SPL at all when their baby was born or adopted, and the proportion is closer to half (45 per cent) among all fathers that did not take SPL. A further 15 per cent of mothers and around one in ten (11 per cent) fathers had heard of SPL but did not know anything about the policy.
- Of the parents that took SPL, two in three (67 per cent) felt very or fairly well-informed about the Shared Parental Leave and Pay arrangements provided by their employer, while one in five (20 per cent) did not feel very well informed, and around one in eight (12 per cent) not at all well informed. Just 8 per cent of all core mothers and 9 per cent of all core fathers felt 'very well informed' about the Shared Parental Leave and Pay arrangements provided by their employer.
- Overall, around 3 in 10 (29 per cent) mothers (from the core sample) who had some knowledge of SPL agreed that SPL offers flexibility to a 'very high' or 'high' extent, while fathers were significantly more likely to agree that this is the case (38 per cent).
- Among the mothers and fathers from the core sample that had not taken SPL but had at least a small amount of knowledge about it around three in five indicated that they did not give any consideration to taking SPL (65 per cent of mothers and 61 per cent of fathers).
- When asked about the reasons why they did not take SPL, the highest proportions (31 per cent of mothers and 34 per cent of fathers) said that it would have a negative financial impact for the family. Almost the same proportion (30 per cent) of mothers said they did not want to share or take this leave, and around one in five (18 per cent) fathers.

8 Employment decisions after birth/Return to work

This chapter of the report focuses on the decisions made by mothers, fathers and SPL parents following the birth or adoption of their child, in terms of whether or not they returned to their pre-birth job, and if not whether they moved to another job or remained out of work at the time of the interview.

The chapter also examines differences in the jobs that mothers were working in after the birth/adoption of their child, compared with beforehand – including whether there had been any changes to their levels of responsibilities or pay.

8.1 Job changes: pre- and post-birth

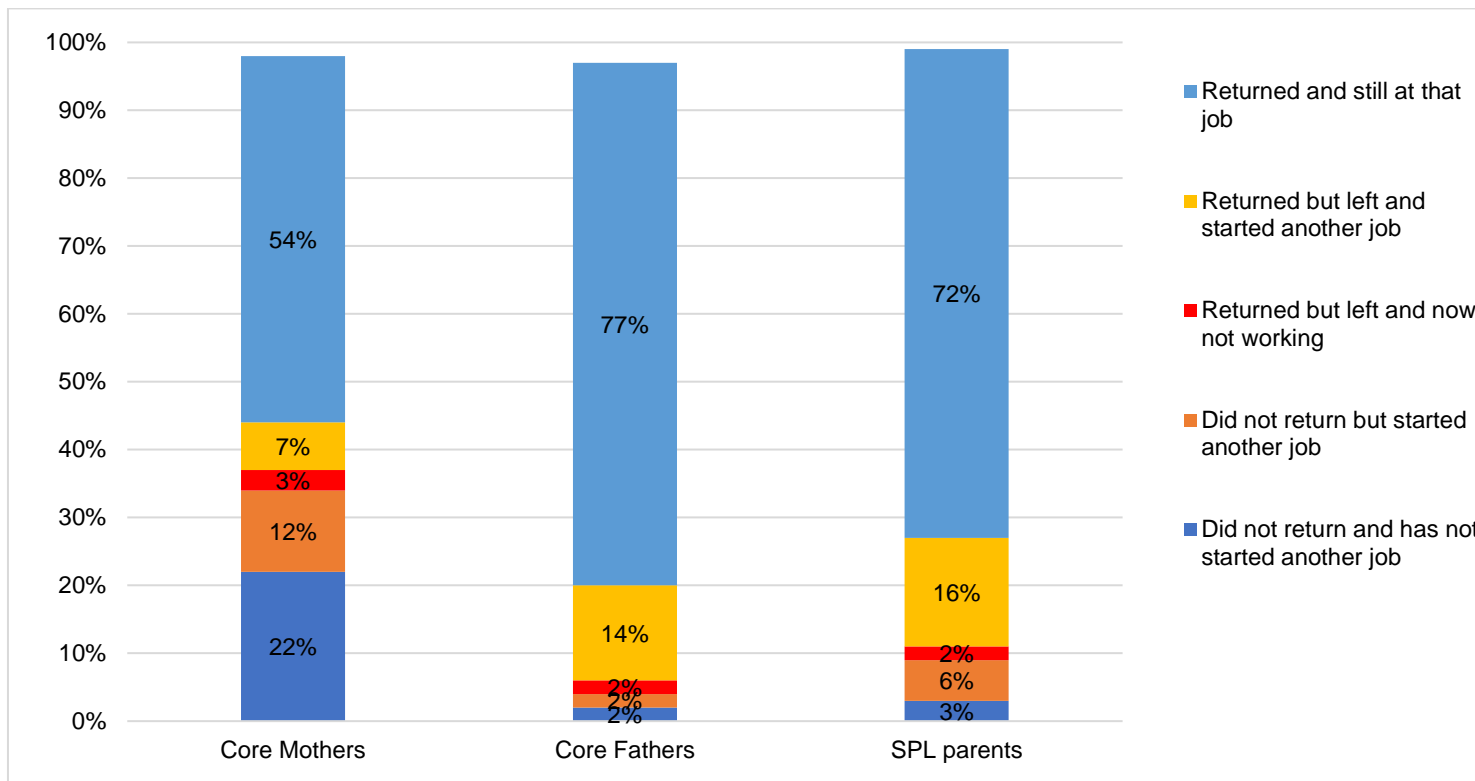
8.1.1 Share of parents that changed job

Following the birth or adoption of their child over half (54 per cent) of all mothers, and around three quarters (77 per cent) of all fathers and parents taking SPL (72 per cent) went back to their previous job and were still there at the time of interview. A further one in ten mothers, and around one in six fathers and parents that took SPL returned to the same job but had since left, either to start a new job or were still not working at the time of interview.

A third (34 per cent) of mothers did not go back to their previous job, including one in five (22 per cent) that were still not working at the time of interview. In contrast, very few fathers and parents that took SPL did not return to their pre-birth job and remained out of work (2 per cent and 3 per cent).

At the time of interview in total 73 per cent of mothers had returned to work (either in the same job as pre-birth or a new one), which compares with 77 per cent for mothers with children born in 2008 and 76 per cent for those with children born in 2006.

Figure 8.1: Return to work following birth/adoption (All respondents)



Q74/RetEmp. Did you go back to this job/period of self-employment after your child was born/adopted? Which of the following best applies to you? Core mothers: 1,959; Core fathers: 1,062; Parents that took SPL: 336 N.B. Chart does not add to 100% due to don't know/prefer not to say not being included

Among mothers there were significant differences by age, in terms of whether or not they returned to the same job or any type of work following the birth or adoption of their child. Mothers under the age of 25 were least likely to have returned to the same job and still been working there (33 per cent). Nearly three in five (58 per cent) mothers under 25 years of age did not return to their pre-birth job at all, including nearly two in five (38 per cent) that did not return and had still not started another job.

Older mothers over the age of 30 were more likely than mothers on average to have returned to the same job they were in before the birth or adoption of their child, and the proportion that did not return and had not started another job was lowest among mothers over 35 years of age (14 per cent).

Table 8.1: Return to work – by age (All mothers)

	Returned & still at job	Returned but left & started another job	Returned, but left & now not working	Did not return but started new job	Did not return and not started another job
All mothers (1959)	54%	7%	3%	12%	22%
Under 25 years (130)	33%-	4%	2%	20%+	38%+
25-29 years (418)	51%	9%+	5%+	12%	22%
30-34 years (655)	59%+	7%	3%	11%	19%-
35-39 years (468)	69%+	5%	3%	8%	14%-
40+ years (185)	62%+	8%	4%	8%	14%-

RetEmp: Nature of return to work after birth – unweighted bases in parenthesis

+/- indicates a significantly higher/lower difference compared with all mothers on average

The length of time mothers had been working in their pre-birth job seems to be a key factor, with just 4 per cent of mothers that had worked in their job for less than 2 years that returned to their pre-birth job and remained there until the time of interview, compared with 76 per cent of mothers that had been in their job for more than 5 years. More than half of mothers that had worked in their job for less than 2 years remained out of work at the time of interview (56 per cent).

Mothers with a health condition were less likely to have returned to the same job and still been there (36 per cent) and more likely than mothers on average to have not returned to their pre-birth job and not started another job since (37 per cent). The same pattern is evident among lone parents, those with lower-level or no qualifications, mothers that worked part time before birth, workers, mothers that worked in smaller organisations, on lower incomes and in lower occupational groups. These differences summarised in Table 8.2 also show that half of all workers did not return to their job and were still not working when interviewed. Mothers in manager and senior official roles, and professional occupations were more than twice as likely as mothers who were in skilled, process or elementary occupations to have returned to their pre-birth job and still been there at the time of interview.

Table 8.2: Proportion of mothers that remained in same job and proportion that did not return and are still not working (All mothers)

		Returned & still at job	Did not return & not started another job
All mothers (1959)		54%	22%
Whether a lone parent	Living with partner/spouse (1569)	60%+	17%-
	Lone parent (377)	36%-	38%+
Qualification level	No qualification (70)	36%-	39%+
	Below degree level (1171)	48%-	26%+
	Degree level or above (692)	69%+	10%-
Hours worked before birth	Full time hours (30+) (1194)	58%+	18%-
	Part time hours (736)	50%-	25%+
Employment status before birth	Employee (1714)	57%+	20%+
	Worker (144)	16%-	52%+
Whether supervisor before birth	Supervisor (554)	66%+	10%-
	Not a supervisor (1303)	49%-	27%+
Mother's income before birth	Less than £20,000 per annum (1074)	48%-	27%+
	£20,000 - £39,999 (534)	69%+	8%-
	£40,000+ per annum (111)	85%+	1%-
Duration of main job before birth	Less than 2 years (188)	4%-	56%+
	2 to 5 years (538)	58%+	18%-
	More than 5 years (643)	76%+	7%-
Size of firm worked in before birth	SME (less than 250 employees) (996)	47%-	26%+
	250+ employees (757)	66%+	-13%
Occupation	Managers & Senior Officials (92)	76%+	8%-
	Professional Occupations (354)	77%+	5%-

	Associate Professional & Technical Occupations (228)	63%+	9%-
	Administrative, Secretarial, Personal, Sales & Customer occupations (932)	51%-	25%+
	Skilled, Process & Elementary occupations (316)	35%-	36%+

RetEmp: Nature of return to work after birth – unweighted bases in parenthesis

+/- indicates a significantly higher/lower difference compared with all mothers on average

Looking at the sector mothers worked in before the birth or adoption of their child reveals that a higher-than-average proportion of mothers that worked in wholesale or retail (27 per cent) and hospitality (38 per cent) did not return to their job and were still not working. While mothers that worked in public administration, health or education were most likely to still be working in their pre-birth job (63%).

Other factors which appear to be linked to mothers returning to the same job and still working there are whether their pre-birth employer offered any flexible working arrangements or childcare support, whether they took Maternity Leave, and the type of Maternity Pay received.

Of those that worked in an organisation that did offer childcare support before birth, two thirds (68 per cent) returned to their job and were still there at the time of interview. Of the mothers that received Occupational Maternity Pay, four in five (81 per cent) returned to their job.

As Table 8.3 indicates, mothers that worked in organisations that offered any type of flexible working arrangements or childcare support were more likely to still be working at their pre-birth job, while mothers that worked in organisations that did not offer any of these arrangements or support were more likely than mothers on average not to have returned to their job and to still be out of work.

Mothers that took Maternity Leave were more likely to have returned to their pre-birth job and to have remained there, while over half of those who took another type of leave or no time off did not return to their pre-birth job and were still not in work.

By pay type, around two thirds (64 per cent) of those that received SMP returned to their pre-birth job and remained there, compared with eight in ten (81 per cent) mothers that received OMP, and closer to four in ten (44 per cent) mothers that received MA.

Table 8.3: Proportion of mothers that remained in same job and proportion that did not return and are still not working (All mothers)

		Returned & still at job	Did not return & not started another job
All mothers (1959)		54%	22%
Flexible working arrangements offered in pre-birth job	Any (1463)	57%+	20%-
	None (343)	43%-	30%+
Childcare support offered in pre-birth job	Any (1051)	68%+	10%-
	None (705)	38%-	36%+
Type of leave taken	Maternity Leave (1678)	61%+	16%-
	Other type of leave/time off (117)	23%-	52%+
	None taken (144)	9%-	58%+
Type of pay received	SMP (1413)	64%+	14%
	MA (263)	44%-	29%+
	OMP (313)	81%+	5%-
	None of these (243)	14%-	51%+

RetEmp: Nature of return to work after birth – unweighted bases in parenthesis

+/- indicates a significantly higher/lower difference compared with all mothers on average

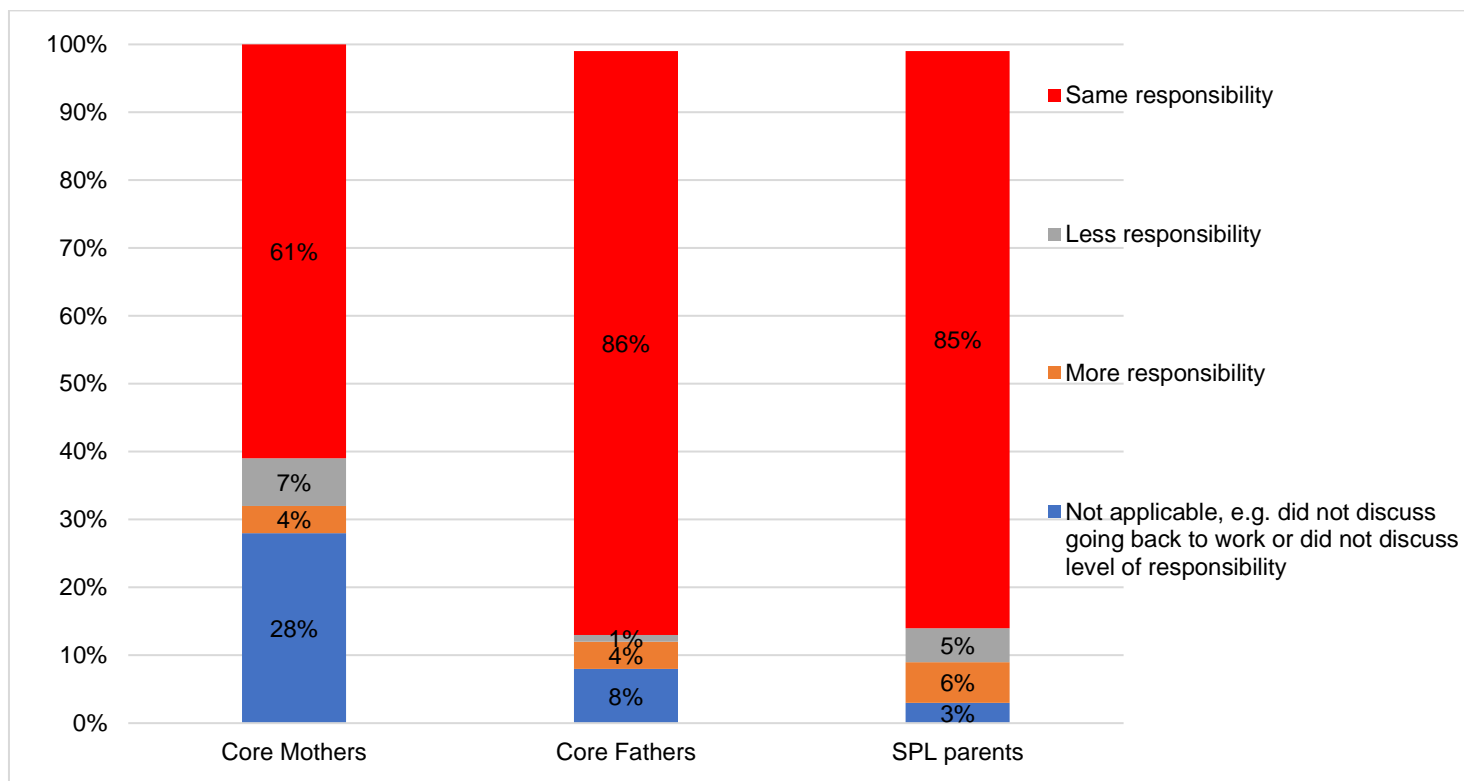
8.2 Discussion/negotiation for return to previous job

Thinking about the main job they had prior to the birth or adoption of their child, all parents who were either an employee or worker were asked about the discussions or negotiations they may have had with their employer before their child's birth or adoption, with regards to the role they would be offered on return to work.

Three in ten (28 per cent) mothers said they did not have any discussions with their employer, while three in five (61 per cent) did have such discussions and were offered a job with the same responsibility, less than one in ten (7 per cent) were offered a job with less responsibility, and one in twenty (4 per cent) were offered a job with more responsibility.

Among fathers and parents taking SPL, more than four in five (86 per cent and 85 per cent respectively) were offered a job with the same responsibility, and only a small percentage were offered jobs with less responsibility (1 per cent and 5 per cent) or more responsibility (4 per cent and 6 per cent).

Figure 8.2: Change in level of responsibility when returned to work (All respondents)



Q79. Thinking about the main job you had just before your child was born/adopted, when you went back to work/talked with your ex-employer about going back to work/went back to work/talked with your ex-employer about going back to work, were you offered a job with more responsibility, less responsibility, or the same level of responsibility you had previously? Core mothers: 1,858; Core fathers: 900; Parents that took SPL: 330 N.B. Chart does not add to 100% due to don't know/prefer not to say not being included

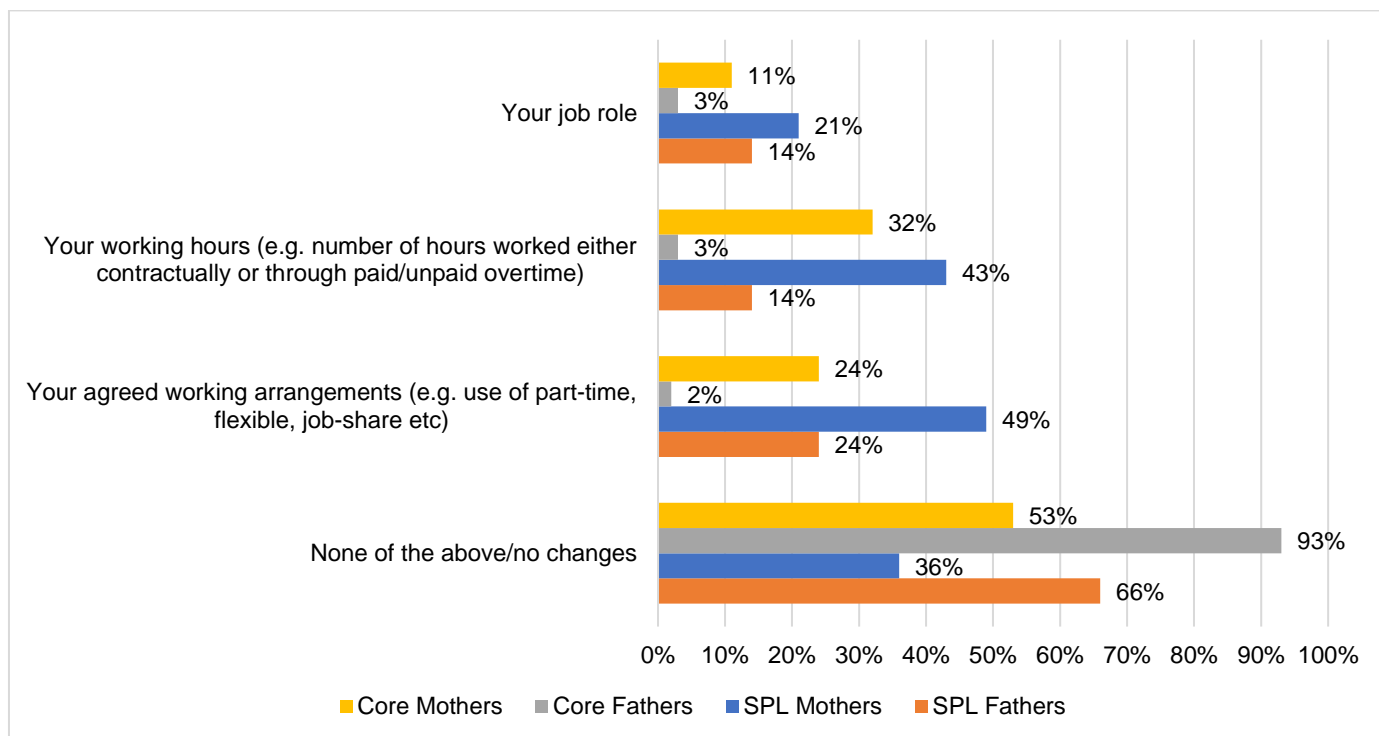
A similar pattern was replicated in relation to discussions on the level of pay they would be offered when they returned to work, with 28 per cent of mothers that had no discussions, compared with just 9 per cent of fathers and 2 per cent of parents that took SPL. While 7 per cent of mothers were offered a job on lower pay, compared with 1 per cent of fathers and 3 per cent of parents that took SPL.

8.2.1 Roles among those who returned to their pre-birth job

Focusing on the parents that returned to their pre-birth job for at least a short period of time, after the birth or adoption of their child, the vast majority (93 per cent) of all fathers from the core sample experienced no changes when they returned, compared with two thirds (66 per cent) of fathers that took SPL. Changes were much more likely among mothers: half (53 per cent) of mothers from the core sample experienced changes on return. Around a third (36 per cent) of mothers that took SPL reported no change to their job.

For a third (32 per cent) of mothers their working hours changed and for around one in four (24 per cent) their agreed working arrangements changed, while mothers that took SPL were more likely to have experienced each of these changes (43 per cent and 49 per cent). Very few mothers and no fathers experienced any changes in their levels of pay when they returned to their pre-birth job.

