

**The Women and Work All Party Parliamentary Group
&
The Return Hub**

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Presented by

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- The Return Hub is a recruitment platform set up in 2016 to be the link between the women who want to re-launch their careers in financial services and employers in the sector who want to achieve a better gender balance.
- We have surveyed professional women who have returned to work and women who want to re-launch their careers, asking them for their views on the questions asked by the APPG for its annual report.
- Total of 108 responses.

Key Findings:

Nearly 60% of respondents think the best way to incentivise the private, public and charity sectors to increase the number of women returning to work is to increase awareness amongst employers of the benefits of hiring returners.

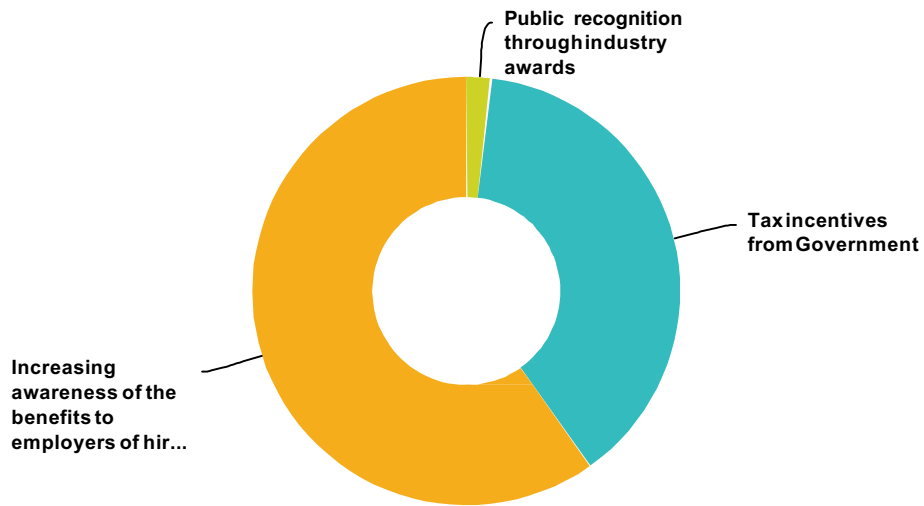
60% of respondents think the main barrier preventing women from returning to work is reluctance from employers to hire someone with a CV gap.

Just under 63% think employers do not offer enough flexible / agile working opportunities due to a culture of presenteeism.

Over 70% think business leaders should increase the adoption of flexible / agile working arrangements by incentivising hiring managers to promote flexible working.

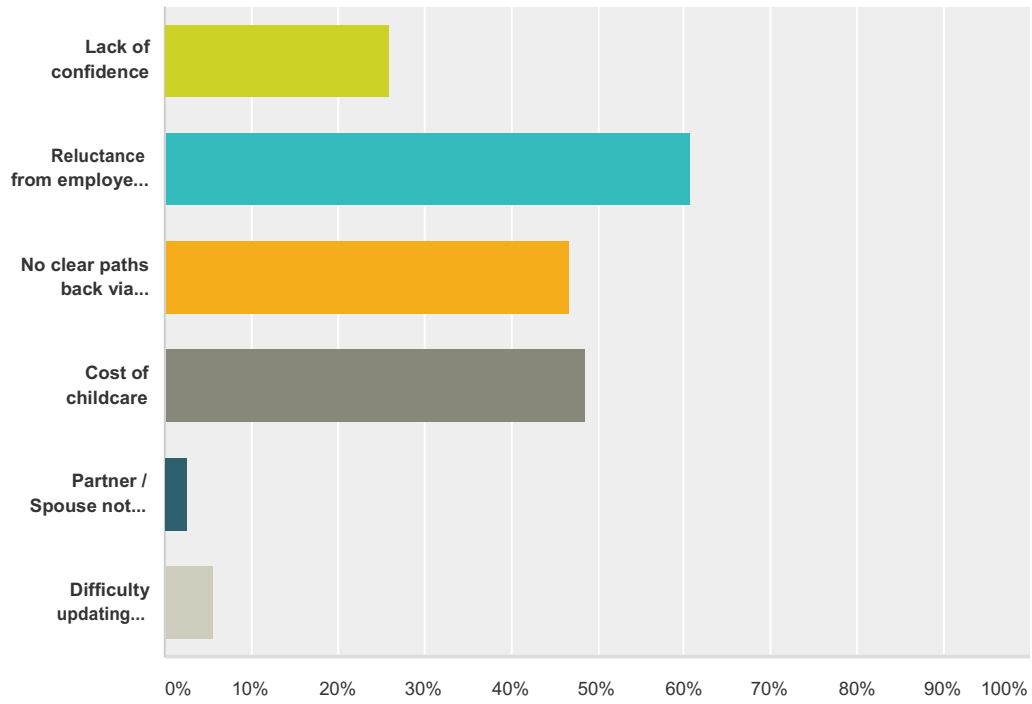
Nearly 90% think Government should provide incentives such as tax breaks to see more "Returnships".

