



# Parental Leave Policy and Reward Benchmark

Almost 700 companies and organisations in the UK and Ireland responded to this year's Parental Leave Benchmark Survey, sharing insights into their current offering and their plans for the future.



## 2-Minute Headlines

Are you, as an employer, aiming to be best in class for new parents? Or simply wanting to calibrate your offering to ensure it is 'good enough'?

In the current climate of virtual meetings and hybrid working, it's even more important to support your staff through this transition. Here's what you need to know to make the business case for your enhanced policy:

- **79%** of employers currently enhance Maternity (and Adoption / Surrogacy) pay beyond the statutory minimum
- **67%** of employers currently enhance Paternity or Partner leave pay
- **48%** of employers currently enhance Shared Parental Leave pay

### Top of the league package



in this survey for maternity / adoption and shared parental leave pay stands at a **52-week package** (26 weeks' pay at 100% followed by 26 weeks at 90%: Energy & Utilities).

### The best fully gender-inclusive financial package



enables parents of any gender and any parenting role to take **26 weeks' fully paid leave** followed by **26 weeks at 50% pay** (Financial Services).

There are now many maternity / adoption packages with 26+ weeks' enhanced pay. The majority who offer enhanced paternity leave still offer just 2 weeks at full pay, while 21% now offer more than this.

There are other key ways of engaging and retaining your talented people through parental leave, which are becoming increasingly popular according to these respondents, including:

- Facilitating a phased return using *Keeping in Touch* days (43%)
- Establishing a parents' network (24%)
- Online / app-based coaching / advice (21%)
- Wellbeing services (e.g. antenatal classes, gym, yoga) (21%)
- Providing parental leave coaching to individuals (17%)
- Training / coaching or guidance to line managers (14%)



Our separate service user data from further research with individuals using our Parental Leave Toolkit and Coaching services due to be published this Autumn, confirms there is high value in providing a Parental Leave Coaching programme: 94% agreed that 'Simply knowing my employer recognises this transition and provides a Parental Leave Programme encourages a positive view of my employer', with the largest group selecting 'Strongly Agree'.





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## Key findings

This report outlines what average, good and excellent now look like in terms of employer support for working parents with new or expanding families.

## Who took part?

Almost 700 responses from a range of sectors in the UK & Ireland surveyed during June 2021. The 5 sectors with highest representation were Financial Services (11%), Legal & Professional Services (11%), Digital, Technology & Telecoms (10%), Engineering & Construction (7%) and Hospitality, Travel & Leisure (6%).

## How are parental leave pay and benefits changing?

Figures from our last two benchmarks show the increasing attention paid to this area



## Marked Rise in Proportion of Employers Enhancing Parental Leave Pay

Maternity pay enhancement has risen by 39% since 2017; Paternity / partner pay enhancement has increased by 52% and enhanced shared parental leave by 92% relative to employers' positions in 2017.

Type of leave	% of Employers who enhance leave		
	2021	2019	2017
Maternity (inc. Adoption & Surrogacy) leave pay	79%	77%	57%
Paternity or partner leave pay	67%	68%	44%
Shared Parental Leave Pay	48%	40%	25%



## What does good, or excellent, look like?

The most frequent enhancement of maternity / adoption pay is now 26 weeks' full pay, with many more occurrences of this than any other package. So, in sectors where packages are at the top end (Financial Services, Legal & Professional Services, Media, Digital, Technology & Telecoms, Engineering & Construction, and to some extent Energy & Utilities) **excellent** means a package of 26 weeks' enhanced pay plus other programme supports. We reach 15th place in the league table for maternity / adoption pay before finding a package of less than 26 weeks at 100% pay (and there are 45 employers sharing equal 14th place with 26 weeks' full pay). Several league table leaders now offer more than 39 weeks' full pay.

In terms of **good**, there are also more 18- and 16-week enhancements than in

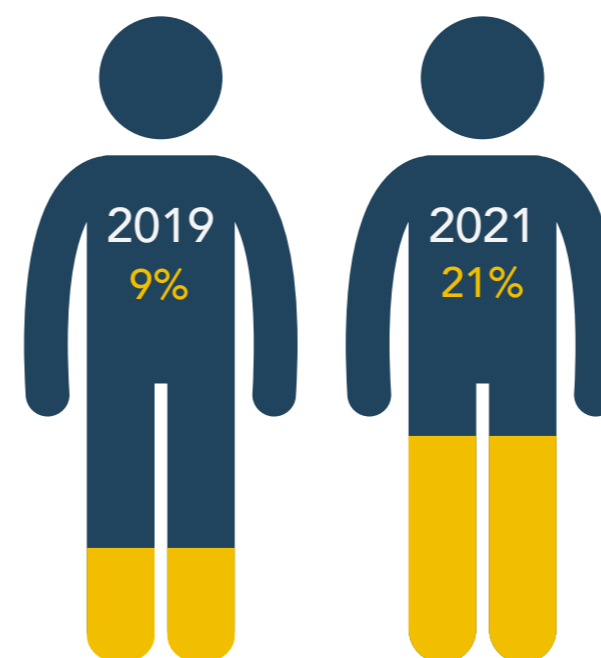
previous years, replacing the previous norm of 12 weeks. That said, many employers still enhance for 12 weeks or 6 weeks (topping up the statutory 90% to 100%) and this will still make a difference, particularly in sectors in which large enhancements are not the norm. Many employers choose to provide a package with reducing levels of pay over a longer period which seems a sensible option in terms of encouraging the take-up of a longer leave (e.g. 26 weeks versus 12 weeks) while ensuring some level of enhanced pay is maintained over that period.

One surprise was that – despite much media coverage of enhanced paternity pay policies, the majority who offer enhanced paternity leave still offer just 2 weeks at full pay. However, 21% now offer more than this, while only 9% offered more than this in 2019.

Some employers restrict enhanced pay for all types of leave to those with a certain length of service, most frequently 1 year, 2 years or 26 weeks.

## Paternity Leave Improved but Still Lacking

Only 1 in 5 employers offer more than 2 weeks' paternity pay



## Are there sector-specific differences?

We have published separate league tables for sectors with good representation in our survey. These can be found through the links at the end of this report.

In brief, yes, there are sector-specific differences.

Financial Services, Creative, Marketing & Advertising; Legal; FMCG: Consumer Goods and TV & Other Media were the sectors most likely to report **enhanced maternity pay**.

Energy and Utilities, Financial Services and TV & Other Media were most likely to report **enhanced paternity pay**.

The Retail and Legal sectors were most likely to report **enhanced Shared Parental Leave**, followed by Creative, Marketing & Advertising and Financial Services.



# What other supports do employers provide for parental leave returners?

Here are the top forms of support beyond pay policies:

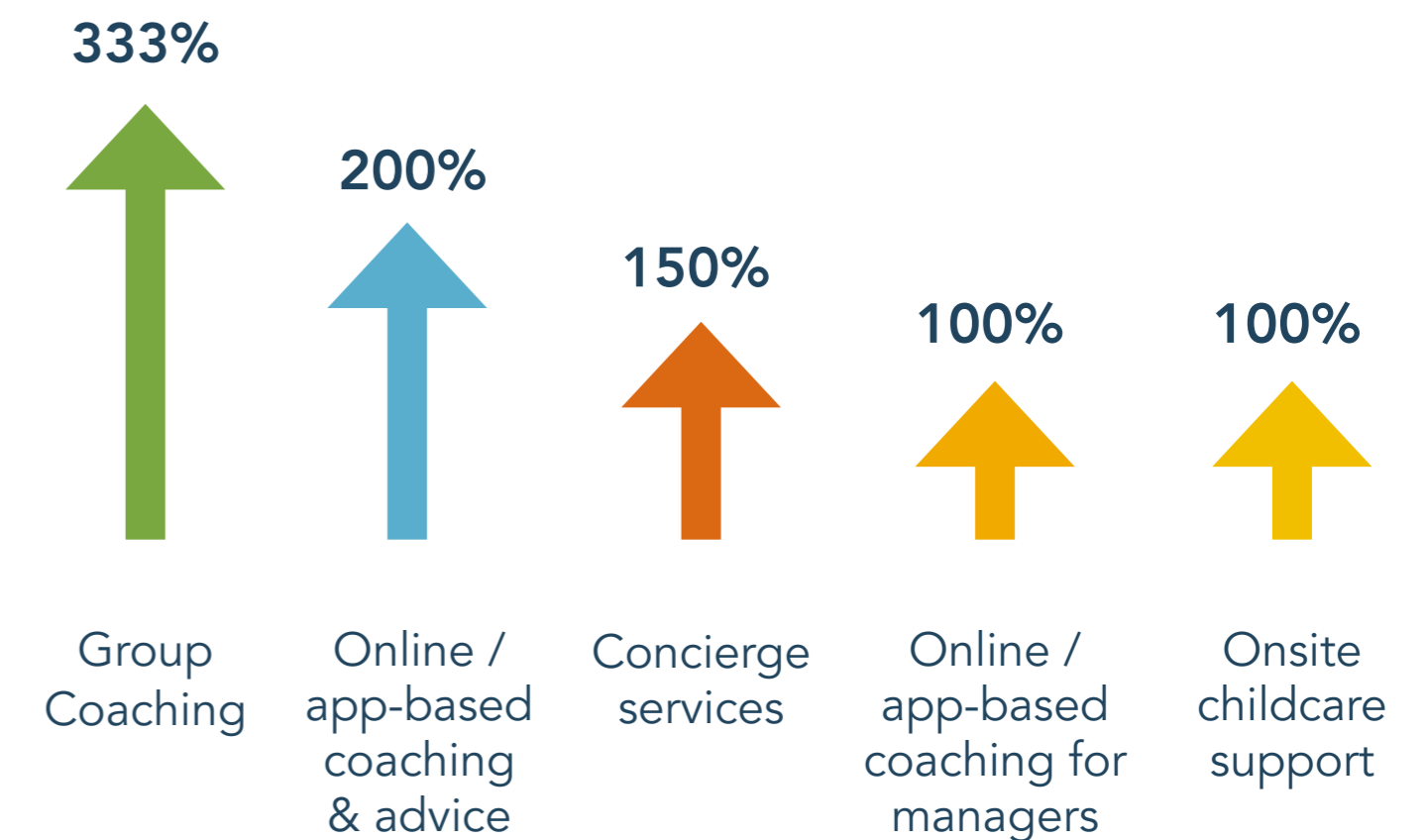


	2021	2019	Change since 2019
Allowing for a phased return using Keeping in Touch days	43%	40%	+7.5%
Establishing a parents' network	24%	17%	+41%
Online / app-based coaching / advice	21%	7%	+200%
Wellbeing services (e.g. antenatal classes, gym, yoga)	21%	19%	+11%
Providing one-to-one coaching to the individuals	17%	14%	+21%
Training / coaching or guidance to line managers	14%	11%	+27%
Group Coaching	13%	3%	+333%
Internal Buddy / Mentor schemes for new parents	12%	10%	+20%
Online / app-based coaching for managers	10%	5%	+100%
Onsite GP / nurse	10%	7%	+43%
Publishing relatable role model stories	10%	8%	+25%
Return to work bonus	7%	6%	+17%
Concierge services	5%	2%	+150%
Onsite childcare support	4%	2%	+100%

The greatest increases, relative to 2019, have been seen in the provision of Group Coaching, Online / app-based coaching & advice, Concierge services, Online / app-based coaching for managers and Onsite childcare support. Concierge services now include a variety of supports including finding childcare solutions, to reflect the new hybrid-working world.

## Some forms of support have seen large increases since 2019

Group Coaching and app-based support have seen marked gains in popularity since 2019.





## What's the average return rate and what helps?

Of the 273 respondents who were able to provide return rates as a %, the mean (average) was 80%.

Of the 216 respondents who were able to give a percentage retention rate of returners 12 months after return from leave, the mean (average) retention was 73%.

We explored correlations with other forms of support that boosted the return rate.

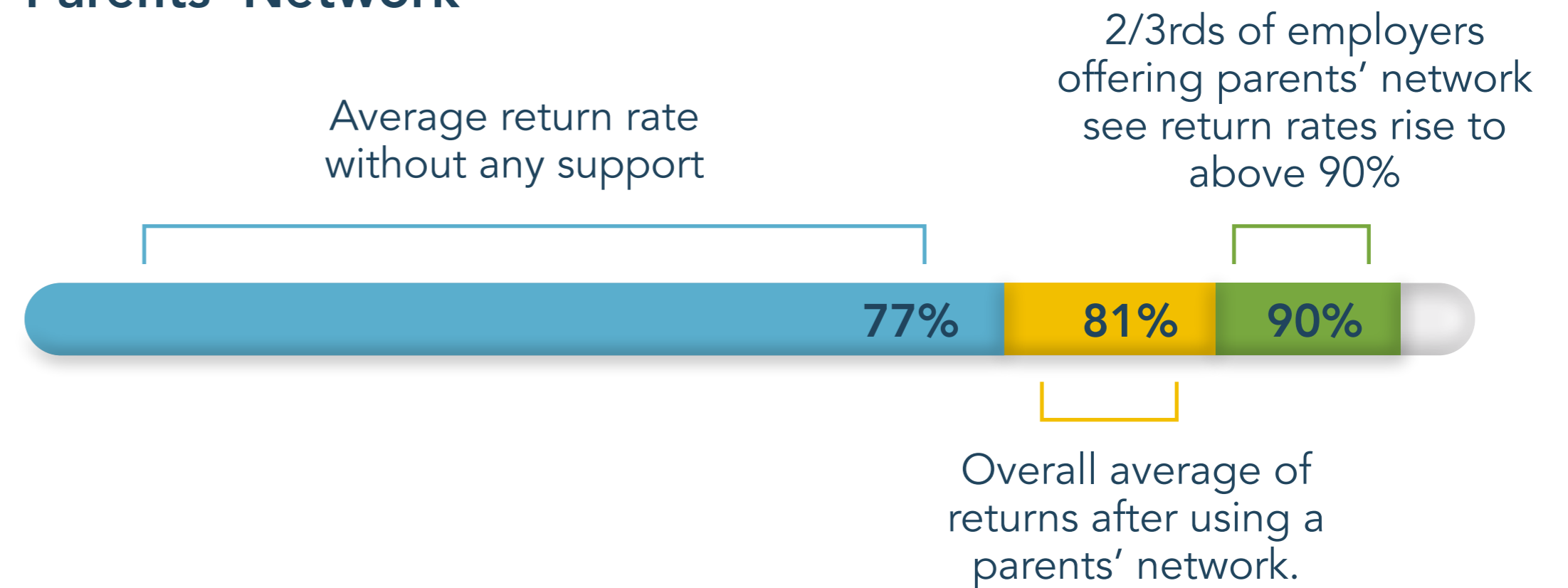
**67%** of employers offering a Parents' network or similar events forum had a return rate above 90% (and overall average 81% return rate)

**63%** of those offering one-to-one parental leave coaching had a return rate of above 90% (overall average 80% return rate)

**64%** of employers offering internal Buddy / Mentor schemes had a return rate above 90% (overall average 78% return rate)

Our separate service user data confirms there is high value in providing a Parental Leave Coaching programme: 94% agreed that 'Simply knowing my employer recognises this transition and provides a Parental Leave Programme encourages a positive view of my employer', with the largest group selecting 'Strongly Agree'.

### Parents' Network



### One-to-one parental leave coaching



### Internal Buddy / Mentor schemes





## Expert Commentary - **Jennifer Liston-Smith**, Head of Thought Leadership

### **More than ever before, the Parent Transition marks a critical moment that matters in the employee lifecycle.**

Now, more than ever, employers are acutely aware of the importance of retaining talented and knowledgeable people. There is much evidence of the 'work-life rethink' prompted both by the pandemic and by new styles of working, for employees at all life stages.

Anecdotally, we hear the number of searches on recruiters' books has leapt by a factor of 10 to 15 times what it was in 2019. This is a key moment to reinforce and strengthen a sense of belonging among all employees. It applies particularly to the new working parent.

### **Managing a series of transitions**

People of any gender taking parental leave go through at least two transitions. There is the major life change of becoming a parent, or expanding an existing family. In addition, there is the transition away from, and back to, their professional role, especially significant for those taking longer periods of leave. All our coaching and advisory experience shows that pro-actively managing the preparation, leave period, and return is absolutely key to ongoing career success; while passively hoping for the best can be a sure route to career derailment.

So, forward-thinking employers can take two actions:

- They can enhance parental leave of all forms to enable and support the family life transition, investing in the wellbeing of all parties at this vital moment. Our data shows this now means 26+ weeks' enhanced pay in those sectors competing for highly-qualified knowledge workers.
- Top employers also provide programmes of coaching, manager training, app-based communication, internal networks and other supports to guide, mentor and encourage the individual, their manager and teams to smooth the transition and boost longer-term success.

