Career break report 2025

Career breaks account for the major difference in women's financial resilience compared to men. Around 50% of women have taken a break in their career due to factors such as childcare or caring for elderly family members. This report will cover the recent statistics covering career breaks and how planning in advance or receiving support can make a difference in reducing the impact on financial resilience throughout.

*Information/statistics in the guide are provided from the Government Gender Pay Gap Report 2025 & Gender pay gap in the UK 2025.

Career breaks

Women are more likely to have taken a career break, the statistics show that 50% of women have taken a career break which is compared to only 20% of men. The gap is currently highest amongst those 55 and over, where almost 60% of women have taken a break.

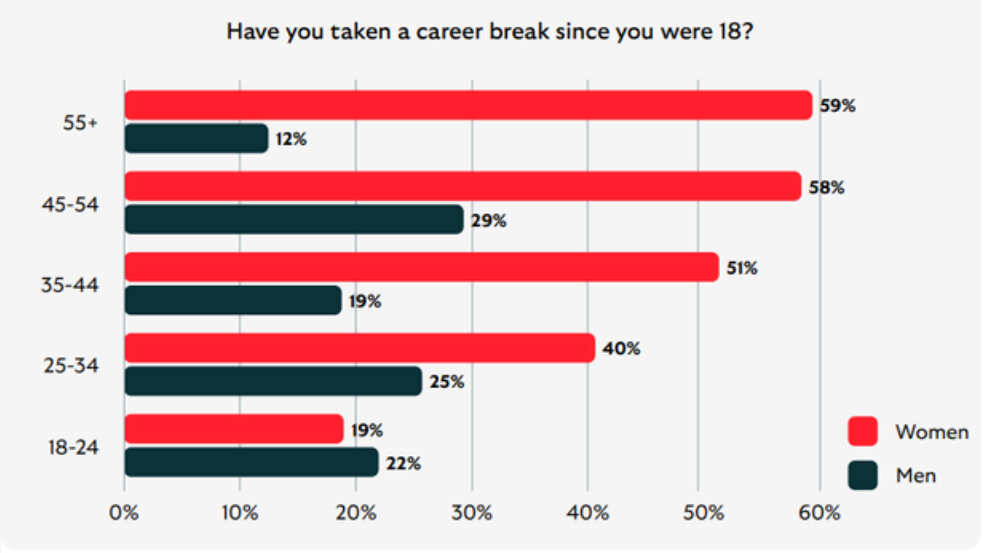
Often, women are able to manage their money sufficiently during their career break, however are unable to financially plan before hand to prepare for the break. Around 40% of women did not financially plan in preparation for their break, however 61% managed their money well once they experienced a change in income.

Financially planning in preparation for a career break can lead to reduced stress throughout the time off, and allow individuals to focus on the important tasks, whether it be caring for a new baby, elderly family member or taking time to improve themselves. This will also allow for greater opportunity to rebuild savings and long-term financial success by the point of returning to work.

Women are more likely to take a career break.

50% of women have taken a career break. This compares to 20% of men.

The gap is largest for those 55+, where nearly 60% of women have taken a break whereas only around 10% of men have done so.



Base: All respondents who have taken a career break (4,091).
Source: YouGov survey, between 29th August and 8th September 2025.
Note: "No" and "Don't know" answers have been excluded from the chart.

How childcare impacts career breaks

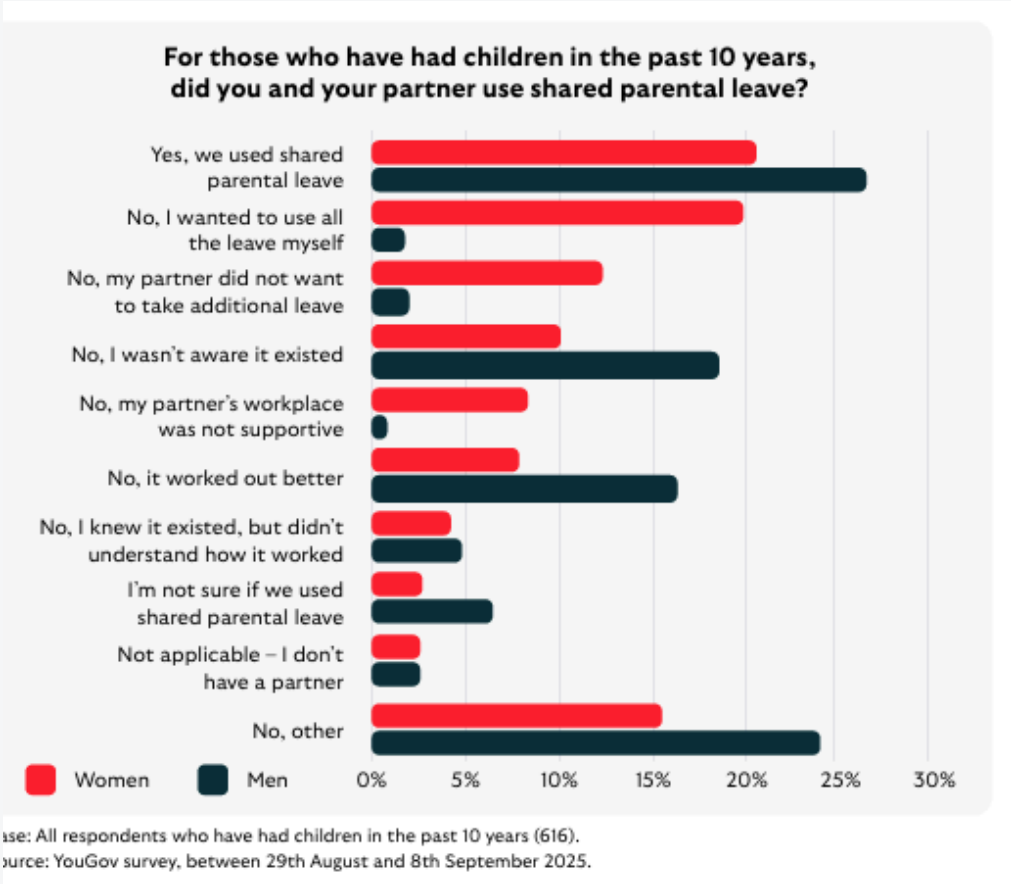
Around 36% of women have taken a career break to care for children, this is in addition to maternity leave. A study carried out by ONS revealed that mothers lose around £65,000 in earnings by the time their first child reaches the age of 5. This is compared to only 3% of men who have taken a break due to childcare.

Shared parental leave

Shared Parental Leave is a policy which allows parents to share maternity or adoption leave. Due to the increased amount of employers who offer SPL, women still carry the large majority of childcare. Many men and women voiced that they were not aware SPL was available via their employer or that it worked out better for their partner to take all eligible leave.

An increase in the use of SPL will significantly help drive and close career break statistics, with the full 9 months+ leave not always falling on the mother.

One in five women say it was their decision to take all the leave themselves, and a further one in five say their partner did not want to take additional leave or that their partners workplace was not supportive.



ase: All respondents who have had children in the past 10 years (616).
ource: YouGov survey, between 29th August and 8th September 2025.