Figure 8.3: Changes when returned to job (Where returned to pre-birth job)



Q305. Have any of these changed when you returned to your job after your leave following your child's birth?
 Core mothers: 1340; Core fathers: 987; Parents that took SPL: 304

Among all the mothers from the core sample that experienced changes in their agreed working arrangements, three quarters (75 per cent) started working part time following the birth or adoption of their child, compared with three in five (58 per cent) mothers that took SPL. One in five (20 per cent) mothers that experienced a change in working arrangements, started working flexi time, compared with more than twice as many (43 per cent) mothers that took SPL. Job shares were each taken up by 7 per cent of mothers overall, and 5 per cent of mothers that took SPL. While 7 per cent of mothers overall started working from home on a regular basis, compared with a much higher proportion of mothers that took SPL (36 per cent).

In terms of the childcare or family-friendly support that was available in the job they returned to, around half (49 per cent) of all mothers that returned to the same job accessed some form of childcare or family support, such as childcare vouchers or time off to take care of family, compared with fewer fathers (30 per cent) and a significantly higher proportion of mothers and fathers that took SPL (92 and 86 per cent). Further detail on this is found in the childcare section of this report (Chapter 9).

A quarter (24 per cent) of mothers had formal responsibility for supervising the work of other employees when they returned to work, compared with higher proportions of fathers (36 per cent) and parents taking SPL (53 per cent).

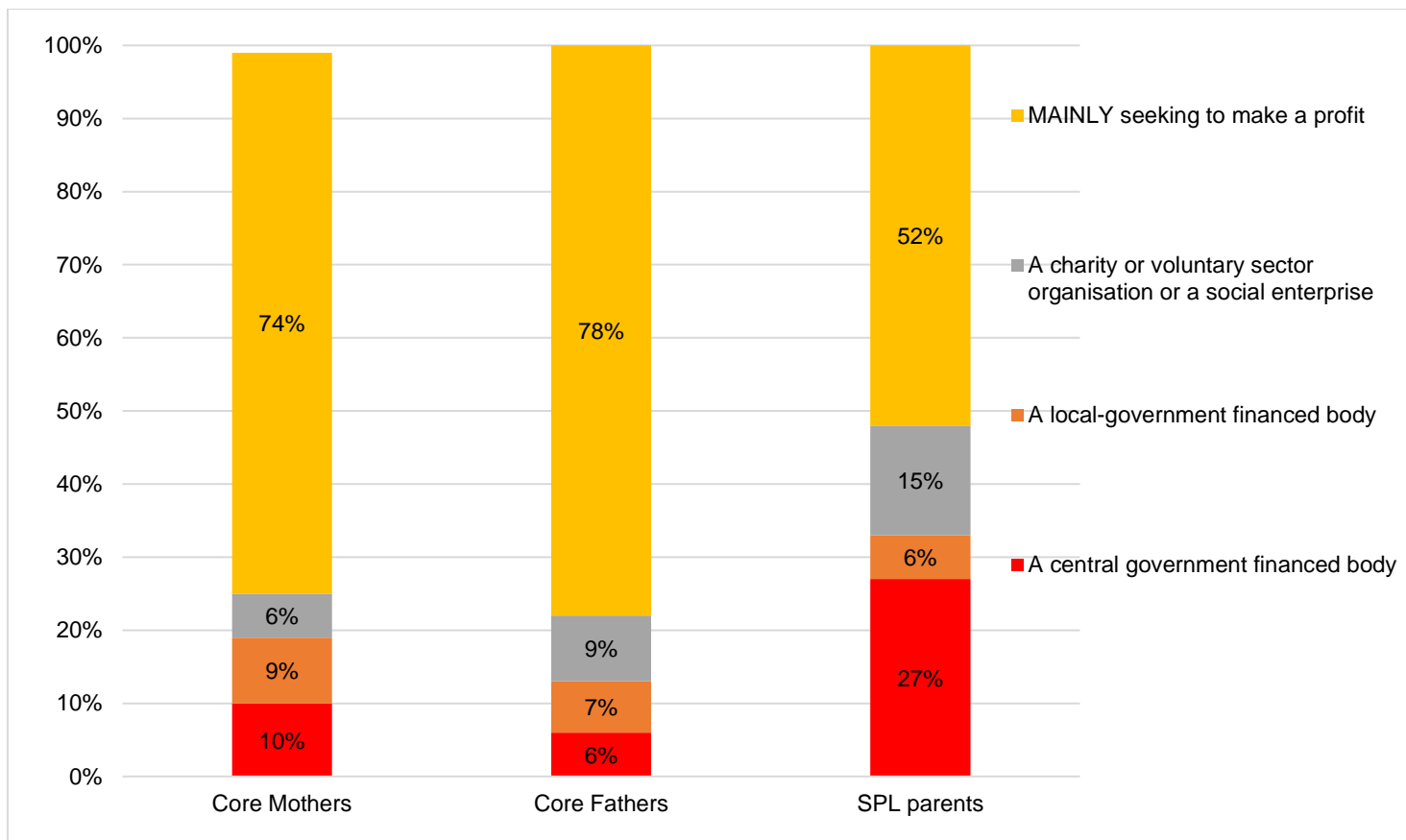
Among the mothers who were supervisors before the birth or adoption of their child, seven in ten (69 per cent) were still supervisors afterwards, while three in ten (30 per cent) were not. Fathers overall, and parents that took SPL (both mothers and fathers) who were supervisors previously were more likely to have remained as supervisors following the birth or adoption of their child (83 and 89 per cent respectively).

8.3 First new job after birth

Focusing now on the parents that changed jobs following the birth or adoption of their child, and specifically on the first new job they started, three quarters of mothers (74 per cent) and fathers (78 per cent) gained new positions at organisations that mainly sought to make a profit, compared with half (52 per cent) of those taking SPL.

A quarter (27 per cent) of parents taking SPL got new jobs for a central government financed body.

Figure 8.4: Nature of organisation (Where changed job since birth/adoption)



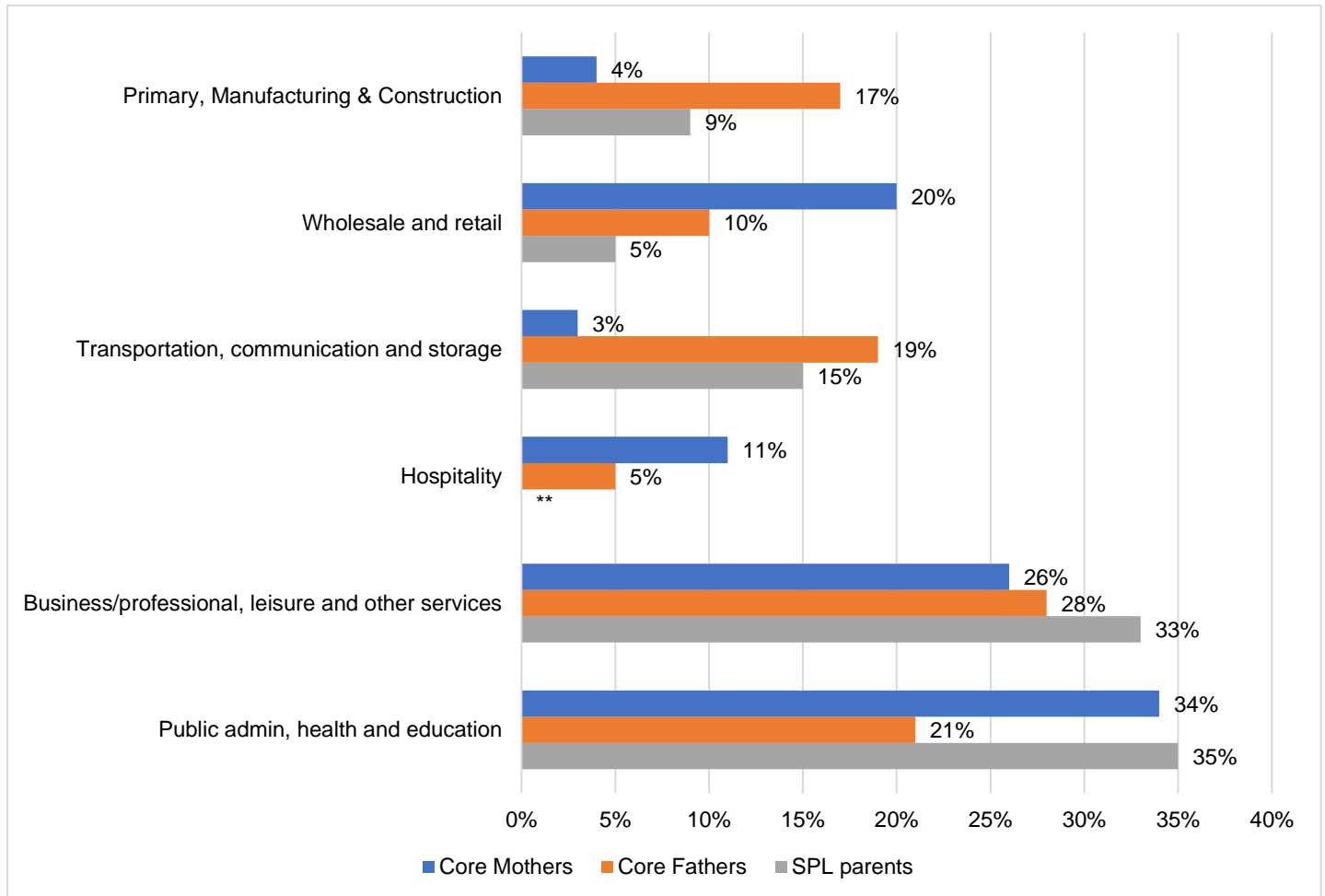
Q100. Would you classify your organisation as one..? Core mothers: 307; Core fathers: 147; Parents that took SPL: 67

In terms of specific sector, mothers who had changed job since the birth of their child were most likely to gain new positions in public administration, health or education (34 per cent) business/professional, leisure and other services (26 per cent) and wholesale and retail (20 per cent).

The most common sectors that fathers got new jobs in were business/professional, leisure and other services (28 per cent), followed by public administration, health or education (21 per cent). Fathers were more likely than mothers to get new jobs in transport, communication and storage 19 per cent; 3 per cent) and in primary, manufacturing and construction sectors (17 per cent; 4 per cent), and less likely to get new jobs in wholesale and retail (10 per cent; 20 per cent).

Among parents that took SPL the sectors they were most likely to obtain new jobs in were either public administration, health or education (35 per cent) or business, professional or other services (33 per cent).

Figure 8.5: Sector worked in after birth/adoption (Where changed job since birth/adoption)

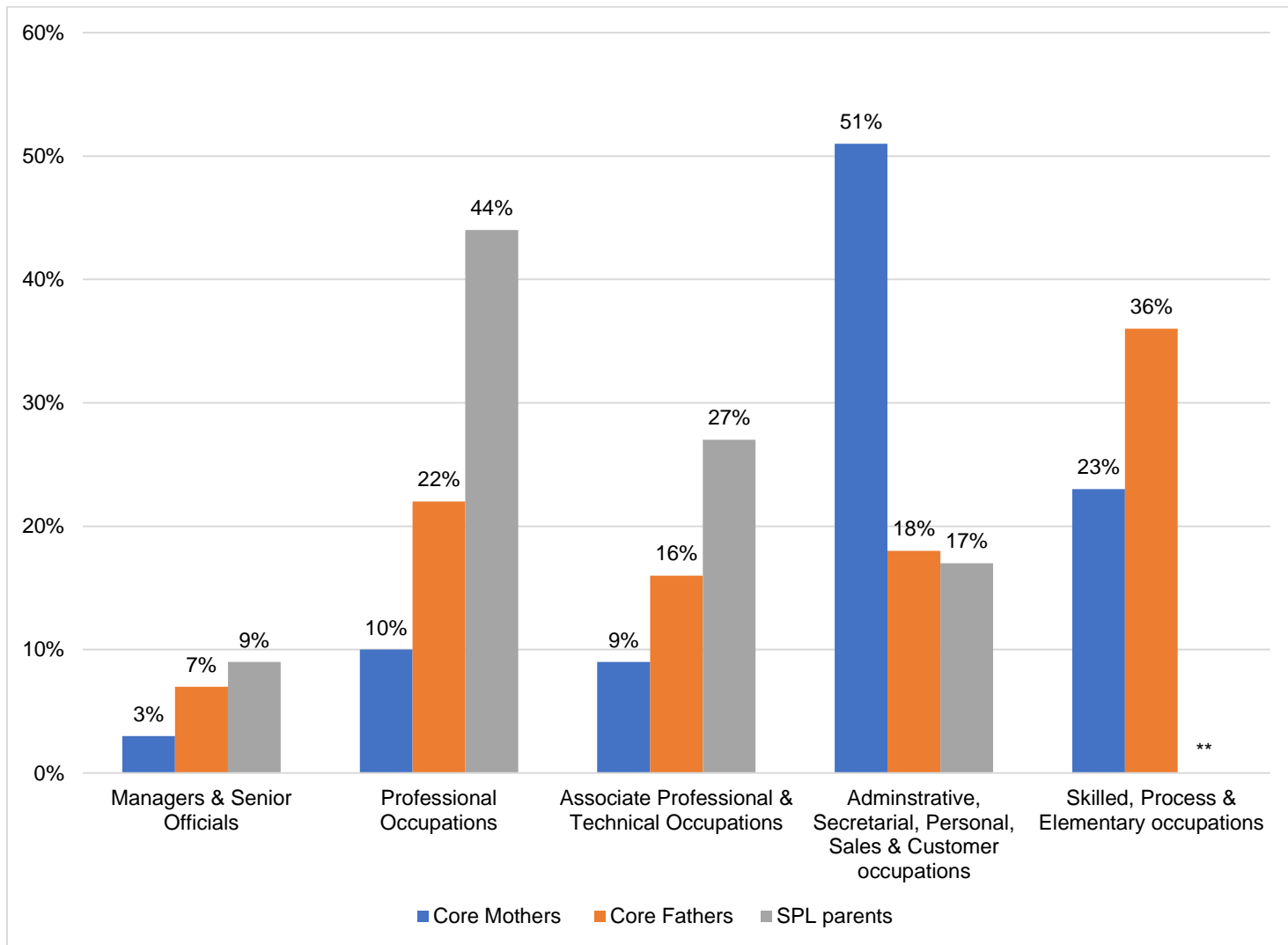


Q91. You said you were working. What does/did the organisation you work/worked for mainly make or do (at the place where you work/worked)? Core mothers: 343; Core fathers: 171; Parents that took SPL: 75

With regards to occupation, where mothers had changed jobs, they were most likely to now be working in administrative, personal services or sales occupations (51 per cent), followed by skilled, process or elementary occupations (23 per cent).

Fathers were most likely to have gained new positions in skilled, process or elementary occupations (36 per cent), while among parents taking SPL, more than two in five (44 per cent) started a new job in a professional occupation, and a quarter (27 per cent) in associate professional or technical occupations.

Figure 8.6: Occupation when returned to work after child's birth/adoption (Where changed job since birth/adoption)



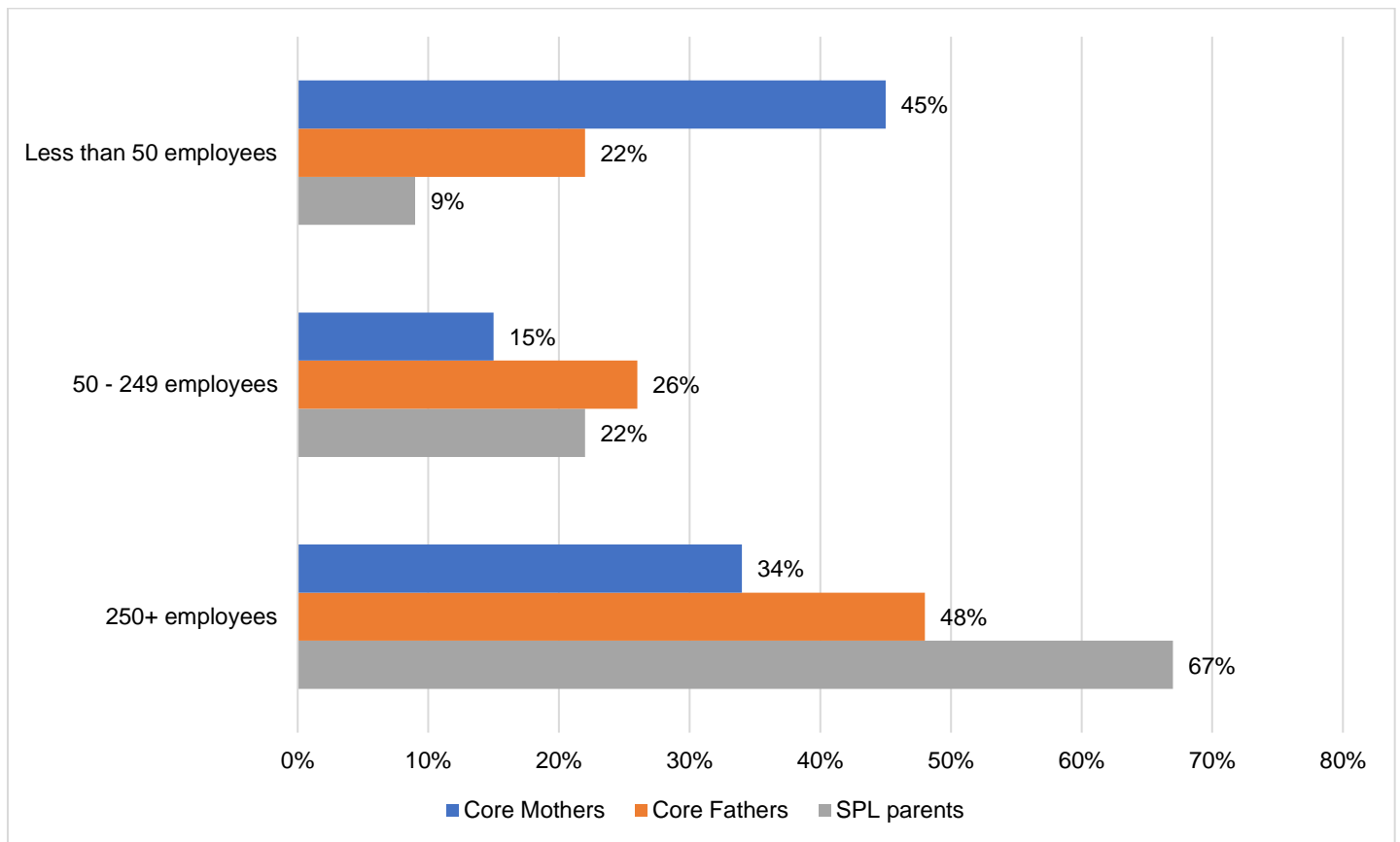
Q92. What kind of work do/did you do most of the time? Core mothers: 343; Core fathers: 171; Parents that took SPL: 75. ** suppressed due to low response.

Of those that had changed jobs since the birth or adoption of their child one in ten (10 per cent) mothers took on a self-employed position, as did 16 per cent of fathers and 11 per cent of parents who took SPL.

Among the mothers that were employees or workers before the birth or adoption of their child 9 per cent switched to a self-employed position following the birth or adoption of their child. This is in line with the proportions of fathers and SPL parents that were employees or workers before the birth or adoption of their child and became self-employed after birth (11 and 9 per cent respectively).

As shown in Figure 8.7, mothers were more likely than fathers and parents who took SPL to take on new positions in smaller organisations (45 per cent worked in organisations with fewer than 50 employees, compared with 22 per cent and 9 per cent respectively).

Figure 8.7: Size of organisation (Where changed job since birth/adoption)



Q98. Including yourself, how many employees work/worked in your organisation? Core mothers: 307; Core fathers: 147; Parents that took SPL: 67

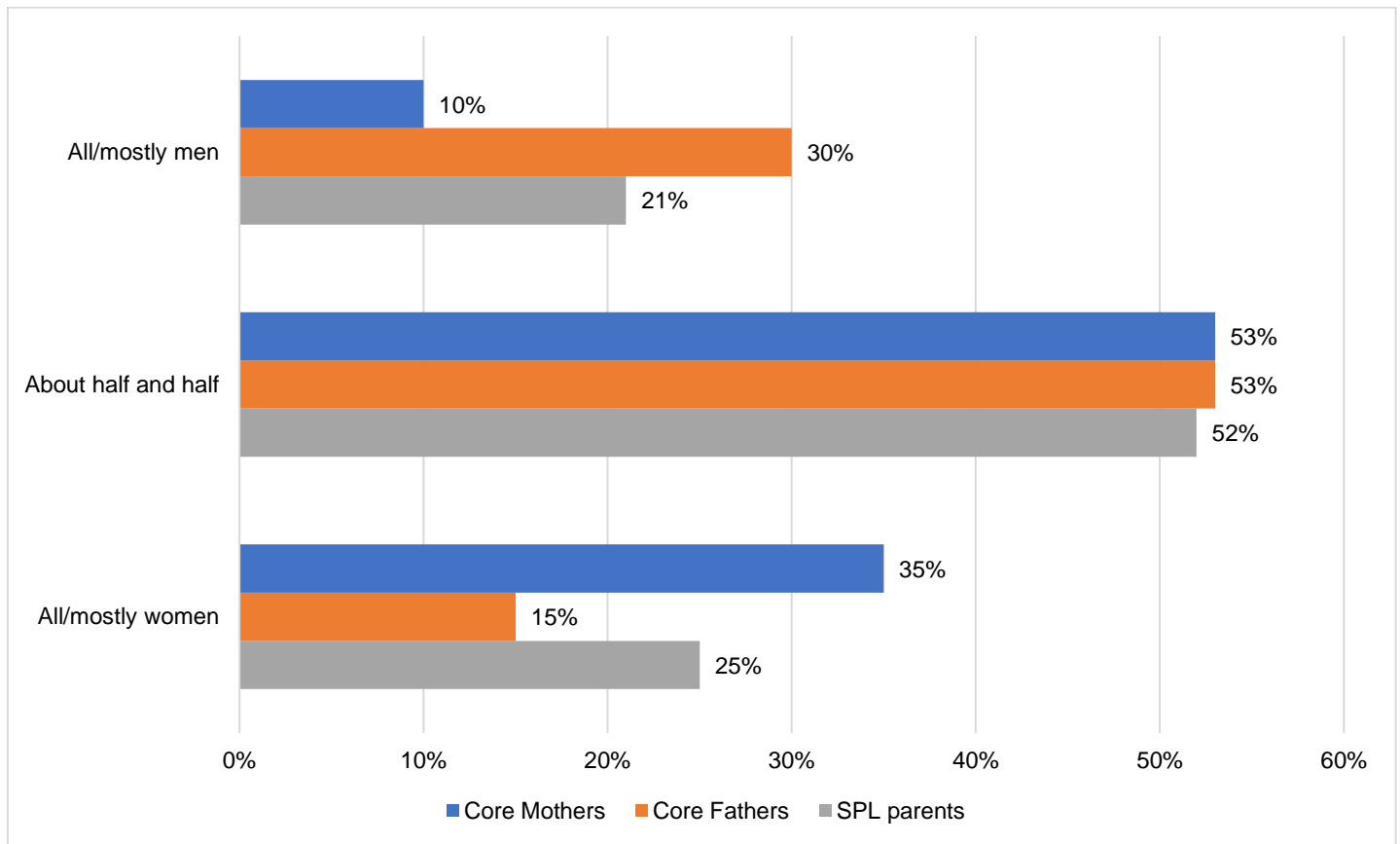
Of the mothers that changed jobs and worked in a SME (with less than 250 staff) before the birth or adoption of their child, one in five (19 per cent) switched to working in a larger organisation employing 250+ staff. There was a greater shift for the mothers that worked in a large organisation before birth/adoption (with 250+), with more than a third (37 per cent) that switched to working in a SME following the birth or adoption of their child.

