



# Global Working Parents Report

Discover the unique challenges parents around the world face at work and how businesses can create more inclusive, supportive environments for employees with young children.

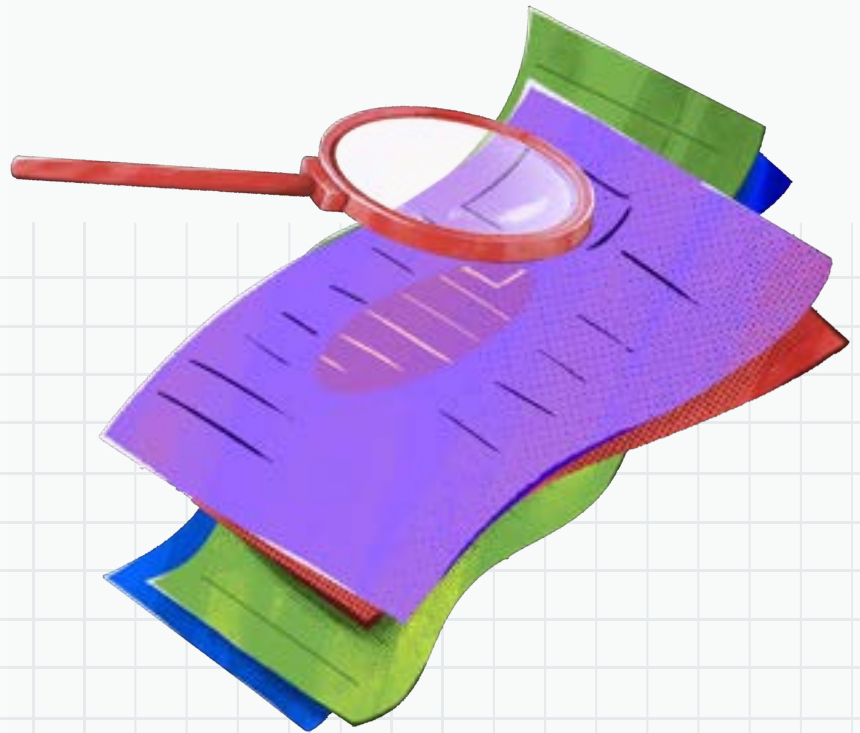


# Can parents have work-life balance?

Today's working parents face escalating challenges, including:

- Return-to-office mandates
- Rising inflation
- Increasing cost of living
- Financial burdens of childcare
- Stagnation in real wage growth

Working parents around the world continue to navigate the complexities of balancing professional responsibilities with parenting. In wake of the challenges outlined above, the financial and emotional impact of juggling work and family have become more pressing than ever.



# Remote's Global Working Parents Survey

## Survey Scope

Remote conducted a global survey of 13,850 working parents across 13 countries:



Australia



Belgium



Finland



France



Germany



Hong Kong



Singapore



Netherlands



Spain



Sweden



United Kingdom



United States



South Korea

## Purpose

The survey was prepared to help understand the unique challenges parents face at work and how companies around the world can better support their needs.

## Respondents

All respondents work white collar "desk jobs" and have at least one child under five years old. Each country's respondents were evenly split between fully remote, hybrid and in-office working arrangements.

## Global parental leave policy findings snapshot

Our findings reveal significant variations in how working arrangements — fully remote, hybrid, or fully in-office — impact finances, career decisions, and overall work-life balance across different countries. The report also details areas where employers and communities can make the biggest impact in giving working parents the best possible opportunity to succeed in the workplace.



## Explore detailed insights by country

Dive deeper into specific country insights to understand the most valuable benefits and the biggest costs for working parents in each location. Whether you're in Seoul or Sydney, find out how working conditions in your region compare to global trends and what steps can be taken to support working parents more effectively.



