

12 December 2023

**The Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs - Legislation Committee - Inquiry into the Paid Parental Leave Amendment (More Support for Working Families) Bill 2023**

*Submission from Impact Economics and Policy*

Impact Economics and Policy welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs inquiry into the Paid Parental Leave Amendment (More Support for Working Families) Bill 2023.

Earlier this year we published research (extracts attached) that highlighted the pivotal role the introduction of paid parental leave has played in increasing labour force participation of women with children aged 0-4. We have estimated that this policy increased the number of women in employment by 74,500 women in 2021-22, adding \$8.5 billion to GDP.

On the advice of the Productivity Commission, the Australian Government designed its paid parental scheme very carefully by ensuring it maintained the relationship between employers and workers on maternity leave. This has had the impact of significantly improving retention and lifting female participation, particularly amongst women that work in small businesses.

Research highlights that women working in small businesses experienced the biggest gains in terms of access to paid parental leave and improved retention after taking maternity leave.

Any move to exempt small businesses from the current arrangements would weaken the relationship between employers and workers on parental leave. The proposed amendments would risk undermining the success of paid maternity leave in lifting female participation. This would adversely impact our economy, small businesses, and women.

Gender pay gap data highlights that small businesses have

While acknowledging the additional administrative burden dealing with Centrelink places on small businesses, these businesses benefit from the government subsidising paid parental leave for their workers and increased retention of staff that take parental leave. Removing the obligation for them to make the payment will act to undermine small business productivity and competitiveness in the long term. Instead, the government should consider reducing the administrative burden through streamlining the registration process or making payments through the Australian Tax Office, as occurred with *JobKeeper*.

Thank you for considering our submission in your deliberations

Regards



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Dr Angela Jackson  
Lead Economist, Impact Economics and Policy

**ATTACHMENT –EXTRACTS FROM IMPACT ECONOMICS AND POLICY (2023), CHILD CARE SUBSIDY ACTIVITY TEST: INCENTIVE OR BARRIER TO LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION?**

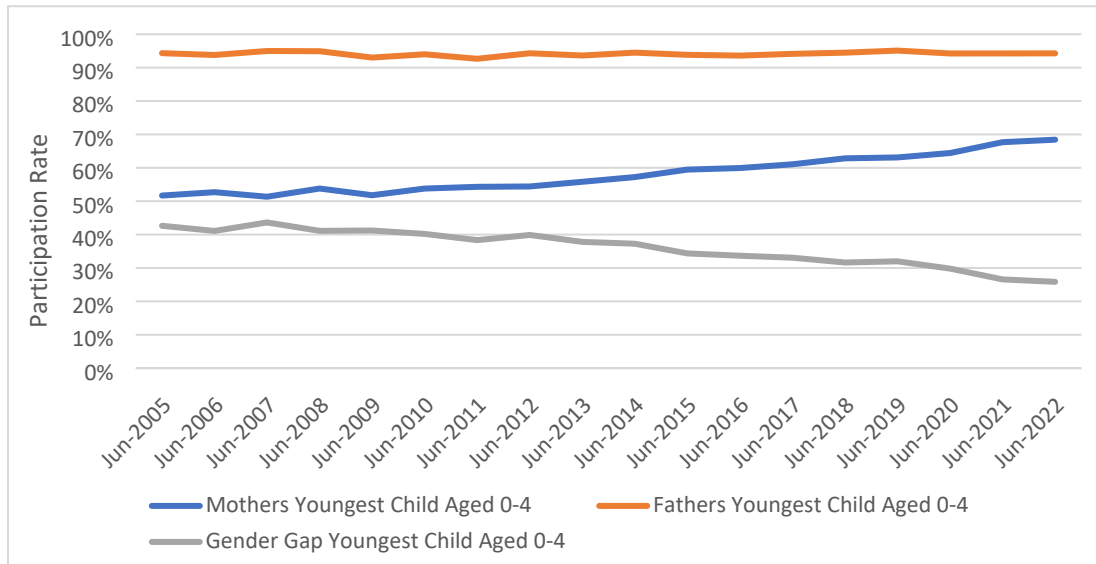
**FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN PAID WORK**

Women in Australia have similar levels of labour force participation to men, until they have children when they fall behind and never catch up.<sup>1</sup> The differences are most pronounced in families with children under the age of 5.