Q1 What is the best way to incentivise the private, public and charity sectors to increase the number of women returning to work?



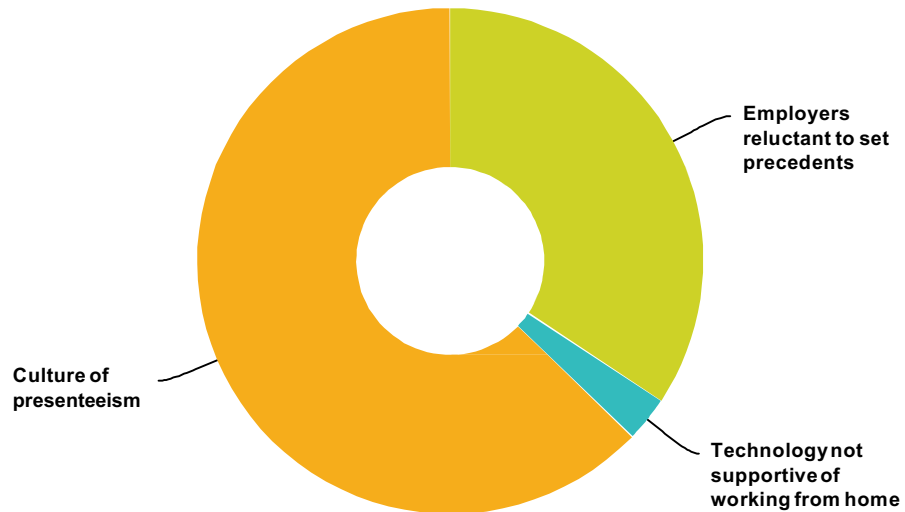
Answer Choices	Responses
Public recognition through industry awards	1.96%
Tax incentives from Government	38.24%
Increasing awareness of the benefits to employers of hiring returners	59.80%

**Q2 What are the two main barriers preventing women from returning to work?
(Please tick two)**



Answer Choices	Responses
Lack of confidence	26.17%
Reluctance from employers to hire someone with a CV gap	60.75%
No clear paths back via traditional recruiting channels	46.73%
Cost of childcare	48.60%
Partner / Spouse not supportive	2.80%
Difficulty updating professional skills	5.61%