[Australia working parents analysis](#) →



[Belgium working parents analysis](#) →



[Finland working parents analysis](#) →



[France working parents analysis](#) →



[Germany working parents analysis](#) →



[Hong Kong working parents analysis](#) →



[Netherlands working parents analysis](#) →



[Singapore working parents analysis](#) →



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[Spain working parents analysis](#) →



[Sweden working parents analysis](#) →



[United Kingdom working parents analysis](#) →



[United States working parents analysis](#) →



# Australia working parents analysis

Remote's survey of **1,009 Australian working parents** reveals the financial and mental health burden that comes with returning to work and paying for childcare, especially for women. In light of these challenges, workers are demanding better flexibility from their employers.

**81%** of working parents would consider leaving their jobs if they had to work more days in the office.

**70%** of respondents agree that mothers take a bigger role in bearing childcare responsibilities within their families.

**92%** of women reported feeling guilty and anxious about returning to work, compared to 77% of men.

**55%** of men reported encouraging their partner to quit or consider quitting their job due to a lack of affordable childcare options during working hours, compared to 39% of women.

## This financial strain often leads women to make significant sacrifices:

**61%** have taken a pay cut or reduced their working hours because of inadequate childcare options, compared to 47% of men.

## Additional findings include:



### Financial burdens of childcare:

69% of working parents said their childcare costs would increase if their working arrangements changed, such as having more days in the office. Nearly 70% of parents say they have already reduced spending in other areas to keep up with childcare costs, and 57% said they have stayed in a job that makes them unhappy but pays more, to afford childcare.



### Work-life balance is key

Second to pay (53%), work-life balance is the second most important consideration when working parents are looking for a new job (47%). Around three quarters (74%) of working parents say they've felt guilty or anxious when asking for time off for childcare needs.

## The impact of return-to-office policies:

52%

of working parents feel that their company's return-to-work policy post-pandemic was unfair.

81%

of respondents would consider leaving their jobs if required to work more days in the office.

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## Belgium working parents analysis

Belgian working parents are increasingly looking for flexible work arrangements, but believe companies are slow to accommodate these needs. As many firms in Belgium seek new talent to expand their workforce, the lack of support for remote work remains a factor.

According to Remote's survey of **617 Belgian working parents**:

**71%** would consider leaving their job if remote work options became stricter.

This highlights the pressing need for more adaptable work policies to help parents balance their professional and family responsibilities.

**The survey sheds light on the financial and logistical burdens faced by Belgian parents.**

ON AVERAGE, PARENTS SPEND

**€700 / week**

on childcare costs, which include daycare, transportation, and babysitting.

This figure is notably higher than in other countries, such as nearby France, where the average is €492 per week.

## Key findings include:



### Impact of return-to-office policies

73% of parents have considered quitting their job or encouraged their partner to do so due to the pressures of managing childcare during working hours.



### Negative workplace feedback

Over two-thirds (77%) of parents reported receiving negative feedback or been reprimanded for taking unplanned time off to care for a sick child or due to daycare closures.



### Seeking balance

82% of parents are considering working fewer hours to get the balance between family time, the costs of childcare and work right.

These findings highlight the urgent need for improved work-life balance solutions to support Belgian working parents.

ONLY  
26%

of respondents are fully satisfied with their current childcare arrangements, underscoring the demand for more flexible work options.



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# Finland working parents analysis

With Finnish businesses facing a chronic [skilled labor shortage](#), better support for working parents could be the answer. Yet Remote's survey of **601 Finnish parents** reveals feelings of pressure by the demands of balancing work and family life.

**80%**

of parents said they have felt guilty or anxious when requesting time off for childcare needs. In many cases it may be warranted.

**55%**

have felt discriminated against or think they have been overlooked for promotions or opportunities at work because they are a working parent.

## Additional key findings include:



### Increased costs and pay cuts

75% of parents have taken pay cuts or reduced hours due to lack of childcare options. An equal percentage feel that more office days would increase their costs.



### Workplace discrimination

55% of parents feel discriminated against or overlooked for promotions, and 74% have received negative feedback for taking unplanned time off to care for their children.