These differences are driven by the uneven distribution of unpaid caring responsibilities, that represents a major barrier to female participation in paid work. The extent to which child care is available and affordable has consistently been found to lift rates of female participation.<sup>2</sup> This is because it can increase the returns to work and is also a pre-requisite to find and undertake work.

The gap between males and females has been closing. Since the introduction of government paid maternity leave in 2011 there has been a significant increase in participation by females in families with children under 5, up from 54.3 per cent in 2011 to 68.4 per cent in 2022. There has been no corresponding decline in the participation of men with children under 5.

**FIGURE 1 MALES AND FEMALES IN FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS OF AGE**



Source: [Labour Force Status of Families, June 2022 | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](https://abs.gov.au/tables/n/tables/6200) Table 9, and author calculations

<sup>1</sup> The Australian Government The Treasury (2022), Treasury Round Up – Productivity Edition, Children and Gender Gap Earnings: <https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-11/p2022-325290-children.pdf>

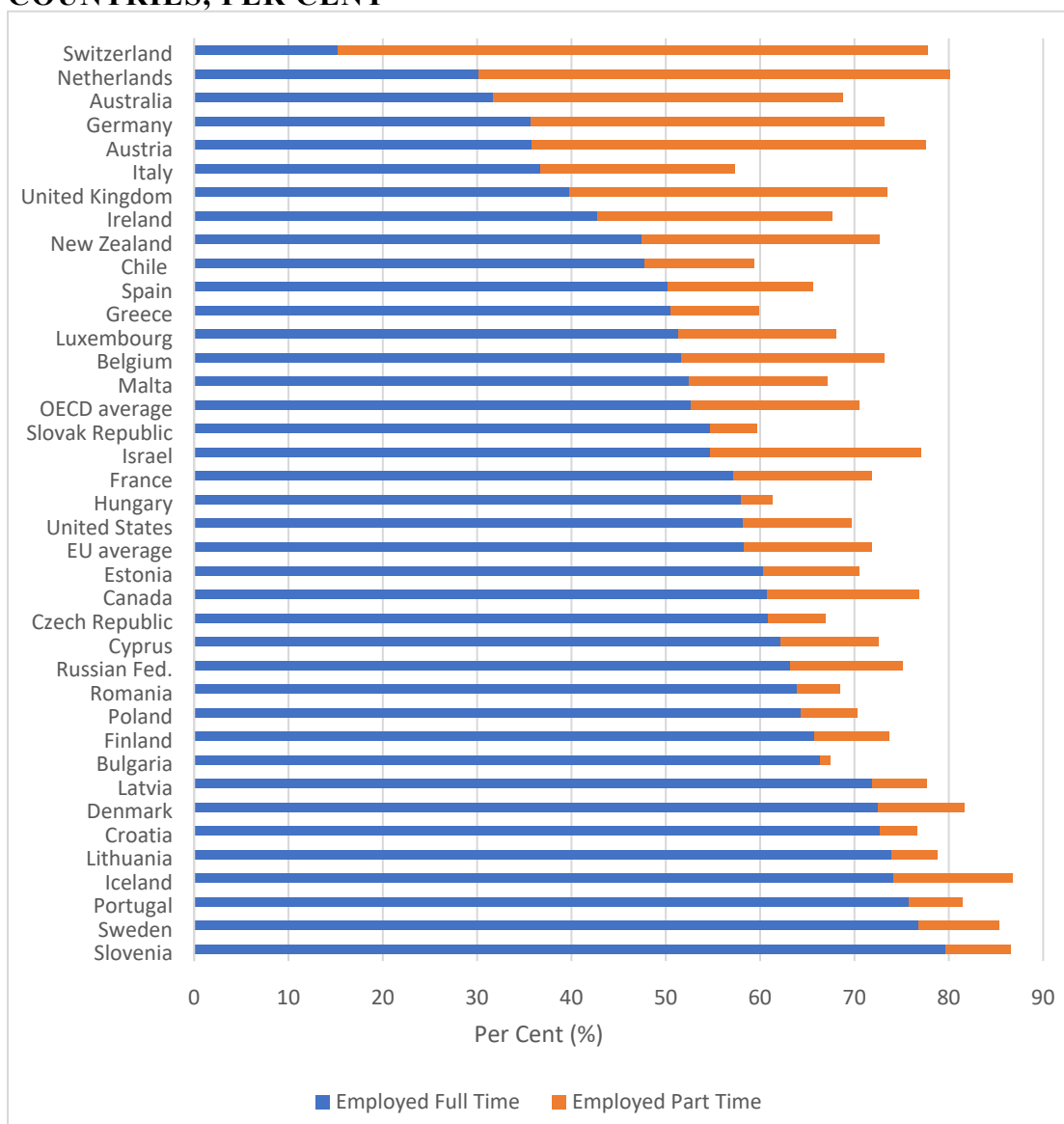
<sup>2</sup> OECD (2020), Is Child care Affordable? Policy Brief on Employment, Labour and Social Affairs: <https://www.oecd.org/els/family/OECD-Is-Child-care-Affordable.pdf>