**A well-managed transition is one in which both handover and return happen in the context of the new parent picking up meaningful, career-relevant work on return. It is surprising how often well-meant biases actually side-line the 'busy' new parent on return.**

### **New returners in a new world**

Again, our current times call for this support to 'go large': parenting a new child during the pandemic's conditions has meant something different from the norm. There will have been fewer parent & toddler get-togethers, fewer stays with relatives and therefore – among other impacts – less experience of being away from the child. Settling both parent and child into the routine of childcare may feel more daunting.

The new parent is also returning, in many roles, to a hybrid working world, combining remote and onsite working. Our coaching has long included a focus on the new parent staying 'visible' at work in career progression terms. That can be harder than ever to navigate within the new norms, and an experienced sounding board or mentor can make a difference in both challenging the

individual (or manager's) habits and expectations, and providing a supportive, confidential space to think, and breathe.

The data here show that provision of online or app-based coaching / advice for the new parent has increased by 200% and by 100% for online or app-based coaching for managers since our last benchmark in 2019. Group coaching has risen by 333% and the provision of onsite childcare support has grown 100%.

This report shows that leading employers are – year-on-year – stepping up their policy and reward packages for parental leave and their investment in other supports. Regarding Return on Investment, our Seven Step Action Plan section demonstrates the cost savings that come with a typical rise in return rates of 12 to 14 percentage points, meaning a programme very quickly breaks even and then yields a high return, in every sense.

### **Closing the gender gap**

Another notable point from this survey is that there is a rise in provision of enhanced paternity or partner leave pay beyond 2 weeks' : 21% now offer more than 2 weeks enhanced pay whereas only 9% offered more than 2 weeks' enhancement in 2019.

However, in order to truly encourage shared parenting and to remove gender biases from the potential career impact of taking parental leave, paternity / partner packages would need to be a great deal higher. Some forward-thinking organisations are equalising pay across all types of leave, and it is these employers who top our league tables and who will in turn have the better story to tell in their Gender Pay Gap narrative and action plan.



# Your Seven Step Action Plan

Here we offer a plan of action, drawn from the research results and over 15 years of leading practice in supporting the parental leave transition.

## Step 1.

**Benchmark your current provision and publicise what you're doing well.**

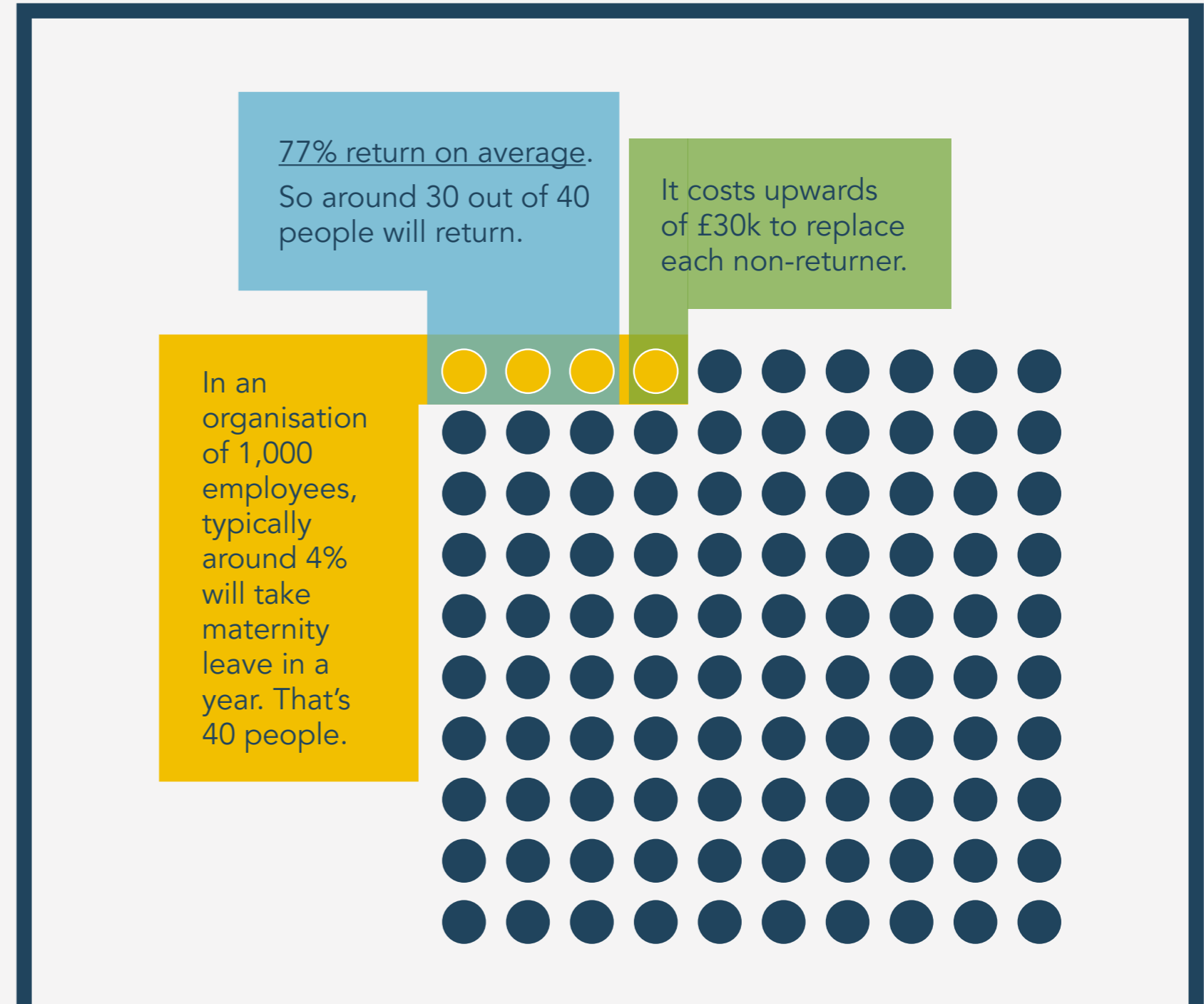
Use the key findings and the infographics in this report as a guide in terms of both pay and programmes. The separate Parental Leave League Tables will give you exact data on the ranking of your pay policy. If your provision is good, make sure you communicate it, to potential joiners as well as current employees. It is a prominent aspect of talent attraction.

## Step 2.

**If you do not yet offer a leading package, make the business case for investing in good parental leave policies and practice.**

Avoid thinking in terms of budget spend only; make the case based on talent attraction, retention and career progression. Two thirds of respondents said the top reason driving their policies was the competition for talent. We offer support with your business case here:

- One key measurable aspect is the improved return rates of new parents following parental leave, as they know they are coming back to an employer who is committed to their on-going success.
- When an employer supports the transition really well (combining good policies with excellent support through coaching & manager guidance and ideally also help with childcare), the savings can be predicted as shown opposite, using maternity leave as an example.



Our online and offline coaching programmes typically see employers' return rates rise by 12-14 percentage points. If you increase the average return rate from 77% to 90%, 5 or 6 more people will return.

**'This could save you well over £150K in recruitment costs per annum.'**



## Step 3.

Once you have the bottom line impact clear, gain senior level buy-in on the business case and also on how you wish to position yourself as an employer.

Some are determined to be leaders and award-winners, recognising the paramount importance of attracting, and keeping, the best talent in the marketplace and understanding the clear risk that talent will be drawn towards more family-friendly competitors. Others simply seek to be 'good enough', not leading the field but keeping up with your sector. Which are you?

## Step 4.

Decide what best fits your employer brand and talent retention goals.

This report shows that in many professional / knowledge worker sectors, 'excellent' now means 26+ weeks' enhanced pay coupled with coaching for individuals, training for managers, networks and ongoing support on combining work and family, including childcare provision.

Do not fall into the trap of ever-increasing weeks of paid leave without considering whether your budget might be better applied to other supports.

## Step 5.

Consider consulting with your workforce on where best to start, or build, your provision.

You could find out through focus groups, by consulting with an existing network or employee resource group or forming a cross-functional committee. Consider:

- Would gender inclusive parental leave pay be more relevant and valued than, say, longer enhancement of maternity pay and short paternity leave?
- Would a minimum global enhanced leave policy be a more important message than a spotlight on the UK?
- Would coaching through the transition, or help with childcare, be more valued and impactful in the long term than more weeks of fully paid leave?

## Step 6.

Keep reviewing and developing: it is worth being aware that this is a dynamic and rapidly shifting field.

In terms of what's next, there are further innovations and good practice options on the horizon. These include global, gender-inclusive policies as well as paying attention to other types of family leave including carers' leave, considering the needs of ongoing parents (through school, and increasingly university years) as well as grandparents in terms of support, advice, flexibility and leave.