### Negative impact of return-to-office policies

77% of parents said their employers implemented post-COVID return-to-office policies that have impacted them negatively, with over 70% considering quitting their jobs if required to work more office days.

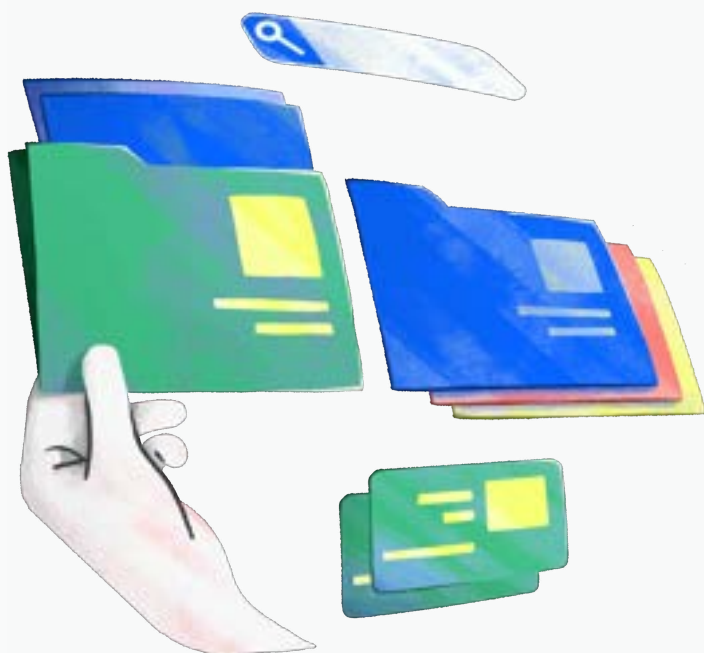
## Despite these challenges:

87%

of respondents acknowledge their employer's support for flexible work, which is crucial for managing childcare needs.

82%

of respondents underscore the necessity for better laws and regulations to support working parents, calling for legislative improvements.



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## France working parents analysis

Despite ongoing government efforts to support working parents, many in France continue to struggle with high childcare costs and inflexible work policies. Remote's survey of **1,002 working moms and dads** highlights the need for changes to better help them balance professional responsibilities with family life.

**The financial burden of childcare is a major issue facing French parents.**

ON AVERAGE PARENTS SPEND

**€493 / week**

on related costs, such as daycare, transportation, and babysitting.

This expense forces many families to make difficult financial decisions, impacting their overall quality of life.

**74%**

of parents reported cutting back on essential expenses like healthcare, groceries, and utilities to afford childcare.

**80%**

indicated that increased in-office work would further raise their childcare costs.

### Additional key findings include:



#### **The impact of workplace policies on family life**

73% of parents have considered quitting their job or encouraged their partner to do so due to the pressures of managing childcare during working hours.



#### **Need for flexibility and discrimination concerns**

73% of parents have submitted flexible working requests to their employers. Additionally, more than half of the parents say they have felt discriminated against or overlooked for promotions due to their parental status.

### The survey also reveals:

**86%**

of respondents believe more comprehensive laws and regulations are necessary to support working parents.

**81%**

feel that the government should do more to fund childcare institutions and provide subsidized options.



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# Germany working parents analysis

Despite ongoing discussions and political actions about the role of part-time and flexible work models to address the country's skills shortage, the reality for many German parents reveals a different story. Remote's survey of **1,507 German parents** highlights the need for greater support.

## 'Fake flexibility' persists

While **84% of respondents** feel their employers support flexible work, allowing them to arrange childcare around their working day, a deeper look reveals significant gaps:

**71%** of German parents report experiencing 'fake flexibility' from employers, including false promises of remote work and flexible hours.

