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# Welcome

Wednesday 29 October 2025

## From Payslip to Pension: Life Course Impacts on Retirement Saving Among Low Earners Series

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# Chair's Welcome

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## Philip Brown

Director of Policy and External Affairs

Nest

# An independent report by the Pensions Policy Institute

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Nuffield Foundation

This project has been funded by the Nuffield Foundation, but the views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily the Foundation.

# Today’s Roundtable

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The roundtable is the official launch of the second part of the “**From Pensions to Payslip: Life Course Impacts on Retirement Saving Among Low Earners**” series

This second report, **Part Two: Practicality of Saving for Low Earners,** explores the practicality of saving by exploring life courses that represent different groups within the low earning population.

# Key Findings

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## John Upton

Policy Analyst

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# Recap

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- This project explores persistent low earning by building a career "roadmap", defined by the variables that predict low earning.
- The previous publication explored population-wide estimates for persistent low earning, and specific risk factors.
- This publication explores individual profiles that are common among the low earning population.

# Low earner profiles

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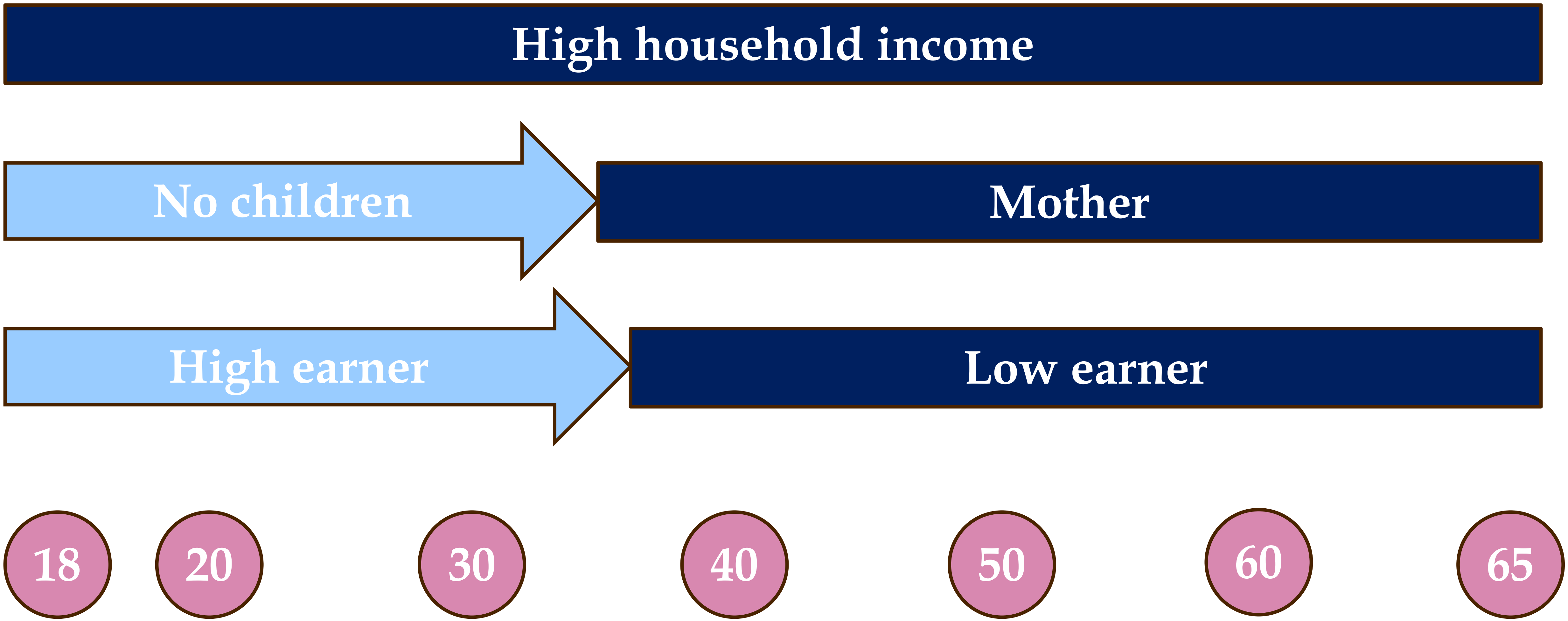
- Mother, high household income
- Mother, low household income
- Highly qualified woman
- Hourly paid man

# Mother, high household income



# Mother, high household income

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- Represents 5% of women.
- Saves consistently whenever a pension is available to her.
- Saving is almost always low-risk because of a high household income.
- May have a brief period where opting out may be tempting.

