

What factors influence fathers' use of paid parental leave without overlapping it with the mother?

Characterization of *solo care* in Spain with microdata from Social Security and an EU comparative

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Session 1: Leave policies and gender equality in paid and unpaid work

# PAID PARENTAL LEAVE DESIGN IN SPAIN

# Spain from 2005 to 2021: towards gender equality?

## From maternity and paternity leave towards birth and childcare leave

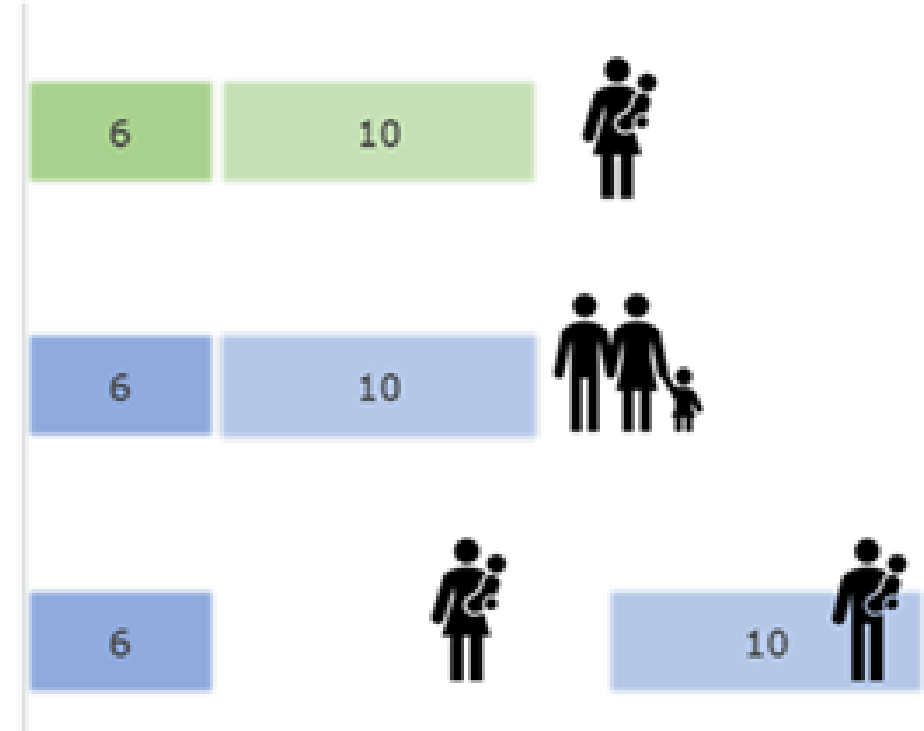
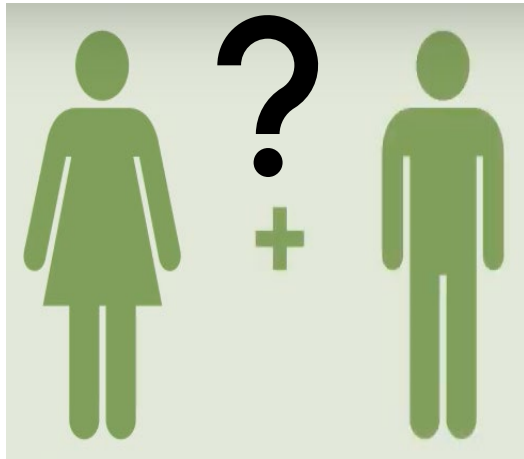
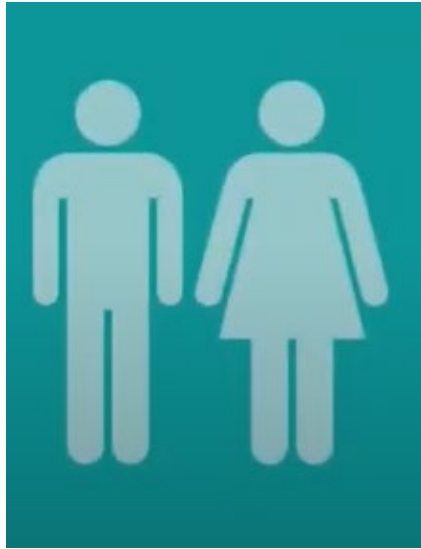
Number of  
100% paid  
weeks



**2007:** Law on Gender Equality 3/2007 (March 22nd ): **2 weeks of paternity leave** (4 weeks in 2017 and 5 in 2018)

**2019:** RDL 6/2019 (March 1st) of urgent measures to guarantee equal treatment and opportunities for women and men in employment and occupation: **8-12-16 weeks of birth and childcare leave.**

## Key characteristics of paid parental leave in Spain



Design of “birth and childcare leave”

# Parental Leave System

	Type of leave	Translation of Spanish term	Available number of weeks	Transferability	Payment	Care purpose	Potential use by men	Payer	When can be used
Parental Leave system	Maternity Leave	Pregnancy leave "Permiso por embarazo"	1	No	60% (as sick leave)	No	No	Social Security	Day 1 of week 39 of pregnancy
	Paid Parental Leave (mandatory after birth)	Birth and Childcare Leave	6	No	100%	Yes	Yes	Social Security	From birth/adoption
	Paid Parental Leave (fractional with employer agreement)	"Permiso por nacimiento y cuidado del menor "	10	No	Fully paid (1a)				12 first months (1b)
		Nursing baby care leave (2a)							
	Paid Parental Leave	"Permiso por cuidado del lactante"	2-4 (2b)	No	100% Fully paid	Yes	Yes	Employer	9/12 first months (2c)
	Unpaid Parental Leave (full job protection)	Parental Leave "Permiso parental"	8	No	Unpaid (3)	Yes	Yes	-	Up to child is 8 years-old
	Unpaid Parental Leave (full job protection)	Full-time Unpaid Childcare Leave	Up to child is 1 year-old	No	Unpaid (4)	Yes	Yes		Up to child is 1 year-old
	Unpaid Parental Leave (reduced job protection)	"Excedencia por cuidado de hijos"	Up to child is 3 years-old	No		Yes	Yes	-	Up to child is 3 years-old
	Unpaid Part-time Parental Leave (full job protection)	Reduction of working hours due to legal guardianship "Reducción de jornada por guarda legal" (5)	usual reduction of 1 to 4 hours of a 8-hour working day	No	Unpaid	Yes	Yes	-	Up to child is 12 years-old
Other practices	Annual leave	Holidays "Vacaciones"	4	No	Fully paid	No	Yes	Employer	After PPL
	Extra Paid Leave (6a)	Maternity and paternity leave provided by employer	Unknown (6b)	No	Fully paid	Yes	Sometimes	Employer	Depending on collective agreement