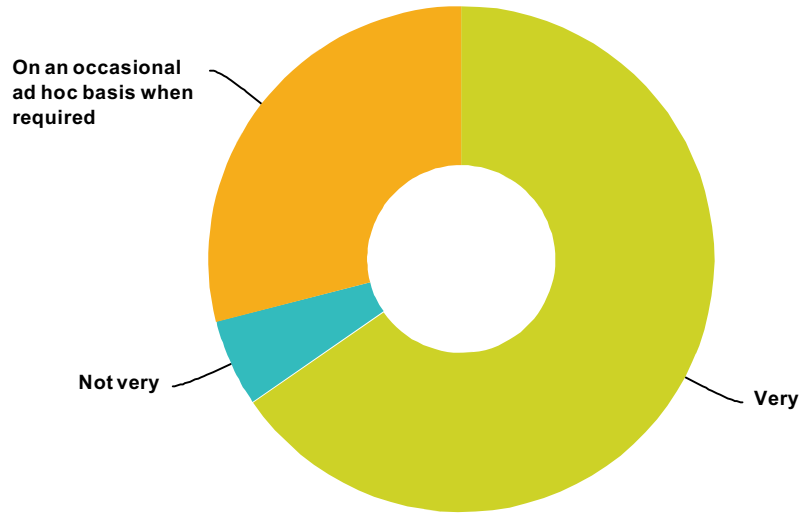
Q3 Why do employers not offer enough flexible / agile working opportunities?



Answer Choices	Responses
Employers reluctant to set precedents	34.31%
Technology not supportive of working from home	2.94%
Culture of presenteeism	62.75%

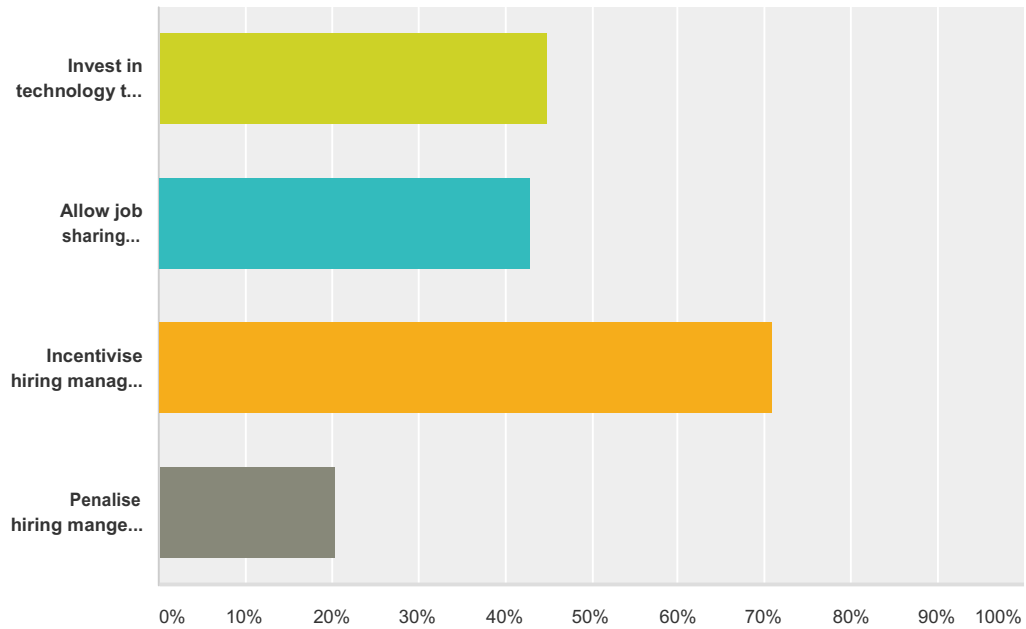
#	Other (please specify)
1	Definitely hard to allow one person to work flexibly/part time etc and not lay oneself open to all requesting the same.
2	Practice evolving slowly. Lack of imagination/daring. Employers fear it will be complex to handle.
3	Perception part time workers unproductive and unreliable which is opposite of true facts.
4	The criminal justice system (courts) operates on a 5 day week basis.
5	Jealousy of rival talent amongst women.
6	It's easier to do what they've always done in the past.
7	Often bosses who don't have children, don't understand the needs of parents. Sometime they do, but often not.
8	Perception that people who work from home are having a 'day off' is still rife despite most people working harder when they work from home and being far more efficient than when they are in the office.
9	Most employers are men and don't have the same need for this as women do so don't really get the need for it.
10	It's too easy to hire staff from outside the UK.

