

Shared parental leave: public attitudes ^[1]

Part of: Making the labour market more flexible, efficient and fair

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AVAILABILITY

Full Report (PDF) ^[2]

Press Release ^[3]

From the press release:

More than half of the UK believes that childcare should be shared equally between parents, a survey by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has found.

The findings show a marked move away from the old attitude that the bulk of childcare responsibilities should be borne by the mother. Some 53% of those questioned said that childcare should be the equal responsibility of both parents while a further 22% believe that a couple should have the right to choose how they divide caring responsibilities, depending on their circumstances.

Just under a quarter of those surveyed believe that childcare should be the mother's main responsibility, with more than half of men thinking that childcare should be shared equally, compared to 50% of women.

The research was carried out ahead of the introduction of Shared Parental Leave (SPL), which will apply to parents of babies born or adopted from 5 April 2015. The new rules mean that parents can split 50 weeks of leave and 37 weeks of pay between them in the baby's first year. SPL also lets parents suggest a flexible pattern of leave to their employer and allows for up to 3 separate blocks of leave, but employers can agree to more.

When parents were questioned, two-thirds said that they would have considered sharing parental leave if it had been available at the time. This was higher amongst fathers, of whom three-quarters said they would have considered it compared with 63% of women.

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For those considering having children in the future, 4 in 5 said they would consider taking Shared Parental Leave when they became parents.

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Region: Europe ^[4]

Tags: maternity and parental leave ^[5]

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