

3.16 Deputy G.P. Southern of the Minister for Social Security regarding a review of the length of maternity leave taken by employees in Jersey:

What data does the Minister have, if any, on the length of maternity leave taken by employees in Jersey, and, if none, will he agree to commission some research to support his maternity leave proposals?

Senator F. du H. Le Gresley (The Minister for Social Security):

I am lodging today an amendment to the Employment Law which includes provision for a statutory minimum period of maternity leave. **[Approbation]** Thank you. I do not have specific data on the length of maternity leave taken by all employees in Jersey but I can provide data relating to maternity allowance claims. The allowance can be paid for a maximum of 18 weeks while a woman is not working. Members will see from the report that accompanies my proposition that the allowance was paid in respect of more than three-quarters of the births in Jersey in 2013 and that on average 15.6 weeks maternity allowance was paid to each woman. I am sure that Members would agree with me that to extend the proposed period of maternity leave beyond the 18 weeks that the Employment Forum recommended would require further research and public consultation through the forum, which is the accepted route for changes to employment law. Members will see when they get my report accompanying the proposition that family friendly rights will be reviewed one year after they come into force.

3.16.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Does the Minister have any comparative figures with other countries, for example with the U.K. (United Kingdom) as to how long people stay off work after they have given birth?

Senator F. du H. Le Gresley:

I think the Deputy needs to wait for my proposition which has an appendix which sets out some of the information he is seeking.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

That is sufficient, thank you.