## Step 7.

Make sure you include your parental leave provisions in your Gender Pay Gap Action Plan.

The parent transition is one of the key points where women drop out of the organisation and/or stall in career progression. Enabling a well-supported leave and confident re-entry is one key piece in retaining talent, mitigating the gender pay gap and fixing the talent pipeline leak. Ensure you promote your programme in your gender Pay Gap Action Plan, showing you are:

- Supporting women taking and returning from leave in a way that keeps careers on track (such as coaching for the individual and also training for managers).
- Encouraging shared parenting through more equal parental leave policies or shared parental leave, which levels the playing field across genders in a way that benefits everyone.

*Of course, you should analyse the causes of your own Gender Pay Gap and work out all aspects of the Action Plan needed. The [Government Equalities Office evidence-based advice](#) is the ideal starting point, including advice on the importance of family-friendly support.*



## About Bright Horizons and our research partners

Bright Horizons provides the best in class work and family solutions. We act as a trusted partner, provider and advisor to employers on strategies for combining work and family. This plays a key part in attracting, engaging and retaining clients' talented employees.

Alongside the provision of a wide range of childcare solutions, we support employers to enable the holistic combination of work and family; ensuring working parents and carers are amongst the most engaged and productive members of any team.

The business now globally encompasses approximately 1,000 nurseries, and over 10,000 emergency childcare and back-up care providers.

With operations in the US, UK, India and the Netherlands, we specialise in supporting multi-national clients. We work with around 400 clients in the UK, and more than 1,300 of the world's leading employers globally, providing a full range of work and family supports. Our bespoke services address the practical, wellbeing and cultural needs of organisations and individuals.

We have a strong commitment to corporate sustainability, which is reflected in a number of ways including our registered charity, Bright Horizons Foundation for Children.

## Our partners who supported this research

Importantly the data here does not come only from Bright Horizons' clients, who by definition, tend to demonstrate leading practice.

Instead, data was gathered through a range of sources, including our clients and wider database of contacts, as well as being distributed by our partners: HR DataHub, WiHTL, Legal Magazine, our conference partners HRD, HR GrapeVine, Flexpo, and via LinkedIn.

## Background to the research

Last published in 2019, our Parental Leave Benchmark is consistently our most downloaded report. Our clients and contacts want to know what's 'normal' and what's leading - in general, and for their sector. The intention is to set out a snapshot of current practice in policies, benefits and support around this key life transition of becoming a working parent.

The main body of the report interprets trends and there is a detailed, anonymised league table of benefits to be found through the link at the end of this document.



# Further Findings

## More on the norms in the League Table

### Enhanced maternity / adoption leave pay

Three organisations had a maternity package that spread across 52 weeks (2 of these confirmed that it was applicable for employees who had worked for over 12 months, and 1 had a 6 month Return to Work clause).

10% of organisations offered a package of 27 weeks and above; 71% of these also confirmed minimum service requirements.

24% of companies provided enhanced maternity packages for 26 weeks of leave. Over half of these offered 100% salary for the 26 weeks.

This was spread across a few industries such as FMCG, Digital, Technology & Telecoms, Engineering & Construction, with Financial Services having 13 entries at this rate.

The remainder of organisations offering 26-week maternity packages covered this through tiered packages.

Of the respondents who confirmed restrictions for their maternity packages, just under half had a requirement of 12 months' employment, just under ¼ had 6-month service requirements and 17% required 2 years' service.

Some organisations' tiered

packages depended on the length of service. For example, one company in the Fintech sector offered the first 8 weeks of maternity leave at 100% of pay, regardless of length of service plus an additional week at 100% of usual pay, for every quarter of employment for up to 5 years .

Based on the detailed figures, 27% did not enhance maternity packages. (In the broader survey, only 21% declared they did not enhance beyond statutory but it was a smaller sample who gave details for the league table).

### Enhanced shared parental leave (SPL) pay

Among the detailed entries, 35% offered enhanced SPL packages. Some mirrored the maternity packages.

61% of these confirmed minimum service requirements.

65% offered only statutory pay for SPL.

When we last ran the benchmark in 2019, 60% offered only statutory SPL pay so the percentage enhancing is lower this time, probably reflecting the wider employer group and wider sector participation this year.

It could also perhaps indicate a move away from enhancing SPL and towards increasing packages of pay

specifically for paternity / partner leave. This can be more attractive to employees as it does not require a couple to share a pot of leave between them. However, to achieve full inclusive value from favouring enhanced paternity / partner leave, packages would likely need to increase further beyond the figures shown just below.

### Enhanced paternity / partner leave pay

37% offered 2 weeks' full pay for paternity / partner leave.

21% offered 3+ weeks' enhanced paternity / partner pay.

Only 9% went beyond 2 weeks' full pay in our 2019 benchmark, underlining the increasing attention paid to

this area.

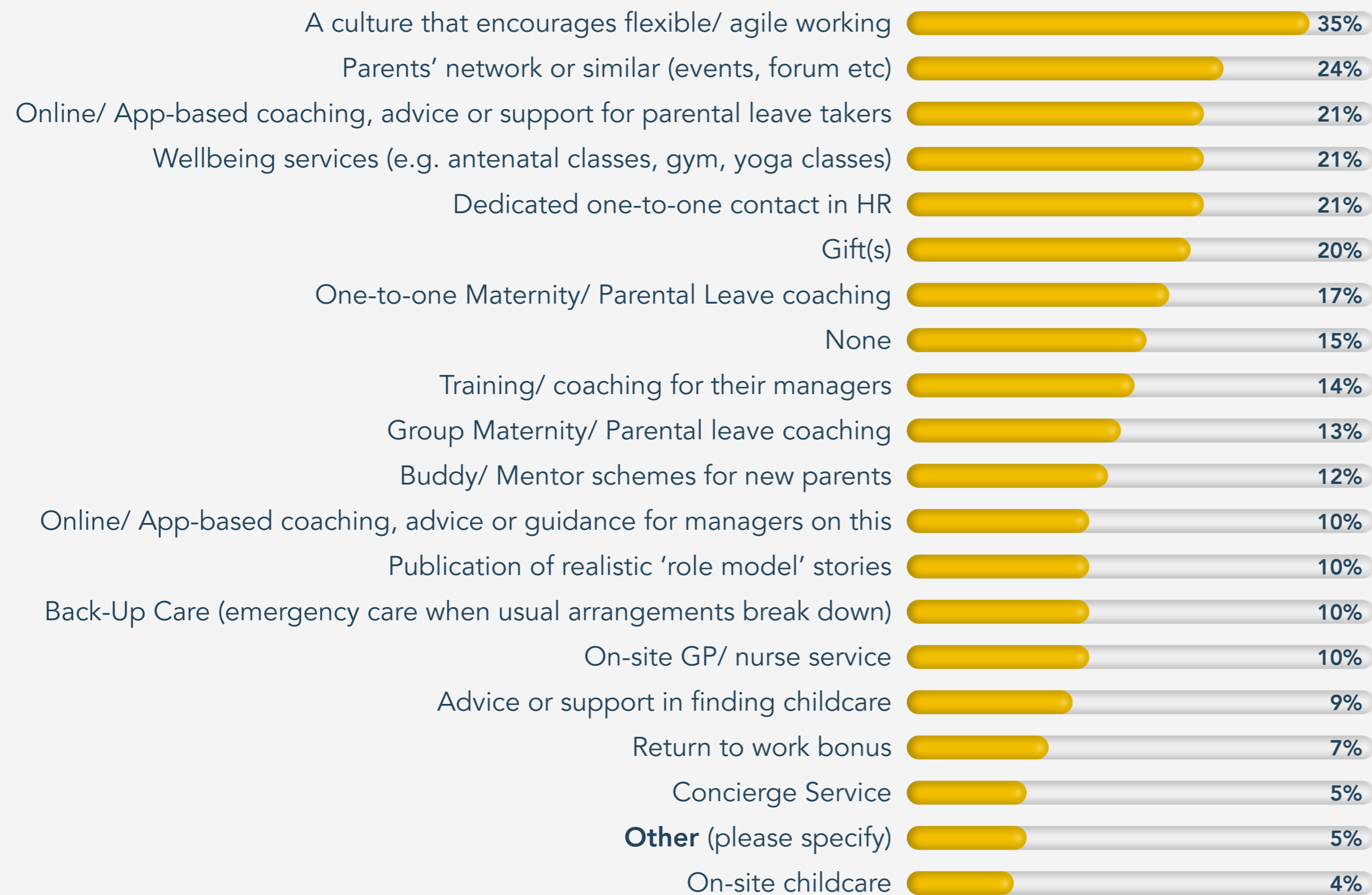
However, in order to truly encourage shared parenting and to remove gender biases from the potential career impact of taking parental leave, paternity / partner packages would need to be a great deal higher.