Among fathers, a third (33 per cent) switched from working in a SME before birth, to working in a large organisation with 250+ staff after the birth of their child, while almost the same proportion (36 per cent) moved from a large organisation to a SME.

For around one in four mothers (23 per cent) and fathers (26 per cent) that changed jobs after the birth or adoption of their child, they started working in a workplace that had a staff association or trade union group. This was more likely to be the case among parents that took SPL and moved jobs (40 per cent).

Across all three parent groups around half got new jobs at sites where the workforce was around half male and half female, while mothers were more likely than fathers to obtain new jobs in workplaces dominated by females (35 per cent; 15 per cent).

Figure 8.8: Balance of males and females in the workplace (Where changed job since birth/adoption)



Q99. At the place where you work/worked, are/were the employees? Please respond based on the site you mostly work/worked at. Core mothers: 307; Core fathers: 147; Parents that took SPL: 67

One in eight (13 per cent) mothers had formal responsibility for supervising the work of other employees in their new job, again compared with higher proportions of fathers (28 per cent) and parents that took SPL (40 per cent).

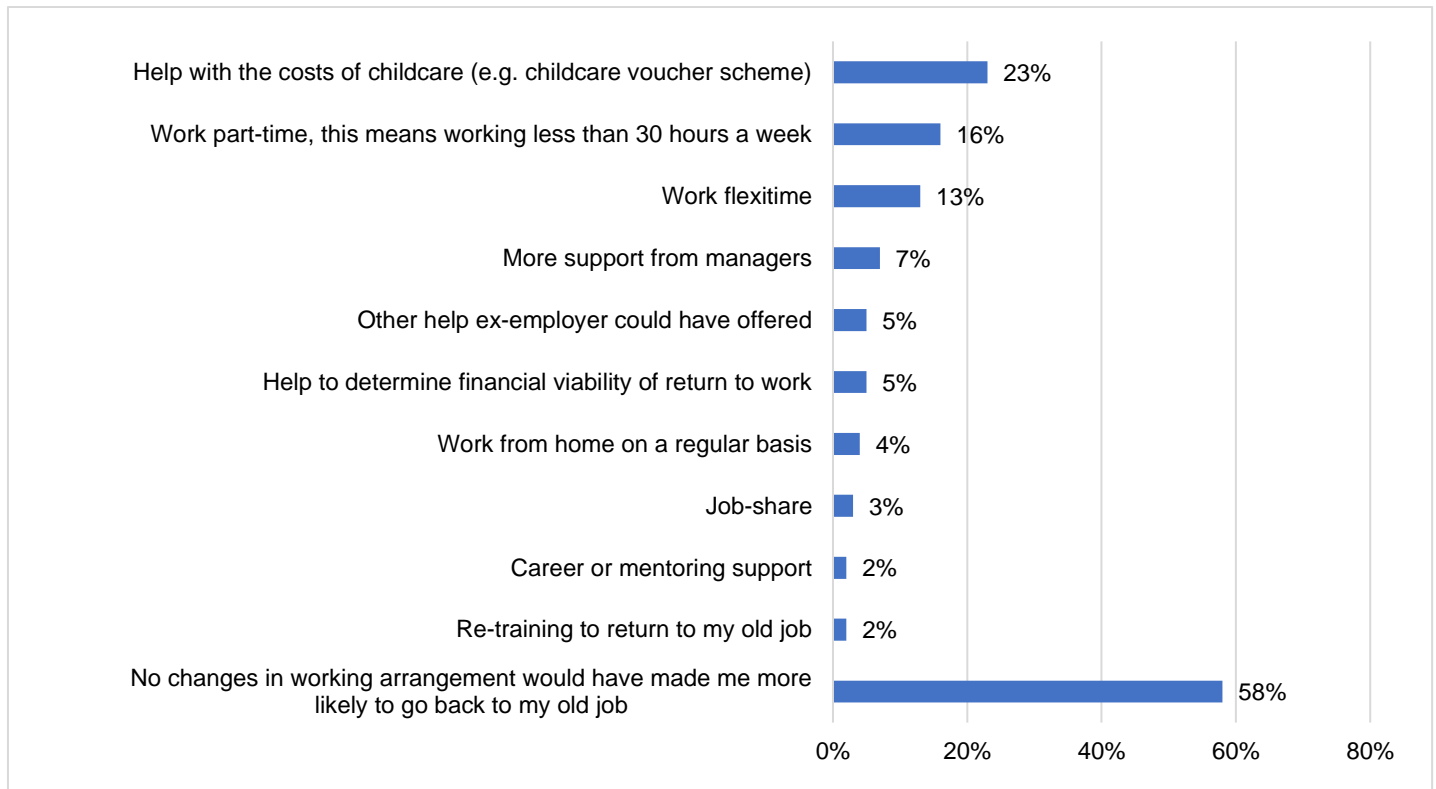
Compared with their pre-birth job just a third (32 per cent) of mothers who had been supervisors previously were still supervisors in their new job, while 6 per cent of mothers who were not supervisors before the birth or adoption of their child took on supervisory responsibilities in their first new job after birth.

8.3.1 Reasons for changing jobs and what might have made them stay

All those who did not return to their pre-birth job were asked whether or not their ex-employer offering various types of flexible working arrangements or other types of support might have made them more likely to have gone back to their job. For three in five (58 per cent) mothers none of these types of working arrangements or support listed in Figure 8.9 would have made them more likely to have gone back to their old job.

However, for around one in four (23 per cent) mothers help with the costs of childcare would have made them more likely to return to their pre-birth job. The option of working part time would have made a difference to around one in six (16 per cent) mothers, and for around one in eight (13 per cent) the option to work flexi time would have made them more likely to return.

Figure 8.9: Whether various flexible working arrangements or support from ex-employers might have made them more likely to return to their pre-birth job (All mothers who did not return to their pre-birth job)



Q89. Would these arrangements have made you more likely to go back to your old job, after your child was born/adopted? Core Mothers: 554

Looking at the factors that may have influenced parents to switch jobs, following the birth or adoption of their child, all those who had started a new job since the birth or adoption of their child were asked whether any of the factors listed in Figure 8.10 were a reason.

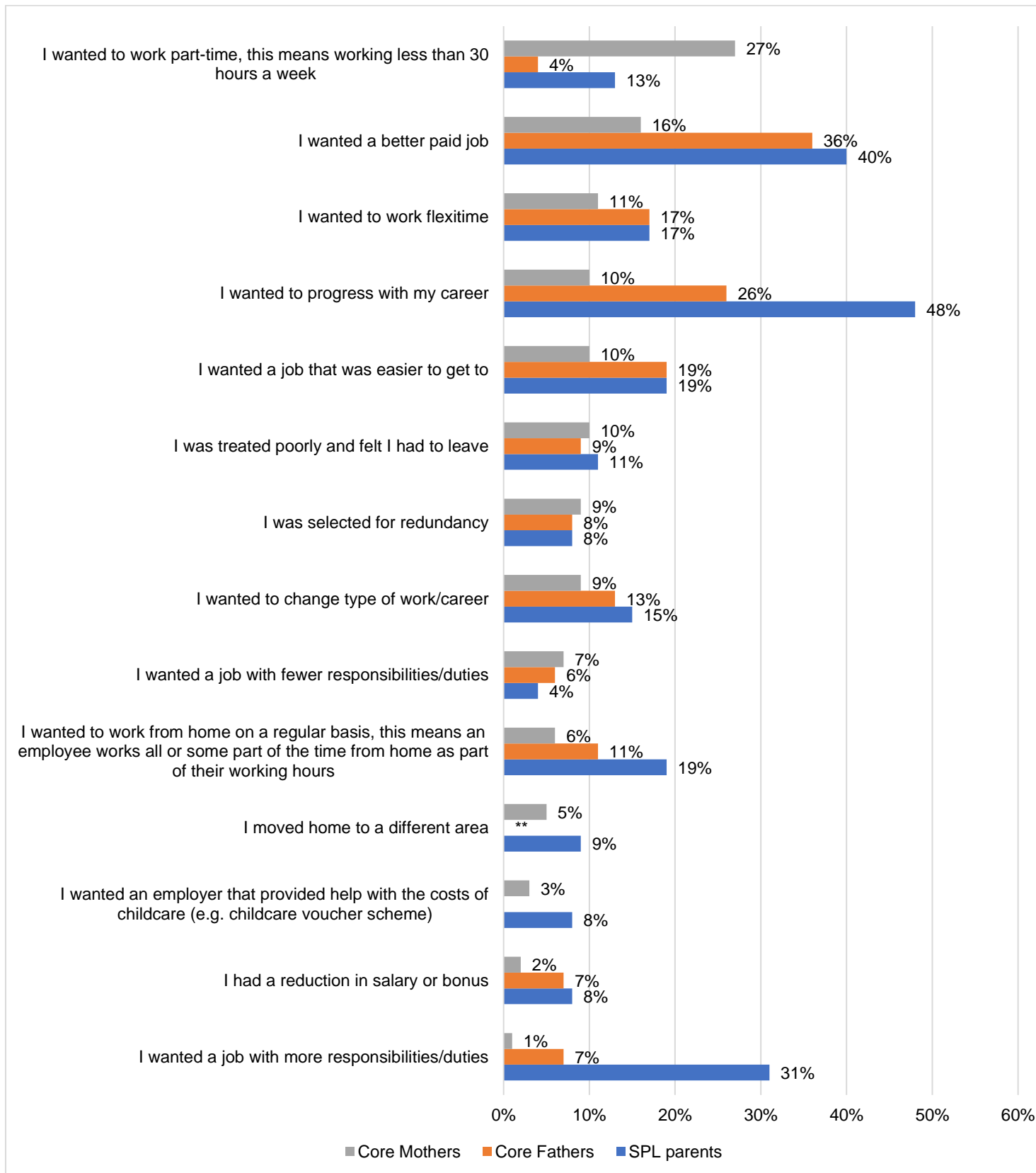
For mothers, wanting to work part time is the most frequently mentioned reason for them changing jobs (27 per cent). After some margin, the second most frequently mentioned reason was wanting a better paid job (16 per cent), and then a range of factors including wanting to work flexi-time, wanting to progress with their career, wanting a job that was easier to get to, and being selected for redundancy, which were each mentioned by around one in ten mothers that moved jobs.

Fathers and parents that took SPL were more likely than mothers to have changed jobs due to wanting a better paid job (36 and 40 per cent respectively) and so that they could progress in their career (26 per cent and 48 per cent).

Parents that took SPL were also more likely to say they changed jobs due to wanting more responsibility (31 per cent).

Around one in ten mothers, fathers and parents that took SPL said they were treated poorly in their pre-birth job and felt they had to leave.

Figure 8.10: Reasons that may have caused parents to change jobs (All those who have changed jobs since the birth or adoption of their child)



Q90. Reasons why parents changed jobs: Core Mothers: 343; Core Fathers: 171; Parents that took SPL: 75. Only reasons mentioned most frequently are included in the chart

8.4 Changes between mothers' pre-birth job and first job after birth

Combining all parents' pre-birth position, whether they remained in their pre-birth job or started a new job gives us more robust base sizes to look at the differences between parents' pre-birth job and the first job they were in after birth.

In terms of organisation type, 96 per cent of mothers who worked in profit-making organisations were still in a profit-making organisation following the birth of their child, and the same proportion of those who worked in central government remained in central government. The most noticeable trend was among those who worked in local government, while 92 per cent remained in local government, 7 per cent of these mothers began working in the private sector following the birth or adoption of their child.

By sector, as table 8.4 summarises mothers that worked in the transport and communications sector were least likely to be working in the same sector after birth (82 per cent), with 7 per cent that had either moved to the wholesale and retail sector, as well as 7 per cent of mothers that had moved to the business services or leisure sector.

Table 8.4: Sector worked in before and after birth (Mothers who returned to work after birth)

	Sector worked in before birth					
Sector worked in after birth	Primary, Manufacturing & Construction	Wholesale and retail	Transport and comms	Hospitality	Public admin, Health & Education	Business / Professional Leisure & Other services
Primary, Manufacturing & Construction	93%	0.5%	1%	0%	0.5%	1%
Wholesale and retail	0%	90%	7%	4%	1%	1%
Transport and comms	0%	1%	82%	1%	<0.5%	<0.5%
Hospitality	1%	2%	1%	87%	2%	2%
Public admin, Health & Education	2%	1%	2%	4%	95%	4%
Business / Professional services, Leisure & Other services	5%	5%	7%	3%	2%	91%
Unweighted bases	119	216	85	98	666	348

Sector worked in, first job after birth, versus the sector they were in before birth. Percentages in bold are where mothers have remained in the same sector as pre-birth

At least nine in ten mothers remained working in an organisation of the same size and around one in ten mothers either moved from a small to a larger organisation, or the reverse.

In terms of gender composition, 88 per cent of mothers who worked in organisations composed mainly of men remained in organisations with this composition, while 94 per cent of mothers who worked where women were dominant remained in such organisations.

In terms of occupation, the majority of mothers remained in the same occupational groupings, as Table 8.5 confirms. This table also shows that 16 per cent of mothers that were managers and senior officials before birth were no longer in these roles after birth and had moved to lower occupational groupings. This was also the case for 12 per cent of mothers that worked in associate professional and technical occupations, with 8 per cent that had moved into administrative or personal services or sales roles, and 4 per cent into skilled, process or elementary occupations. Among those who worked in skilled process and elementary roles before birth however, 12 percent moved up into the next highest occupational group.

Table 8.5: Occupations before and after birth (Mothers that returned to work)

	Pre-birth occupation				
First occupation after birth	Managers & Senior Officials	Professional Occupations	Associate Professional & Technical Occupations	Administrative, Secretarial, Personal, Sales & Customer occupations	Skilled, Process & Elementary occupations
Managers & Senior Officials	84%	<0.5%	<0.5%	1%	0%
Professional Occupations	3%	94%	3%	1%	<0.5%
Associate Professional & Technical Occupations	3%	2%	81%	1%	0%
Administrative, Secretarial, Personal, Sales & Customer occupations	5%	2%	8%	91%	12%
Skilled, Process & Elementary occupations	5%	0%	4%	4%	84%
Change in level of	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%

responsibility/ Job role unspecified					
Prefer not to say/ Unable to code	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%
Unweighted	82	329	208	696	211

Occupation worked in, in first job after birth, versus the occupation they were in before birth. Percentages in bold are where mothers have remained in the same occupational group as pre-birth

Virtually all mothers who were either employees or workers before birth remained as such, while 2 per cent became self-employed. Among the mothers who were self-employed before birth 8 per cent became an employee or worker after birth.

Among the mothers who were supervisors before the birth of their child 35 per cent said they were no longer supervisors in their first job after birth.

In terms of income, 97 per cent of mothers that earned under £20,000 before birth remained on that income, while for those earning between £20,000 and £39,999 before birth 14 per cent earned less than this after birth, and 9 per cent of mothers on the highest income before birth (£40,000 or more) were on a lower income after birth.

Table 8.6: Income before and after birth

Income after birth	Total	Income pre-birth		
		Under £20K	£20,000 - £39,999	£40K+
Under £20K	61%	97%	14%	5%
£20,000 - £39,999	24%	1%	82%	4%
£40K+	5%	0%	1%	91%
Don't know prefer not to say		2%	2%	1%
Unweighted bases	1549	785	490	108

Income in first job after birth, versus income before birth. Percentages in bold are where mothers have remained in the same income band as pre-birth

In terms of working hours, 86 per cent of mothers that worked part time before birth stayed on part time hours, while 6 per cent increased to 30 or more hours per week. Of the mothers that worked full time before birth 57 per cent remained on full time hours, compared with almost the same proportion (56 per cent) in 2009. Close to two in five (38 per cent in 2019 and 2009) reduced their hours to less than 30 hours per week.

8.5 Changes between mothers' pre-birth job and current job (i.e., at time of interview)

Looking next at any changes between the job they were in prior to the birth or adoption of their child and the job they were in at the time of interview (some 18 months or so after the birth or adoption of their child) and regardless of whether they stayed in the same job/organisation or not, the vast majority of mothers stayed working in the same type and size of organisation.

By occupation, the mothers least likely to stay within the same occupational grouping were those who were managers and senior officials, or in associate professional & technical occupations before birth, where 20 per cent and 16 per cent respectively reported that they were now working in lower occupational groups.

Table 8.7: Occupation pre-birth vs time of interview (All mothers in work at time of interview)

Current occupation (at time of interview)	Pre-birth occupation				
	Managers & Senior Officials	Professional Occupations	Associate Professional & Technical Occupations	Administrative, Secretarial, Personal, Sales & Customer occupations	Skilled, Process & Elementary occupations
Managers & Senior Officials	76%	<0.5%	1%	1%	0%
Professional Occupations	3%	93%	4%	1%	<0.5%
Associate Professional & Technical Occupations	4%	2%	75%	1%	0%
Administrative, Secretarial, Personal, Sales & Customer occupations	7%	2%	12%	90%	12%
Skilled, Process & Elementary occupations	6%	0%	4%	-3%	87%
Change in level of responsibility/	3%	2%	3%	3%	*%

Job role unspecified					
Prefer not to say/ Unable to code	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Unweighted bases	77	310	195	620	170

Occupation worked in, at time of interview, versus the occupation they were in before birth. Percentages in bold are where mothers have remained in the same sector as pre-birth

Of all the mothers who had been working part time before the birth of their child 6 per cent had since started working full time hours (30 or more hour per week). While, of those that worked full time before the birth or adoption of their child, a third (33 per cent) were now working less than 30 hours per week.

There was also some evidence of mothers' income having fallen after the birth of their child, including that of the mothers earning £40,000 or more before birth, 12 per cent were on lower incomes after birth, while of those earning £25,000-£39,999 before birth, 13 per cent were on lower incomes afterwards.

Overall mothers' incomes at the time of interview remained significantly lower than that of fathers, and of parents that took SPL.

Table 8.8: Average income pre-birth and at time of interview

	Core Mothers	Core Fathers	SPL Parents
Average income before birth	£17,200	£28,900+	£43,500++
Average income at time of interview (where still in work)	£18,600	£30,650+	£45,000++

+ = significantly higher at 95 per cent level of confidence than one other column

++= significantly higher than both other columns

Pre-birth income: Q63/68. Current income: combination of Q63/68, Q120/Q137/142 depending on return to work status.

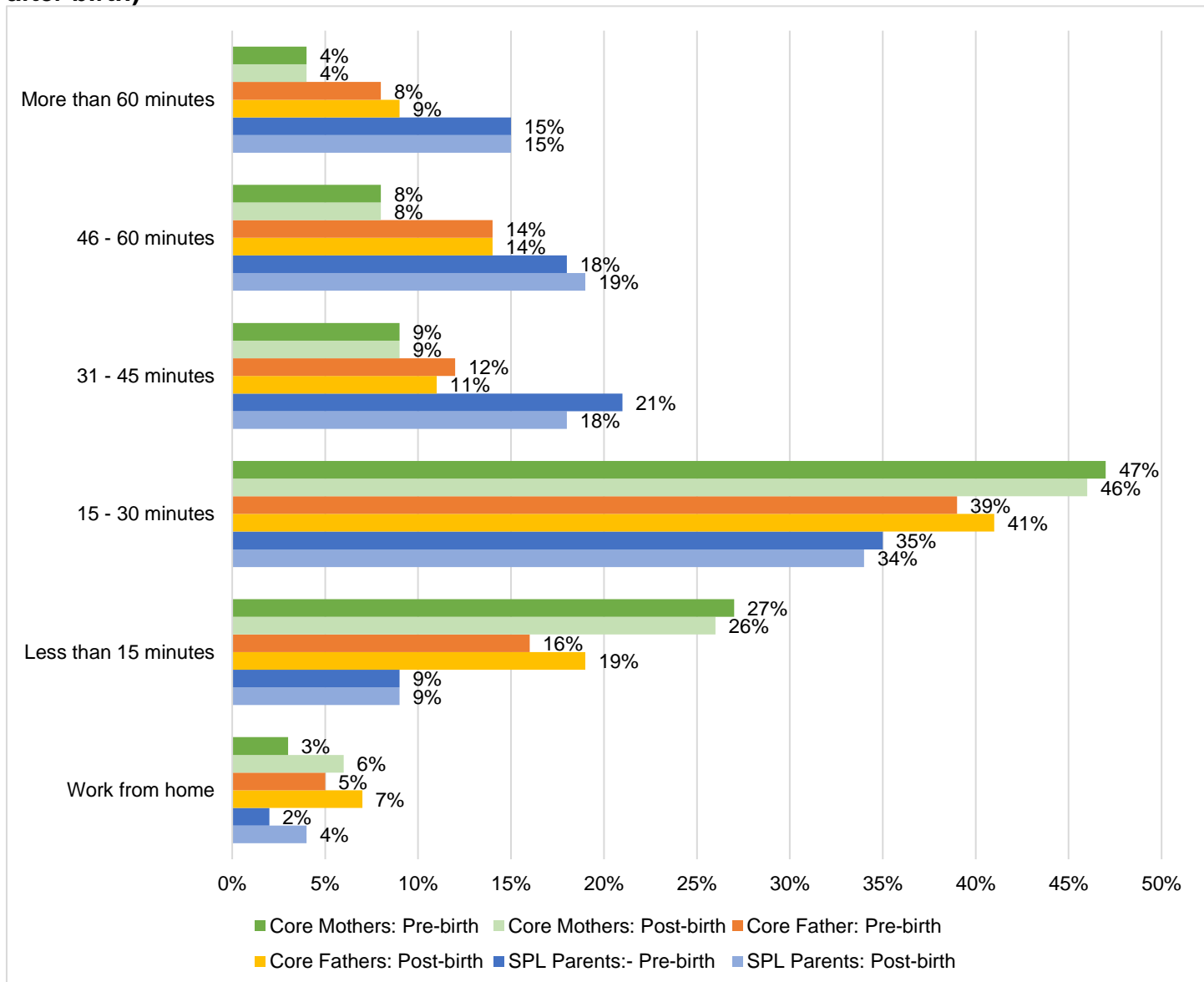
In terms of their working status the largest shift was among workers, where two in five (39 per cent) mothers had become employees following the birth or adoption of their child. Among mothers who were employees before birth 96 per cent remained as such, with 2 per cent becoming self-employed and 2 per cent became workers. Among those who were self-employed before birth 15 per cent were employees at the time of interview.