# Mother, high household income

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- Because of the LEL, contributions are relatively low.
- If she does opt-out, care should be taken to ensure she is opted back in.
- While her individual pension wealth may be low, her household pension wealth may be much more substantial.

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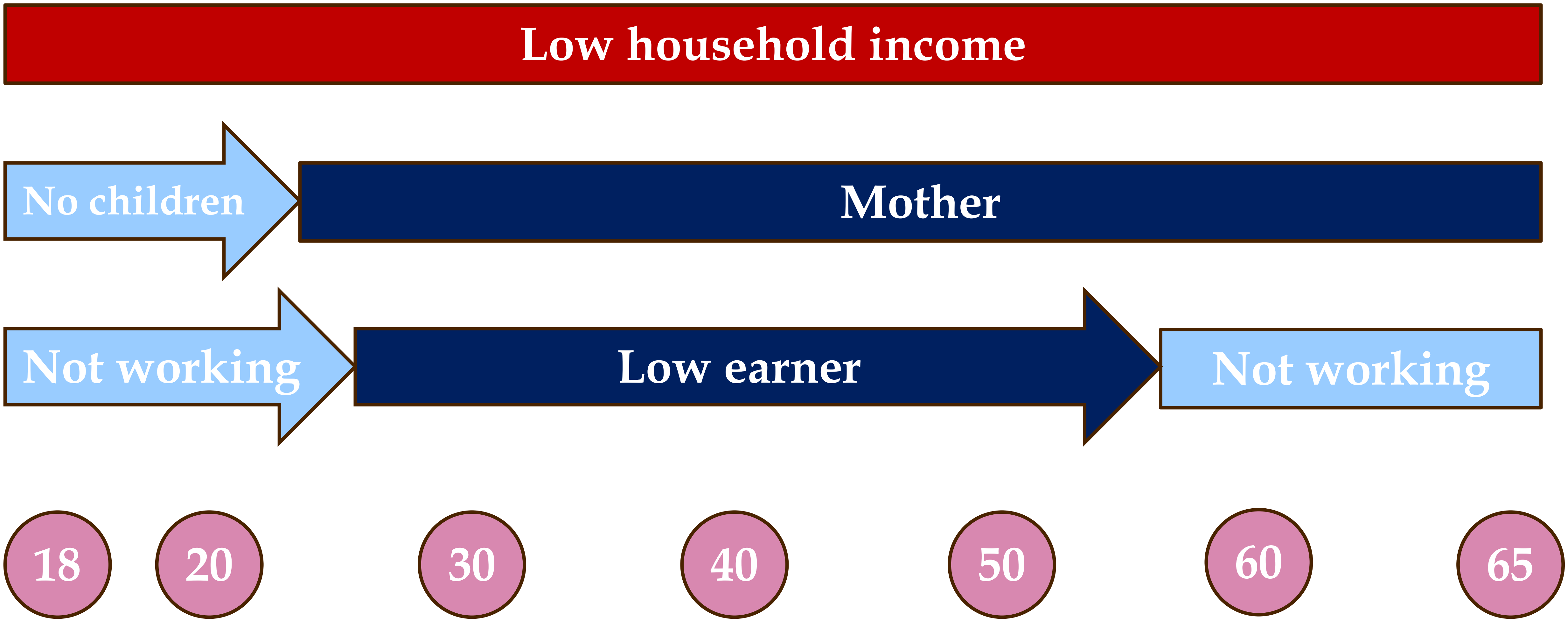
# Mother, low household income



# Mother, low household income

- Represents 5% of all women.
- Does not always save during her early career, where her earnings are lowest. The precise threshold for the trigger income may be important.
- Is either below, or only slightly above, the threshold for relative poverty, with a low household income throughout life.