Some forward-thinking organisations are equalising pay, which does require a level of buy-in since there is much less statutory pay to set against paternity pay than with maternity and adoption or even shared parental leave pay.

33% of employers providing detailed entries did not enhance paternity pay beyond the 2 weeks of statutory pay.



# What other supports are employers offering?



Over a fifth of employers now provide a parents' network, online or app-based coaching, wellbeing services, a dedicated one-to-one contact in HR, and coach-led coaching (combining one-to-one and group coaching).

Provisions noted under '**Other**' included:

**"Childcare Voucher Scheme"**

**"Payment for childcare when work commitments stop someone from providing the care they normally would"**

**"We are currently developing a re-induction programme for those who are returning from maternity or shared parental leave"**

**"Employee Assistance Programme"**

**"A Maternity loan option at the start of the leave"**

**"Discount with local childcare provider"**

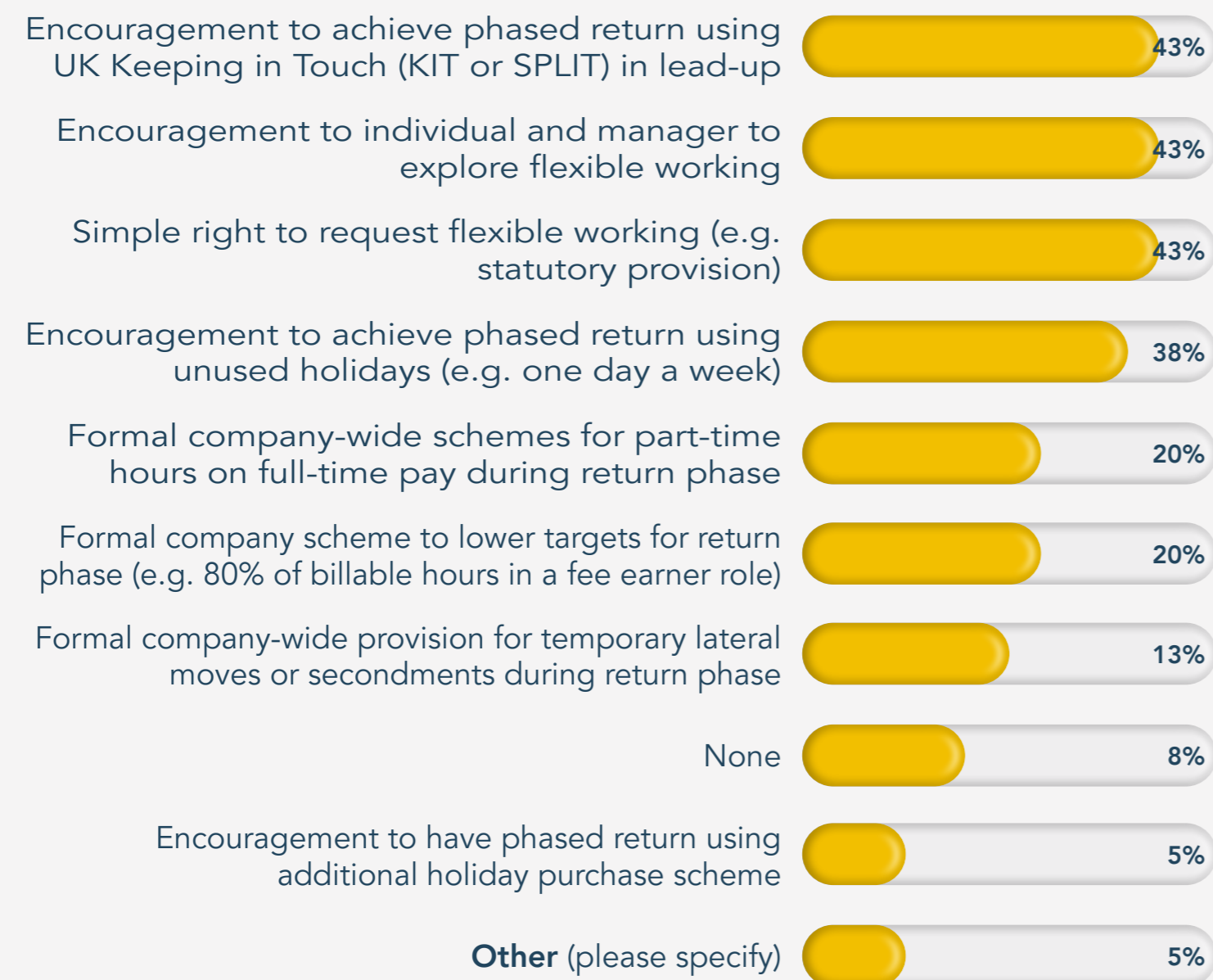
**"We have private healthcare which pays £100 bonus to new parents. The policy excess was recently removed so new parents can utilise this benefit"**

**"Specialist resources for self-coaching through a toolkit, in the design stage of a development programme for parental returners, we have a well-being and counselling service for all staff, we offer extra paid leave to both parents of premature babies, we have paid compassionate leave and generous sick pay provisions that cover things like miscarriage and baby loss, we were shortlisted for 2 national awards for our flexible working and agile hiring scheme, 100% of our jobs advertised offer multiple specific types of flexible working, we have had a comprehensive gender pay gap action plan for several years with actions to improve benefits and culture for working parents, we are taking action to improve uptake of entitlements by dads and partners"**



# What provision are employers making for phased return?

Do you have any provision for a phased return or different arrangements on return to work following maternity, adoption leave or shared parental leave? (choose all that apply)



Using Keeping in Touch (KiT) days, or unused holidays, to provide a form of temporary part-time working without a change in contract can be a real enabler for the returning parent. It is positive to see 43% pointing to KiT days to enable this and 38% pointing to unused holidays to facilitate temporary part-time. As 10 KiT days are possible during maternity or adoption leave and 20 SPLiT days for shared parental leave, these can be used, for example, to work 2 or 3 days a week for 3 to 4 weeks or more.

Holiday is another part-time enabler. Instead of having an obligation to use up accrued holiday before coming back, a phased return can be achieved by, for example, taking every Friday as a holiday for a month or two.

In terms of long-term engagement and retention, a phased approach is highly likely to boost the success of returners and also give both the returner

and the business time to decide what a suitable working pattern looks like as a new parent and in a hybrid working world.

Another encouraging finding is that a fifth of employers responding indicated both that new returners could have a period of working part-time for full pay and that they worked to reduced targets in terms of billable hours during the return phase. This shows a real understanding of the juggling act that a new parent can face in terms of settling their child or children into childcare and coping with changes in care arrangements that can occur in the first few weeks. Facilitating this period paves the way both for future success and loyalty.

Finally, given the dramatic shift in approach to flexible working over recent months, it is surprising that in June 2021, just 43% of respondents said there is encouragement to the individual and manager to explore flexible working and only 43% also

pointed towards the simple right to request flexible working.

'Other' responses expanded on the theme of making it as individual for the employee as possible:

**"We encourage conversations to understand what would work best for the employee and are guided by what we can accommodate. Our standard position is to try and accommodate as much as possible. We have a wider flexible leave policy in that requests can be made every six months with no minimum service. We have also introduced a way of working with flexibility at the heart so that we can meet the needs of our people and their lives."**

**"Treated case by case, all employees given options (phased return with holiday, KIT days, flexible working), they then chose what's best for them."**



# What drives policies?

Policies are primarily driven by the need to attract and retain talent with two-thirds of respondents giving this as one of their three main considerations, along with 58% wishing to specifically support fathers and 56% citing retaining the younger generation as they reach the parenting life stage as one of their top three considerations.

**We asked:** 'What are the main considerations behind your policies and benefits in this area?' (Please select your top three)



In our 2019 Benchmark, we offered five options rather than this year's six which included the post-pandemic focus. Strikingly, the order of the original five drivers remained constant, 'Staying competitive in the battle to attract and retain talent' was the top driver, with 85% of respondents selecting this, followed by 'Being inclusive of and supporting working fathers / partners' at 70% and 'Retaining / Supporting younger generation workforce as they reach the parenting life stage' in third place at 64%. 'A focus on closing Gender Pay Gap' was indicated by 53% and 'Parity of pay and benefits across EMEA / wider regions' came in fifth with 18% of respondents selecting this as a driver for their policies.