**79%**  
feel overlooked for promotions or opportunities at work because they are working parents.

**76%**  
feel guilty or anxious when requesting time off for childcare needs.

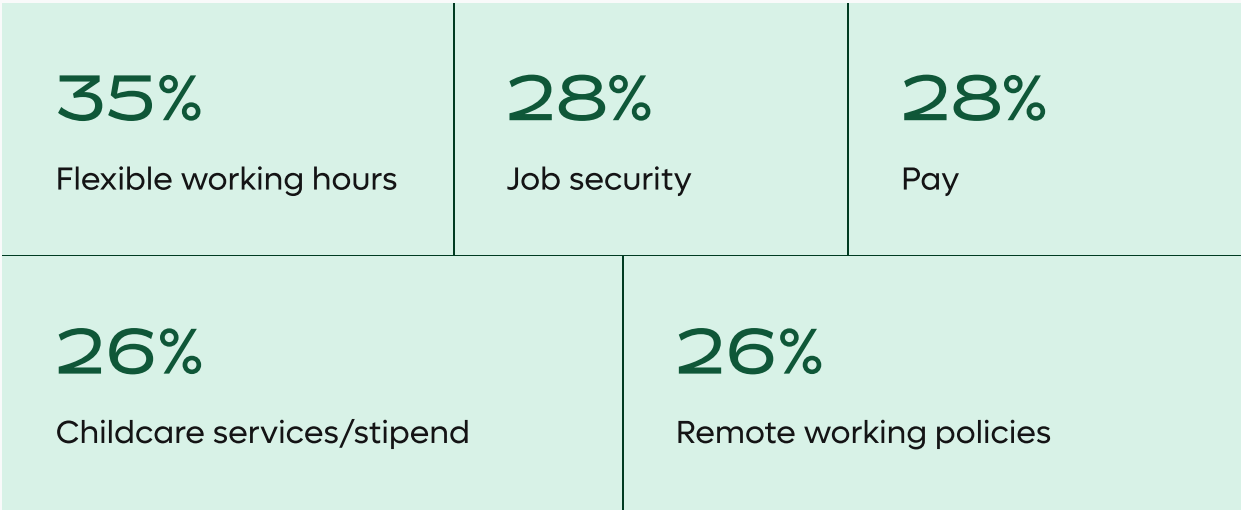
**76%**  
experienced negative impacts from return-to-office policies, with 92% considering job changes if forced to return to the office more often.

**69%**  
have been reprimanded or received negative feedback for taking unplanned time off to care for a sick child or due to daycare closures.

Additionally, 70% of respondents have encouraged their partner to quit or reduce hours due to childcare challenges, and 76% have taken a pay cut or reduced working hours themselves for the same reason.

**Flexibility is now parents' top priority**

Working parents shared that when choosing a workplace, flexibility is now number one in their list of top considerations:



## Government and policy needs

Despite recent efforts guaranteeing childcare after 12 months, many parents still find it challenging to secure suitable childcare.

**70%**

of parents have encouraged their partner to quit their job.

**76%**

have taken a pay cut or reduced their working hours.

**78%**

believe the government needs to do more to support childcare facilities with better provisions and more places.

**83%**

wish for laws that better enable flexible work models for working parents.

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# Hong Kong working parents analysis

Remote's survey of **1,002 working parents** in Hong Kong highlights the significant need for flexible work arrangements to balance professional and parental responsibilities. The report reveals that flexible work arrangements, such as hybrid or remote work, are highly valued by Hong Kong working parents, even more than job prospects or a 10% salary increase.

## Key findings include:



### Support for flexible work

A substantial 86% of working parents agree that fully remote work benefits their mental health the most, while 74% believe that hybrid work arrangements also have a positive impact. However, nearly 87% feel they are offered “fake flexibility” despite their workplaces implementing flexible work policies.

More than 43% of working parents feel anxious that requesting flexible work arrangements could lead to job loss, underscoring the need for better implementation and acceptance of flexible work policies by employers.