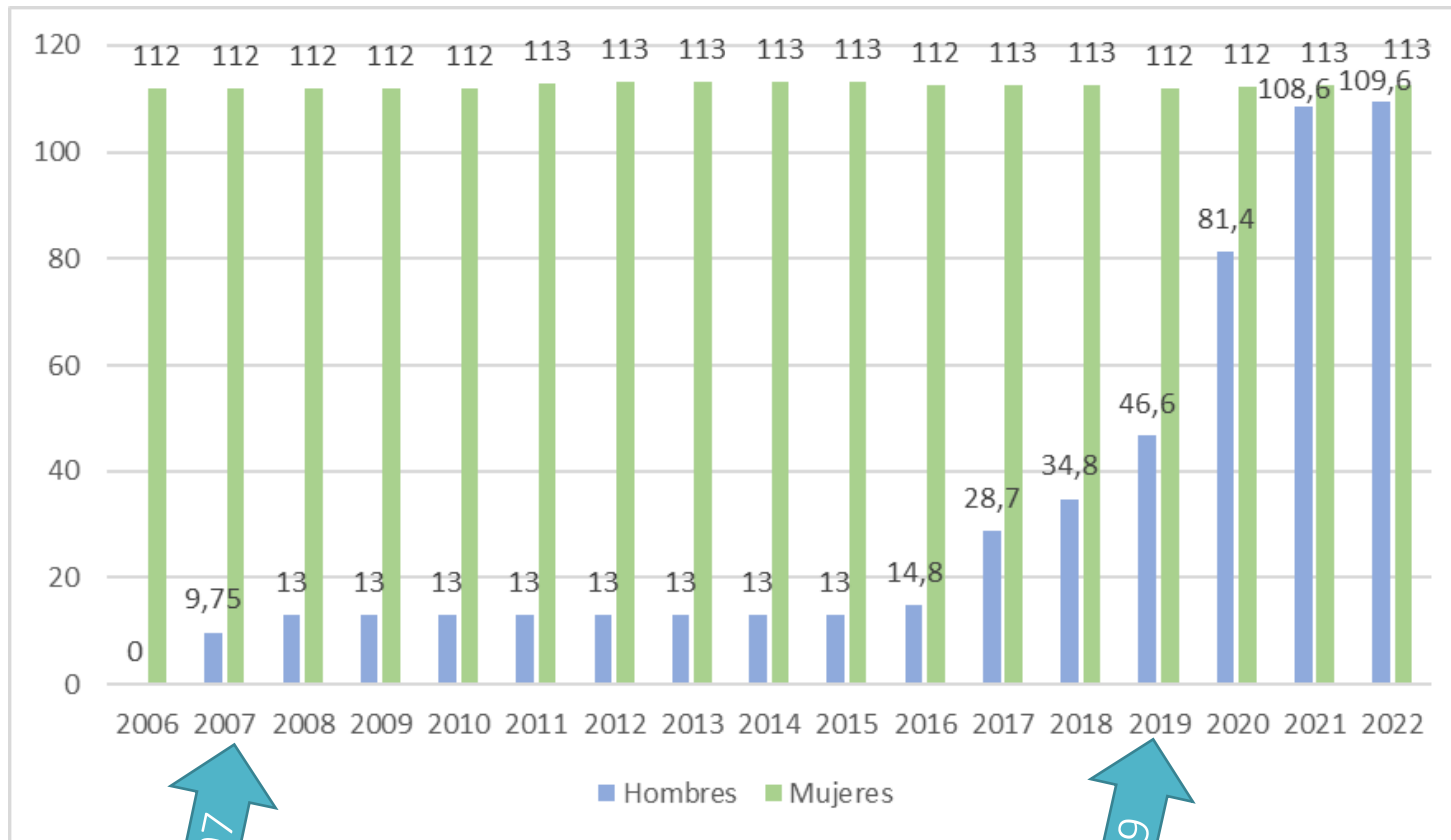
Spain 2025



# USE OF PAID PARENTAL LEAVE IN SPAIN

# SPAIN from 2006 to 2022: PAID PARENTAL LEAVE USE & GENDER EQUALITY

Number of  
100% paid  
days



This is the law provision:

**2007:** Law on Gender Equality 3/2007 (March 22nd ): **13 days of paternity leave**

**2017:** 4 weeks of paternity leave

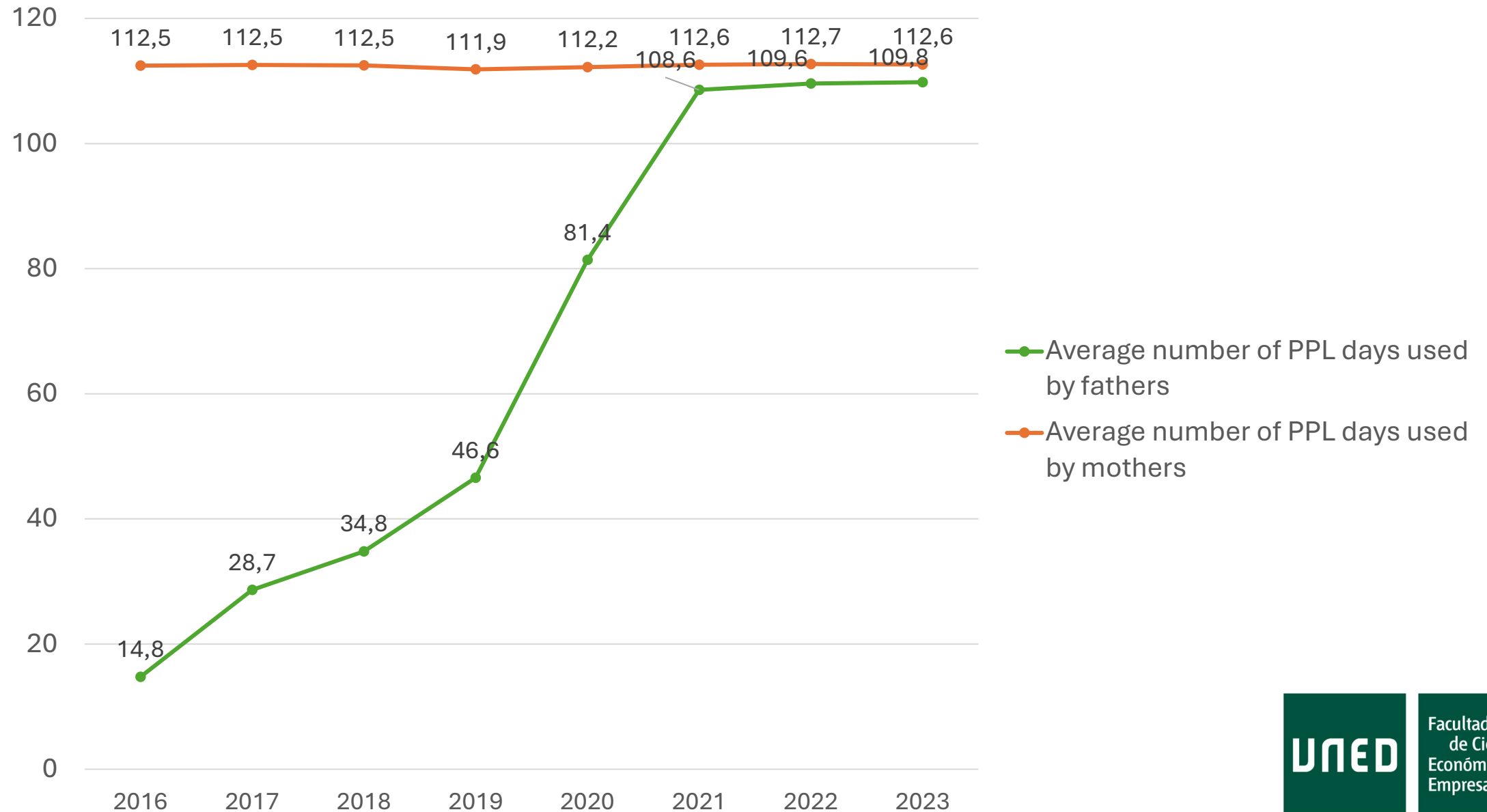
**2018:** 5 weeks of paternity leave

**2019:** RDL 6/2019 (March 1st) of urgent measures to guarantee equal treatment and opportunities for women and men in employment and occupation:

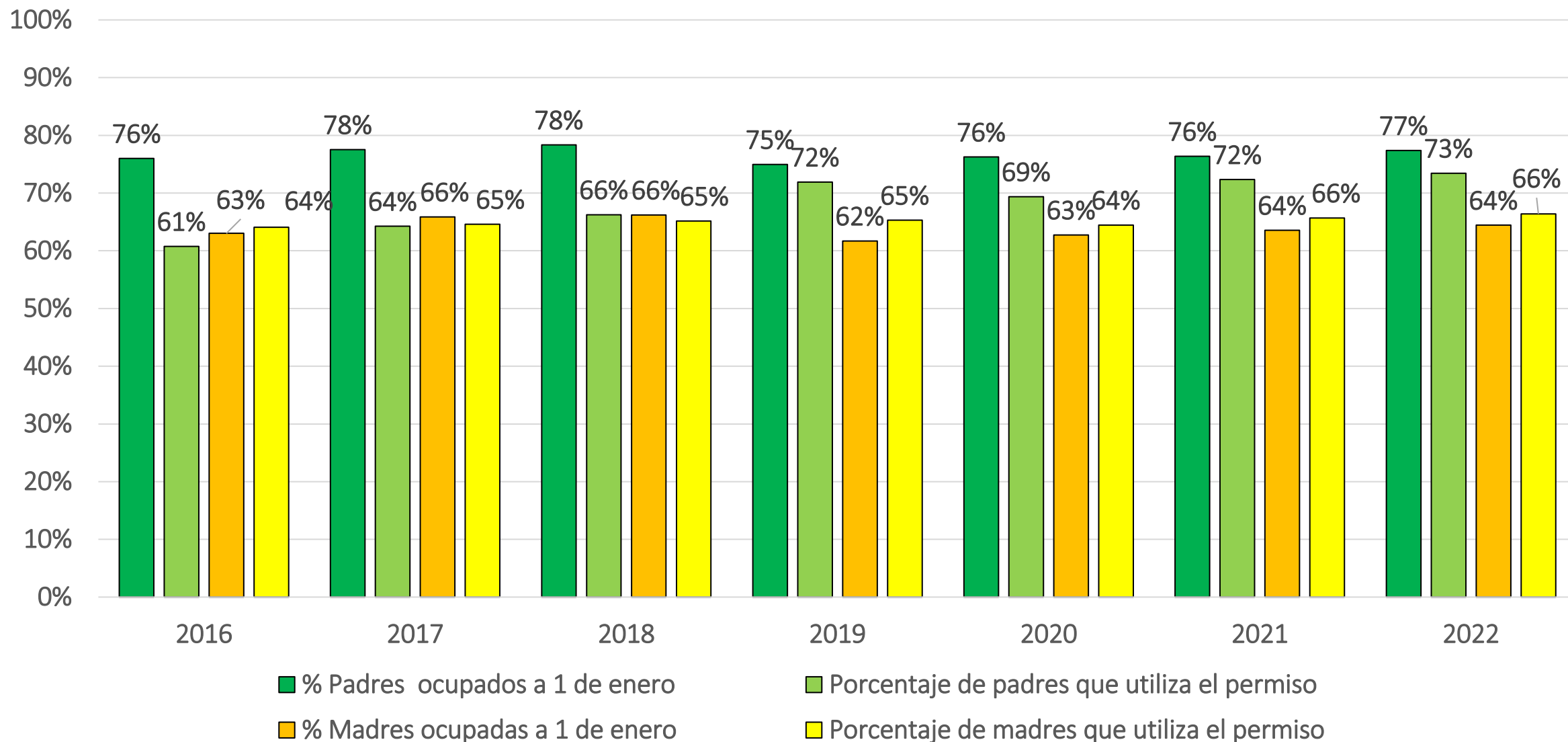
**8-12-16 weeks of birth and childcare leave in 2019, 2020 & 2021**

Source: Own elaboration based of registration data of Social Security (2024)

# Average days of PPL used by mothers and fathers (Spain, 2016-2023).

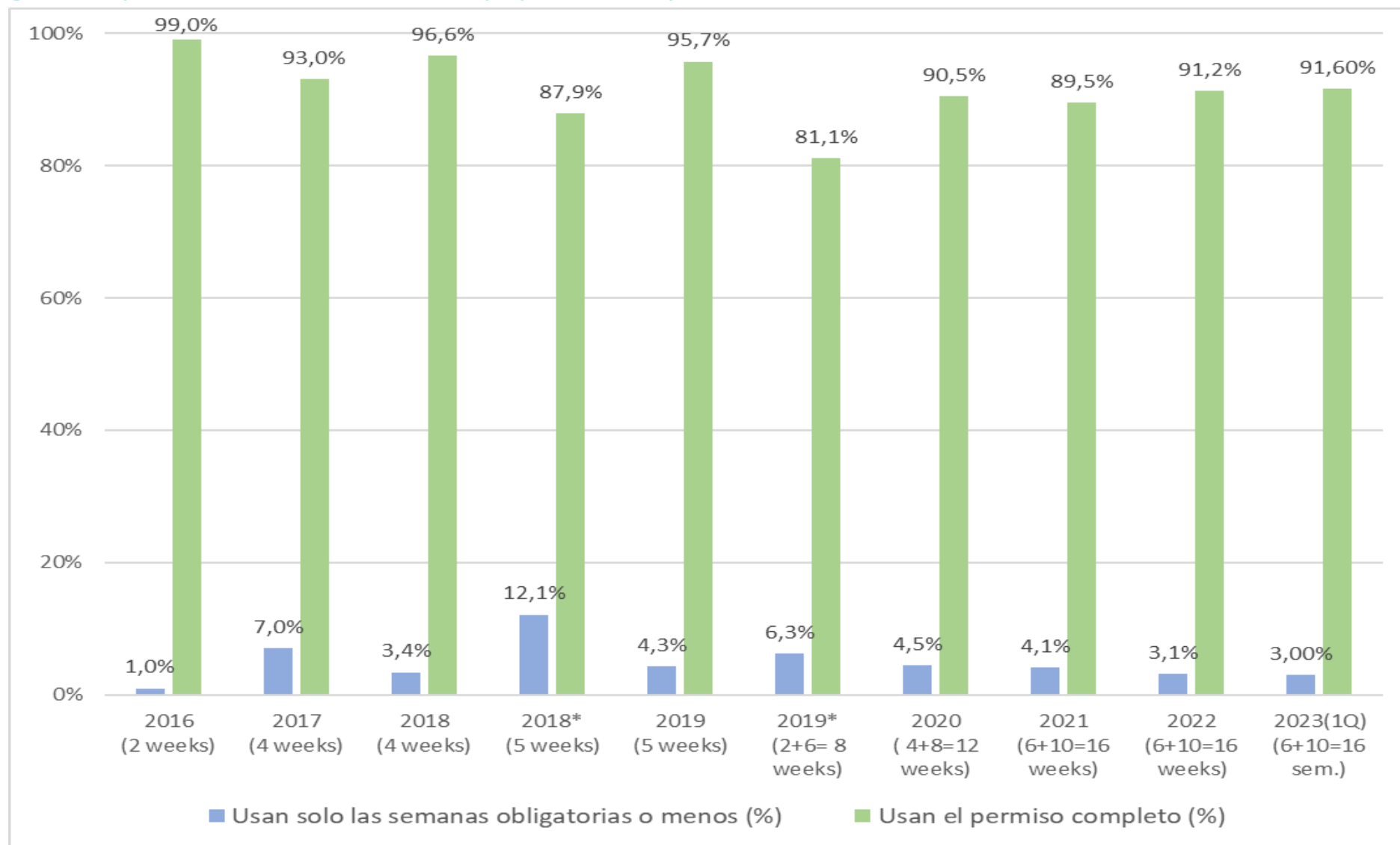






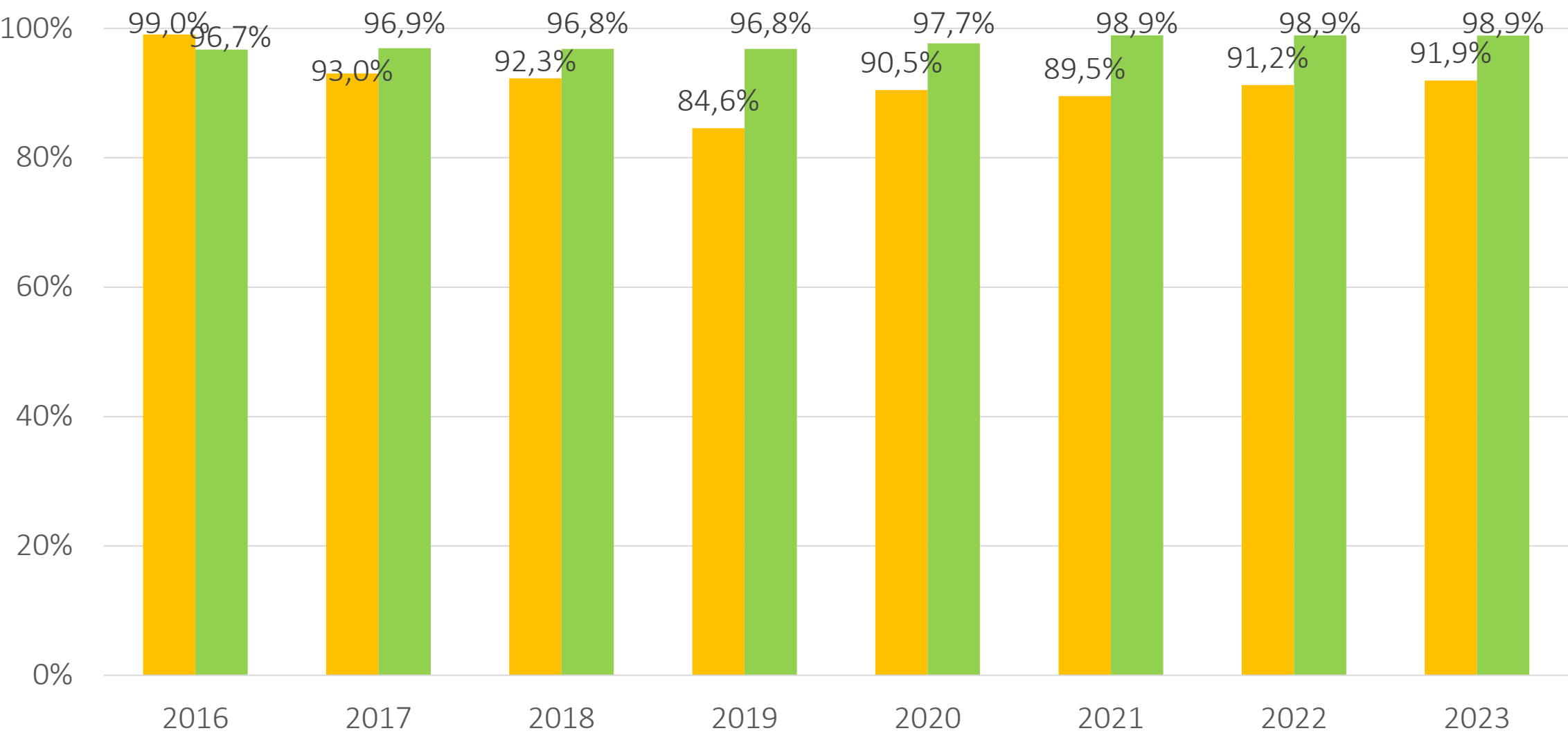
Elegibility vs use: fathers and mothers with right to PPL (estimation)  
and those who have used it: change between 2016 and 2022.