Other drivers given include:

"Maintaining the mentality 'Doing the right thing' by new parents"

"Doing our best to flex roles to support employees through different life stages"

"Not on external website but available via internal intranet/ learning platform"

"All employees receive a handbook and if they are to become a parent, a letter details the enhanced benefits they are entitled to"

## Accessibility & Policy Visibility

Elsewhere in the research, two-thirds (66%) reported that their parental leave policies and benefits were easily accessible to potential employees (e.g. published on website). Others commented on the policies being published only on the intranet, or in the employee handbook.

While these comments show the policies are communicated to those within the organisation, it misses the opportunity to position policies and benefits externally as part of the Employee Value Proposition and undermines the talent attraction potential of good policies.

# How has provision changed?

We asked: How has your provision for employees going through the parent transition changed over the last 12 to 24 months? (Choose all that apply)

	%
None	32%
Enhanced or further enhanced Maternity/ Adoption pay	31%
Developed a culture that encourages flexible/ agile working	27%
Enhanced or further enhanced paternity pay or gender neutral leave and enhanced pay (e.g. not shared leave but available to any new parent)	25%
Introduced policies and supportive practice for fertility treatments	20%
Enhanced or further enhanced shared parental leave pay	16%
Introduced/enhanced training/coaching for managers	13%
Introduced/ enhanced coaching/ training/ networks for parents	12%
Introduced/ enhanced childcare or other practical services	11%
Started/ enhanced publication of realistic 'role model' stories	4%
Other (please specify)	4%

For nearly a third of respondents, the provision for employees going through the parent transition hadn't changed over the last 12-24 months, while almost another third had enhanced or further enhanced their maternity/ adoption pay in the last couple of years.

Surprisingly, only 27% said they had developed a culture that encourages flexible working over the past 12-24 months for employees going through this transition; hopefully this means they already had this culture or did not see it as specific to this population.

13% introduced or enhanced training or coaching for managers while 12% introduced or enhanced coaching or networks for new parents and 11% had introduced childcare or similar supports.

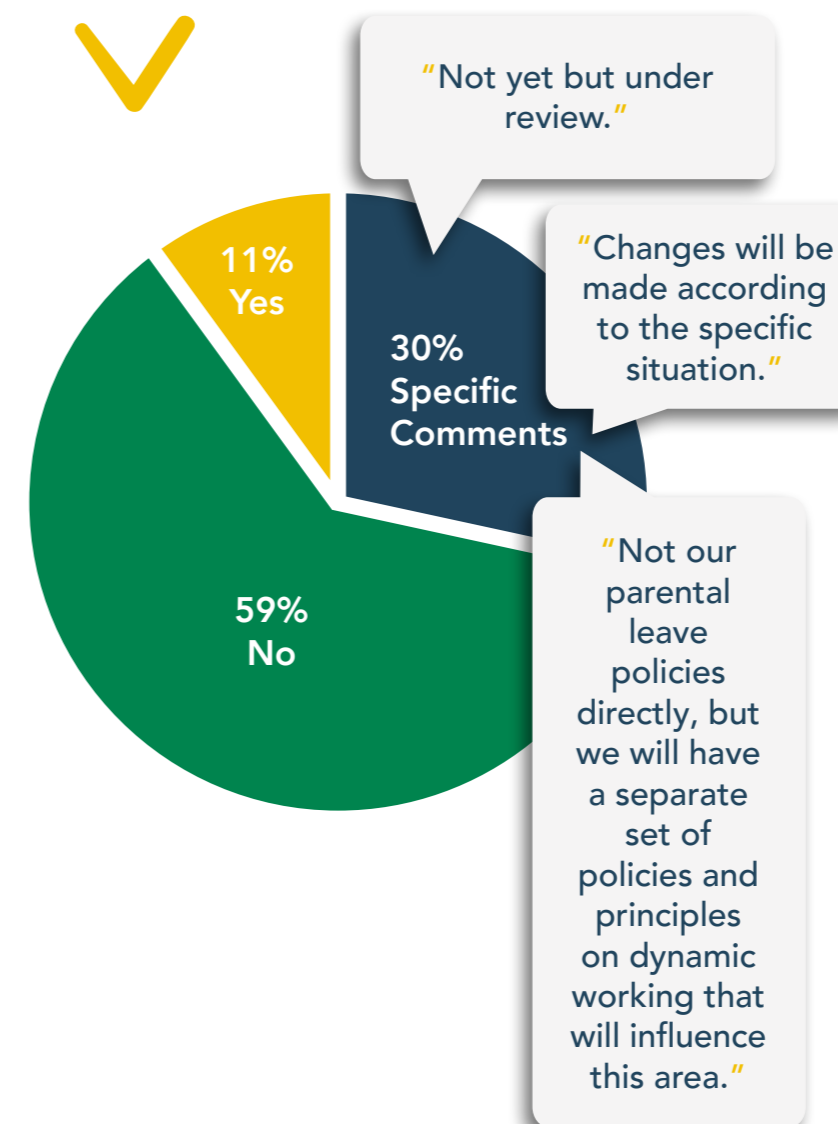
'Other' responses included:

"We are reviewing our approach and policies in support of fertility and baby loss, regular parent network support meetings and relevant 'lunch and learn' sessions on appropriate topics. The on-going development of our Parent Pledge - outlining and showing our commitment to supporting working parents."

"We introduced paid leave for both parents of premature babies in April 2020. We also removed service requirements and requirements to return to work at that point, and enhanced the paternity offer. We also changed the wording of policies to be gender neutral and trans inclusive".

# Has the pandemic had an impact?

We asked: Have your policies changed in light of recent remote working or new hybrid working to take account of different experiences of parental leave in these times?



We also asked: If you have made changes recently, have these been driven more by pandemic restrictions and rethinking or by more general trends and developments?

The responses implied both factors played a part:

"A bit of both. More flexibility has been given during the pandemic but we have always looked at each case individually and sought to support a colleague."

There was also an acknowledgement of global trends:

"Global Trends and Developments. Culturally over the last 12 months, we have seen a rise in children being present while parents are working and are supportive of the various scenarios parents have had to manage, normalising the 'dual roles' our employees have in their lives."



# What are the future trends?

We asked: What are you planning/ considering introducing/enhancing for this type of leave? (Choose all that apply)

	%
Enhanced or further enhanced shared parental leave pay	33%
Enhanced or further enhanced Paternity pay	28%
Enhanced or further enhanced Maternity/Adoption/Surrogacy pay	27%
Gender neutral enhanced pay & leave (e.g. not shared leave, for either parent independent of gender/parenting role)	26%
Develop a culture that encourages flexible/agile working	23%
More support around return specifically in light of remote or hybrid working	23%
Nothing Further	19%
Parents' network or similar	17%
Training/coaching for their managers	16%
Online/app based coaching, advice or support for parental leave takers/ returners	13%
One-to-one Maternity/parental leave coaching	11%
Advice or support in finding childcare	11%
Buddy schemes for new parents	10%
Publication of realistic 'Role Model' stories	10%
Back-Up Care (emergency care for when usual arrangements break down)	9%
Group Maternity/Parental Leave coaching	8%
Access to places in nearby day nurseries	6%
Online/App-based coaching, advice or guidance for managers on this	5%
Onsite childcare	5%
Other (please specify)	4%

The top plans were about pay. The top choice was enhanced or further enhanced Shared Parental Leave pay (33%), followed by Paternity pay (28%), Maternity pay (27%) and gender-neutral enhanced pay and leave (26%).

There are also strong intentions to ramp up support in terms of coaching, networks, online-app-based coaching and support for managers as well as childcare support.

