

Lack of workplace childcare forces women out of jobs [GB] ^[1]

Author: Dillon, Jo

Source: The Independent

Format: Article

Publication Date: 2 Aug 2002

AVAILABILITY

Text below

EXCERPTS:

Women are being forced out of the workplace because 95 % employers fail to provide childcare facilities, according to a new TUC study.

Many parents, particularly those in the south of England, are finding it impossible to buy a house and bring up a family because of the combined costs of housing and childcare. Now the unions are calling for action from employers and government bodies.

Regional development agencies are revising their economic strategies, and trade unionists want them to put higher priority on boosting local childcare. The TUC's latest report quotes figures first revealed in The Independent on Sunday, showing the staggering costs of childcare and the lack of access to childminders and nursery places.

In inner London, the most expensive area for childcare, parents will pay avg UKP 149 / wk for a nursery place and UKP 144 for a childminder. The cheapest region, the North West, still has avg costs of UKP 99 / wk for a nursery place and UKP 86/wk for a childminder. But the Daycare Trust, which contributed to the report, says that the real costs of childcare can be much higher, placing parents in the difficult situation of either having to give up work altogether or struggling financially to pay for childcare.

The report claims 47 % families say there are not enough childcare places. In London and the North East that rises to 52% .

The TUC makes the case that as well as helping parents, providing affordable childcare can be profitable for business. The Work Foundation estimates the typical cost of replacing a member of staff on a salary of UKP 15 K is > UKP 7 K .

A childcare project at HSBC bank has resulted in saving UKP 18 M / yr , Since the project started, the number of women returning to work after having a baby has risen 30 -> 85 % .

Yet according to government figures, only 5 % UK companies provide a workplace nursery and just 2 % have reserved a nursery places scheme; 5 % make a contribution towards nursery costs & 3 % have after-school clubs.

The real effects of high costs are all too familiar for Iain and Rebecca Stewart, an architect and a lawyer from north London. When their son Joseph begins nursery this autumn, the Stewarts will be paying UKP 11 232 / yr on childcare for their 2 children: "We both have good jobs and there are people in London far worse off than we are. It is manageable with one child but very difficult with two".

For David and Diana Shonfield from Manchester, their childcare costs are much lower at UKP 5280 , but it was still a factor in Mrs Shonfield's decision not to work full time: "The nursery is not as expensive as some in the area, but I wanted to go back to work and keep my hand in".

TUC General Secretary John Monks said: "Local access to childcare is just the sort of issue that will damage our productivity if it is not prioritised soon. Many women are not given the choice of returning to work, which drains valuable skills from our economy".

reprinted from The Independent.

Region: Europe ^[2]

Tags: economics ^[3]

affordability ^[4]

staff ^[5]

accessibility ^[6]

gender ^[7]

spaces ^[8]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/02/09/lack-workplace-childcare-forces-women-out-jobs-gb>
Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/02/09/lack-workplace-childcare-forces-women-out-jobs-gb> [2]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/europe> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/economics> [4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/affordability> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/staff> [6]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/accessibility> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/gender> [8]
<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/spaces>