# % of fathers using **all available days** of PAID parental leave versus percentage using only the mandatory part, Spain (2016-2023)

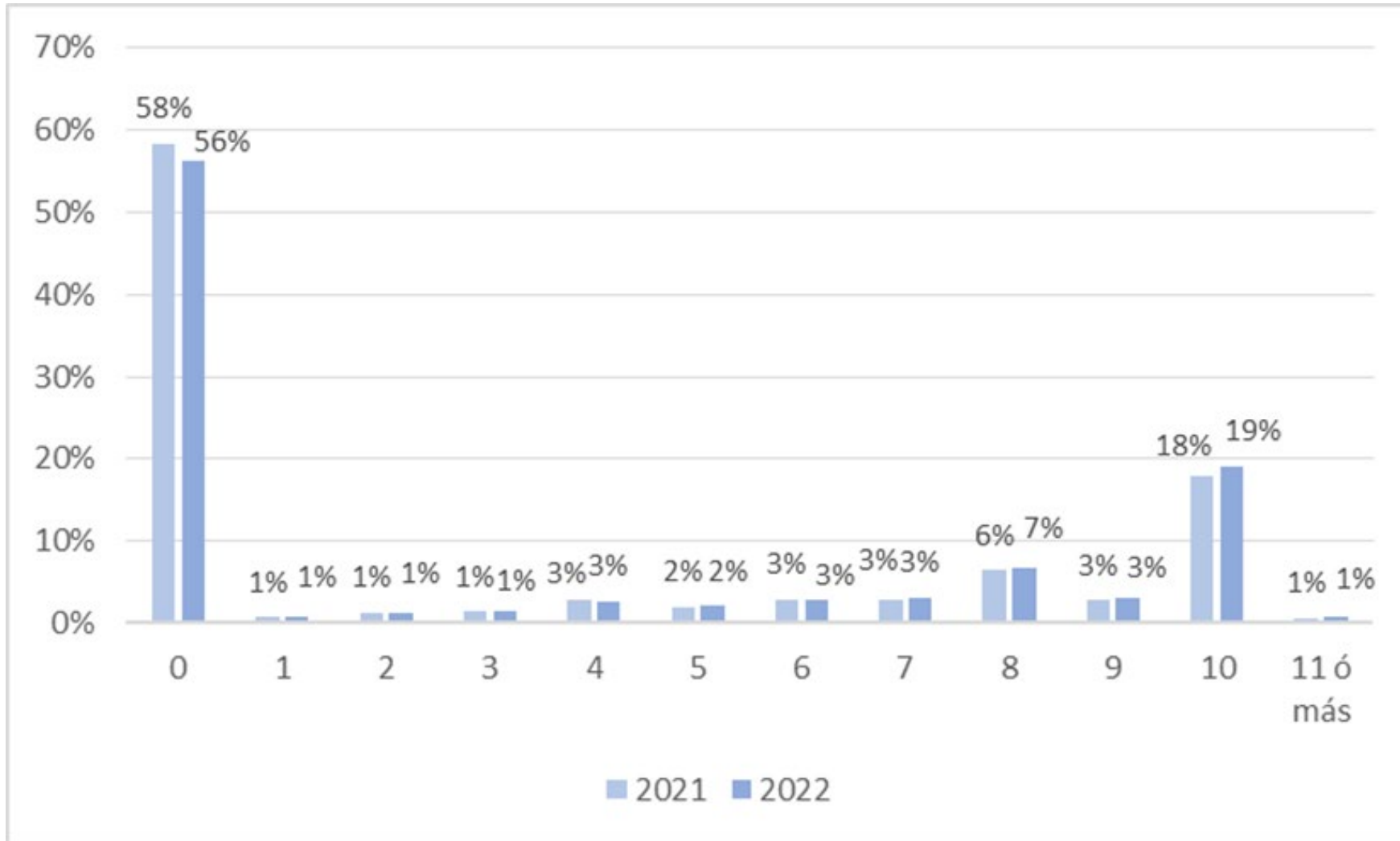


CRISTINA CASTELLANOS SERRANO Source: Own elaboration based of registration data of Social Security (2024)

# % of mothers and fathers who used all the weeks they have right to

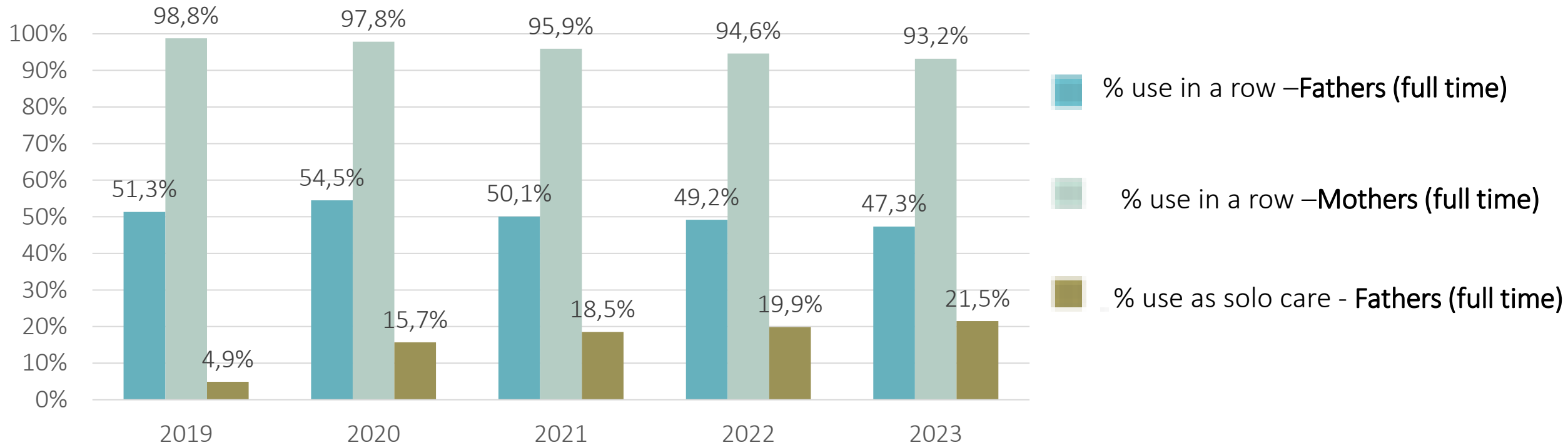


# % of fathers by number of weeks of leave used after week 16 (whether or not they used the whole leave) 2021-2022 (SPAIN)



Source: Recio Alcaide et al (2024)