'Other' options included:

**"We already have a parents' network but it will be enhanced to provide more support and information."**

**"Early years paediatric wellness support via app."**

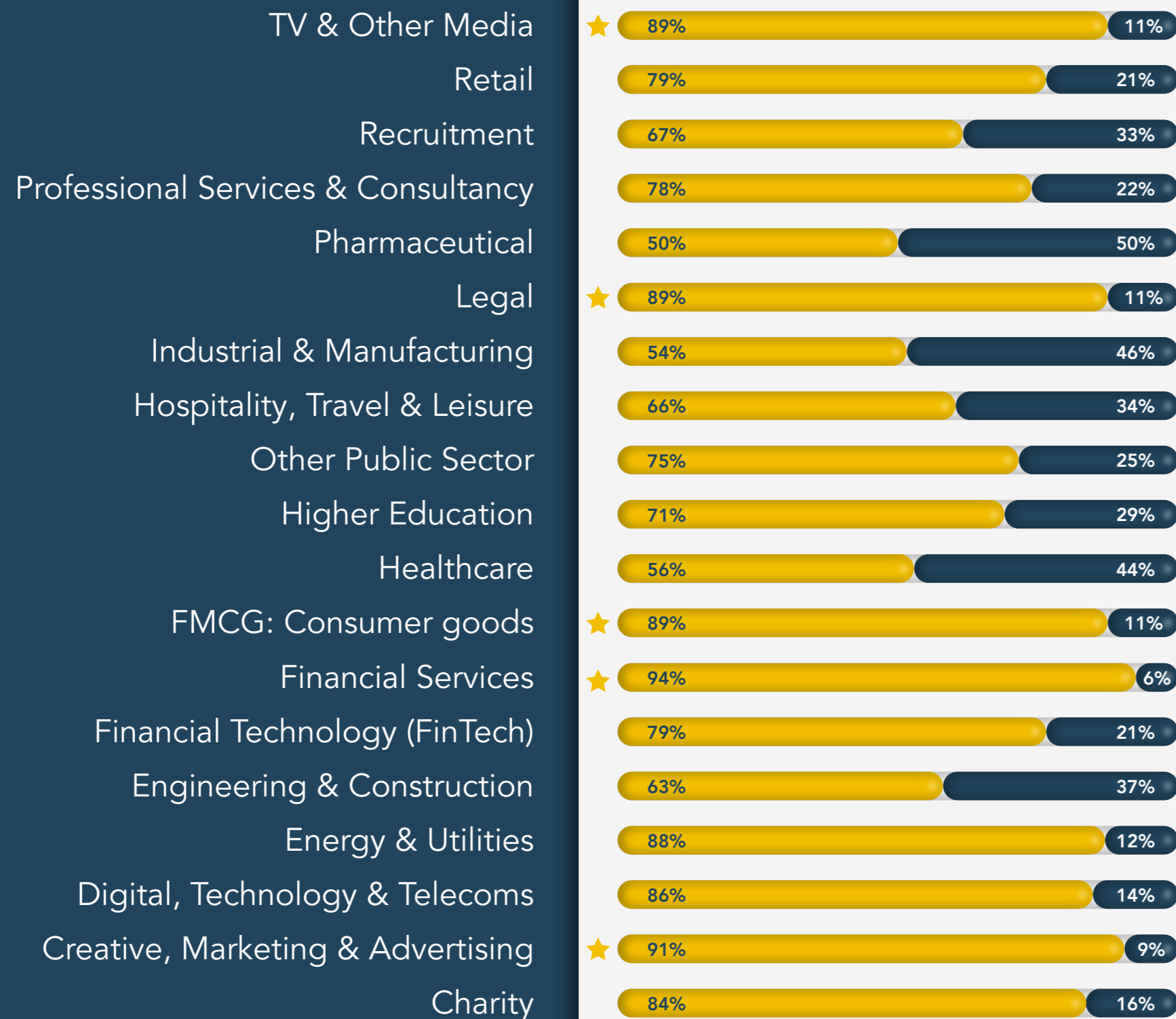




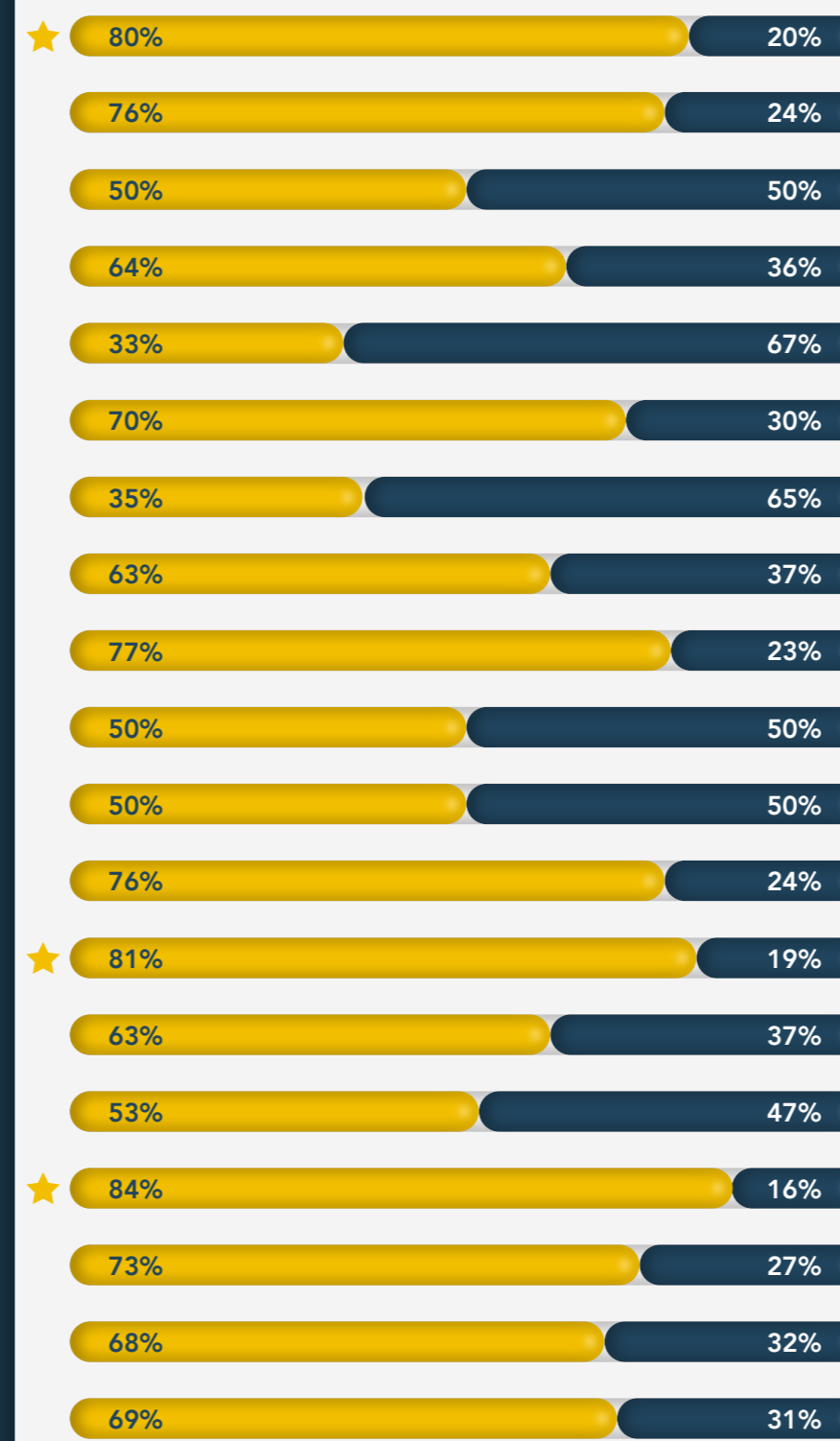
# Are there differences by sector?

■ Yes, we enhance  
■ No, we offer statutory pay only  
★ The sectors most likely to report enhanced pay