### Challenges in implementation

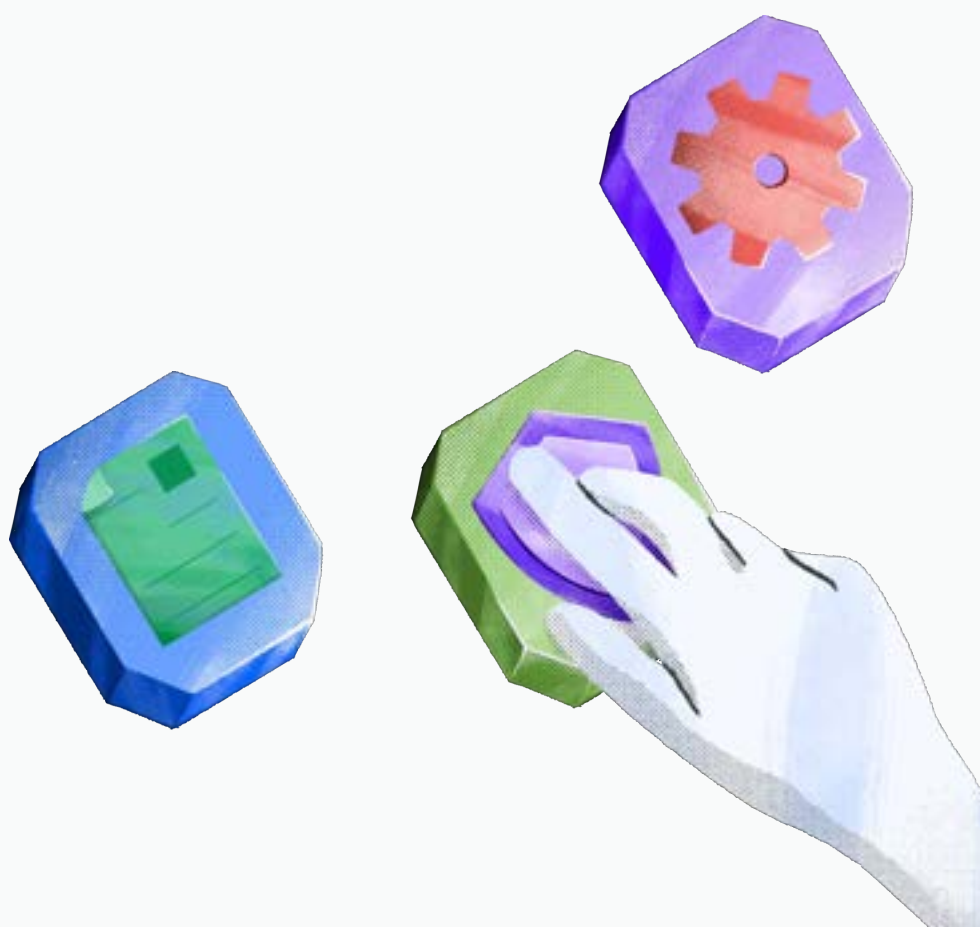
Despite 42.1% of respondents stating their employers have implemented flexible working arrangements, 88.9% feel overlooked for promotions or other opportunities due to being working parents. Additionally, 87.6% have considered quitting their jobs due to the lack of affordable childcare options during working hours.





### Impact on job decisions

The financial and emotional burdens of childcare are evident, with 88.8% of respondents saying they have had to take a pay cut or reduce working hours because of the lack of affordable childcare options. Furthermore, 87% of working parents feel guilty and anxious when requesting time off to care for their children.



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## Netherlands working parents analysis

While many companies in the Netherlands are eagerly searching for new talent and expanding their workforce, Remote's **survey of 1,007** respondents showed that working parents face challenges in the workforce.

**Dutch parents would consider leaving their job if remote working options were to become stricter.**

**19%**

encountered resistance when requesting flexible working arrangements

**76%**

of working parents are contemplating working fewer hours to better balance family time, childcare costs, and work responsibilities.