# % of simultaneous use and solo care in Spain (2019- 2023)



Source: Own elaboration based on Social Security (2025) in Recio & Castellanos (2025)

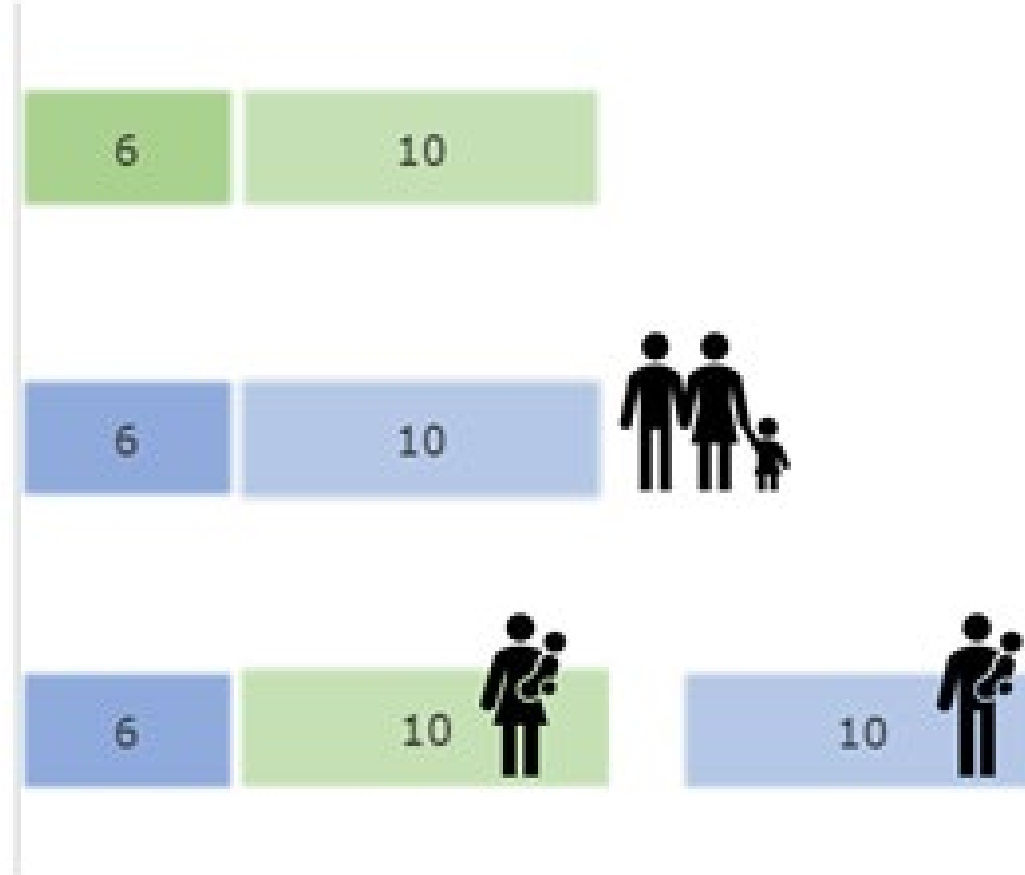
# Majoritary uses of paid parental leave of parents using 16 or more weeks (2021-2022, Spain)

**Mothers** who use 16 weeks in a row from birth/adoption **(95%)**

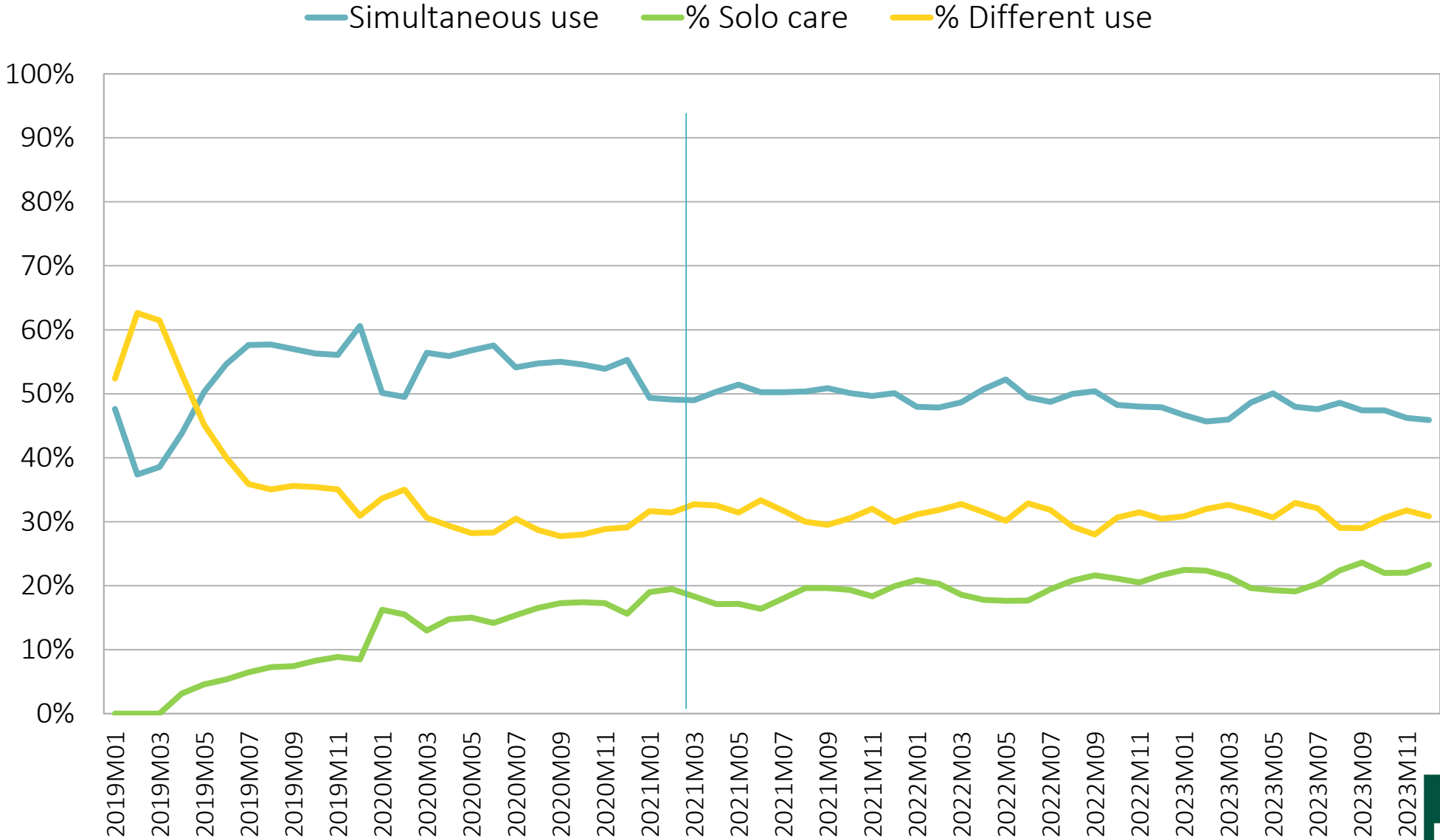
**Fathers** who use 16 weeks in a row from birth/adoption **(50%)**  
**SIMULTANEOUS USE**