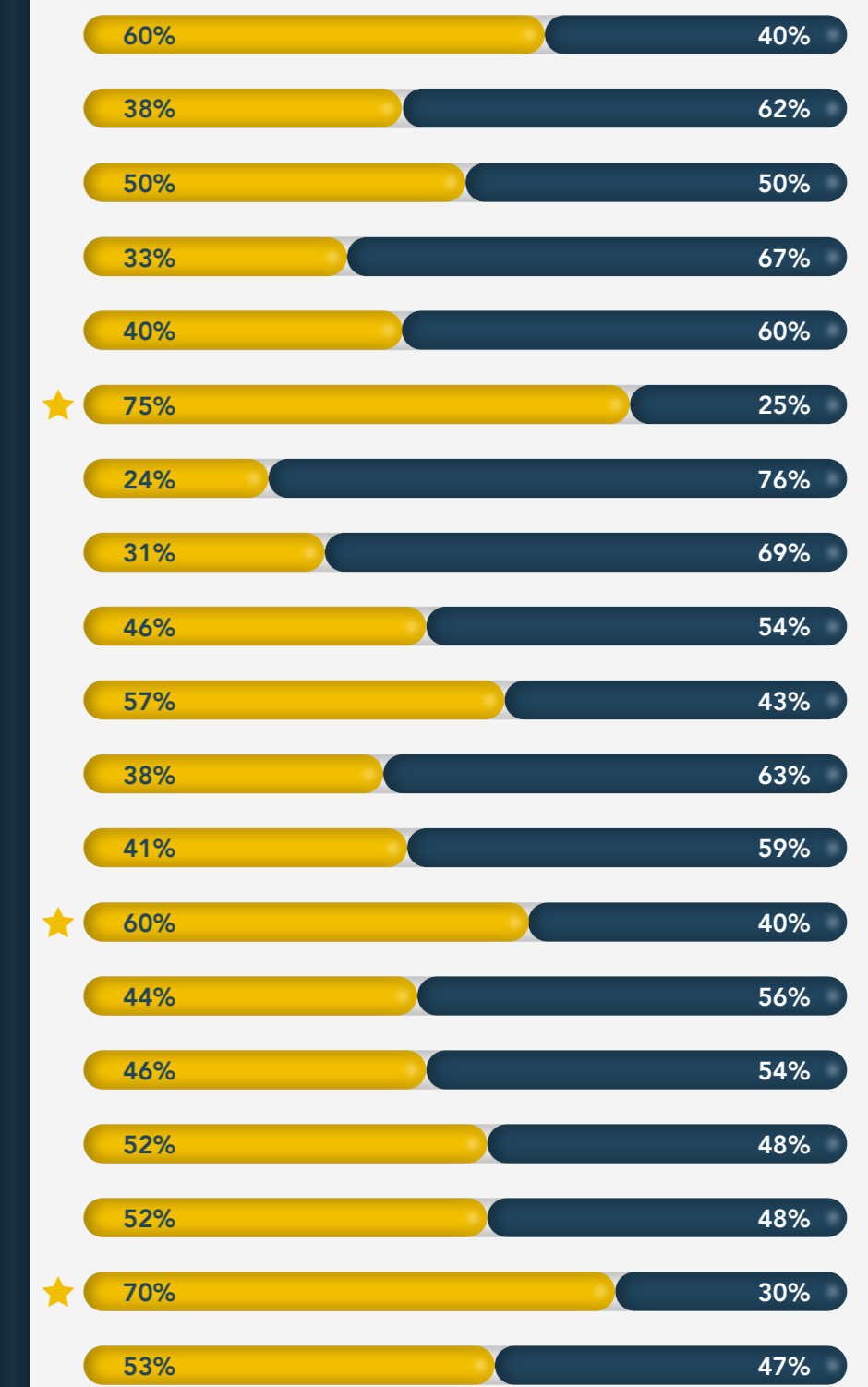
Sector-specific differences in enhanced **Maternity (inc Adoption / Surrogacy) pay**



Sector-specific differences in enhanced **Paternity / Partner pay**

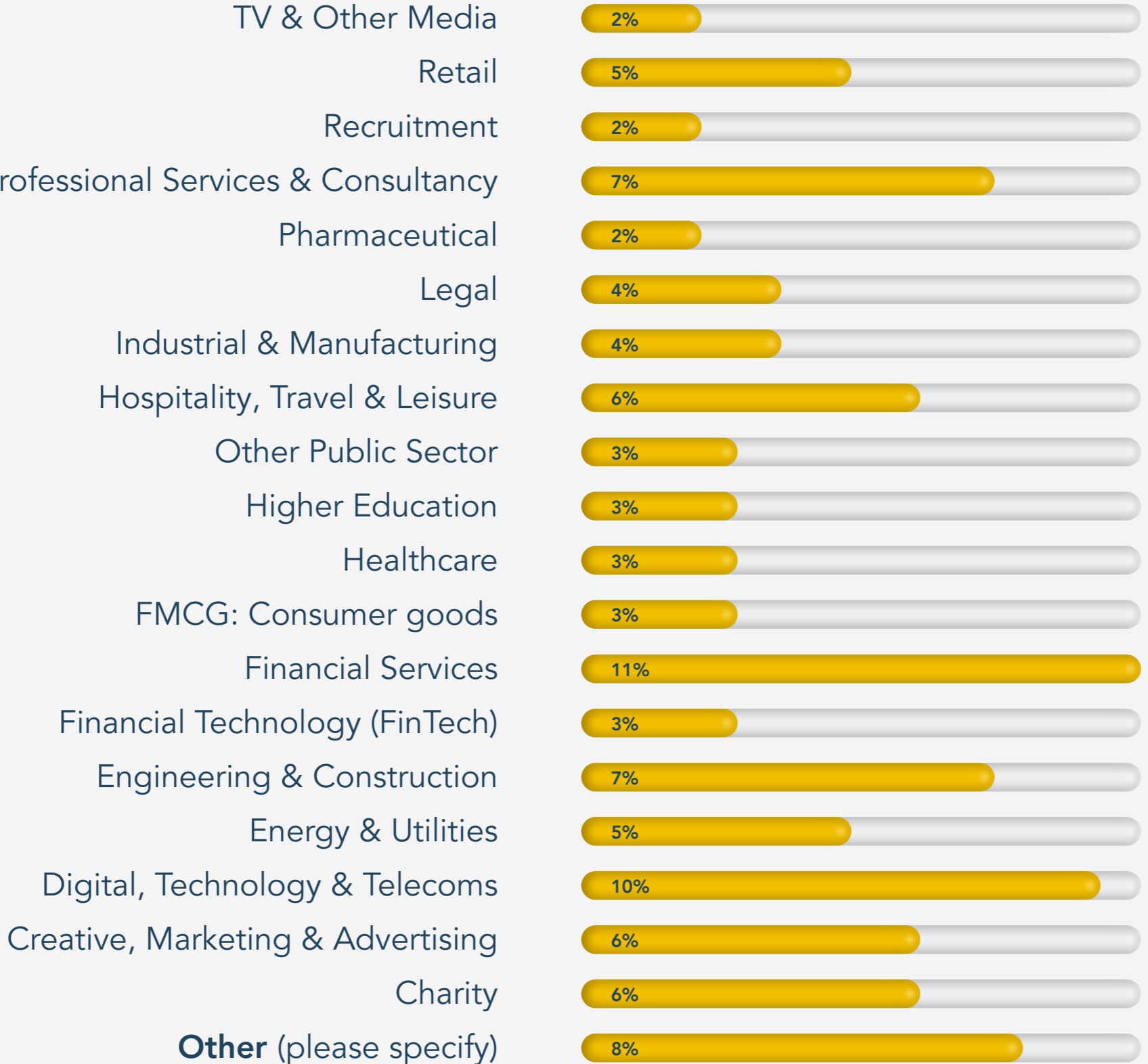


Sector-specific differences in enhanced **Shared Parental pay**





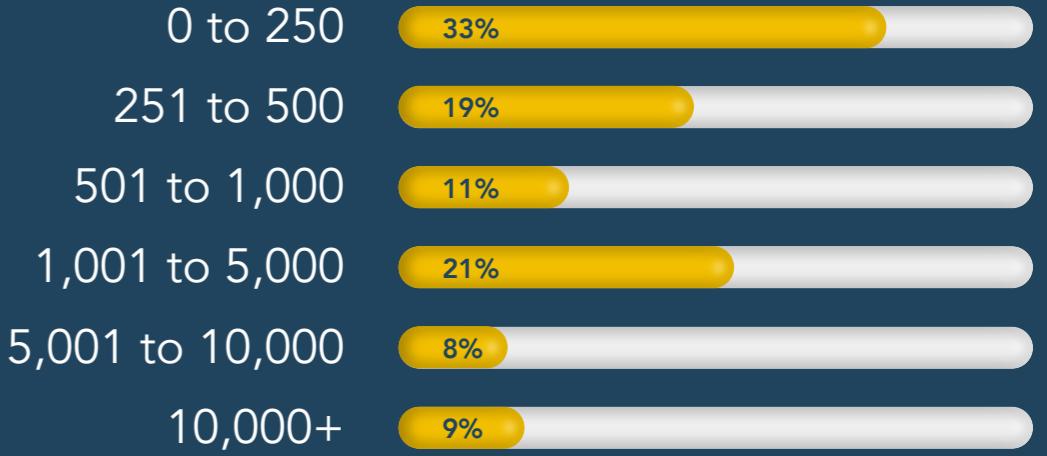
# More detail on who took part...



## Those selecting 'Other' included:

- Social Housing
- Life, Physical, & Social Science Occupations
- Music / Culture
- Transport
- Waste
- Affiliate Marketing
- Publishing
- Logistics / Distribution
- Recycling
- Defence
- Medical Research
- Car Warranty sales
- Transport & Logistics
- InsurTech
- Not-for-profit/ Membership organisation
- Aviation
- Real Estate
- Food services & Facilities Management
- Chemicals
- Betting & Gaming
- Education
- Further Education & Skills
- Private Equity
- Translations & Interpreting
- Clean Energy Technology
- Education resources & Technology

## Please tell us how many employees/members your company/organisation has.



While SMEs accounted for 1/3 of respondents, more than 1 in 5 were in the 1,001-5,000 category and 9% had 10,000+ employees.





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