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However, despite these gains Australia’s rates of maternal labour force participation remain low in comparison to other OECD countries, with Australian women having the third lowest rates of participation in full-time work across the OECD.<sup>3</sup>

If labour force participation rates for females in families with children under 5 were to increase to match male participation rates, there would be an additional 301,000 females in families with children under 5 years old in the labour force.<sup>4</sup>

**FIGURE 2 MATERNAL EMPLOYMENT RATES, FULL AND PART TIME, OECD COUNTRIES, PER CENT**



Source: [OECD Family Database - OECD LMF 1.2](#)

<sup>3</sup> [OECD Family Database - OECD LMF 1.2](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Labour Force Status of Families, June 2022 | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#) Table 9 and author calculations

While individual preferences and differences across countries in gender norms may explain some of these differences, there are also important differences in policy settings that are driving Australia's poor performance.<sup>5</sup>

### *Policy Differences*

Compared to countries that perform at the top of the OECD in terms of female participation, Australia has less generous maternity and paternity leave and a higher cost of child care. The imposition of an Activity Test to access subsidised early childhood education and care does not occur feature in countries with high levels of maternal labour force participation.

**TABLE 1: POLICIES COMPARED**

	<i>Parental Leave</i>	<i>Use it Lose it provisions for fathers</i>	<i>Average Child Care Costs</i>	<i>Activity Requirement for Access to Child Care Subsidies</i>	<i>Per cent of women employed full time (%)</i>
<i>Australia</i>	<i>22 weeks</i>	<i>NA*</i>	<i>24 per cent of earnings</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>31.8</i>
<i>Canada</i>	<i>50 weeks</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>16 per cent of earnings</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>60.7</i>
<i>Sweden</i>	<i>68 weeks</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>5 per cent of earnings</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>76.7</i>

*\*Australians Government has indicated intention to introduce use it or lose it provisions but no such provisions have been announced.*

In order for Australia to close the gap with its international peers, and benefit from the full potential of women in the workforce it will need to take further action on each of these policy areas.

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## BARRIERS TO FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN PAID WORK

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A number of known barriers exist to female participation in paid work, including:

- Discrimination and harassment<sup>6</sup>
- Low rates of pay in female dominated industries<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Equity Economics (2021), Back of the Pack – How Australia's Parenting Policies are Failing Women and Our Economy, December 2021

<sup>6</sup> Gonzales, C et al (2015), IMF Staff Discussion Note: Fair Play – More Equal Laws Boost Female Labour Force Participation, February 2015: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/sdn/2015/sdn1502.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Cassells, R., Vidyattama, Y., Miranti, R., & McNamara, J. (2010). The impact of a sustained gender wage gap on the Australian economy.



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- Gender norms that women should undertake the primary carer role in the family<sup>8</sup>
- Lack of access to high quality and affordable child care<sup>9</sup>

Discrimination and harassment can influence the decision of women to work by reducing job satisfaction, placing limits on career opportunities, causing mental health issues and lowering self-esteem.

As noted above the decision to work and how much to work is heavily influenced by potential wage rates, and the enduring gender pay gap means women have lower returns to work than men.

Gender norms entrench the role of women as primary care givers, creating a barrier to participation.<sup>10</sup> Caring for young children is labour intensive, and does not leave time for undertaking job search activities.