Once again there was also a noticeable shift among the mothers who had supervisory responsibilities at work, before the birth or adoption of their child. Of these mothers two in five (39 per cent) were no longer supervisors at the time of interview. Among both fathers and parents that took SPL this proportion is lower, with one in five (20 per cent in each case) who had been a supervisor before the birth or adoption of their child no longer having these responsibilities afterwards.

8.6 Commuting patterns pre- and post-birth

Looking at changes in commuting, as Figure 8.11 highlights there is little difference in the proportions of mothers, fathers or parents that took SPL between the length of time they spent commuting before the birth or adoption of their child and afterwards. However, mothers were more likely than fathers to say their commute pre and after birth was less than 30 minutes (74 per cent of mothers pre-birth, compared with 55 per cent of fathers). Parents that took SPL were more likely than mothers and fathers generally to say their commute exceeded 60 minutes (15 per cent, compared with 4 per cent of mothers pre-birth and 8 per cent of fathers).

Figure 8.11: Duration of commute: pre vs. post birth (All parents in work before and after birth)

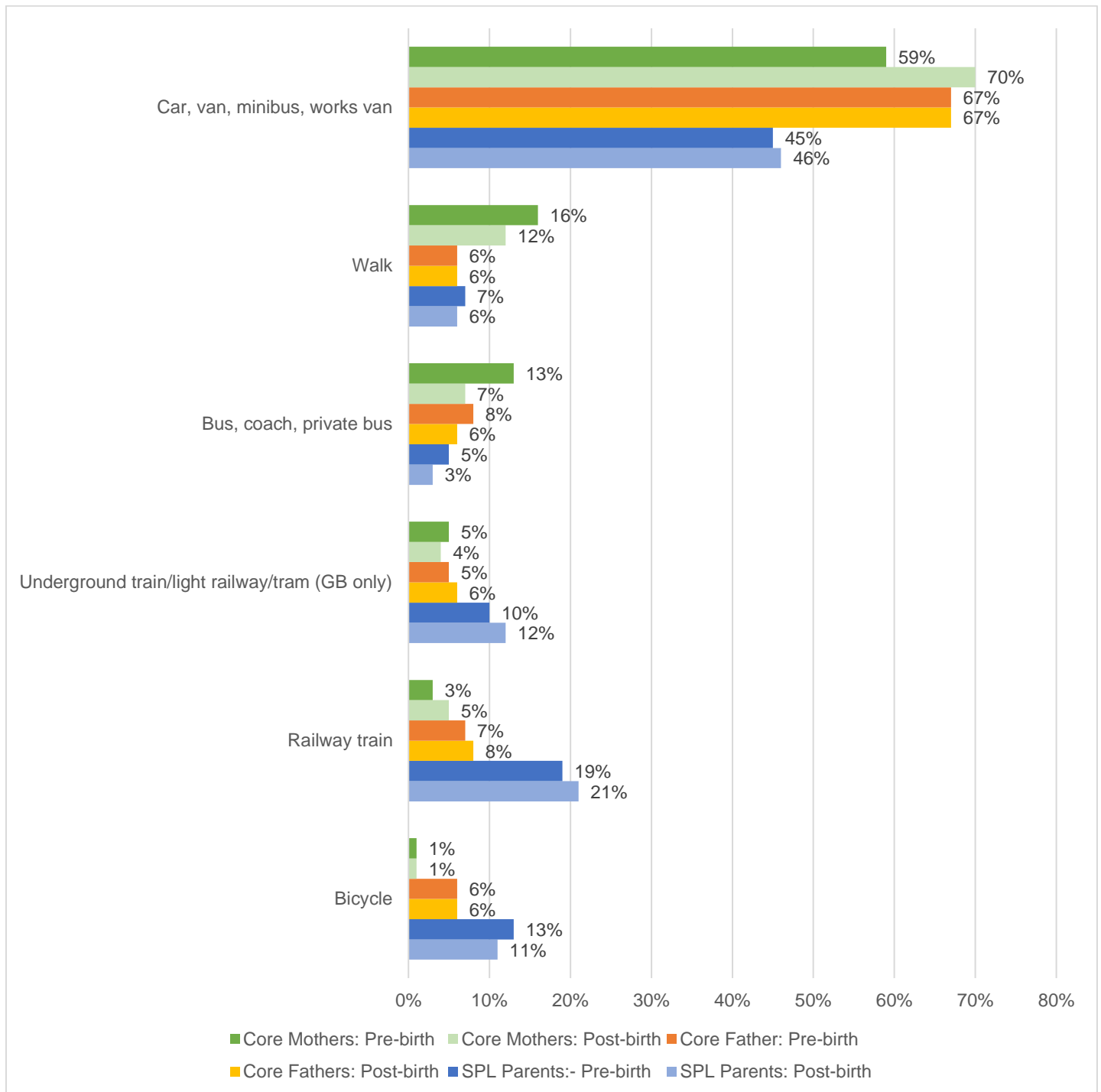


Q69. What was your usual home to work travel time in minutes? Core Mothers: 1959; Core Fathers 1062; Parents that took SPL: 336. Q143. What is your usual home to work travel time in minutes? (i.e. currently) Core Mothers: 1284; Core Fathers 895; Parents that took SPL: 308.

In terms of the main method of travelling to work the highest proportion of all parent groups usually used the car, although it is noticeable that parents that took SPL were more likely than mothers and fathers generally to travel to work either by train or by bicycle.

For mothers, the proportion that mainly used the car to travel to work increased following the birth of their child, from 59 per cent before the birth of their child, to 70 per cent afterwards. This was accompanied by a reduction in the proportion of mothers that walked to work or travelled by bus.

Figure 8.12: Main method of travelling to work: pre vs post birth (Where parents commute to work)



Q70. What was your usual and main method of travel to work? Core Mothers: 1826; Core Fathers: 950; Parents that took SPL: 328. Q144. What is your usual and main method of travel to work? Core Mothers: 1192; Core Fathers: 831; Parents that took SPL: 296 N.B. Chart only includes methods used by at least 1% in each parent group

8.7 Differences in experiences by whether or not mothers had older children

8.7.1 Pre-birth characteristics

Overall, just over a third (37 per cent) of ‘core mothers’ from the survey had at least one child that was older than the child that was the subject of the interview.

Focusing on these mothers and their working status prior to the birth of the child that was the subject of the survey (Table 8.9), mothers who had an older child were more likely than first time mothers to be working part time (55 per cent, compared to 24 per cent). This supports the findings of analysis of Understanding Society, which found that changes to working patterns were most common three to five years after birth (Harkness et al, 2019).

Mothers with older children were also more likely to have a lower income before birth, particularly mothers who were not in work prior to the birth of their oldest child (£10,300; £18,900 among mothers that did not have older children).

Table 8.9: Working status of mothers prior to birth of the child that is the subject of the interview – according to whether they had older children and whether they were in work when their oldest child was born (All mothers)

		All mothers	Had older children		No older children
			In work when older child was born	Out of work when older child was born	
Full or part time	Paid work full time	61%	44%-	-33%	+75%
	Paid work part time	38%	55%+	62%+	24%-
Average number of hours worked per week		31	27-	25.5-	35+
Had supervisory responsibilities		26%	31%+	10%-	26%
Average Income (per annum)		£17,200	£16,900	£10,300-	£18,900+
Unweighted bases		1959	642	181	937

+/- indicates figures that are significantly higher/lower than among all mothers

8.7.2 Return to work

Of the mothers who already had an older child, three quarters (75 per cent) had been in work prior to the birth of their oldest child.

As found previously (e.g., Newton et al, 2017), this survey found that women’s labour market attachment before becoming a parent influences whether they return to work. For example, after the birth of the child that was the subject of the interview, mothers who were not working when their oldest child was born were much less likely to have returned to any work at all (40 per cent), compared with mothers who were in work when their oldest child was born (17 per cent), and compared with mothers without older children (21 per cent).

It is also noticeable that mothers who were not working when their oldest child was born were much less likely to be working at supervisory level at the time of interview (9 per cent), compared with mothers who were in work when their oldest child was born (28 per cent), and compared with mothers without older children (21 per cent).

At the time of interview, some 18-24 months after the birth of the child that is the subject of the interview, mothers with older children still tended to work fewer hours than first time mothers (24-26 hours per week on average; 29 hours for mothers without older children), a finding supported by other research, as they seek to balance the needs of different childcare settings and school hours. This is shown in Table 8.10.

The table also shows that mothers with older children tended to be on lower incomes, particularly where they did not work when their older child was born, which is likely to reflect their lower working hours.

Table 8.10: Working status of mothers at time of the interview – according to whether they had older children and whether they were in work when their oldest child was born (All mothers still in work at time of interview)

	All mothers	Had older children		No older children
		In work when older child was born	Out of work when older child was born	
Average number of hours worked per week	28	26-	24-	29+
Average Income (per annum)	£18,600	£18,500	£10,800-	£20,300+
Unweighted bases	1392	489	92	679

+/- indicates figures that are significantly higher/lower than among all mothers

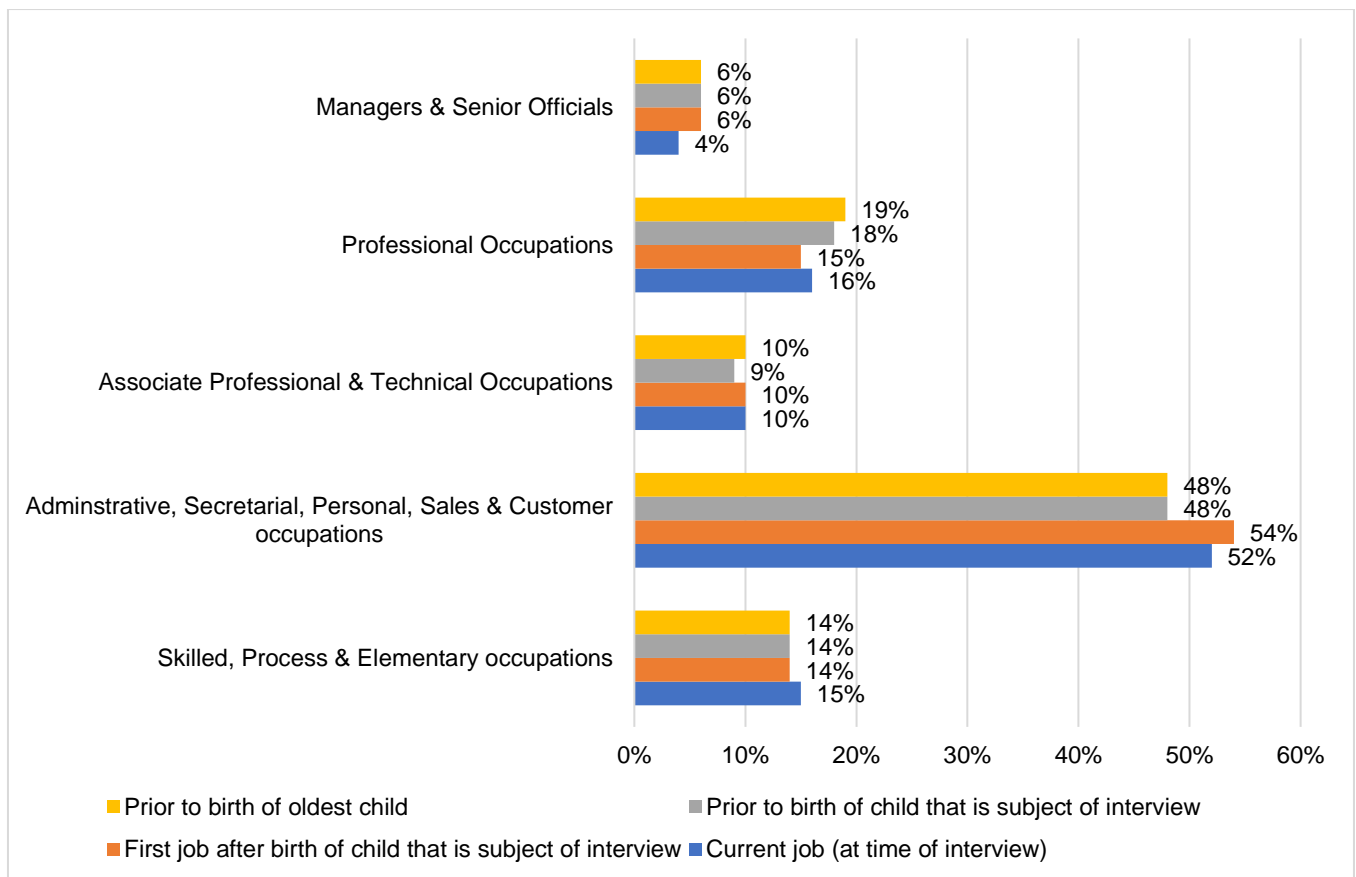
In terms of income over time, mothers that were in work at the time of their oldest child’s birth earned an average of £18,200 per annum. Prior to the birth of the child that was the subject of the interview this average was lower, at close to £16,900, and then around £16,550 on average in their first job after the birth of the child that is the subject of the interview. By the time of the interview however (some 18 months after the birth of the child that is the subject of the interview) the average income of these mothers had increased, to £18,500.

The average number of hours worked by mothers appears to stay lower after the birth of their child, with mothers working an average of 33 hours at the time of their oldest child’s birth; an average of 27 hours prior to the birth of the child that is the subject of the interview; 25.5 hours in their first job after the birth of this child, and 26 hours at the time of interview.

Tracking the working patterns of the mothers who were in work at the time of their first child’s birth (Figures 8.13 and 8.14), through to the time of interview shows that there has generally been little movement in terms of the sectors they have worked in.

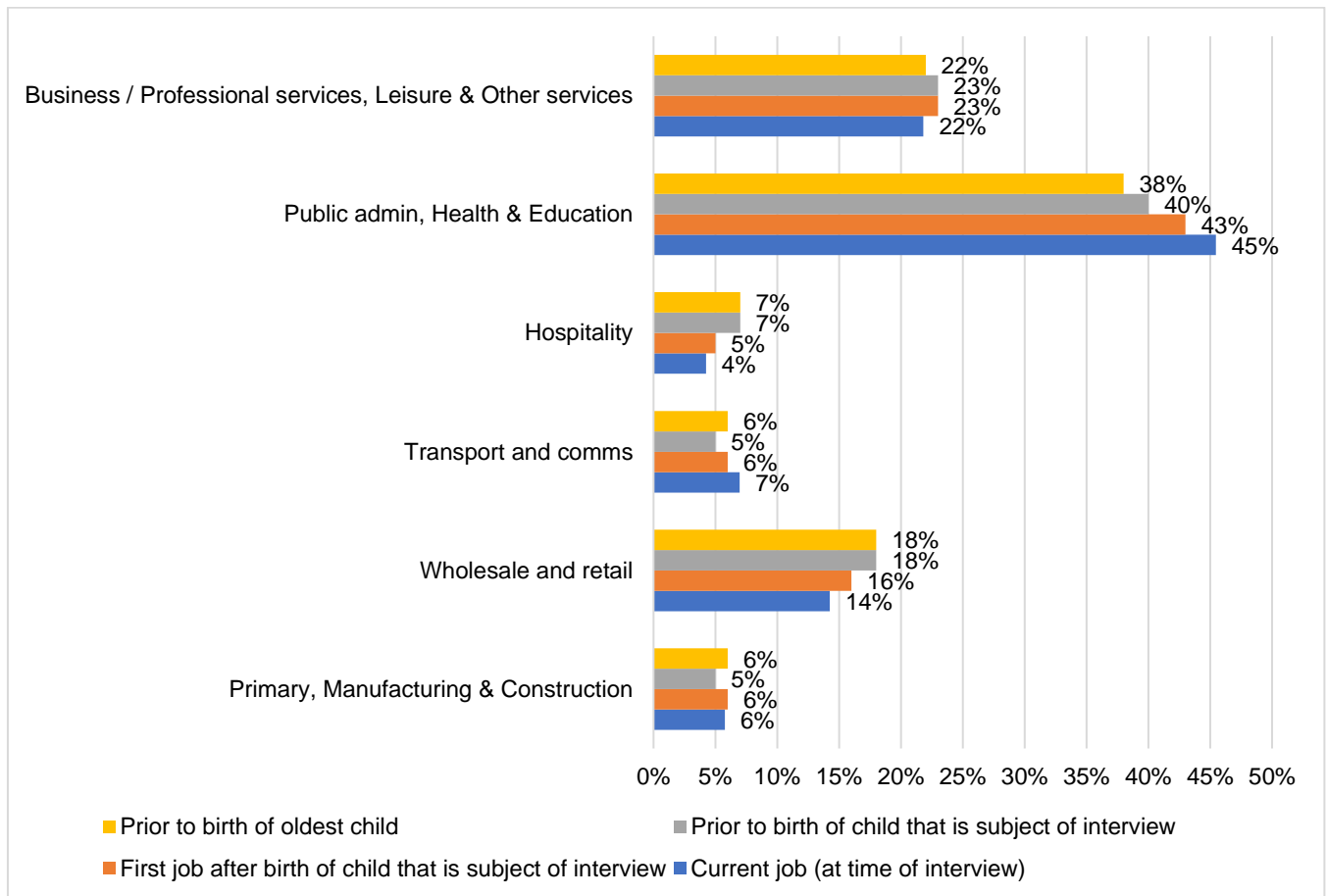
However, while the amount of time before the birth of their first child and the interview varies among respondents (depending on the age of mothers’ oldest child), there is a general downward trend in the proportions of mothers that worked in hospitality, and in wholesale and retail over time, accompanied by an increase in the proportion working in public administration, health and education. As noted in Chapter 9 on family-friendly employers the hospitality sector stands out as being the least likely of the sectors to offer childcare support, while employers in public administration, health and education seem most ‘family friendly’ in terms of being more likely than employers on average to offer mothers flexible working arrangements and childcare/family-friendly support. This, as well as perhaps the ‘unsociable’ working hours involved in the hospitality and retail sectors, for example working evenings and weekends, may help to explain the movement between sectors among mothers with older children.

Figure 8.13: Occupation - at time of oldest child’s birth through to time of interview (Mothers in work when their oldest child was born)



Unweighted base: Mothers in work when oldest child was born: 642

Figure 8.14: Sector worked in at time of oldest child’s birth through to time of interview (Mothers in work when their oldest child was born)



Unweighted base: Mothers in work when oldest child was born: 642

8.8 Parents that did not return to work

Focusing next on the parents that were out of work at the time of interview (25 per cent), nine in ten (90 per cent) mothers described their status as looking after the home or family. Six per cent of mothers said they were looking for work, and a further 3 per cent were waiting to start a job, while 6 per cent were in education or training.