**As in many other countries, Dutch parents said the financial burden of childcare is a major issue they face.**

ON AVERAGE PARENTS SPEND

**€723 / week**

This is significantly higher compared to other countries, such as France, where the average weekly cost is €492.

## Additional key findings from the survey include:



### Impact of return-to-office policies

65% of working parents considered quitting their job or encouraged their partner to do so due to increased pressure from return-to-office policies.



### Negative workplace feedback

68% of parents reported to have received negative feedback or being reprimanded for taking unplanned time off to care for a sick child or due to daycare closures.

ONLY  
**28%**

of respondents are fully satisfied with their current childcare arrangements, with the majority seeking improvements or significant changes. Flexible working arrangements are the second most important factor after salary when choosing a job, with men prioritizing job security and commute length, while women place a higher importance on flexibility.

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# Singapore working parents analysis

Remote's survey of **1,000 working parents** in Singapore reveals the impact of flexible work arrangements on family planning and work-life balance.

With Singapore's historically low birth rate becoming a national issue,

**89.7%** of working parents say that flexible working arrangements would increase their chances of having additional children.

As the Government prepares to implement the Tripartite Guidelines for Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) by the end of the year, the role of employers in supporting working parents and boosting the birth rate is more crucial than ever.



## Key findings include:



### Support for flexible work

With nearly 9 in 10 parents saying they would consider having more children if provided with more flexible work arrangements, the survey underscores the key role that employers play in employees' family planning decisions. Additionally, 81% of working parents agree that flexible, remote, and hybrid work arrangements are most helpful for balancing career and parental responsibilities.



### Challenges in implementation

While 56% of respondents say their employers accepted their flexible working arrangement requests, 82% feel they were offered "fake flexibility." This indicates a disconnect between policy and practice, highlighting the need for better implementation of flexible work policies.



### Impact on job decisions

The financial and emotional burdens of childcare have led 82% of respondents to consider quitting their jobs due to a lack of affordable childcare options during working hours. Additionally, 87% considered leaving their jobs when faced with more days in the office, emphasizing the importance of flexible work in retaining talent.



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## South Korea working parents analysis

In South Korea, the balancing act between career and parenting continues to pose significant challenges for working parents. Remote's survey of **1,005 white-collar workers** sheds light on these challenges, underlining the critical need for flexible work arrangements.

**Flexibility in work arrangements is not just a preference but a crucial factor for job retention among South Korean working parents, to enable them to balance childcare, school, and other family responsibilities.**

**44%**

of all respondents indicate that flexible working arrangements are crucial for their decision to stay at their job.

**65%**

of remote workers are satisfied with their work-life balance, higher than 58% of hybrid workers and 49% of in-office workers.

**72%**

Nearly three in four parents have felt the negative impact of return-to-office policies on their work-life balance, with men slightly more likely to have switched jobs due to return-to-office policies, at 37% compared to 32% for women.

**Financial strain influences significant life decisions for working parents.**

58%

of parents have considered leaving their jobs due to inadequate work flexibility affecting childcare.

35%

of women are likely to reduce working hours to better manage childcare, compared to 25% of men.

28%

of remote workers express the need to adjust their budget for childcare, compared to 45% of in-office workers, indicating that remote workers report the highest ability to manage work and family without financial compromise.



## Childcare costs are a key consideration for working parents.

# 36%

of all respondents work primarily to afford childcare. Remote workers report childcare as a less dominant career driver at 30%, compared to 35% for hybrid and 40% for in-office workers, suggesting that remote work may offer better opportunities for managing childcare costs alongside career goals.

# 39%

MEN

vs.

# 34%

WOMEN

work primarily for childcare affordability, which indicates that mothers and fathers share a similar sense of financial responsibility for childcare needs.



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# Spain working parents analysis

Remote's survey of **1,002 Spanish working parents** underscores how flexible working hours and remote work policies have become significant job priorities alongside compensation. This transformation reflects broader changes in work-life balance models, with flexibility becoming a non-negotiable option for many.