When respondents that would like to enter the labour force or work more hours are asked about the barriers that are stopping them starting in the next four weeks, 12.6 per cent (85,900) women and only 1.1 per cent (5,000) men cite caring for children as the reason.<sup>11</sup>

### *Policies Levers to Increase Female Participation*

International and Australian evidence highlights a number of policies that have been found to impact maternal participation in the labour force, including:

- Paid maternity leave which maintains the connection between women and their employer and results in women being more likely to return to work after having children<sup>12</sup>;
- Paid paternity leave which encourages more equal sharing of caring responsibilities between parents and increases maternal labour force participation and hours worked<sup>13</sup>;
- The availability and cost of child care, with an expansion in access to low-cost child care associated with increases in female participation.<sup>14</sup>; and
- Reducing effective marginal tax rates of the second earner in households.

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<sup>8</sup> Deloitte (2022), *Breaking the Norm – Unlocking Australia’s Economic Potential*: file:///Users/angelahinckson/Downloads/deloitte-au-economics-breaking-norm-unleashing-australia-economic-potential-031122%20(2).pdf

<sup>9</sup> Gong, X, Breunig, B and King, A 2010, ‘How responsive is female labour supply to child care costs? — New Australian estimates’, *Treasury Working Papers*, 2010-03, Australian Treasury.

<sup>10</sup> Deloitte (2022), *Breaking the Norm – Unlocking Australia’s Economic Potential*: file:///Users/angelahinckson/Downloads/deloitte-au-economics-breaking-norm-unleashing-australia-economic-potential-031122%20(2).pdf

<sup>11</sup> [Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia, 2020-21 financial year | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#) Table 5

<sup>12</sup> Valentova, M. (2019). The impact of parental leave policy on the intensity of labour-market participation of mothers: Do the number of children and pre-birth work engagement matter? *Journal of European Social Policy*, 29(3), 428–445. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0958928718776826>

<sup>13</sup> Patnaik (2014). Reserving Time for Daddy: The Short and Long Run Consequences of Fathers’ Quotas. [https://cepr.org/sites/default/files/events/papers/4576\\_PATNAIK%20-%20Reserving%20Time%20for%20Daddy.pdf](https://cepr.org/sites/default/files/events/papers/4576_PATNAIK%20-%20Reserving%20Time%20for%20Daddy.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Vuri, D. 2016, ‘Do child care policies increase maternal employment?’, *IZA World of Labour*, vol. 241.



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Understanding why these policies have an impact requires first understanding how economists model participation in paid work, particularly of women with children. In the next section we explain the theory behind female labour supply, and provide an empirical example of the benefits possible from these policies using the introduction of paid maternity leave in Australia as a case study.

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## HOW DO ECONOMISTS MODEL DECISIONS TO WORK?

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Economists model the decision of individuals to work using different theoretical and empirical approaches. There are generally considered two important steps in an individual's decision to work<sup>15</sup>:

- Step One** – the decision to participate in paid work
- Step Two** – the decision on how many hours to work in paid work

Both steps are influenced by education levels, wage rates, tax rates, individual preferences, and the presence of children and other dependents in the household. In addition, the first step – the decision to work – is also influenced by search costs.

Search costs involve the costs of finding and accepting a good job match, and include the time to find work, the foregone income while searching for a good job match, the costs of travelling to find work, and for women with young children the costs of childcare. The higher the search costs, the less likely individuals are to participate in job searching or persist in looking for an optimal job match.<sup>16</sup> This can impact both the probability of working and the returns from working.

Economists have explored the relationships between various factors and labour force participation overtime, and while the size of impacts often vary depending on the countries studied and data used, the general directions are well established.

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<sup>15</sup> Heckman, J. (1983). *A life-cycle model of family labour supply* (pp. 213-230). Palgrave Macmillan UK.

<sup>16</sup> Turon, Helene, The Labour Supply of Mothers. IZA Discussion Paper No. 15312, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4118213> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4118213>

**TABLE 2: DRIVERS OF THE DECISION TO WORK AND HOW MUCH TO WORK**

	<b>Decision to participate</b>	<b>Decision on how many hours</b>
Education <sup>17</sup>	Higher levels of education associated with being more likely to participate	Higher levels of education associated with working more hours
Taxation <sup>18</sup>	Higher taxation rates associated with lower probability of participation	Higher levels of taxation reduce benefits of working and hours worked
Wage <sup>19</sup>	Higher potential wage associated with being more likely to participate	Higher wage associated with working more hours
Children <sup>20</sup>	No impact for men, but presence of children in household reduces likelihood of participation for women	No impact for men, but presence of children in household decreases hours worked for women
Child care costs <sup>21</sup>	No impact for men, but higher child care costs associated with lower probability of participation for women	No impact for men, but higher child care costs decreases hours worked for women
Search costs <sup>22</sup>	Higher search costs reduce participation	Search costs do not impact hours worked

Any policies that impact the returns from work, the probability of those returns and the cost of searching for work, will impact decisions around labour force participation.

