

Tackling in-work poverty by supporting dual-earning families ^[1]

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Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Format: Report

Publication Date: 1 Nov 2013

AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf ^[2]

Description:

This research reviewed employment trends among couples with children, and examined four areas affecting their employment rate: family leave, childcare, the labour market and the tax and benefit system.

Key points:

- The risk of poverty is greater for children in couple families with only one earner; sole-earner families comprised 30 per cent of families with children in poverty in 2011/12.
- Although the share of sole-earner families has fallen considerably, around a quarter of couple families with children had only one earner in 2012.
- Most non-working partners are mothers, with lower employment levels among mothers with pre-school children compared to those with school-age children.
- Enabling more mothers to work would boost household incomes and help tackle in-work poverty.
- Paid family leave allows parents to spend time with young children while protecting incomes, helps keep mothers in the labour market and increases fathers' involvement in family life.
- However, family leave is badly paid in the UK and too short for fathers.
- Childcare enables parents with young children to work, particularly mothers, but remains expensive for many low-income families.
- Despite some improvements in the conditions of low-paid work, many mothers can only access poorly paid part-time jobs because of their childcare responsibilities.
- Many fathers work long hours, making it harder for them to get involved in family life and more difficult for mothers in low-income families to work.
- Universal Credit will raise incomes among many low-income couple families, but weaken work incentives for many second earners.
- To enable both partners in more low-income families to work, the study recommends: allowing second earners to keep more income before withdrawing means-tested benefits; expanding publicly funded affordable childcare; and more generous family leave, including longer paternity leave.

Related link: Traditional 'breadwinner' families more likely to be in poverty ^[3]

Region: Europe ^[4]

Tags: poverty ^[5]

gender ^[6]

work/life balance ^[7]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/13/11/tackling-work-poverty-supporting-dual-earning-families>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/13/11/tackling-work-poverty-supporting-dual-earning-families> ^[2]

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/tackling-work-poverty-supporting-dual-earning-families> ^[3] <https://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/news/article/traditional-breadwinner-families-more-likely-to-be-in-poverty> ^[4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/europe> ^[5]

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