**Fathers** who use 16 weeks and use 10 weeks after week 16 **(20%)**  
**SOLO CARE**

**Fathers** who use 16 weeks with diverse uses (25%)

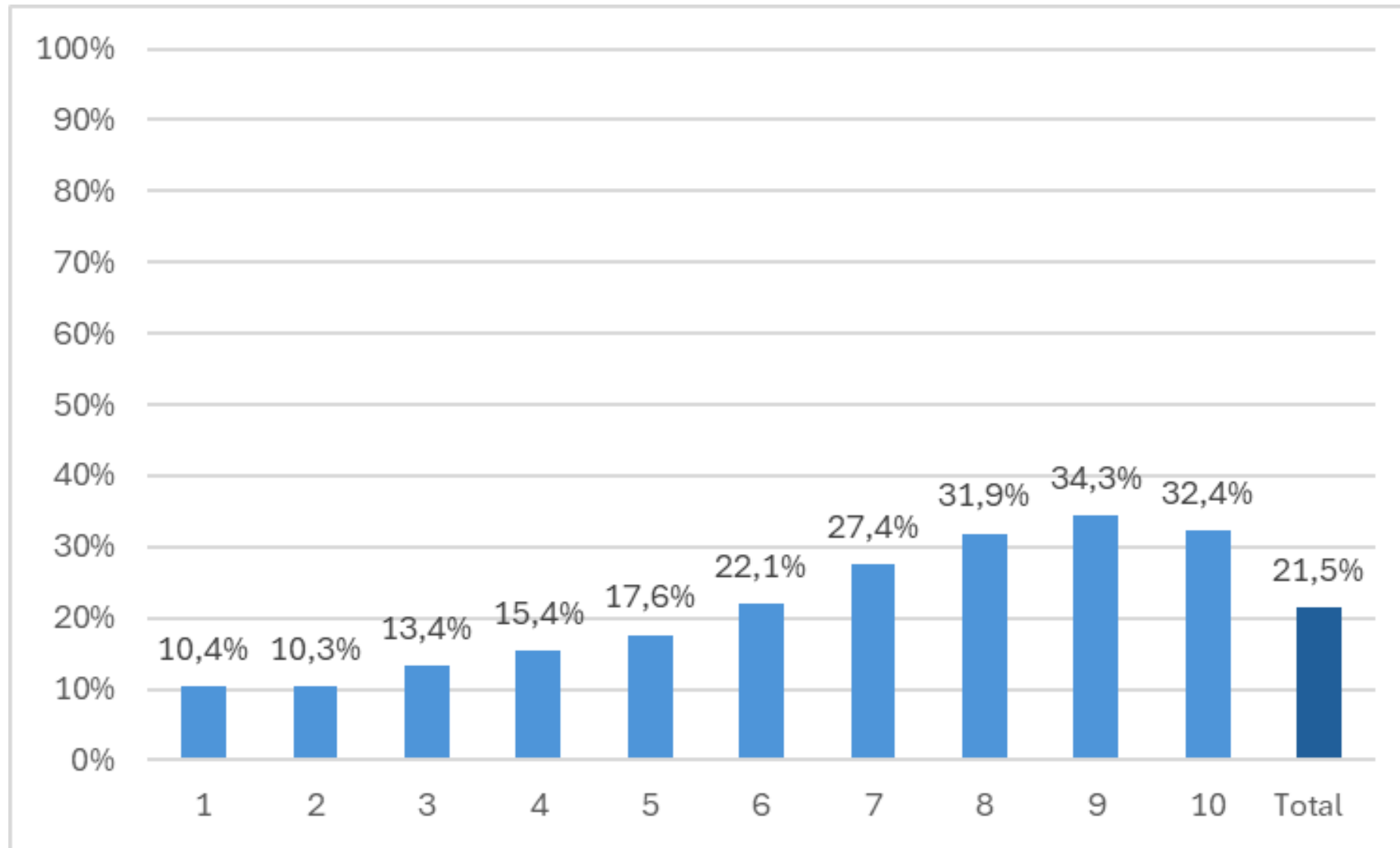


# Monthly evolution of fathers' simultaneous use, solo care and other uses (Spain, 2019-2023)



Source: Own elaboration based on Social Security (2025), Graph. 7 in Recio & Castellanos (2025)

# % of solo care according to decile of income in Spain in 2023

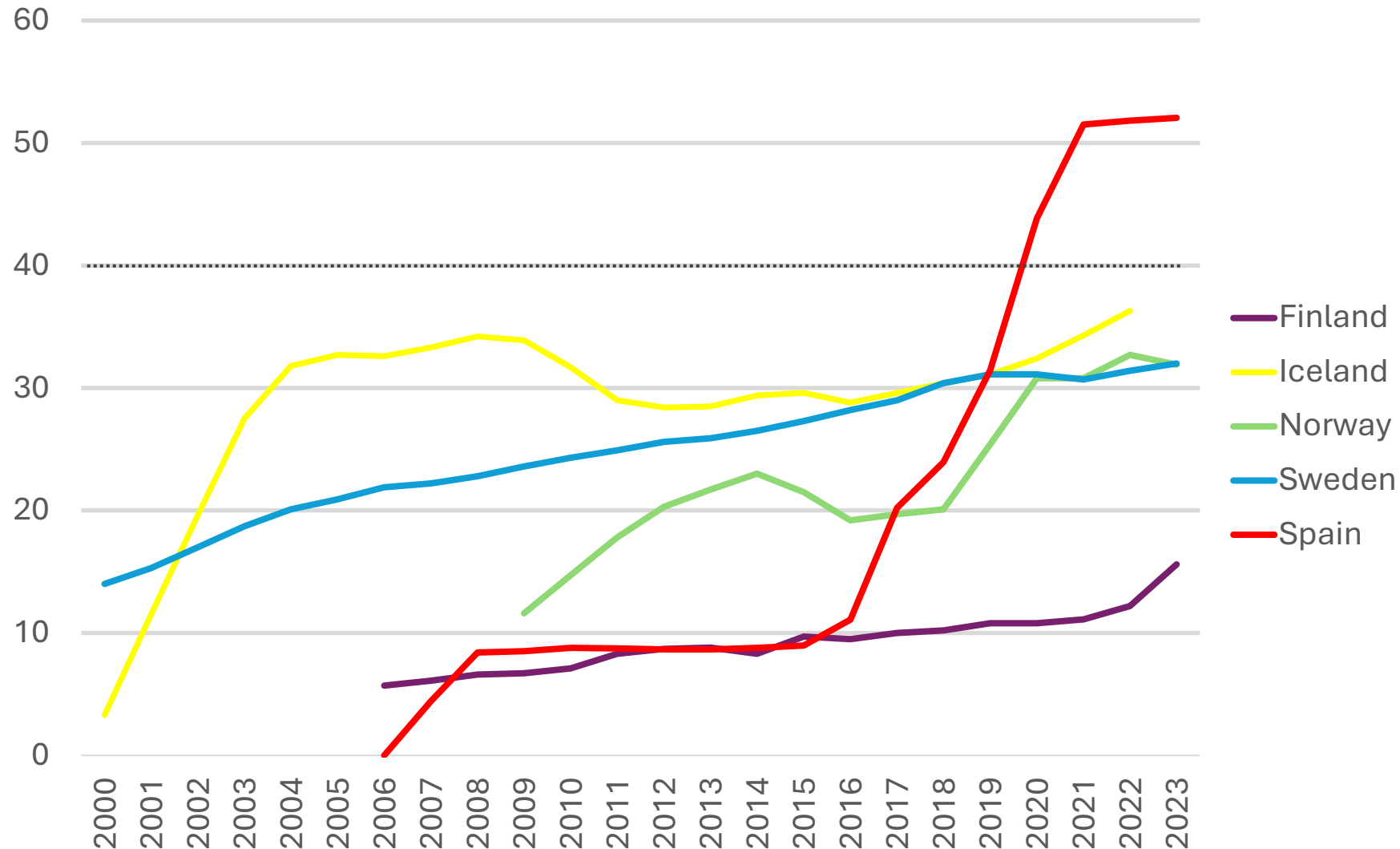


Source: Own elaboration based of registration data of Social Security (2024)