Decisions around child care use and work are complicated as they tend to occur simultaneously, and policy approaches need to factor in the impact on both search costs and the returns to work.

### *Do Mothers Caring for Children Face Lower Returns from Work?*

Women returning to work face lower returns due to associated child care costs.<sup>23</sup> These costs reduce the probability of women working and the number of hours they choose to work.

Close to half of women caring for children aged 0 to 12 years old who were part-time workers (1.1 million), unemployed (157,000) and not in the labour force (817,000) report that access to child care and financial assistance for child care were ‘very important’ as incentives to participate in the labour force.<sup>24</sup> Policies that reduce the cost of child care and increase the availability have been found to significantly increase labour force participation.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Kennedy, S., Stoney, N., & Vance, L. (2009). Labour force participation and the influence of educational attainment. *Economic Round-up*, (3), 19-36.

<sup>18</sup> Blundell, Richard, Andreas Peichl, and Klaus F. Zimmermann (eds), LABOR SUPPLY AND TAXATION (Oxford, 2016; online edn, Oxford Academic, 23 June 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198749806.001.0001>, accessed 23 Feb. 2023.

<sup>19</sup> Card, D., & Krueger, A. B. (1993). Minimum wages and employment: A case study of the fast food industry in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

<sup>20</sup> Heckman, J. (1983). *A life-cycle model of family labour supply* (pp. 213-230). Palgrave Macmillan UK.

<sup>21</sup> Powell, L. M. (1997). The impact of child care costs on the labour supply of married mothers: Evidence from Canada. *Canadian Journal of Economics*, 577-594.

<sup>22</sup> Michelacci, C., & Pijoan-Mas, J. (2012). Intertemporal labour supply with search frictions. *The Review of Economic Studies*, 79(3), 899-931.

<sup>23</sup> Turon, Helene, The Labour Supply of Mothers. IZA Discussion Paper No. 15312, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4118213> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4118213>

<sup>24</sup> [Barriers and Incentives to Labour Force Participation, Australia, 2020-21 financial year | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#) Table 14

<sup>25</sup> Turon, Helene, The Labour Supply of Mothers. IZA Discussion Paper No. 15312, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4118213> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4118213>



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A number of Australian studies have quantified the impact, with a range of estimates on the impact of child care costs on both the decision to work and the number of hours worked. These studies tell us how much a one per cent increase in child care costs will impact the probability of labour force participation and the number of hours worked.

**TABLE 3 ESTIMATES OF IMPACT OF HIGHER CHILD CARE COSTS ON DECISIONS TO WORK**

	<b>Decision to Work</b>	<b>Decision on How Many Hours</b>
NSW Productivity Commission (2020)	A one per cent increase in costs reduces labour force participation by 0.07 percentage points	A one per cent increase in costs reduces hours worked by 0.04 per cent
Gong and Breunig (2012)	A one per cent increase in costs reduces labour force participation by 0.07 percentage points	A one per cent increase in costs reduces hours worked by 0.11 per cent

*Do Mothers Caring for Children Face Higher Search Costs?*

Caring for children can increase search costs in a number of ways:

- The opportunity cost of searching may be higher as it reduces time spent with children.
- Finding and securing suitable child care represents an additional search cost.
- Negotiating work arrangements with an employer that allows for the balancing of work and family adds to search costs.
- Negotiating caring responsibilities with a partner that has stayed fully engaged with work represents an additional search cost.
- The cost of child care is an additional search cost.
- Limited availability of child care may limit the days that a woman can work or commit to work, making a job match more difficult and increasing the costs of searching.
- Women show a preference for jobs with closer proximity to home and child care to facilitate caring activities.<sup>26</sup>

Higher search costs will reduce labour force participation, and while a number of studies have shown strong behavioural responses to reducing search costs<sup>27</sup> there is limited empirical research using real world data that can isolate search costs from other impacts. However, the introduction of universal paid maternity leave in Australia provides an illustrative example of the potential benefits.

<sup>26</sup> Le Barbanchon, T., Rathelot, R., & Roulet, A. (2021). Gender differences in job search: Trading off commute against wage. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 136(1), 381-426.