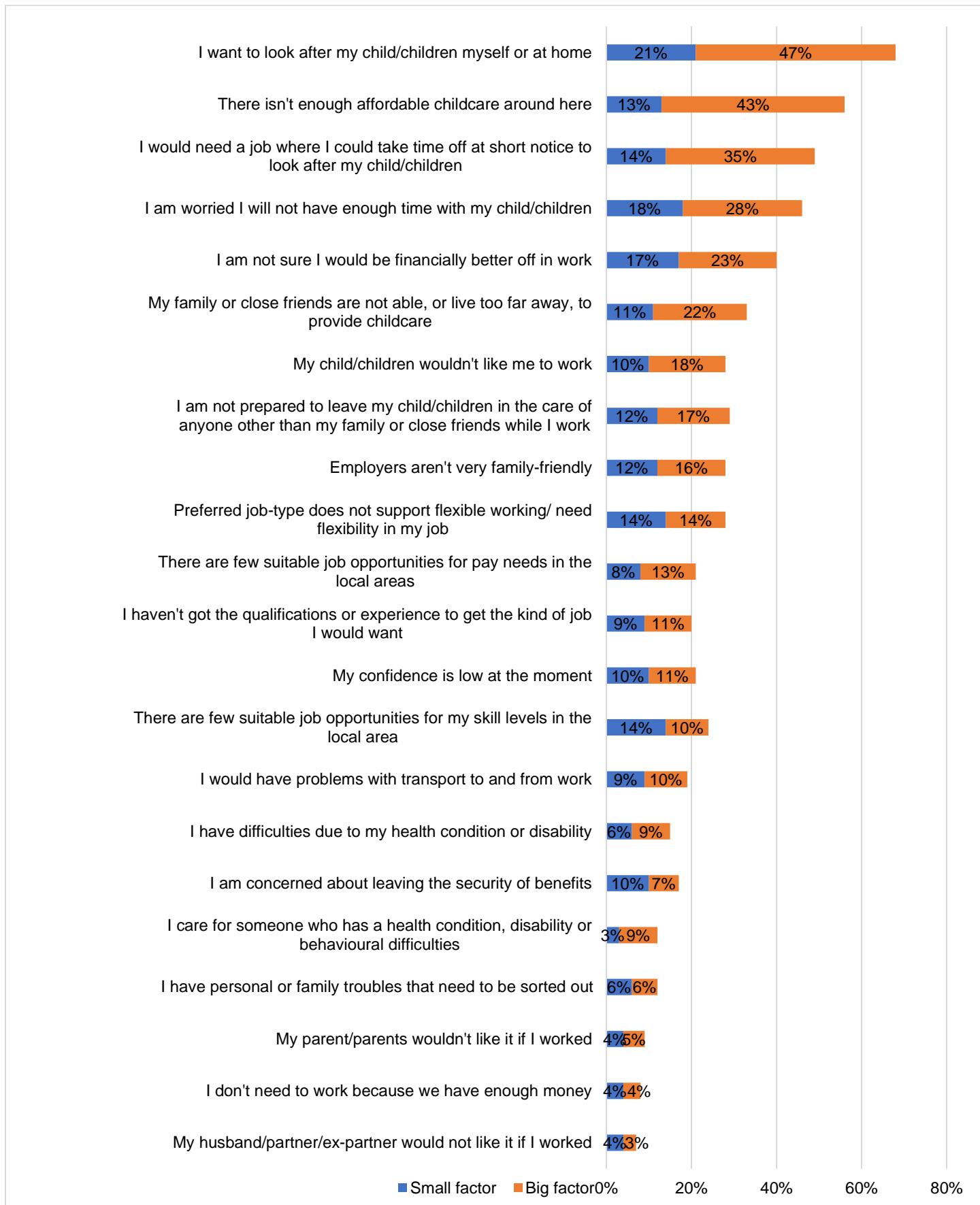
Fathers mentioned they were either looking for work (37 per cent) or waiting to start a job (12 per cent). While a significantly lower proportion of fathers (27 per cent) than mothers (90 per cent) described themselves as looking after the home or family.

Half (51 per cent) of the mothers that were not currently in work had been out of work for more than a year, compared with around one in four fathers (24 per cent). On average mothers had been out of paid employment for just over 75 weeks, while the average among fathers was lower at just over 42 weeks.

Figure 8.15 summarises the extent to which all mothers out of work at the time of interview and not about to start a new job thought each of a range of factors were at least a 'small factor' in them not wanting or being able to do paid work.

Of the 22 factors listed, the highest proportion (47 per cent) of mothers said that wanting to look after their child themselves was a 'big factor' and just slightly fewer said that there not being enough affordable childcare was a 'big factor' (43 per cent). Around a third of mothers (35 per cent) said needing a job where they could take time off at short notice to look after their child; and 28 per cent of mothers said being worried that they will not have enough time with their child were considered 'big factors' in wanting or being able to do paid work. Just over a fifth (23 per cent) of mothers said a 'big factor' was that they were not sure whether they would financially be better off if they were in work.

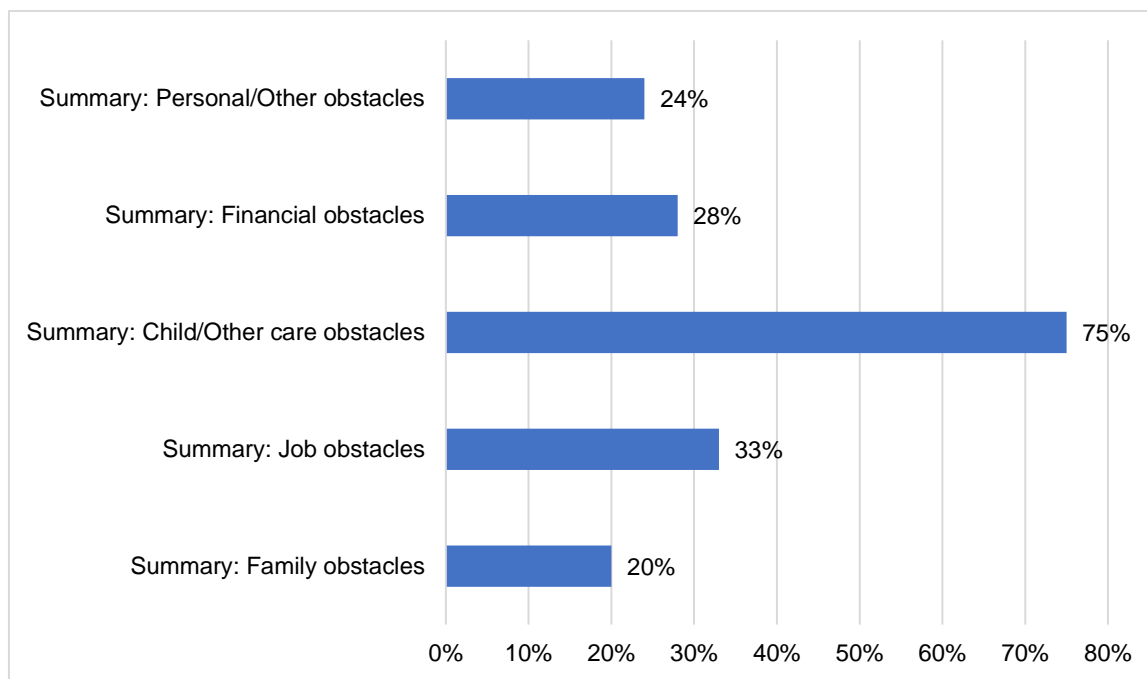
Figure 8.15: Factors for not wanting or not being able to do paid work (Mothers not currently in work and not waiting to start a new job)



Q279. Thinking about your current situation, Is the following a small factor, a big factor or not a factor in your not wanting to, or being able to, work at this time. Core mothers: 492

When the 22 factors listed in Figure 8.15 are summarised into groups of similar types, the type of factors most likely to have been considered ‘big factors’ as to why mothers didn’t want or were not able to do paid work were childcare or other care obstacles, which were considered a big factor by three quarters of mothers out of work.

Figure 8.16: Summary of ‘big factors’ for not wanting or not being able to do paid work (Mothers not currently in work and not waiting to start a new job)



Q279. Thinking about your current situation, Is the following a small factor, a big factor or not a factor in your not wanting to, or being able to, work at this time. Core mothers: 492.

A key as to which factors belong to each summary group can be found in the annex.

Looking at changes in the reasons for being out of work since 2009 (Table 8.11) reveals that there have been a number of significant changes in the ‘big factors’ influencing the decision not to return to work.

The proportion that considered a lack of affordable childcare in their local area a ‘big factor’ in their decision not to return to work has increased significantly, while fewer mothers were worried about having enough time with their children, and said they were not prepared to leave their child in the care of someone else. There has also been a reduction in the proportion of mothers not sure if they would be financially better off in work.

Table 8.11: Reasons for being out of work (where mothers were not in work at time of interview)

	'Big factor'	
	2009*	2019
My child/children wouldn't like me to work	15%	18%
My parent/parents wouldn't like it if I worked	3%	5%
I would have problems with transport to and from work	14%	10%-
I have difficulties due to my health condition or disability	6%	9%
My confidence is low at the moment	8%	11%-
I want to look after my child/children myself or at home	65%	47%-
I care for someone who has a health condition, disability or behavioural difficulties	6%	9%+
I am worried I will not have enough time with my child/children	48%	28%-
I haven't got the qualifications or experience to get the kind of job I would want	16%	11%-
My husband/partner/ex-partner would not like it if I worked	4%	3%
I am not sure I would be financially better off in work	34%	23%-
There isn't enough affordable childcare around here	31%	43%+
I would need a job where I could take time off at short notice to look after my child/children	43%	35%-
Employers aren't very family-friendly	16%	16%
My family or close friends are not able, or live too far away, to provide childcare	31%	22%-
I am not prepared to leave my child/children in the care of anyone other than my family or close friends while I work	30%	17%-
I am concerned about leaving the security of benefits	7%	7%
I have personal or family troubles that need to be sorted out	8%	6%
I don't need to work because we have enough money	10%	4%-

+/- significant increase/decrease, at 95% level of confidence compared with 2009

8.9 Key determinants of mothers returning to work (Multivariate analysis)

BMG conducted analysis to determine which factors were most strongly related to whether or not mothers returned to work after Maternity Leave/Pay. The definition of the variable we were trying to explain is biological or adoptive mothers who:

- Returned to same job OR;
- Returned and moved to another job OR;
- Returned to a different job;
- Versus not;
- Those who selected "Don't know/ Prefer not to say" were removed from the analysis.

The list of potential drivers was extensive – too many to include in a multivariate logistic regression model. We therefore conducted a series of preliminary bivariate regression models and used significance testing and R-squared values to determine which of the potential factors should be included in the multivariate model.

The table below shows the relative importance of factors as derived from the final multivariate regression model.

Table 8.12: The relative importance of key drivers of “Mothers returning to work after Maternity Leave”

Mothers returning to work	Relative Importance
Q12. Health conditions	6%
Q18. Live alone	5%
Q36/37. Childcare help available	3%
Q63. Net. Income	11%
Q47. Duration in job	38%
Q49. SIC	6%
Q57. Workplace composition	6%
Q71. Flex Working	5%
Q72_1. Childcare vouchers or other help with paying for childcare (including tax-free childcare)	3%
Q72_3. Help with childcare arrangements during school holidays	5%
Q72_8. "Keep in touch" scheme offered by employer during Maternity or Shared Parental Leave	10%
Q72_5. An hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters	2%

The most important driver of mothers returning to work was duration in job (that was also the biggest driver of mothers taking Maternity Leave/Pay). This was followed by net income and *“Mothers for whom a ‘Keep in touch’ scheme is offered by employer during maternity”*.

The next table gives the odds ratios – if an odds ratio is greater than 1 then that group is more likely to return to work, if it is less than 1 the group is less likely to. The size of each group (frequency) should also be taken into account; sometimes the odds ratio shows a big difference, but it only applies to a small percentage of the total population. Several iterations of the model were run in order to optimise the groups within any particular variable.

Table 8.13: Odds ratios for “Mothers returning to work after Maternity Leave”

Mothers returning to work	Frequency	Odds ratio
<u>Constant</u>	1906	0.492
<u>Q12. Health conditions</u>		
Yes	150	0.499
No	1756	1.000
<u>Q18. Live alone</u>		
Single	348	0.647
Cohabiting	1558	1.000
<u>Q36/37. Childcare help available</u>		
Yes (any at Q36, Q37)	1652	1.500
No	254	1.000
<u>Q63. Net. Income</u>		
£15,000-£24,999	484	1.297
£25,000+	545	2.516
Under £15,000	730	1.000
<u>Q47. Duration in job</u>		
2 to 5 years	538	3.773
5+ years	677	5.676
Less than 2 years	184	1.000
<u>Q49. SIC</u>		
Wholesale & retail/Leisure & other services	375	0.691
Hospitality	150	0.541
NOT	1381	1.000
<u>Q57. Workplace composition</u>		
Mostly women	716	0.642
NOT	1190	1.000
<u>Q71. Flexible working</u>		
Yes	1535	1.545
NOT	371	1.000
<u>Q72 1. Childcare vouchers or other help with paying for childcare (including tax-free childcare)</u>		
Yes	743	1.590
NOT	1163	1.000
<u>Q72 3. Help with childcare arrangements during school holidays</u>		
Yes	64	5.964
NOT	1842	1.000
<u>Q72 8. "Keep in touch" scheme offered by employer during Maternity or Shared Parental Leave</u>		
Yes	831	2.147
NOT	1075	1.000
<u>Q72 5. An hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters</u>		
Yes	499	1.373
NOT	1507	1.000

Looking firstly at the key drivers, the odds of a mother returning to work were:

- Nearly four times higher for mothers who had worked at a job for over 2 years and over five times higher for mothers in a job more than 5 years (both compared to those who had worked less than 2 years);
- Note: parents who have been off work for 26 weeks or less (in aggregate) are entitled, by law, to return to the same job. Employees who have been off work for more than 26 weeks (in aggregate) are entitled, by law, to return to the same job but if that job is no longer available they are entitled to return to a similar job in terms of pay, status, and terms and conditions of employment.
- Over twice as high for higher earners (over £25,000 p.a.) compared to lower earners (under £15,000);
- Over twice as high for mothers for whom a 'Keep in touch' scheme is offered by their employer during maternity.

The latter point could represent a general theme of employers who offer, communicate and promote support benefits. The survey asked a number of such benefits (Q72. "*To the best of your knowledge, does/did your employer offer/provide to employees any of the following types of support?*") and four of them (labelled Q72 in the table) came out as significant in the regression model (although one had a very small subgroup).

The odds of mothers returning to work were also significantly higher for:

- Mothers who said they do not have a health condition;
- Mothers who are cohabiting with a spouse/partner (compared to single);
- Mothers who said they knew people who could help with childcare (compared to those who didn't);
- Mothers who do not work in certain industries (wholesale & retail/leisure & other services, hospitality) compared to those who do;
- Mothers whose workplace composition was not "mostly women" – compared to those whose was;
- Mothers whose employer offered some kind of flexible working ("Q71. *In this/that job, are/were any of the following working arrangements available at your workplace...?*");
- Mothers for whom childcare vouchers (or similar help) is offered by employer;
- Mothers whose employers offer help with childcare arrangements during school holidays (only a small percentage of mothers said 'yes' to this);
- Mothers whose employer offered "*An hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters.*"

8.10 Chapter Summary

Overall mothers were much less likely than fathers to return to work for any period of time, following the birth of their child. One in five (22 per cent) mothers did not return to their pre-birth job and remained out of work at the time of interview, compared with 2 per cent of fathers.

The proportion of mothers that did not return to work at all was particularly high among lone parents (38 per cent); mothers with no qualifications (39 per cent), those who were workers before birth (52 per cent), as well as mothers who were not in work when their oldest child was born (40 per cent), indicating a link between return to work and household circumstances and prior attachment to the labour market.

The length of time mothers had worked in their job also appears to be linked to the likelihood of them returning to their pre-birth job or any type of work; of those mothers that had been in their job for less than 2 years just 4 per cent returned to their pre-birth job and were still there at the time of interview (compared with 54 per cent of mothers on average), and more than half did not return and remained out of work at the time of interview (56 per cent; 22 per cent on average).

Having family-friendly or flexible working arrangements available at their pre-birth job was a key determining factor for mothers' likelihood to return to work at all; with mothers that worked in organisations that offered flexible working arrangements or childcare support more likely to remain working at their pre-birth job. While mothers working in organisations that did not offer these arrangements or support were more likely than average not to have returned to their job and to be out of work at the time of interview.

In terms of discussions with their employer, 7 per cent of mothers were offered a job with less responsibility on return to work and the same proportion were offered a job on lower pay, compared with 1 per cent of fathers in each case. Where parents did return to their pre-birth job, mothers were much more likely than fathers to have experienced some change to their working hours (32 per cent; 3 per cent) or working arrangements (24 per cent; 2 per cent). Most fathers experienced no changes to their role or working arrangements (93 per cent; 53 per cent of mothers).

As Table 8.14 summarises, after the birth of their child working mothers had lower incomes than fathers and were less likely to have supervisory responsibility. Mothers were also more likely than fathers to be working part time hours.

Table 8.14: Supervisory responsibilities, hours worked and pay – mothers versus fathers (All mothers & fathers)

		Mothers	Fathers
Supervisory responsibilities	When they returned to pre-birth job	24%	36%+
	In first new job after birth	13%	28%+
	Time of interview	22%	34%+

Average number of hours worked	Where started new job after birth	24	37.5+
	Time of interview	28	39.5+
Annual gross pay	First job after birth	£16,800	£26,800+
	Time of interview	£18,600	£30,650+

Unweighted bases vary. + indicates a significantly higher difference than compared with mothers

The shift in each of these aspects of their work before and after birth is greater among mothers, who, as found in other studies, are changing their work patterns to accommodate the demands of parenthood much more than fathers, despite prevailing attitudes that parenting should be shared:

- Among working parents who were supervisors before birth, 35 per cent of mothers were no longer supervisors in their first job after the birth of their child (whether that was the same job or a new one) and 39 per cent were no longer supervisors by the time of interview (versus 16 and 20 per cent of fathers);
- Of those parents who worked full time hours before birth, 57 per cent of mothers were still working full time hours in their first job after birth and 63 per cent were still full time at the time of interview (versus 86 and 84 per cent of fathers respectively);
- In terms of income, of the mothers earning £25,000 - £39,999 before birth 13 per cent were earning less than this after birth. Of those who earned £40,000 or more per annum before birth, 12 per cent were on lower incomes by the time of interview. The equivalent proportions among fathers are lower, at 2 per cent and 1 per cent respectively.

The lessening of supervisory responsibilities after birth is also demonstrated by analysis of changes to occupation, which again affects mothers more than fathers. Looking at occupations in mother's first job after birth, 16 per cent of mothers that were managers and senior officials before birth were no longer in these roles after birth and had moved to lower occupational groupings. This was also the case for 12 per cent of mothers that worked in associate professional and technical occupations. The equivalent proportions among fathers are lower, at 3 per cent and 1 per cent. Comparing pre-birth occupations to occupations at the time of interview also shows a greater shift among mothers than fathers where they worked in associate professional & technical occupations before birth and had moved to lower occupational groups (16 per cent of mothers; 2 per cent of fathers).

Overall, the mothers least likely to stay within the same occupational grouping were those who were managers and senior officials, or in associate professional & technical occupations before birth, where 20 per cent and 16 per cent respectively reported at the time of interview that they were now working in lower occupational groups.

Other aspects in the survey also suggest that childcare responsibilities fall more to mothers than to fathers, and therefore contribute to the need for mothers to reduce the hours they work after birth, and the distance they travel to work. This includes seven in ten mothers stating that they are the main adult in their household responsible for planning and arranging childcare, compared with 8 per cent of fathers; mothers citing wanting to work part time as the top reason for starting a new job after the birth of their child; and that mothers were more likely to have a shorter commute to work than fathers.

Despite the gender role attitudes discussed in chapter 3, where more than eight in ten mothers and fathers agreed that men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and children, in the majority of cases it still seems it is women who take on these responsibilities in practice, and as a result reduce their working hours and their work responsibilities (i.e., not having supervisory responsibilities) after the birth of their child. The analysis of mothers with older children suggests that mothers generally stay working at reduced hours and on lower incomes, than compared with first time mothers.

Supporting previous research on this theme, this survey has shown that not only are mothers much more likely than fathers to work part time after birth, but they are also significantly more likely to come out of employment altogether. Multi-variate analysis reveals that the most important driver of mothers returning to work was duration in job (that was also the biggest driver of mothers taking maternity leave/pay). This was followed by net income and “*Mothers for whom a ‘Keep in touch’ scheme is offered by employer during maternity*”.

Returning to work after the birth of a child is a significant point of divergence in the working lives of parents. The family reality about returning to work remains highly gendered and attitudes can be contradictory to reality in some cases. This mis-match may in part reflect the decision-making of parents, labour market position and financial circumstances, but the findings also indicate the influence of employer practices, particularly Keeping in Touch schemes, childcare support and flexible working opportunities.

9 Childcare/Family-friendly arrangements

This chapter of the report brings together findings from various sections of the survey concerned with the availability and use of childcare (both formal services and informal types), as well as the extent to which employers offered various types of childcare/family support and flexible working arrangements for parents.

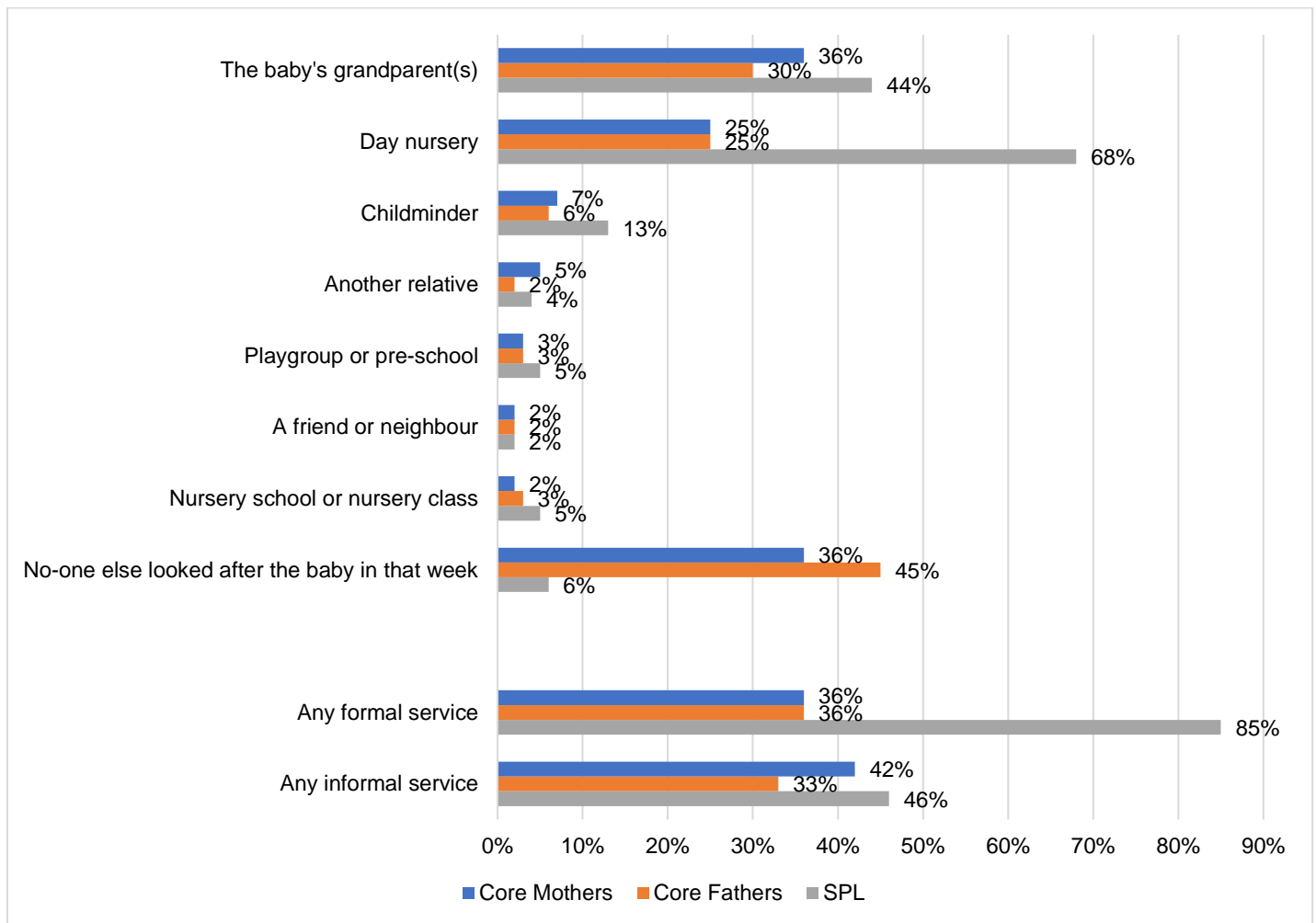
9.1 Childcare arrangements at time of interview

Thinking about the week prior to the interview all parents were asked what type of childcare they had used, if any. Based on this around two thirds of all mothers indicated that someone other than them had looked after their child that week, and just over half of fathers. Parents that took SPL were much more likely than mothers and fathers generally to have used some form of childcare in the previous week, with just 6 per cent that said no one else had looked after their child.