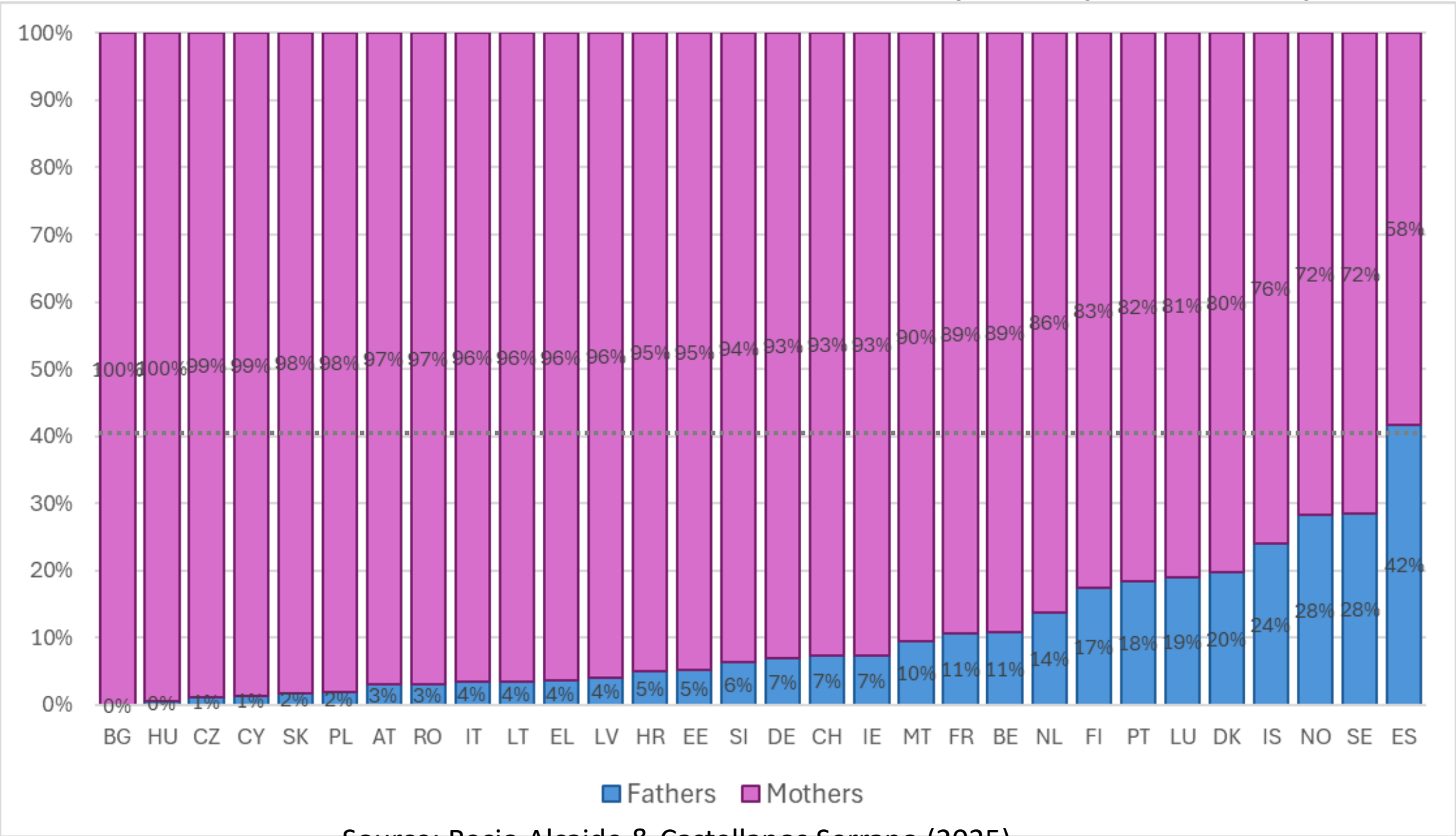
# International Comparison of PAID PARENTAL LEAVE USE and DESIGN

# % of days used by fathers out of total days of leave used by mothers and fathers by country and year (2000-2023)



Source: Castellanos Serrano & Recio Alcaide (2025)

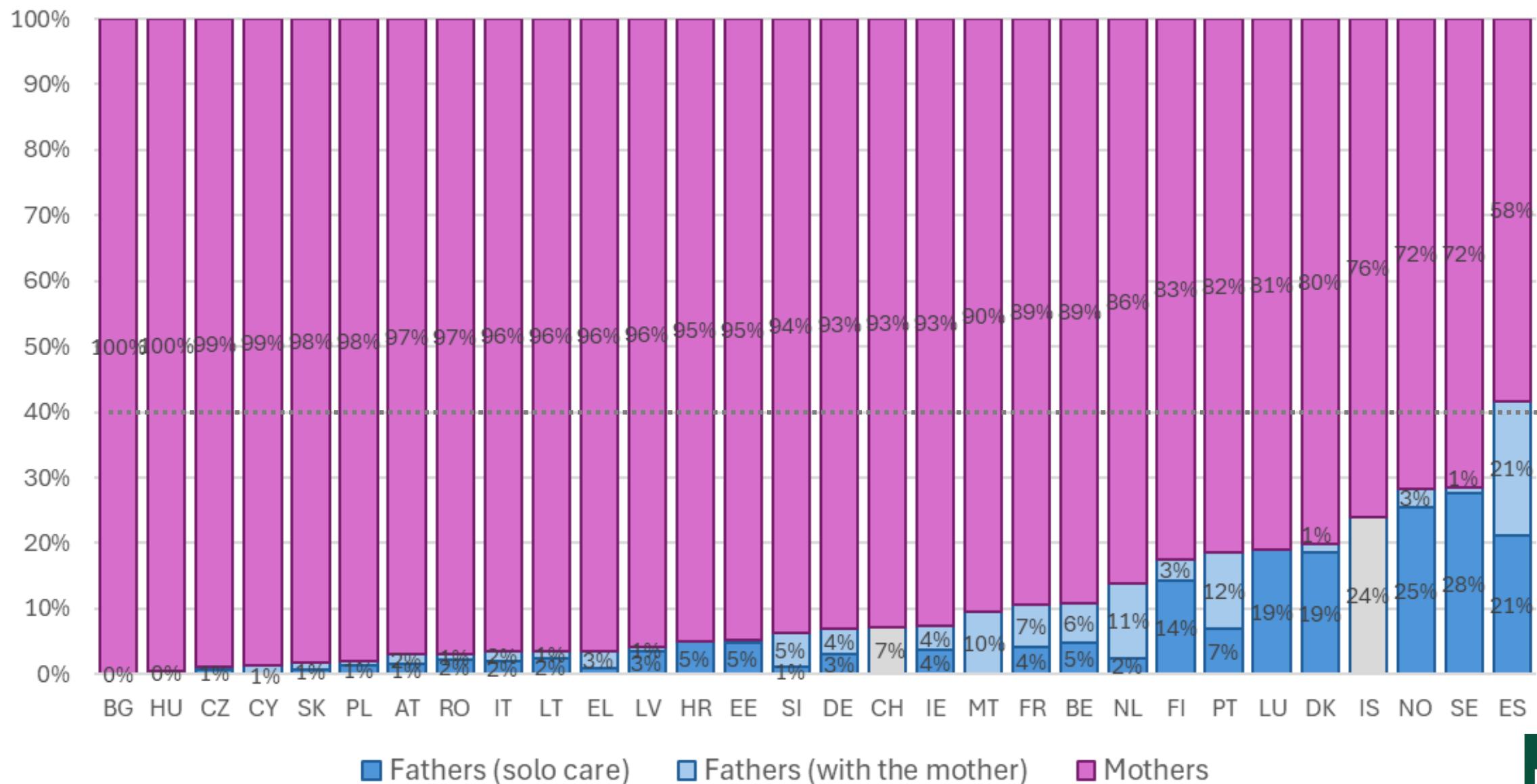
# Use of Parental Leave and Gender Equality in Europe, 2023



Source: Recio Alcaide & Castellanos Serrano (2025)



## Use of Parental Leave and Gender Equality in Europe, 2023



Source: Recio Alcaide & Castellanos Serrano (2025)

# PPL: Learning for gender equality at work and at home

- **FULLY PAID:** Most men and many women do not use parental, paternity or maternity leave if they are not paid. Below 80% of their salary, most men don't use it. Mothers are less sensible to levels of payment. **100% PAYMENT (or more) with HIGH CAPS** PROMOTES GENERAL USE.
- **NON-TRANSFERABLE:** Most men do not use paid parental/paternity leave if it can be transferred to women.
- **EQUAL RIGHTS FOR MEN and WOMEN:** From “daddy quotas” to equal rights : gender equality
- **INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS** (gender-neutral name, no family rights, adding to existing rights, inclusiveness)
- **MAXIMIZE “SOLO” CARE TIME:** Men caring without the presence of the mother is a key element to increase fathers' responsibility and competences in childcare and modify gender roles. Relevance of promotion or capacity of non-simultaneous use of full-time leave.
- **USE OVER THE FIRST YEAR OF THE CHILDREN**
- **Flexibility:** pros and cons (number of blocks to split guarantee by law, part-time, ...)
- **PAID BY SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (THE STATE)**
- **FOR ALL WORKERS:** public and private sector, working for others or self-employed
- **UNIVERSAL RIGHTS:** contributory and non-contributory rights

# Evidence-based proposal for next Spanish reform on PPL



Will SOLO CARE be promoted in next reform?