<sup>27</sup> Beam, E. A. (2021). Search costs and the determinants of job search. *Labour Economics*, 69, 101968. And Girum Abebe, A Stefano Caria, Marcel Fafchamps, Paolo Falco, Simon Franklin, Simon Quinn, Anonymity or Distance? Job Search and Labour Market Exclusion in a Growing African City, *THE REVIEW OF ECONOMIC STUDIES*, Volume 88, Issue 3, May 2021, Pages 1279–1310, <https://doi.org/10.1093/restud/rdaa057>

*Paid Maternity Leave – A Case Study in Reducing Search Costs and Lifting Female Participation*

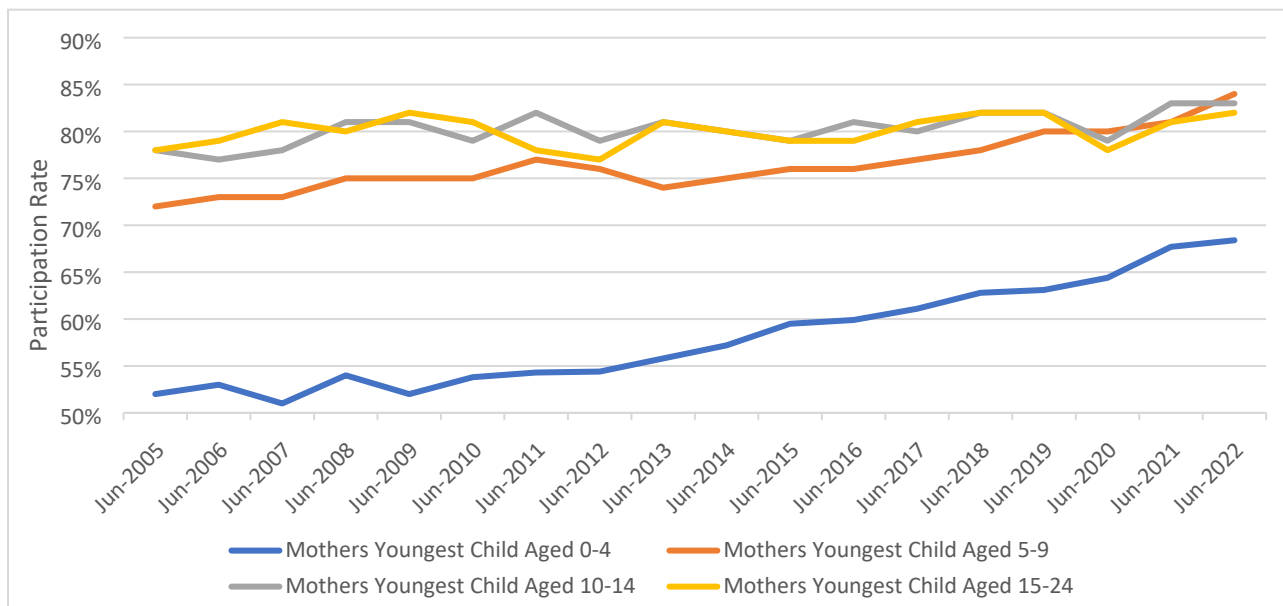
The provision of paid maternity leave has been found to increase rates of labour force participation in a number of studies in Australia and overseas.<sup>28</sup> This result is somewhat counter intuitive – we would expect that increasing the benefits from not working, would reduce the probability of working. However, we observe the opposite.

Paid maternity leave has been found to increase participation largely because it maintains a woman’s relationship with her employer and attachment to the labour market.<sup>29</sup> This reduces search costs for women returning to work after having a child, and as a result increases participation in paid work. The design of the Australian scheme also encouraged women to stay engaged in work in order to qualify for the payment.<sup>30</sup>

Australia introduced a paid parental scheme in 2011 which provided universal maternity leave, subject to a means test, and also underpinned a large increase in maternity leave provision by private sector companies. This expansion in paid maternity leave has been found to have lifted female labour force participation by studies using administrative data.<sup>31</sup>

Impact Economics and Policy analysis using difference-in-difference methodology (see Appendix) finds that the introduction of paid parental leave in Australia has led to a faster growth in participation amongst women with children aged under 5 compared to other cohorts.