Overall mothers and fathers were most likely to be relying on grandparents for childcare. Around a third of mothers and fathers generally said a grandparent had looked after their child at some point in the previous week. This proportion increased to more than two fifths among parents that took SPL.

Day nurseries had been used by one in four mothers and fathers generally, while parents that had taken SPL were much more likely to have done so (68 per cent).

Figure 9.1: Childcare used in the previous week (All respondents)



Q30. Thinking back over the week starting on Monday and ending Sunday, did any of the following people or places look after your child in that week? Core Mothers: 1959; Core Fathers: 1062; Parents that took SPL: 336. Only individual forms of childcare mentioned most frequently are included in the chart

Overall, around one in three mothers and fathers (36 per cent in each case) had used some form of formal childcare in the previous week such as a day nursery or childminder, compared with more than four in five (85 per cent) parents that took SPL.

In terms of changes over time mothers in 2019 were more likely to suggest no one else looked after their baby (36 per cent) than in 2009 (23 per cent*). Mothers were less likely to suggest that grandparents looked after their child (49 per cent in 2009* compared to 36 per cent in 2019). Use of childminders also appears to have fallen (from 12 per cent* in 2009 to 7 per cent in 2019).

Among mothers generally it is notable that Asian mothers were more likely to say that no one else had looked after their child in the previous week (47 per cent). The proportion that did not use any childcare was also higher than average among mothers with 3 or more children (49 per cent), mothers with no formal qualifications (55 per cent), mothers living in London and the East of England (53 per cent in each case), and on lower incomes (49 per cent among those earning less than £10,000 per annum). By sector worked in before birth, it was also noticeable that mothers that worked in wholesale and retail and in hospitality were less likely to have used childcare (46 per cent and 45 per cent had not used any), while mothers that worked in public administration, health and education, and in transport and communications were more likely than mothers on average to have done so (29 and 27 per cent had not used any).

Mothers in Scotland and Wales were less likely than mothers in England to say no one else looked after their child in the previous week (22 per cent in Scotland and 26 per cent in Wales; 38 per cent in England) and more likely to say that the child had been looked after by a grandparent (52 per cent in Scotland and 53 per cent in Wales; 34 per cent in England).

Table 9.1 summarises the average (mean) number of hours that each type of childcare was used for in the previous week, among those that used each at all. Where sufficient sample allows, the table shows that as well as SPL parents being more likely to use day nurseries, they also used day nurseries for a higher number of hours, compared with mothers and fathers overall.

Table 9.1: Average (mean) number of hours each childcare type was used for (Users of each type)

	Core Mothers	Core Fathers	SPL Parents
Day nursery	18	20	26.5++
Playgroup or pre-school	7	-	-
Nursery school or nursery class	17	-	-
Childminder	20	22	-
The baby's grandparent(s)	14	15	12.5
Another relative	11	-	-

Q31. For how many hours did ... look after your child last week? Base sizes vary. – indicates insufficient cases

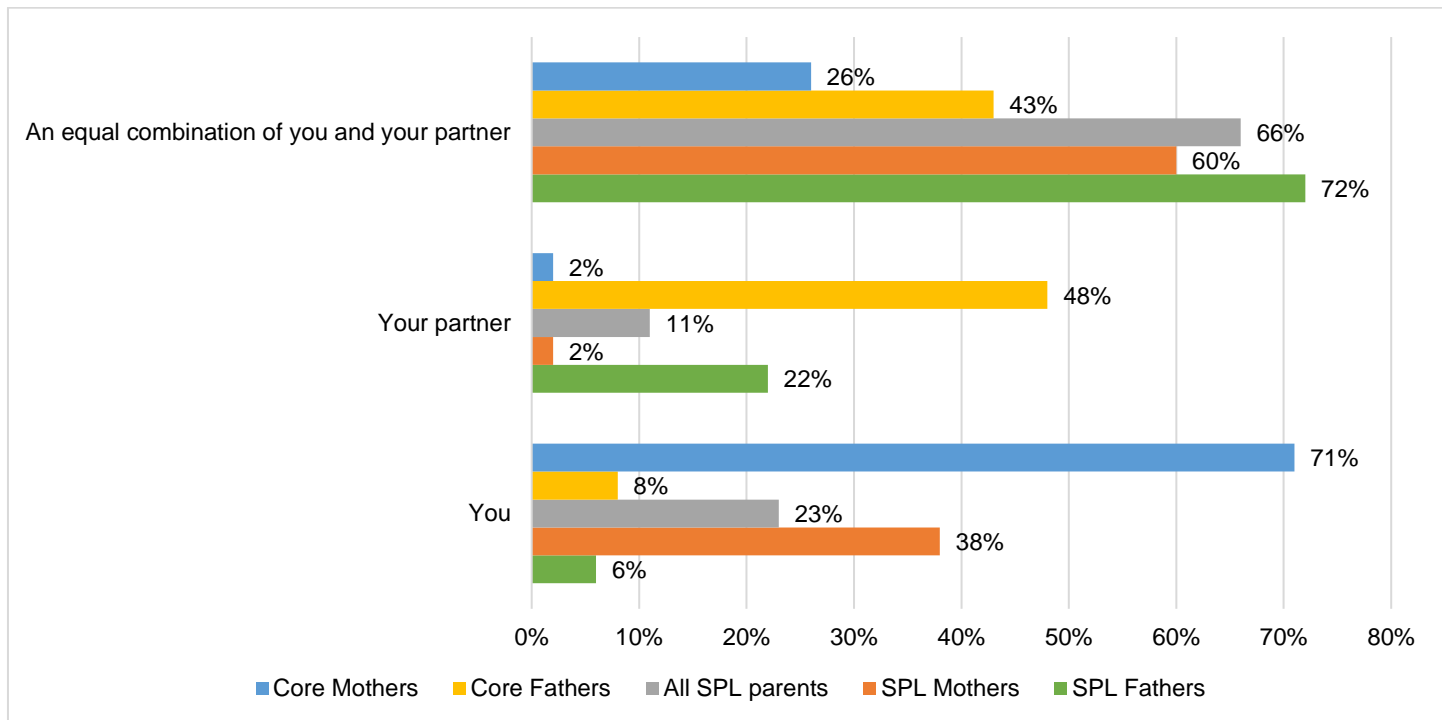
++ indicates a significantly higher differences than compared with both other columns

Seven out of ten mothers overall said they are the main adult in their household responsible for planning and arranging childcare, while for one in four (26 per cent) mothers it is an equal combination of them and their partner.

Just 8 per cent of fathers said they are mainly responsible for childcare, and half said their partner is the main adult responsible for childcare arrangements. Fathers were more likely than mothers to say it is an equal combination of them and their partner (43 per cent; 26 per cent).

For parents that took SPL a much higher proportion (66 per cent) than compared with mothers and fathers generally said that responsibilities for childcare arrangements are an equal combination of them and their partner. This was the case among mothers that took SPL (60 per cent), as well as fathers (72 per cent). Mothers that took SPL were around half as likely as mothers generally to say they are the main adult responsible for childcare arrangements in their household (38 per cent; 71 per cent).

Figure 9.2: The main adult responsible for planning and arranging childcare arrangements (All respondents)



Q33. Who in this household is the main adult responsible for planning and arranging childcare arrangements?
 Core Mothers: 1959; Core Fathers: 1062; Parents that took SPL: 336; SPL Mothers: 181; SPL Fathers: 155

In three in five (57 per cent) cases mothers who were in employment when interviewed and living with a partner or spouse said their partner regularly looks after their child while they go to work, compared with a lower proportion (48 per cent) of mothers that took SPL. The proportion increased to nine in ten (89 per cent) among fathers generally, and seven in ten (69 per cent) among fathers that took SPL.

The proportion of mothers that said their partner regularly looks after their child while they are at work represents an increase compared with 2009 (from 51 per cent* to 57 per cent in 2019).

On average mothers said their partner regularly looks after their child for 18 hours per week. The average was the same among SPL parents, while among fathers their partners look after their children for an average of 34 hours per week while they work.

9.2 Childcare available

In terms of who might be available to parents if they needed someone as a one off to look after their child, grandparents were most frequently mentioned by all three parent groups, including 70 per cent of all mothers and 64 per cent of fathers.

Parents that took SPL were more likely than mothers and fathers generally to say that a friend or neighbour would be available as a one off to look after their child (37 per cent; 15 per cent of mothers or fathers generally).

Overall, around one in seven (14 per cent) mothers said no friend or relative would be available to look after their child as a one off; the proportion was similar among parents that took SPL (12 per cent) and higher among fathers (22 per cent).

In terms of regular childcare, around half (51 per cent) of mothers believed grandparents would be available, compared with fewer fathers and parents that took SPL. While two in five (40 per cent) mothers said no friend or relative would be available for childcare on a regular basis, compared with higher proportions of around half among fathers (48 per cent) and parents that took SPL (52 per cent).

These differences in the availability of childcare, both as a one-off and on a regular basis are summarised in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2: Childcare available as a one off and regularly (All respondents)

	Core Mothers		Core Fathers		SPL Parents	
	One-off	Regular	One-off	Regular	One-off	Regular
The baby's grandparent(s)	70%+	51%++	64%	45%	76%++	44%
The baby's older brother/sister	1%	*%	1%	*%	1%	*%
Another relative	23%	10%++	22%	7%	24%	4%
A friend or neighbour	15%	4%	15%	4%	37%++	5%
The baby's other parent who does not live in this household	5%	3%++	1%	1%	*%	*%
None of these	14%	40%	22%++	48%+	12%	52%+

Q36. Who would be available to you if you needed them just as a one off to look after your child? Q37. And who would be available to you if you needed them for regular childcare for your child? Core Mothers: 1959; Core Fathers: 1062; Parents that took SPL: 336

+ Significantly higher than one other column; ++ significantly higher than both other columns

Compared with 2009, it seems there is generally less availability among those listed in Table 9.3 for one-off care, while for regular childcare there is increased availability, particularly among grandparents.

Table 9.3: Who would be available for one-off/regular childcare (All mothers)

	One-off		One regular basis	
	2009*	2019	2009*	2019
The baby's other parent who does not live in the household	7%	5%-	4%	3%
The baby's grandparent(s)	73%	70%-	47%	51%+
The baby's older brother / sister	4%	1%-	1%	1%
Another relative	33%	23%-	9%	10%
A friend or neighbour	31%	15%-	6%	4%-
None of the people listed	6%	14%+	44%	40%-

+/- significant increase/decrease, at 95% level of confidence compared with 2009

Q36 and Q37, unweighted: 1,959 mothers 2019; 1,303 2009.

9.3 Family-friendly working arrangements

Overall, more than half of mothers in employment at the time of interview and around two thirds of fathers (56 and 65 per cent) were *not* accessing any childcare or family friendly support from their employer, while the proportion was much lower among parents that took SPL (21 per cent).

The support mothers were most likely to be using was either childcare vouchers or flexible working arrangements (14 per cent in each case), while parents that took SPL were much more likely to be using each of these (62 and 42 per cent respectively), as well as an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters (32 per cent; 10 per cent of core mothers).

9.3.1 Pre-birth

Based on their last main job before the birth of their child around three quarters (73 per cent) of mothers who were employees or workers said their employer offered part-time working arrangements. The proportion was considerably lower (40 per cent) among fathers, and higher (81 per cent) among parents that took SPL.

The next most common type of flexible working arrangement on offer at parents' pre-birth job was the option to work flexitime, which was available to one in five (22 per cent) mothers, around one in four (27 per cent) fathers, and a much higher proportion (60 per cent) of parents that took SPL.

Parents that took SPL were also much more likely than mothers and fathers overall to say that their pre-birth employer offered the option to work at home on a regular basis (58 per cent; 8 per cent of mothers and 17 per cent of fathers).

Overall, four in five (78 per cent) mothers said some form of flexible working arrangement was on offer at their pre-birth job, compared with fewer fathers (53 per cent) and a greater proportion of parents that took SPL (91 per cent).

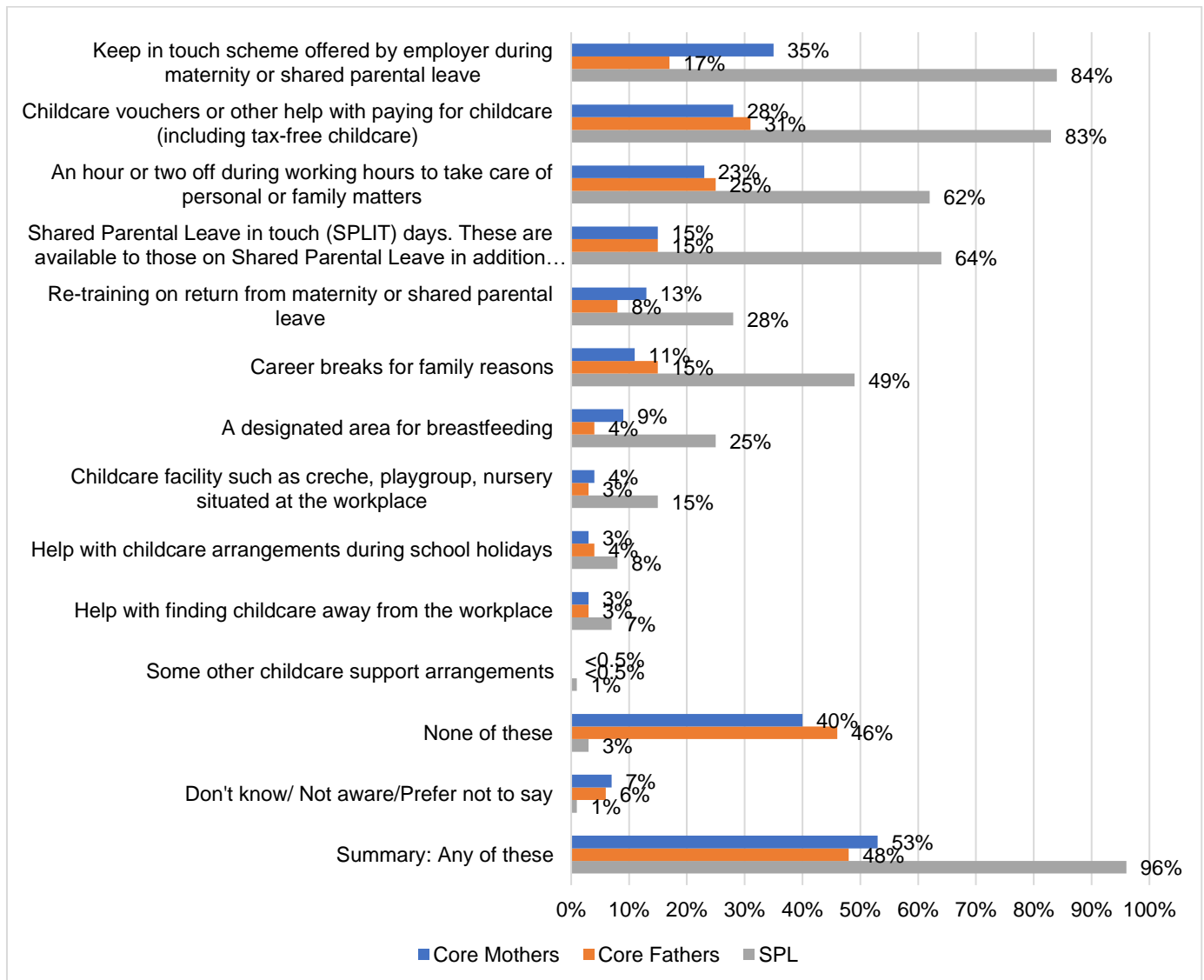
One in five (20 per cent) mothers overall that said no flexible working arrangements were on offer at their pre-birth job and the proportion was higher among mothers who worked in:

- Smaller organisations (24 per cent among those who worked in organisations with fewer than 50 staff; 16 per cent where 250 or more were employed);
- The primary, manufacturing or construction sector (29 per cent) or transport and communications sector (31 per cent);
- Organisations composed of all or mostly men (28 per cent);
- Where mothers had worked in their pre-birth job for less than 2 years (26 per cent);
- Workplaces with no trade union presence (24 per cent).

Around half of all mothers and fathers (53 per cent and 48 per cent) said that some form of childcare or family friendly support (i.e., any of those listed in Figure 9.3) was on offer from their pre-birth employer. Among parents that took SPL such support was available in virtually all cases (96 per cent).

Childcare vouchers were offered by pre-birth employers to around three in ten mothers and fathers generally, compared with eight in ten parents that took SPL. Around three in five parents that took SPL were offered an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal matters, compared with around one in four mothers and fathers generally. Around half of parents that took SPL had the option of a career break for family reasons, compared with just 11 per cent of mothers generally and 15 per cent of fathers.

Figure 9.3: Types of childcare/family-friendly support offered by pre-birth employers (Employees & workers before birth)



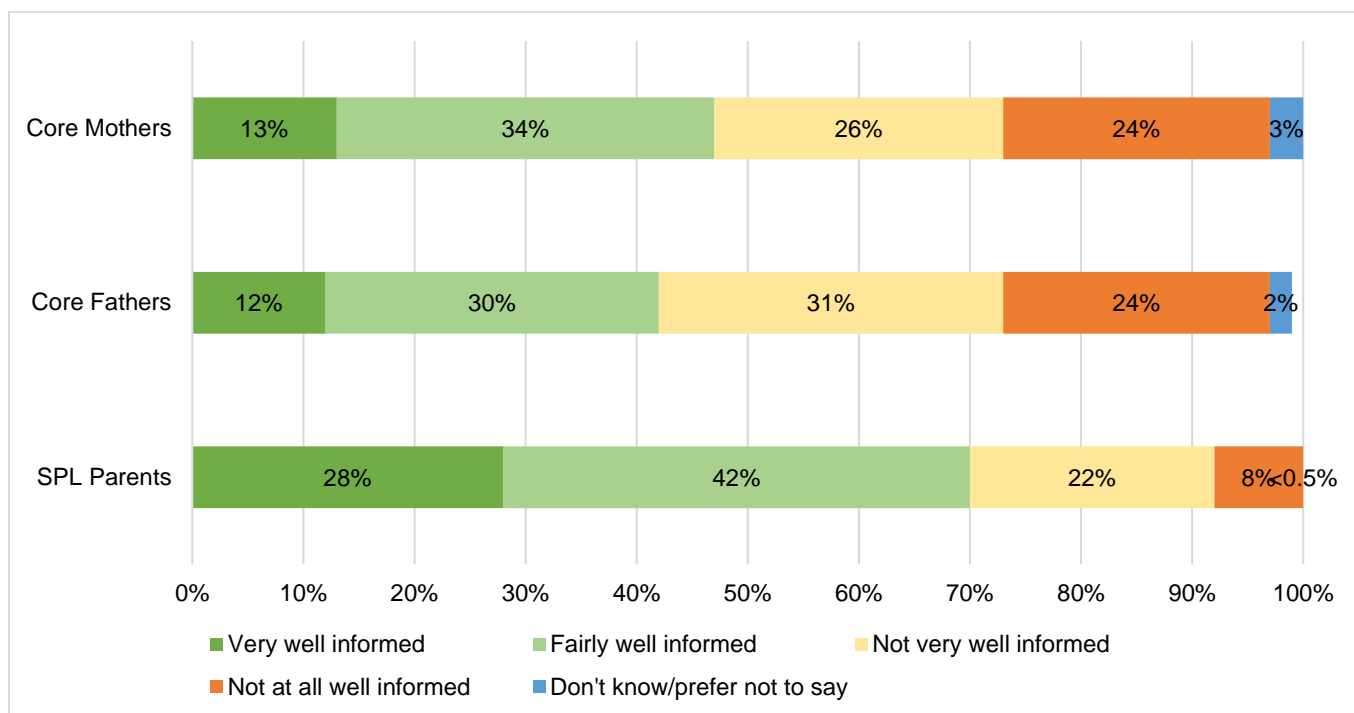
Q72. To the best of your knowledge, did your employer offer/provide to employees any of the following types of support? Core Mothers: 1858; Core Fathers: 900; Parents that took SPL: 330

9.3.2 How well-informed about family-friendly arrangements before/after birth

In terms of how well-informed parents felt about the family-friendly arrangements offered by their employer before the birth of their child, views were quite mixed. Around half (47 per cent) of mothers felt very or fairly well-informed, including just 13 per cent that felt 'very well-informed'. While half of mothers felt not very or not at all well-informed.