## What Spanish working parents prioritize when choosing a job:



Flexibility in working hours has become more important than remote working itself, indicating a strong preference for adaptable schedules over mere location-based flexibility.

## Flexible work is crucial



## Additional findings include:



### Support for flexible work

A significant 80.24% of Spanish workers report that their companies fully support flexible working, providing the necessary assistance to organize childcare around their workday. Among those with flexible work patterns, 27.45% state that it helps them manage household responsibilities better, while 27.15% feel they can be better parents by being present when their children need them.



### Acceptance of flexible work proposals

More than 68% of respondents have proposed flexible work arrangements to their employers, but only 43% say these arrangements have been accepted.

## While current regulations aim to support parents,

84%

of respondents believe that there should be better laws and regulations on flexible work at the national level.

74%

indicate that while childcare support exists, it remains difficult to access.



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## Sweden working parents analysis

As return-to-office mandates increase and calls for greater flexibility grow louder, Swedish working parents face significant challenges in balancing work and family life. Remote's survey of **602 Swedish parents** highlights the importance of flexible working conditions and the impact of inflexibility on the everyday lives of working parents.

**80%**

of parents have accepted a pay cut or reduced their working hours to better balance childcare with work.

**83%**

have considered reducing their hours to 80%.

Despite Sweden's relatively low childcare costs, non-flexible work policies and negative employer attitudes significantly impact parents' mental health and career progression.

### Additional key findings:



#### Mental health impact

80% feel guilty or anxious when requesting time off for childcare needs, and 79% have been reprimanded for taking unplanned time off to care for a sick child.



#### Experiences of discrimination

71% of parents feel discriminated against or overlooked for promotions due to their parental status.



#### Return-to-office policies

80% report that return-to-office mandates have negatively impacted them, with nearly 80% (79.40%) claiming they were offered "fake flexibility" or false promises of remote work and flex-time.

NEARLY **70%**

of respondents believe their current setup could improve with small adjustments, with flexible working as a top priority for many parents.

**82%**

of parents think better laws and regulations are needed to support flexible working.

**78%**

have submitted flexible working requests, with most being accepted.

In other countries like Finland, France, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, and the US, generous parental leave policies rank high among job search priorities—between 15% to 26% of respondents consider these options most important when job hunting. However, in Sweden, this option receives zero percent preference.

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# United Kingdom working parents analysis

As the UK grapples with an ever-growing skills gap, working parents are a vital, yet underutilized, resource. Yet Remote's survey of **1,501 moms and dads** highlights that despite government initiatives, UK working parents continue to face obstacles fully participating in the workforce.

MORE THAN **2/3** (70%)

of working parents in the UK have quit or are considering quitting their job due to lack of affordable childcare options.

## Financial pressures are a major concern:

OVER  
**€1600 / month**

is spent on childcare by more than half of working parents, which is 25% more than the average rent in England.

## Additional key findings from the survey include:



### Job dissatisfaction and sacrifices

73% have taken a pay cut or reduced hours due to unaffordable childcare, and 70% have stayed in an unhappy job to afford childcare.



### Negative workplace experiences

63% of working parents have been reprimanded or received negative feedback at work due to taking unplanned time off for their child being sick. Three quarters of respondents felt guilty or anxious for taking time off for childcare needs, with working mothers (78%) more likely to feel guilty about unplanned childcare related absences than working fathers (68%).

Despite the new Flexible Work Act coming into force in April, false promises of flexible and remote work are also impacting working parents.

**65%**

of working parents said they have been offered 'fake flexibility' at work, leading to unexpected or unplanned childcare costs.

**73%**

of working parents fear that their childcare costs would go up further if they were required to work more days in the office.

### Top priorities for working parents when considering a job:

**37%**

Flexible working hours

**35%**

Pay

**25%**

Job security

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# United States working parents analysis

In the United States, the allure of work flexibility through remote and hybrid models promises a new era of balance for working parents. Yet Remote's survey of **2,001 working parents** across the country tells a different story. Amid rising inflation and escalating living costs, the realities of managing careers — even ones with some level of flexibility — alongside young children are proving to be anything but simple.