**FIGURE 34 GROWTH IN LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION OF MOTHER'S WITH CHILDREN AGED 0-4**



<sup>28</sup> Kalb, G. (2018). Paid parental leave and female labour supply: A review. *Economic Record*, 94(304), 80-100.

<sup>29</sup> Kalb, G. (2018). Paid parental leave and female labour supply: A review. *Economic Record*, 94(304), 80-100.

<sup>30</sup> Kalb, G. (2018). Paid parental leave and female labour supply: A review. *Economic Record*, 94(304), 80-100.

<sup>31</sup> Kalb, G. (2018). Paid parental leave and female labour supply: A review. *Economic Record*, 94(304), 80-100.

Since 2011 the participation rate for mothers with children under 5 has increased by 14.1 per centage points, representing an additional 165,790 women in employment. Part of this increase reflects historical trends and can also be seen in mothers with older children. However, the rate of increase for mothers with a child aged 0-4 is higher than before the reform, and than mothers with older children during the post reform period.

Impact Economics and Policy modelling using difference-in-difference estimates finds that the introduction of paid maternity leave in 2011 has increased employment of mothers with children aged under 5 by 74,200. This represents a direct economic benefit of \$9.0 billion to GDP in 2022-23, an impressive gain for a policy that costs the Australian Government \$2.7 billion a year<sup>32</sup>, excluding increased taxation revenue and reduced government payments.

While other policy changes over the period may have contributed to this increase, including the increase in child care subsidies for many families that occurred in 2018, an evaluation of the reforms found no impact on hours worked.<sup>33</sup> It is noteworthy that the 2018 reforms included a tightening of the Activity Test, and a large decrease in support for child care costs for women not actively engaged in the labour market. This change effectively increased the search costs for women that do not maintain a relationship with their employer, particularly women marginally attached to the labour force or in casual employment.

The impact of the introduction of paid maternity leave in Australia illustrates the importance of designing policies that reduce the higher search costs in the labour market for women with young children.

## **PAID MATERNITY LEAVE METHODOLOGY**

In order to estimate the economic benefits of labour force participation rates were estimated for women with dependent children of various ages using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Status of Families June 2022 release.

The labour force participation rates were estimated for mothers (both in couples and single mothers), measured by the age of their youngest dependent child over the period June 2005 to June 2022 using the following age groups:

- 0 to 4 years old
- 5 to 9 years old
- 10 to 24 years old

### *Pre and post reform periods*

In order to undertake difference in difference estimation we must define the relevant periods of pre and post reform.

Government provided PPL was introduced in January 2011, and the growth in participation is calculated for pre-reform period from June 2005 to June 2010, and the post reform period June 2011 to June 2019. The

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<sup>32</sup> Australian Government Department of Social Services (2022), Portfolio Budget Statements 2022-23, Budget Related Paper No. 1.14: [https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/10\\_2022/october\\_2022-23\\_social\\_services\\_portfolio.pdf](https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/10_2022/october_2022-23_social_services_portfolio.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> AIFS (2022), Child Care Package Evaluation: Final report: <https://aifs.gov.au/research/research-reports/child-care-package-evaluation-final-report>

years 2020 to 2022 are excluded from the ‘after PPL’ time period so as not to bias the estimates with impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Calculation of average growth rates**

**Appendix Table 1: Average annual change in labour force participation rates of mothers by age group of youngest dependent child**

	Before PPL 2006 to 2010	After PPL 2011 to 2019	Difference	Difference-in- difference
<b>0 to 4 years old</b>	0.4%	1.0%	0.6%	
<b>5 to 9 years old</b>	0.5%	0.5%	0.1%	0.5%
<b>10 to 24 years old</b>	0.4%	0.2%	-0.1%	0.7%

Source: Impact Economics and Policy analysis of ABS 2022, Labour Force Status of Families

**Treatment Group**

The treatment group is the cohort with children aged 0 to 4 years old.