Q4 How important is the ability to work flexibly to you?



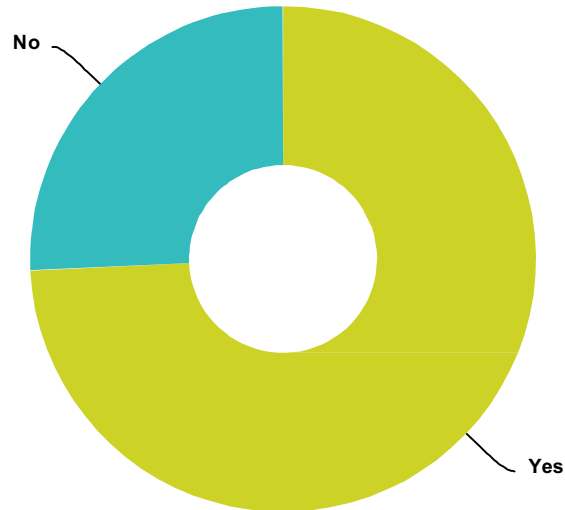
Answer Choices	Responses
Very	65.42%
Not very	5.61%
On an occasional ad hoc basis when required	28.97%

Q5 What two things can business leaders do to increase the adoption of flexible / agile working arrangements?



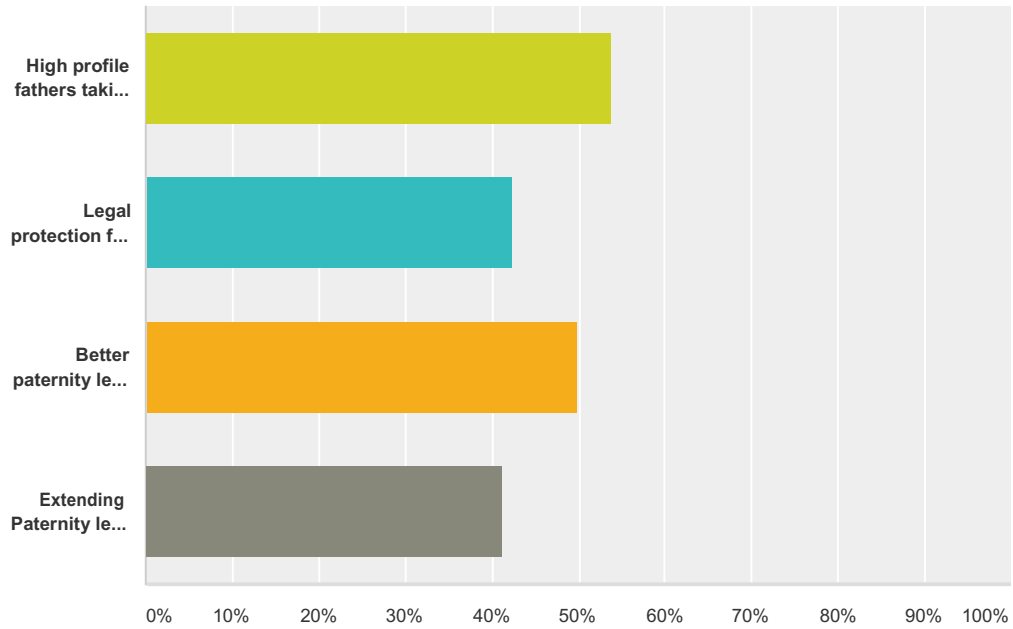
Answer Choices	Responses
Invest in technology that would enable it	44.86%
Allow job sharing opportunities	42.99%
Incentivise hiring managers to promote flexible working	71.03%
Penalise hiring mangers that don't allow flexible working	20.56%

Q6 Do you think the take-up of shared parental leave should be increased?