## The Promises vs. realities of hybrid work

The data shows that hybrid work, celebrated for its potential to offer the perfect blend of remote and office-based environments, often falls short of expectations, with hybrid workers actually encountering some of the toughest challenges.

■ Hybrid workers ■ In-office workers ■ Remote workers

### Dissatisfaction with work-life balance



### Reduced working hours or accepted pay cuts due to the soaring costs of childcare during their working hours



### Want to work from home more frequently to better manage childcare but find their schedules too rigid



The financial and emotional toll of work ‘flexibility’

With nearly one in three families spending **more than \$900 weekly** on childcare during work hours, parents are being pushed to make difficult decisions to cope with the financial and emotional strains of balancing work and family life.

Hybrid working parents    In-office working parents    Remote working parents

Reduced spending on essential items, including groceries, healthcare visits, and utilities, in order to afford childcare during their working hours



Encouraged their partners to quit their jobs to manage childcare



Report missing key family moments, such as tucking their children into bed, at least three days a week on average due to work obligations





## Family planning pressures: A universal challenge

Despite the differences across work models, one thing remains consistent: the profound difficulty and expense of being a working parent in the United States.

NEARLY  
**1/5**

parents across all work models have considered sending their young children to school earlier to manage the high costs of childcare, underscoring a common challenge irrespective of work arrangement.

NEARLY  
**1/4**

parents have delayed or are reconsidering having more children due to their job demands, with the least impact seen among remote workers (22% remote vs. 25% hybrid and 27% in-office), indicating that despite financial pressures, remote roles may offer more confidence in one's ability to balance career and family.



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## Learnings for employers

The data gathered from this extensive survey underscores the need for tailored, flexible work policies that consider the diverse backgrounds and needs of working parents globally. By highlighting the commonalities and differences across various countries, Remote aims to foster dialogue and inspire policy changes that make the workplace a more inclusive and supportive environment for parents worldwide.



### **The shift to remote work changed perceptions about parental leave**

After parents realized the advantages of being able to stay home with their children and enjoy more flexible schedules, companies have discovered that parents are focusing more priority on spending time with their children in the first phase of their lives.



### **Parents want increased leave when welcoming new children into their families**

Expectations are high. There are a few problems, however: not all countries require paid parental leave, and not all parental leave covers all parents. In fact, many parents are excluded entirely from traditional maternity and paternity leave policies.



### **A generous, inclusive, and equitable family leave policy attracts and retains top talent**

To create this sort of policy, your organization must commit to going beyond the minimum statutory requirements when it comes to family leave — especially in places where no minimum exists.



### **Provide equitable and inclusive parental leave benefits to employees no matter where they live.**

Remote is purpose-built to help distributed companies hire, pay, and manage a multi-country workforce. You get one comprehensive HR platform specifically designed for global teams. Our team of HR experts craft globally compliant and locally competitive benefits programs that make it easy for you to attract and retain the world's best talent.

# Set up a chat with a Remote expert

You can talk through the specifics  
of your company's situation

Schedule a call



## Employees Holidays

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**Paul Grant**  
Marketing Manager

Only today



**Beatriz Costa**  
Product Designer

Mar 16 - Mar 18



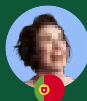
**Narobi Yan**  
UX Writer

Tomorrow



**Peter Rowling**  
Marketing Manager

Tomorrow



**Alisha Jackson**

ONBOARDING

Step 1 of 3



**16 JOINERS**

+5 from last week



**512 HEADCOUNT**

+10 from last week



## Summary

82 countries

## Annual salary

\$80,000.00

## COUNTRY

## ONBOARDING TIME



Argentina

7 days



Brazil

4 days



France

3 days



Italy

3 days