Fathers (43 per cent) were less likely than mothers to have felt well-informed about family-friendly arrangements, while parents that took SPL (70 per cent) were much more likely than both mothers and fathers overall to have felt well-informed.

Figure 9.4: How well-informed parents felt about the family friendly arrangements offered by their employer before their child was born or adopted (Employees and workers)



Q73. How well-informed did you feel about the family friendly arrangements offered by your employer before your child was born/adopted? Core Mothers: 1,858; Core Fathers: 900; Parents that took SPL: 330

Mothers that had worked in their pre-birth job for less than 2 years were much less likely to have felt well-informed (18 per cent) than mothers that had worked in their job for more than 5 years (57 per cent).

9.3.3 Arrangements on return to work

Among the mothers that returned to their pre-birth job, one in four (24 per cent) experienced any changes in their agreed working arrangements. This compares with just 2 per cent of fathers and 37 per cent of parents that took SPL, including 49 per cent of mothers that took SPL.

Where changes in working arrangements had occurred, three quarters (75 per cent) of mothers said they took up part-time working because of the birth or adoption of their child, compared with fewer (58 per cent) mothers that took SPL. One in five (20 per cent) mothers overall started working flexitime following the birth or adoption of their child, compared with more than twice as many (43 per cent) mothers that took SPL.

Mothers that took SPL were also much more likely than mothers in general to start working from home on a regular basis after the birth or adoption of their child (36 per cent; 7 per cent).

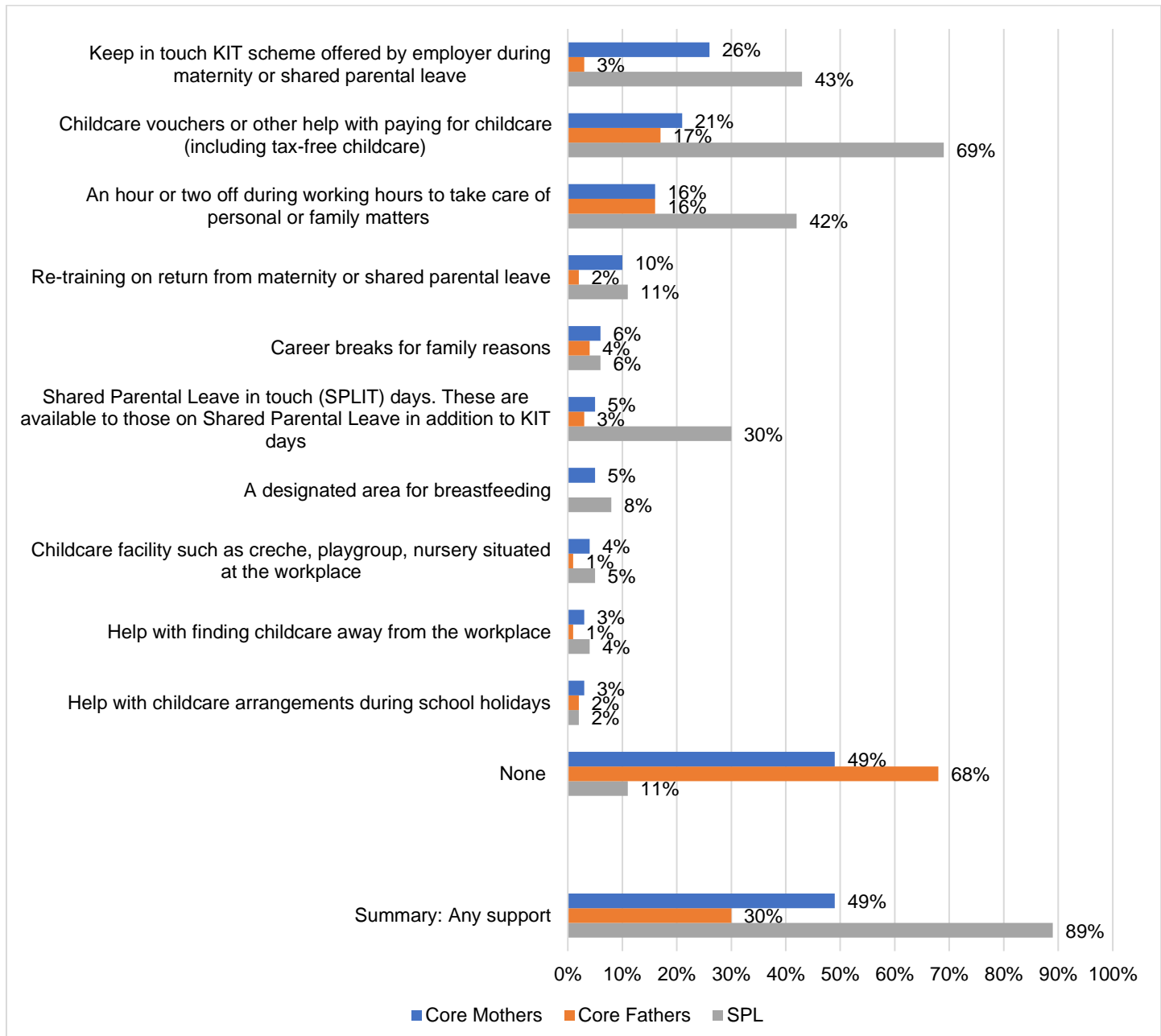
In terms of the childcare or family-friendly support accessed by those who returned to their pre-birth job, half (49 per cent) of all mothers accessed some form of support, compared with three in ten (30 per cent) fathers, and the vast majority (89 per cent) of parents that took SPL.

In terms of the various types of support, mothers were most likely to have accessed the KIT scheme (26 per cent), although this was even more likely to be used by parents that took SPL (43 per cent).

One in five (21 per cent) mothers generally accessed childcare vouchers from their pre-birth employer and a similar proportion (17 per cent) of fathers, while the proportion (69 per cent) among parents that took SPL is considerably higher.

Parents that took SPL were also more than twice as likely as mothers and fathers generally to have had an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters, as Figure 9.5 confirms.

Figure 9.5: Types of support access when they returned to pre-birth job (Where returned to same job after birth)



Q88. Thinking again about the main job you had just before your child was born/adopted, when you went back to work did you access any of the following types of support? Core Mothers: 1,340; Core Fathers: 987; Parents that took SPL: 304

Among mothers, there are some notable differences in those who did and did not access any types of childcare or family-friendly support following the birth or adoption of their child, with the proportion that did not access any higher than average among mothers:

- Qualified below degree level (57 per cent) or with no qualifications (62 per cent); 35 per cent among those qualified to degree level or above);
- In the East Midlands (69 per cent) and North West (59 per cent) of England, as well as outside of London (51 per cent), compared with inside London (37 per cent);
- On lower incomes (59 per cent where mothers earned less than £20,000 per annum before birth);
- Worked in smaller organisations (55 per cent where mothers work in organisations with fewer than 50 staff; 42 per cent where 250 or more were employed);
- Who were not supervisors (52 per cent; 37 per cent of supervisors);
- Worked in the hospitality sector (68 per cent);
- Or in administrative personal service and sales occupations (54 per cent) or skilled, process and elementary occupations (70 per cent).

9.3.4 Factors that may have encouraged mothers to return to pre-birth job

Among the mothers that did not return to their pre-birth job, when asked whether family-friendly arrangements might have made any difference, in three in five (58 per cent) cases mothers said that no changes in working arrangements would have made them more likely to go back to their pre-birth job. This proportion was higher than average among the youngest mothers, aged under 25 (67 per cent), those on the lowest incomes (64 per cent among mothers earning under £10,000 before birth) and those that worked in smaller organisations of under 250 staff (64 per cent where they worked in SMEs; 49 per cent among those who worked in organisations with 250+ employees).

Of all the suggestions presented, help with childcare costs would have made a difference to the highest proportion of mothers (23 per cent). For around one in six (16 per cent) mothers the option to work part-time would have made them more likely to return to their pre-birth job and for just slightly fewer (13 per cent) the option to work flexitime. More support from managers would have made a difference for 7 per cent of mothers that did not return to their pre-birth job.

9.3.5 Changing jobs

For the mothers that changed jobs following the birth or adoption of their child wanting to work part-time was the most frequently mentioned reason for this (27 per cent), while around one in ten (11 per cent) mothers, and closer to a fifth of fathers and parents that took SPL (17 per cent in both cases) switched jobs following the birth or adoption of their child because they wanted to work flexitime.

Among parents that took SPL, one in five (19 per cent) changed jobs due to wanting to work from home on a regular basis, compared with 6 per cent of mothers and 11 per cent of fathers generally.

Part-time working was available for three quarters of mothers (75 per cent) in the first new job they started after the birth or adoption of their child, and a similarly high proportion of parents that took SPL, (81 per cent).

For one in ten (10 per cent) mothers that started a new job following the birth or adoption of their child, job shares were available. This was much more likely to be the case in the new jobs started by parents that took SPL (49 per cent).

Flexitime was also much more likely to be available in the new jobs started by parents that took SPL (70 per cent; 21 per cent of mothers). Availability of the option to work annualised hours, where the number of hours an employee has to work is calculated over a full year rather than a week or month, was also higher among SPL parents starting new jobs (18 per cent; 3 per cent of mothers).

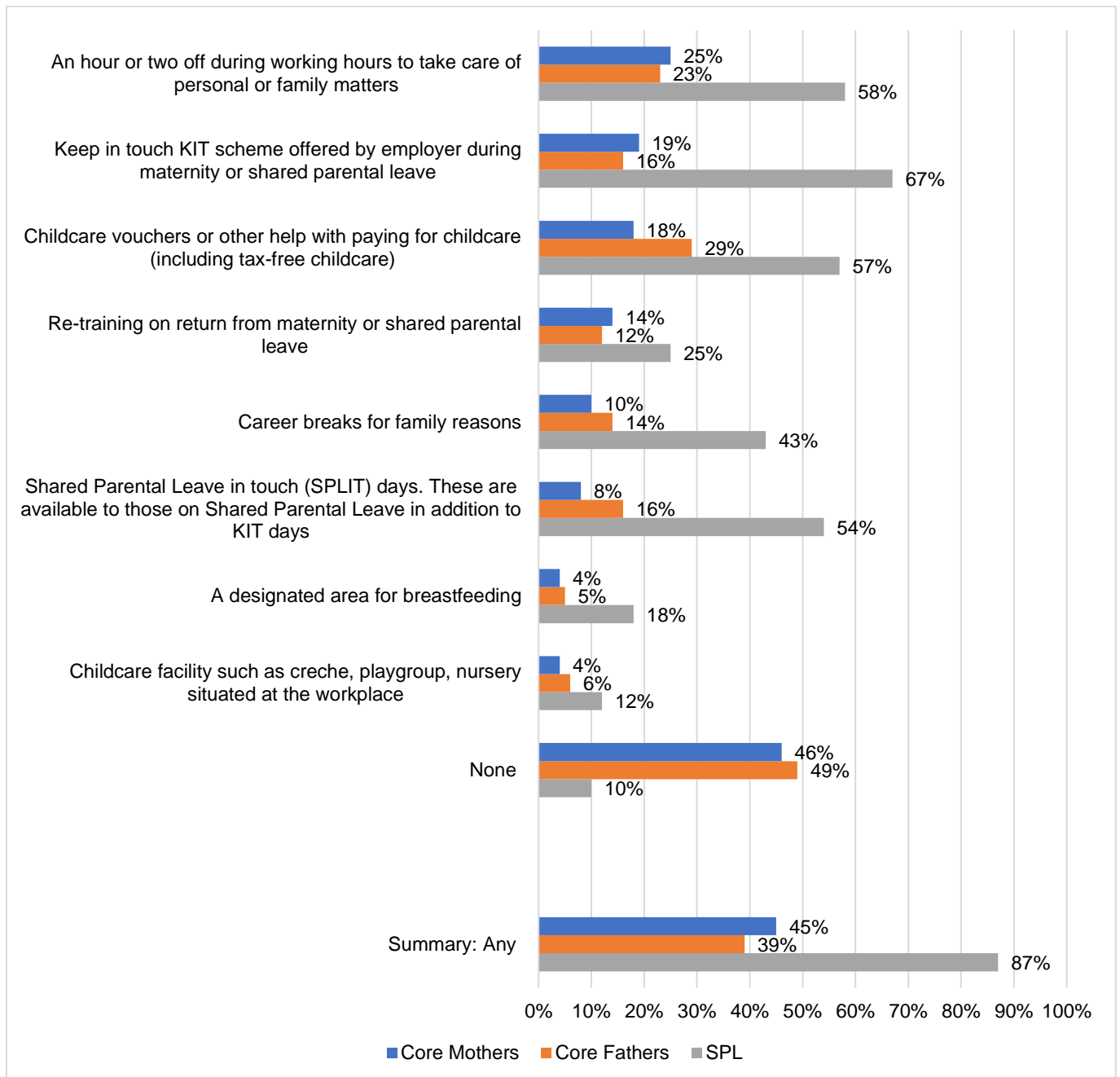
At least one type of flexible working arrangement was in place for four out of five (81 per cent) mothers in their new jobs and in 90 per cent of cases for parents that took SPL. This was less likely to be the case for fathers; just half (52 per cent) of fathers that changed jobs following the birth or adoption of their child had such options available to them in their new job.

In terms of childcare or family-friendly support available in their first new job after birth, close to half of all mothers and fathers (46 and 49 per cent) that had started a new job said no such support (i.e., the options listed in Figure 9.6) was available, compared with just 10 per cent of parents that took SPL.

The type of support most likely to be available to mothers in their new job was an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters (25 per cent), followed by KIT days (19 per cent) and childcare vouchers (18 per cent). However, all three of these types of support were much more likely to be available to parents that had taken SPL, as Figure 9.6 summarises.

For two in five (43 per cent) parents that took SPL career breaks were available in their first new job after birth, compared with just one in ten mothers and one in seven fathers.

Figure 9.6: Childcare or family-friendly support in first new job after birth (Where parents changed jobs after birth)



Q114. To the best of your knowledge, does/did your employer offer/provide to employees any of the following types of support? Core Mothers: 307; Core Fathers: 147; SPL Parents: 67 Only individual types of support mentioned most frequently are included in the chart.

In terms of the types of support parents accessed in their first new job after birth, one in four mothers and fathers generally (25 per cent and 23 per cent) accessed any, compared with a significantly higher proportion (67 per cent) of parents that took SPL.

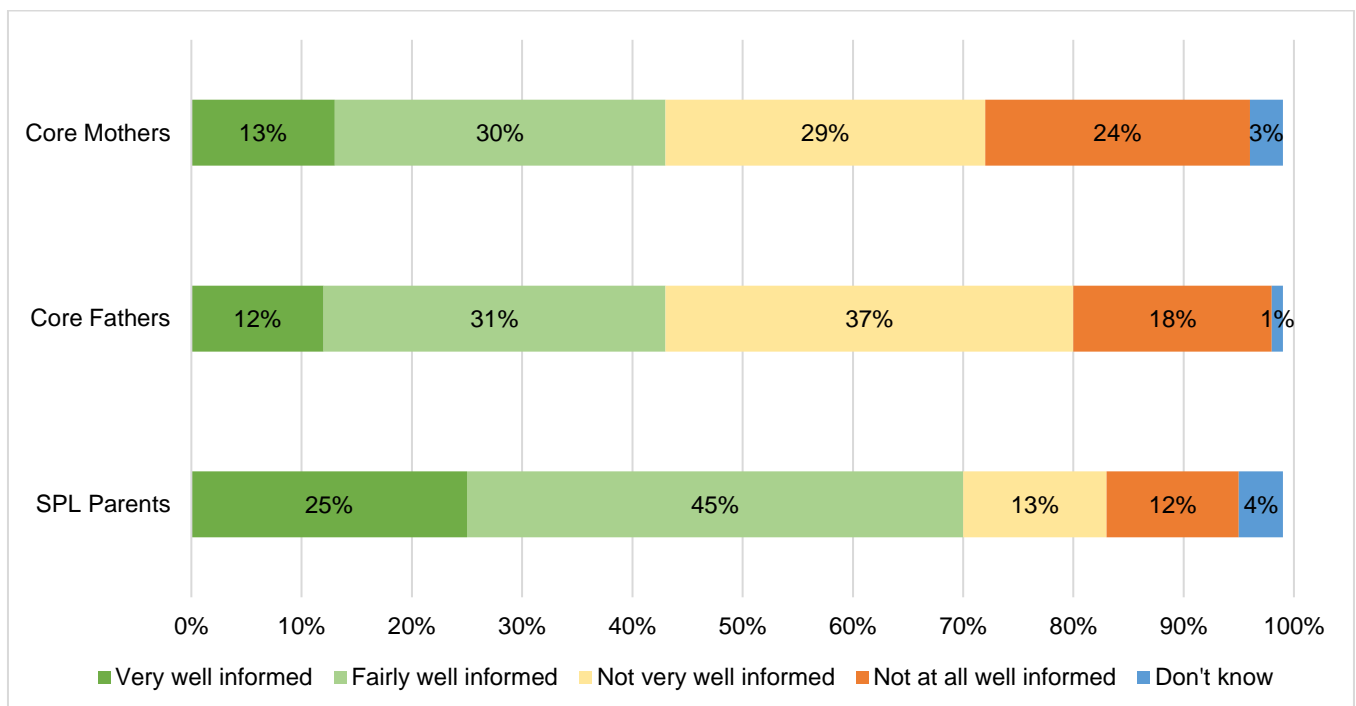
Flexible working arrangements were accessed by around one in eight (12 per cent) mothers and a slightly lower proportion (8 per cent) of fathers. While close to half (46 per cent) of parents that took SPL accessed flexible working arrangements in their first new job after birth.

Parents that took SPL were also more likely to have accessed childcare vouchers in their new job (40 per cent; 13 per cent of fathers and 5 per cent of mothers) and to have had an hour or

two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters (34 per cent; 10 per cent of mothers and 11 per cent of fathers).

On balance both mothers and fathers generally, who had started a new job following the birth or adoption of their child were more likely to feel ‘not very’ or ‘not at all’ well-informed about the family-friendly arrangements on offer from their new employer (53 per cent of mothers and 55 per cent of fathers), than to feel fairly or very well-informed (44 per cent and 43 per cent). Whereas parents that took SPL were much more likely to feel well-informed in their new job (70 per cent).

Figure 9.7: How well-informed parents felt in their first new job after birth about the family-friendly arrangements offered by their employer (respondents who were employees or workers in their first new job after birth)



Q116. How well-informed do/did you feel about the family friendly arrangements offered by your employer? Core Mothers: 307; Core Fathers: 147; SPL Parents: 67. Percentages do not add to 100% due to don't know being removed

9.3.6 Changes in arrangements on return to work

Among all those who returned to work following the birth or adoption of their child and were still in work at the time of interview (whether it was the same job or a new one), around two fifths of mothers and two fifths of parents that took SPL had experienced a change in working arrangements or hours, compared with around one in ten fathers.

Where there had been such a change, among mothers this was most likely to be that they had started working part-time (63 per cent of those who had experienced a change; 37 per cent of parents that took SPL and 16 per cent of fathers). For parents that took SPL the changes in work arrangements most likely to be experienced were either that they had started to work flexitime (49 per cent; compared with 16 per cent of mothers and 31 per cent of fathers that had experienced a change). Half of SPL parents had started to work from home on a regular basis (50 per cent), a higher proportion than mothers (6 per cent) and fathers (11 per cent).

9.3.7 Current arrangements

Looking at family-friendly arrangements available in their job at the time of interview, for two fifths (39 per cent) of mothers and around half (51 per cent) of fathers no types of family-friendly or childcare support was on offer, which as Table 9.4 summarises, is in line with the pattern of responses for mothers' and fathers in their pre-birth jobs. Similarly, as in their pre-birth job parents that took SPL were much less likely to say that no such support was available to them, either in the job they returned to or the new job they have gained since the birth or adoption of their child (just 7 per cent).

Table 9.4: Types of support available in pre-birth job versus current job (Employees and workers before and after birth)

	Core Mothers		Core Fathers		SPL Parents	
	Pre-birth	Currently	Pre-birth	Currently	Pre-birth	Currently
Childcare vouchers or other help with paying for childcare (including tax-free childcare)	28%	27%	31%	23%	83% ⁺⁺	75% ⁺⁺
Childcare facility such as creche, playgroup, nursery situated at the workplace	4%	5%	3%	2%	15% ⁺⁺	12% ⁺⁺
Help with childcare arrangements during school holidays	3%	5%	4%	4%	8% ⁺⁺	10% ⁺⁺
Help with finding childcare away from the workplace	3%	4%	3%	2%	7% ⁺⁺	7% ⁺⁺
An hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters	23%	22%	25%	20%	62% ⁺⁺	56% ⁺⁺
A designated area for breastfeeding	9%	9%	4%	1%	25% ⁺⁺	25% ⁺⁺
Flexible working arrangements	N/A	21%	N/A	16%	N/A	61% ⁺⁺
Career breaks for family reasons	11%	11%	15%	11%	49% ⁺⁺	49% ⁺⁺
Keep in touch scheme offered by employer during maternity or shared parental leave	35%	28%	17%	10%	84% ⁺⁺	74% ⁺⁺
Shared Parental Leave in touch (SPLIT) days.	15%	13%	15%	10%	64% ⁺⁺	63% ⁺⁺

Re-training on return from maternity or shared parental leave	13%	11%	8%	6%	28%++	32%++
Some other childcare support or arrangements	*%	1%	*%	*%	1%	4%
None of these	40%+	39%+	46%+	51%++	3%	7%
Don't know/ Not aware/ Not provided	7%	10%	6%	10%	1%	2%
Unweighted bases	1,858	1,392	900	965	330	312

Q72. To the best of your knowledge, did your employer offer/provide to employees any of the following types of support? Q145. To the best of your knowledge, does your employer offer/provide to employees any of the following types of support?