Everybody cares,  
Everybody works



# References

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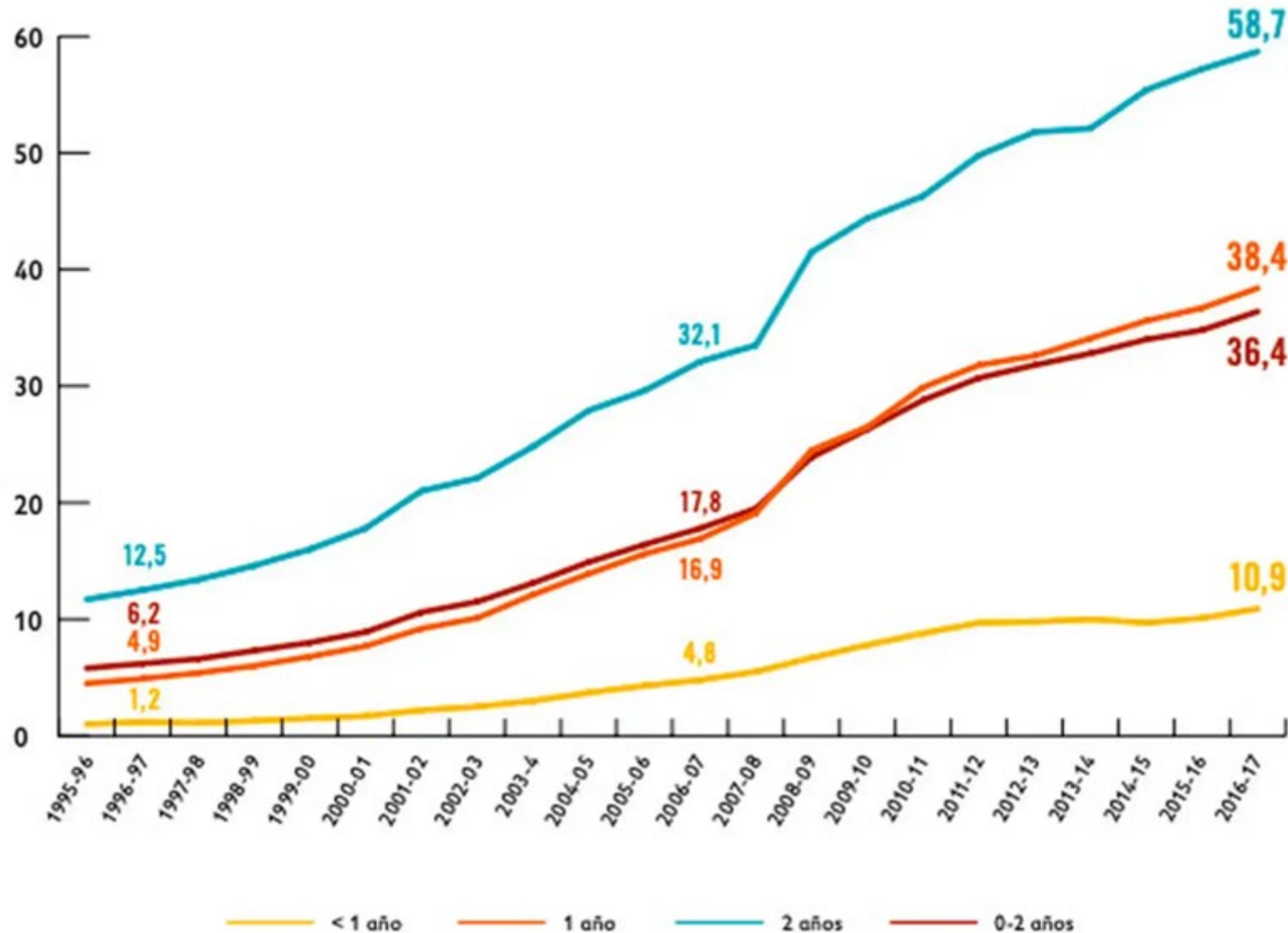
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Recio Alcaide, A., Castellanos Serrano, C. y Andrés Jiménez, J. (2024) [Cómo incide el nuevo diseño de los permisos de nacimiento en la corresponsabilidad: Un análisis con registros administrativos de la Seguridad Social de 2016 a 2023](#) . Papeles de trabajo del Instituto de Estudios Fiscales. Serie economía. Nº 4, 2024, págs. 1-90

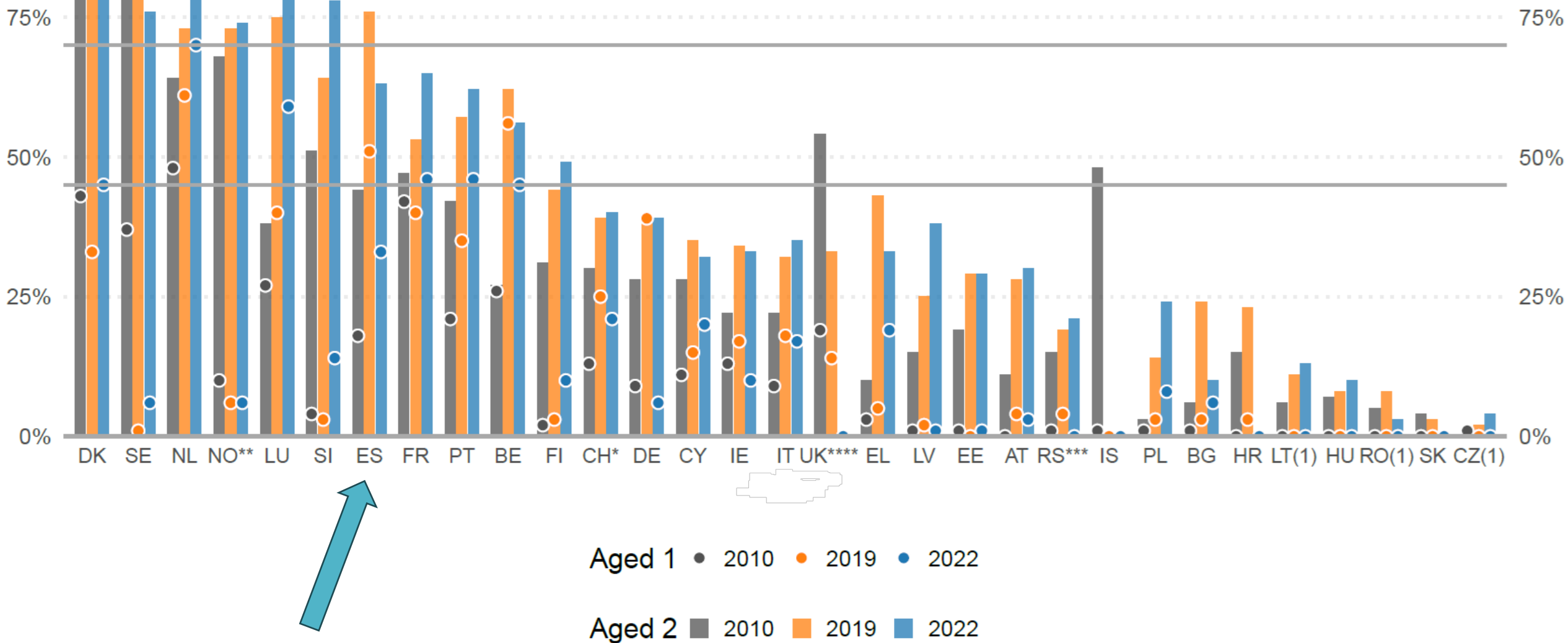
**Recio Alcaide, A. & Castellanos Serrano, C. (2025).** ¿Qué factores influyen más en que los padres usen el permiso por nacimiento sin solaparlo con la madre? Caracterización del *solo care* en España y comparativa con los países de la Unión Europea. *Documentos de trabajo del Instituto de Estudios Fiscales* 2/2025 [https://www.ief.es/docs/destacados/publicaciones/documentos\\_trabajo/2025\\_02.pdf](https://www.ief.es/docs/destacados/publicaciones/documentos_trabajo/2025_02.pdf)



# Spanish ECEC participation rates (children aged 0, 1 and 2)



# European ECEC participation rates (children aged 1 and 2)



Thank you very much  
for your attention and comments!

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