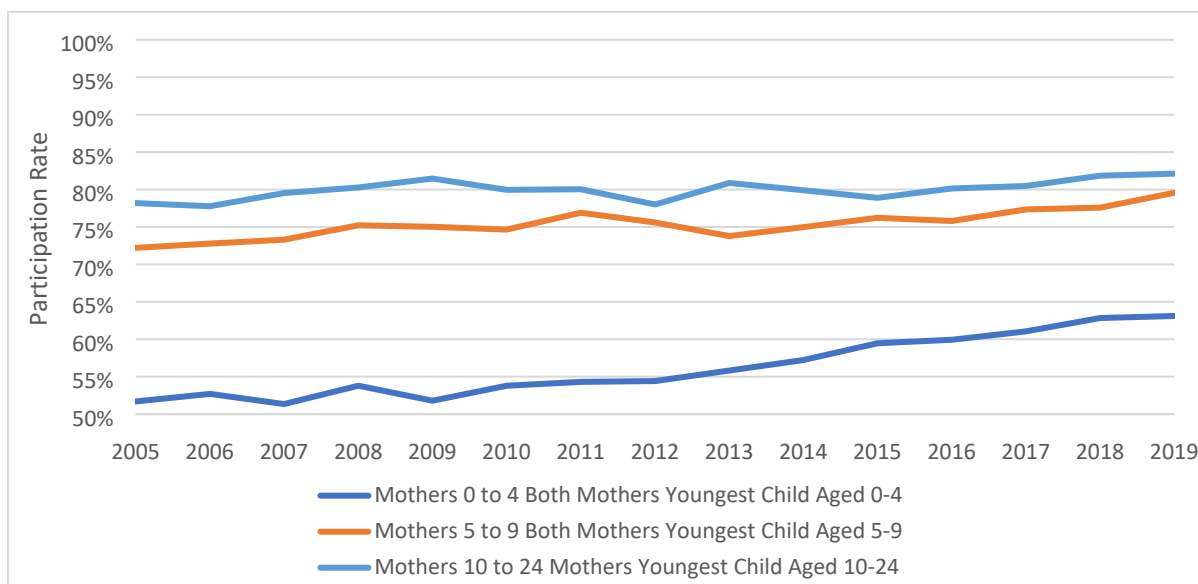
**Control Group**

There are two potential control groups:

- mothers with children aged 5 to 9 years old; and
- mother’s of children aged 10 to 24 years old.

Each of these control groups had similar trends to the treatment group prior to the reforms.

**APPENDIX FIGURE 1: TREATMENT AND CONTROL GROUPS TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION RATES**



Source: Impact Economics and Policy analysis of ABS 2022, Labour Force Status of Families

The cohort of mothers initially in the under 5 age group move into the 5-9 age group from 2016, making mothers with children aged 5-9 an inappropriate control – as women in this cohort after 2016 are also in the treatment group.

In selecting the cohort of mothers with children aged 10-24 as a control we note that other policy changes were occurring during this period, including changes to parenting payments which aimed to increase participation amongst mothers with children age 8 years and above. The extent to which this biased the results, it would result in an underestimate of the impact of the paid maternity leave reforms.

### **Employment impacts**

Based on the analysis described above, it is assumed that a 0.7 percentage point increase each year in the participation rate of mothers of 0 to 4 year olds, is attributable to the introduction of Paid Parental Leave (PPL) over the period 2011-2019. This is applied to the number of mothers of 0 to 4 year olds in Australia each year to estimate that by 2022-23, 76,187 mothers have joined the labour force who in the absence of PPL would have not.

Over the 2011-12 to 2022-23 period, the average employment rate of mothers of 0 to 4 year olds who are participating in the workforce has been 97.5%. Applying this rate to the estimate labour force increase, provides an estimate of 74,245 mothers of 0 to 4 year olds who are employed who would not have been without PPL.

### **Economic value**

The next stage of the process estimates the direct economic value associated with each additional employed mother of a 0 to 4 year old. This was done by estimating the average annual value of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) generated per each employee in the labour force. This value was weighted to account for the industries in which women most commonly work. It was then weighted further by 66% to reflect that mothers of 0 to 4 year olds who are employed, tend to work 66% of the average hours worked by all employees.<sup>34</sup>

This economic value produced per each additional employed mother of a 0 to 4 year old, was calculated for each year from 2011-12 to 2018-19.

These values were multiplied by the estimated number of additional employees to estimate the direct economic value generated from the uplift in employment of mothers of 0 to 4 year olds associated with the introduction of PPL. The GDP deflator was then applied to bring this value into 2022-23 \$ terms.

This method estimates that the 2011 introduction PPL generated \$9.0 billion of direct economic value in 2021-22 by enabling the employment of 74,000 mothers of 0 to 4 year olds.

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<sup>34</sup> Impact Economics and Policy analysis of Household Income and Labour Dynamics (HILDA) survey data 2021.