+ Significantly higher than one other column; ++ significantly higher than both other columns

Overall, just over four in five mothers (83 per cent), fathers (83 per cent) and parents that took SPL (85 per cent) said they were satisfied with their current working arrangements, although parents that took SPL were more likely to say they were 'very satisfied' (40 per cent; 34 per cent of mothers and 28 per cent of fathers currently in employment).

In terms of work-life balance, when asked to rate how satisfied they are on the whole these days on a scale from 1 to 10, on average mothers and fathers from the core sample gave a score of 7 out of 10. The average score was higher among parents that took SPL, at 7.4.

Overall, around one in four (23 per cent) mothers gave a score of 9 or 10 for their satisfaction with work life balance and 11 per cent gave a low score, of between 1 and 4. Mothers more likely to rate their work-life balance as low were:

- Older mothers (17 per cent among mothers aged 40 and over);
- Asian mothers (16 per cent);
- Those reporting a health condition (23 per cent);
- Lone parents (15 per cent);
- In the North West (21 per cent), East Midlands (19 per cent) or Wales (18 per cent);
- Did not take any form of statutory leave (27 per cent);
- Did not return to work after birth and are still out of work (18 per cent).

9.4 Comparisons with 2009

Changes in the way in which questions were asked make comparisons with 2009 difficult, for example in this latest survey we specifically referred to 'flexitime', compared with 'flexible working arrangements' in 2009, and in 2019 we referred to 'work from home on a regular basis', compared with 'work from home sometimes/all of the time' in 2009.

However, figures from the 2009 SPSS file compared with 2019 suggest there has been a reduction over time in availability of flexible working arrangements reported among new parents.

Table 9.5: Flexible working arrangements available in pre-birth job

		Mothers		Fathers	
		2009*	2019	2009*	2019
Pre-birth job	Part-time work	64%	73%+	39%	40%
	Flexible working hours/Flexitime	51%	22%-	49%	27%-
	Working at home sometimes/all of the time/on a regular basis	21%	8%-	26%	17%-
	Job share	28%	11%-	21%	11%-
	None	20%	20%	32%	43%+
First new job after birth	Part time work	73%	75%	45%	44%
	Flexible working hours/Flexi-time	63%	21%-	54%	28%-
	Working at home sometimes/on a regular basis	27%	3%-	30%	9%-
	Job share	28%	10%-	26%	16%-
	None	10%	17%+	28%	43%+

+/- significant increase/decrease, at 95% level of confidence compared with 2009

In terms of childcare support and other types of support, once again changes make comparisons difficult, however the data does suggest that the availability of schemes such as childcare vouchers has reduced.

Table 9.6: Childcare and other types of support available, 2009 and 2019

		Mothers		Fathers	
		2009*	2019	2009*	2019
Pre-birth job	Childcare vouchers	46%	28%-	45%	31%-
	Workplace childcare	7%	4%-	6%	3%-
	Career breaks	19%	11%-	28%	15%-
	KIT scheme	42%	35%-	26%	17%-
First new job after birth	Childcare vouchers	36%	18%-		
	Workplace childcare	10%	4%-		
	Career breaks	19%	10%-		
	KIT scheme	25%	19%		

+/- significant increase/decrease, at 95% level of confidence compared with 2009

In 2009 24 per cent* of mothers and 25 per cent* of fathers felt 'very well-informed' about the family friendly arrangements offered by their employer before their child was born, compared with significantly lower proportions (of 13 per cent and 12 per cent respectively) in 2019.

In terms of their first new job after birth mothers were also less likely in 2019 to feel 'very well-informed' about family friendly arrangements: 13 per cent; 29 per cent in 2009*.

9.5 Family-friendly employers

This section explores in more detail parents' experience of employers offering family-friendly policies and support.

This survey adds to the discussion by highlighting the varied experiences of parents with regards to family-friendly employment, and some of the differences between sectors.

9.5.1 Flexible working arrangements

The majority (78 per cent) of employed mothers said that flexible working arrangements were available in their pre-birth organisation, although the exact type of flexibility offered varied in prevalence, with working from home on a regular basis least common (8 per cent). However, there were differences in the flexible working arrangements available to mothers in their pre-birth job between by organisation type, sector and size.

Central government organisations, the public administration, health and education sector, and organisations employing at least 250 employees were more likely than employers on average to be offering flexible working arrangements. The sectors least likely to offer flexible working arrangements, according to mothers, were primary, manufacturing and construction (62 per cent), and the transport and communications sector (65 per cent, compared to 78 per cent on average). These differences are summarised in Table 9.7.

Table 9.7: Flexible arrangements available to mothers before birth – by organisation type, sector and size (All mothers who were employees or workers before birth)

		Part-time working	Job shares	Flexitime	Work from home on regular basis	Any flexible arrangements
Total – all mothers (1,858)		73%	11%	22%	8%	78%
Org. type	Profit-making (1,244)	71%-	8%-	20%-	8%	76%-
	Charity/voluntary (66)	78%	27%+	29%	16%+	80%
	Local Government (175)	75%	16%+	31%+	6%	80%
	Central Government (345)	78%+	21%+	25%	11%	82%+
Sector	Primary, Manufacturing & Construction (139)	52%-	8%	19%	12%	62%-
	Wholesale and retail (291)	78%+	8%	19%	2%-	82%
	Transport and comms (92)	58%-	14%	26%	16%+	65%-
	Hospitality (154)	76%	7%	18%	3%-	80%
	Public admin, Health & Education (761)	77%+	16%+	23%	7%	81%+
	Business / Professional services, Leisure & Other services (395)	71%	9%	25%	14%+	77%
Size	Less than 50 employees (647)	70%-	7%-	14%-	5%-	74%-
	50-249 employees (341)	72%	12%	23%	6%	76%
	250+ employees (757)	76%+	15%+	32%+	13%+	82%+

Q71. In that job, were any of the following working arrangements available at your workplace? (FLEX)
 Unweighted bases in parenthesis +/- indicates a significantly higher/lower proportion than compared with all mothers on average

By occupation, mothers in professional occupations before birth were more likely than mothers on average to say their employer offered any flexible working arrangements (83 per cent).

Fathers were less likely than mothers to report that their employer offered these arrangements. Around half of fathers reported that their pre-birth employer offered any form of family-friendly working arrangement (53 per cent; 78 per cent of mothers). Fathers reported that any flexible working arrangements are more likely to be available in:

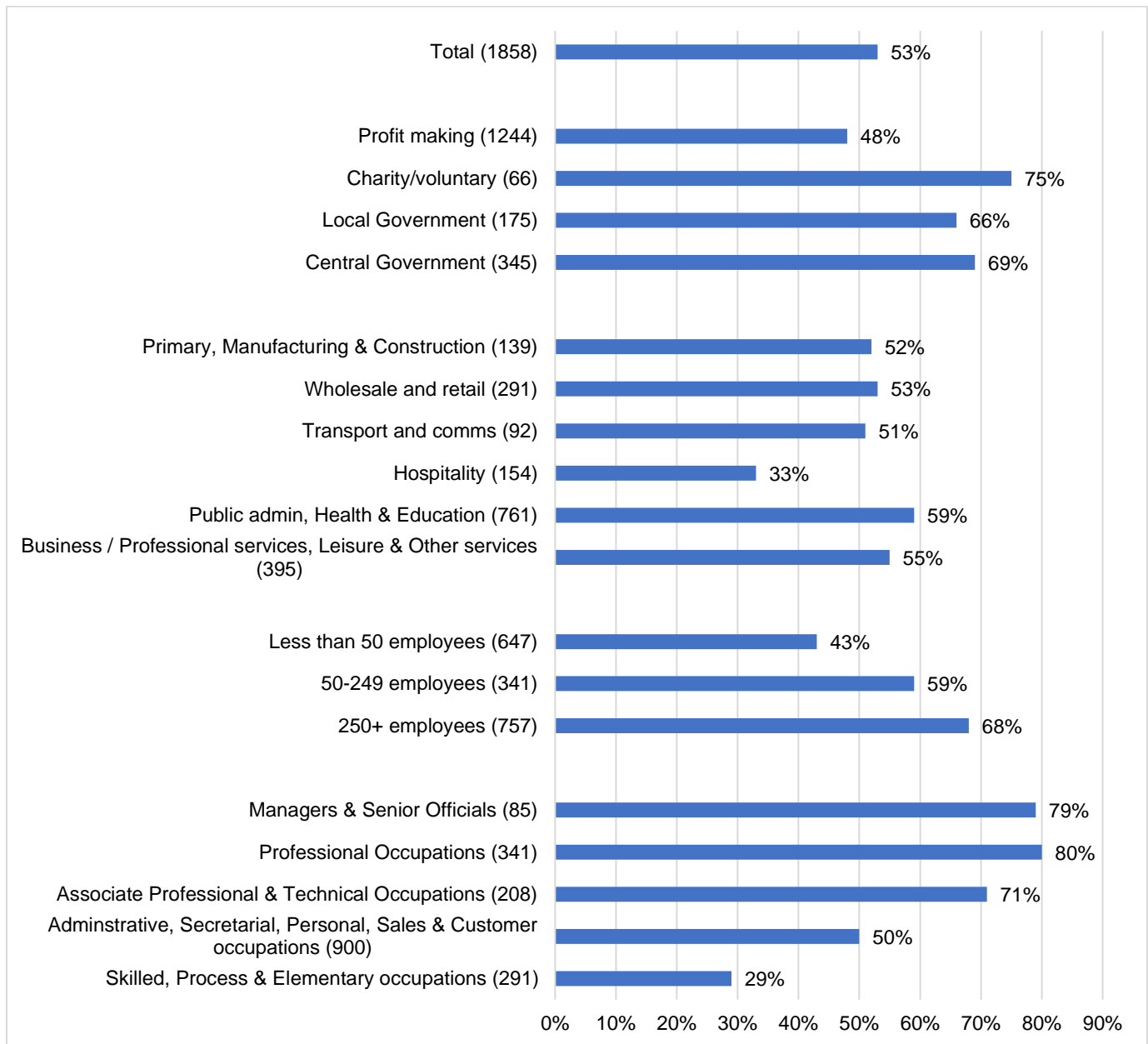
- organisations employing at least 250 staff (62 per cent; 43 per cent in organisations with fewer than 50);
- central government organisations (72 per cent; 49 per cent in profit-making organisations)
- the public administration, health and education sector (65 per cent; 53 per cent of fathers on average, 34 per cent in the primary, manufacturing and construction sector).

9.5.2 Childcare and family support

As with flexible working, the likelihood of pre-birth employers offering mothers some form of childcare or family support including childcare vouchers, help with finding childcare, career breaks, 'Keep in touch' (KIT) schemes or retraining on return from Maternity or Shared Parental Leave (see Figure 9.6 for full list) varied significantly by organisation type, sector and size.

Just over half (53 per cent) of mothers reported that their pre-birth employer offered some form of childcare or family support, and such support is more likely to have been available in non-profit-making organisations, the public administration, health and education sector, and organisations employing at least 50 staff. This is summarised in Figure 9.8 which also shows that by sector, hospitality stands out as being least likely to offer mothers any childcare or family support (33 per cent), and that the likelihood of any support being offered decreased significantly among mothers in lower occupational groups.

Figure 9.8: Any type of childcare or family support available in pre-birth job (Mothers who were employees or workers before birth)



Q72. To the best of your knowledge, did your employer offer/provide to employees any of the following types of support? (WCAR) Unweighted bases shown in parenthesis. N.B. Any childcare or family support includes all those listed in Figure 9.6

In terms of examples of differences between individual types of support made available to mothers in their pre-birth job, KIT schemes were more likely to be available in charity/voluntary organisations (49 per cent), local government (48 per cent) and central government (53 per cent), compared with profit-making organisations (28 per cent).

The same is true of childcare vouchers (which allow parents to benefit from tax-free childcare from registered providers) and were offered by 42 per cent among mothers working in charity/voluntary organisations, 36 per cent in local government and 47 per cent in central government, compared with 23 per cent in profit-making organisations.

By sector, the availability of childcare vouchers was highest among mothers that worked in the transport and communications sector (38 per cent) and the public administration, health and

education sector (35 per cent) before birth, compared with 9 per cent availability reported in the hospitality sector.

While by organisation size, employers where at least 250 were employed were more than twice as likely as organisations with fewer than 50 staff to offer childcare vouchers (46 per cent; 11 per cent); career breaks for family reasons (18 per cent; 8 per cent); and KIT schemes (50 per cent; 23 per cent).

The availability of support in mothers' jobs at the time of interview reflects the discussion above for pre-birth jobs, with larger employers, central government organisations and the public administration, health and education sector more likely to have been offering any support. While the hospitality sector is reported as least likely to be offering any (53 per cent offer none; 36 percent of employers in public administration, health and education sector).

In terms of childcare or family support available to fathers, once again the pattern was similar. While just under half (48 per cent) of all fathers indicated that some form of support was available in their pre-birth job, by sector, pre-birth employers in the public administration, health and education sector were most likely to offer any (62 per cent), and the primary, manufacturing and construction, and hospitality sectors significantly less likely to offer any (38 and 34 per cent). Larger employers with 250 or more staff were far more likely than SMEs (with fewer than 250 staff) to be offering fathers any type of childcare or family support (67 and 37 per cent respectively). While among central government organisations, three quarters (73 per cent) offered fathers some form of support compared with closer to two fifths (44 per cent) of fathers in profit-making organisations. Fathers' occupation also seemed to be a determining factor in whether such support was available in their pre-birth job, and like mothers, support was much more likely to be on offer in higher occupational roles (for 61 per cent of fathers who were managers and senior officials and 70 per cent of professional occupations; compared with 32 per cent of fathers in skilled, process and elementary occupations).

9.5.3 Other indicators of family friendly employers

A range of other indicators across the survey also indicated that larger employers and the public/non-profit making sector were perceived as more family friendly by parents, than compared with smaller employers, and those that are profit-making. For example:

- Mothers in smaller companies and in the hospitality sector were less likely than mothers on average to have felt comfortable asking their employer for Maternity Leave.
- Uncertainty over mothers' legal entitlement and the amount of Maternity Leave offered by their employer was higher than average among mothers who were working in smaller workplaces and profit-making organisations. The actual amount of leave offered by employers appears to increase in larger companies, and in central government organisations. The number of weeks mothers took as paid or unpaid Maternity Leave was also higher in larger organisations.
- Mothers working in larger organisations were more likely than those in SMEs to have received Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP) (23 per cent where 250 or more were employed; 7 per cent in SMEs). The likelihood of mothers receiving OMP was also significantly higher in non-profit making organisations (32 per cent in central government; 20 per cent in charity/voluntary organisations and local government; 7 per cent among mothers working in profit-making businesses). By sector, receipt of OMP was highest in public administration, health and education (19 per cent) and lowest in hospitality (3 per cent) and primary, manufacturing and construction (5 per cent).

- Fathers working in public administration, health and education took more weeks off after the birth of their child (6.6 weeks) than fathers on average, as did those in central government organisations (8.3 weeks, compared to 4.5 weeks in private businesses). Fathers in larger organisations also had more time off; 6 weeks on average in organisations with 250+ staff, compared to 3.6 weeks in organisations with less than 50.
- Parents that took SPL were more likely to have been working in public administration, health or education sectors, central government, and larger organisations.

9.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter on the use of childcare types available to parents and both the flexible working arrangements and childcare/family-friendly policies offered by employers has highlighted the following key points:

- Around two thirds of all mothers and just over half of fathers indicated that someone other than them had looked after their child in the week prior to interview. Parents that took SPL were much more likely than mothers and fathers generally to have used some form of childcare in the previous week, with just 6 per cent that said no one else had looked after their child.
- Overall, mothers and fathers with children born in 2017 were most likely to be relying on grandparents for childcare. Around a third of mothers and fathers generally said a grandparent had looked after their child at some point in the previous week. This proportion increased to more than two fifths among parents that took SPL. Day nurseries had been used by one in four mothers and fathers generally, while parents that had taken SPL were much more likely to have done so (68 per cent).
- Seven out of ten mothers overall said they were the main adult in their household responsible for planning and arranging childcare, while for one in four (26 per cent) mothers it was an equal combination of them and their partner. Just 8 per cent of fathers said they are mainly responsible for childcare.
- For parents that took SPL a much higher proportion (66 per cent) than compared with mothers and fathers generally said that responsibilities for childcare arrangements were an equal combination of them and their partner, and this was the case among mothers that took SPL (60 per cent), as well as fathers (72 per cent).
- Around one in seven (14 per cent) mothers say no friend or relative would be available to look after their child as a one off; the proportion is similar among parents that took SPL (12 per cent) and higher among fathers (22 per cent). In terms of regular childcare, two in five (40 per cent) mothers say no friend or relative would be available for childcare on a regular basis, compared with higher proportions of around half among fathers (48 per cent) and parents that took SPL (52 per cent).
- Overall, more than half of mothers in employment at the time of interview and around two thirds of fathers (56 and 65 per cent) were *not* accessing any childcare or family friendly support from their employer, while the proportion was much lower among parents that took SPL (21 per cent).
- The support mothers were most likely to be using was either childcare vouchers or flexible working arrangements (14 per cent in each case), while parents that took SPL

were much more likely to be using each of these (62 and 42 per cent respectively), as well as an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters (32 per cent; 10 per cent of core mothers).

- Most mothers (73 per cent) felt that flexible working arrangements were available to them from their pre-birth employer, and just over half (53 per cent) also reported that their employer offered childcare or family support of some kind.
- There were some significant differences however by employer type and size in terms of how 'family-friendly' employers were and the support offered to parents.
- Furthermore, comparing the views of mothers and fathers on whether their employer offered family-friendly practices, while similar patterns are observed, fathers were less likely than mothers to report that their employer offered these arrangements.
- Given the importance of flexible working arrangements and childcare support to facilitate parents' return to work however, it does seem more could be done across workplaces to ensure all parents are aware of company policy.
- More generally, among profit-making businesses particularly, SMEs and those in the hospitality sector, it does seem more could be done to understand how best to support and accommodate parents returning and staying in work after the birth of a child.
- The return to work chapter (Chapter 8) highlighted movement of mothers away from certain sectors, towards those that offered better flexibility and family-friendly culture. This could suggest a demand among parents for flexibility and support that, if accommodated, has the potential to improve staff retention in some workplaces.

10 Annex

Table 10.1: Key – summary of the factors/reasons for being out of work that belong to each ‘summary grouping’

Summary group	Individual factors
Summary: Job obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would have problems with transport to and from work • There are few suitable job opportunities for my skill levels in the local area • There are few suitable job opportunities for pay needs in the local areas • Employers aren’t very family-friendly • Preferred job-type does not support flexible working / need flexibility in my job
Summary: Child/Other care obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to look after my child/children myself or at home • I care for someone who has a health condition, disability or behavioural difficulties • I am worried I will not have enough time with my child/children • There isn’t enough affordable childcare around here • I would need a job where I could take time off at short notice to look after my child/children • My family or close friends are not able, or live too far away, to provide childcare • I am not prepared to leave my child/children in the care of anyone other than my family or close friends while I work
Summary: Family obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My child/children wouldn’t like me to work • My parent/parents wouldn’t like it if I worked • My husband/partner/ex-partner would not like it if I worked
Summary: Financial obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am not sure I would be financially better off in work • I am concerned about leaving the security of benefits • I don’t need to work because we have enough money
Summary: Personal/Other obstacles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have difficulties due to my health condition or disability • My confidence is low at the moment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I haven't got the qualifications or experience to get the kind of job I would want• I have personal or family troubles that need to be sorted out
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11 Abbreviations and Glossary

11.1 Abbreviations

MA – Maternity Allowance

OMP – Occupational Maternity Pay

SME – small to medium sized enterprises

SMP – Statutory Maternity Pay

SPP – Statutory Paternity Pay

SPL – Shared Parental Leave

ShPP – Shared Parental Pay

SPL&P - Shared Parental Leave and Pay

11.2 Glossary

Core Mothers – this is the sample of mothers from the main survey which has been weighted to be representative of all mothers with a child born between 1st January 2017 to 31st November 2017

Core Fathers – this is the sample of fathers from the main survey which has been weighted to be representative of all fathers with a child born between 1st January 2017 to 31st November 2017

SPL sample – this is mothers and fathers from the main/core sample that took shared parental leave, as well as mothers and fathers from the boost sample who were recruited on the basis of having taken shared parental leave – this sample is unweighted

Small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) – in the UK SMEs are classed as businesses/organisations with fewer than 250 employees

Maternity Leave - new mothers are able to take up to 52 weeks of Maternity Leave of which up to 39 weeks is covered by Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) or Maternity Allowance (MA).

Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) - the first six weeks of SMP are paid at an enhanced rate, and pregnant women and new mothers receive 90 per cent of their average weekly earnings (with no upper limit) during this period. The remaining 33 weeks of SMP are worth up to £148.68 a week (2019/20).

Maternity Allowance (MA) - a benefit paid to working mothers (including self-employed mothers) who do not qualify for SMP. It is paid for up to 39 weeks and is worth up to £148.68 a week (2019).

Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP) - gives employers the option of topping up mothers' SMP. There is no fixed amount and is often offered on the condition that the employee returns to work after their maternity leave.

Paternity Leave – fathers or same sex partners are entitled to one or two weeks paid leave and received Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP). SPP is worth up to £148.68 a week and fathers and partners do not currently have any entitlement to a period of enhanced pay.

Shared Parental Leave - allows new parents to share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay, and to take blocks of leave, interspersed with periods of work (each parent can take up to three blocks of leave, more if their employer allows, interspersed with periods of work). Shared Parental Leave Pay is currently paid up to £148.68 a week.

Qualification/education levels – reference is made in the report to education/qualification levels at degree level or above, and below degree level. The following lists examples at each level, and shows that qualifications above degree level are those equivalent to level 5 or above:

Levels 7-8: postgraduate qualifications

Levels 5-6: degree level

Level 4: Higher National Certificate (HNC)

Levels 3: A-levels or equivalent

Level 1-2: GCSEs/O-Levels or equivalent

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