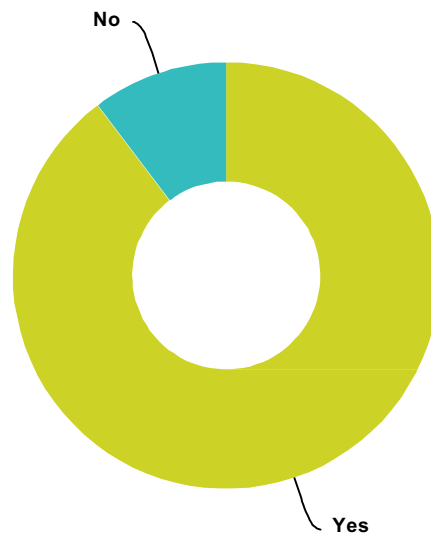
Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	74.29%
No	25.71%

Q7 What two answers do you think will increase the take-up of shared parental leave by fathers? (Please tick two)



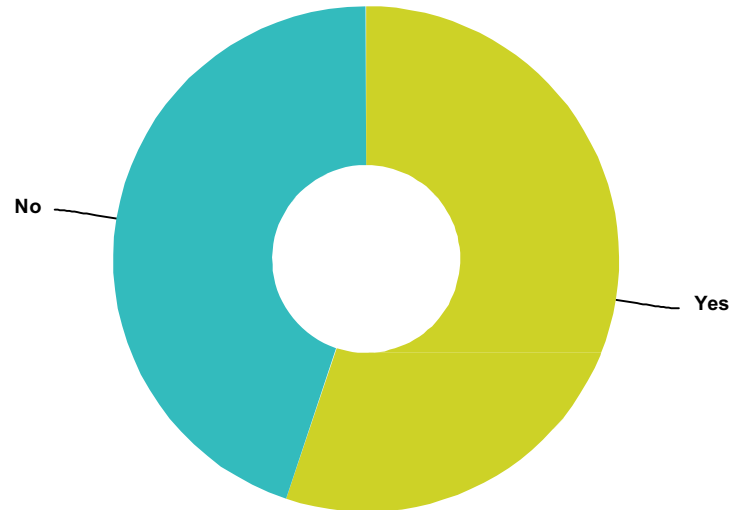
Answer Choices	Responses
High profile fathers taking it up	53.85%
Legal protection from redundancy for both parents whilst on parental leave	42.31%
Better paternity leave pay	50.00%
Extending Paternity leave without shortening the mothers maternity leave	41.35%

Q8 Should the Government provide incentives such as tax breaks to see more “Returnships”?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	89.72%
No	10.28%

Q9 Should “Returnships” be mandatory for larger employers?



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	55.14%
No	44.86%

Summary of additional feedback from respondents with suggestions about how the Government can increase the number women returning to the workforce

- TV and Media campaign to increase awareness of the benefits of hiring returners
- Childcare vouchers
- Pay for all childcare from pre-tax salary
- Tax breaks for employers that offer flexible working
- Equal pay legislation enforced, particularly for part time workers
- Promote “temp to perm” opportunities
- High profile leaders who are job sharers or flexible workers should be promoted in the media
- Incentivise businesses to take on Returners and promote the benefits of hiring returners
- Short term tax breaks for women returners, short term childcare benefits
- Better and higher government subsidised childcare in nurseries
- Wrap around childcare in schools
- Abolish tax on childcare
- Further engagement with employers on the benefits of women returners. Promote the advantages of having a diversified work force and the benefits of more female representation at all levels of the company
- Government to offer “returnships”
- Incentivise employers to have “returnships” along the lines of apprenticeships
- Offer free re-training / learning academy with government accreditation
- Promote flexible working
- Quantify the benefits to the individual business, the economy and society as a whole from increased participation of women in the workforce. Consider making flexible childcare in the home tax deductible or give a fixed allowance – including thinking about means testing this benefit
- Encourage organisations to make a positive decision that they want working parents with all that goes with it – part time, occasional crisis, flex hours etc
- Making men feel they *should* be contributing to running family life at home by offering them more chances to be at home.
- Quotas for hiring more women