# Mother, low household income

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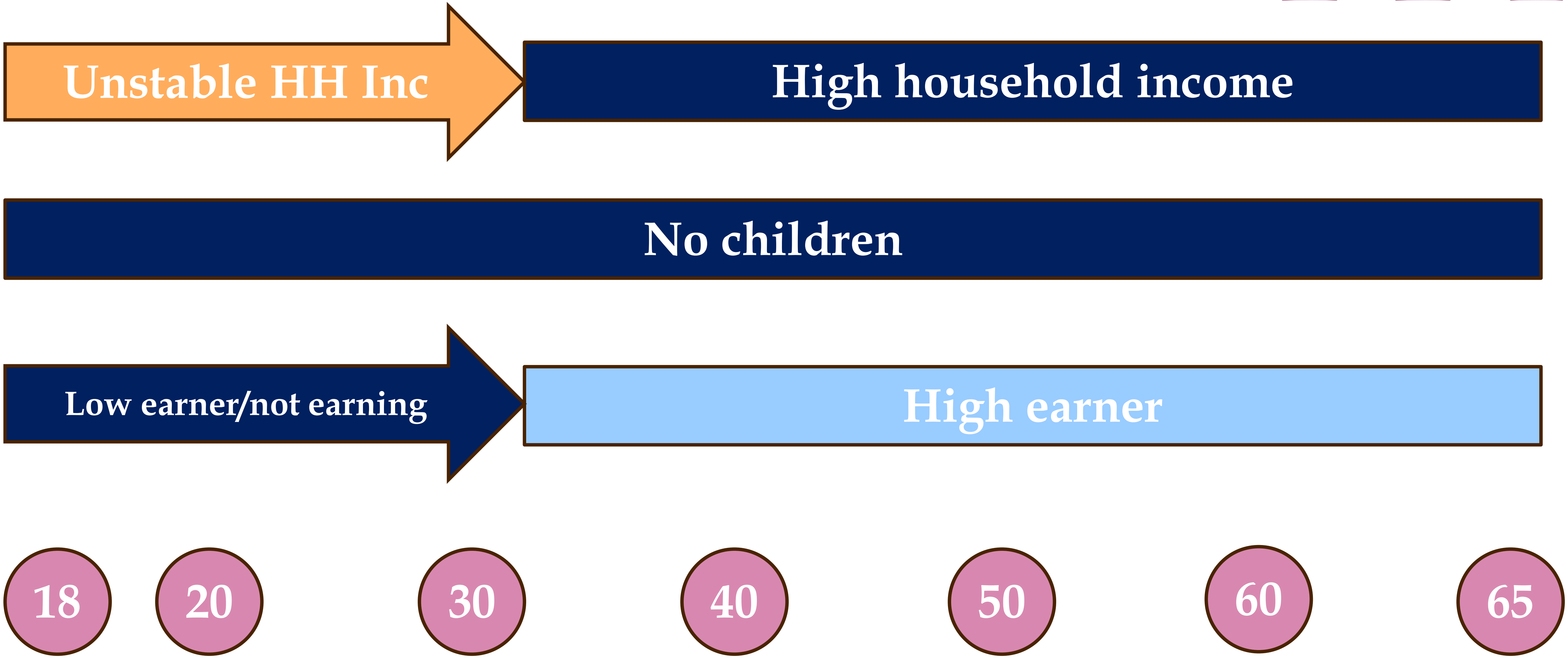
- Especially sensitive to the earnings trigger.
- Is likely to be on benefits in working life.
- May need to use private pension savings to bridge the gap between leaving work and being eligible for state pension.

# Highly qualified woman



# Highly qualified woman

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- Represents 9% of women.
- May not save, even when the option is available, during her early career.
- Has a high household income, and lower costs as a result of not having children.

# Highly qualified woman

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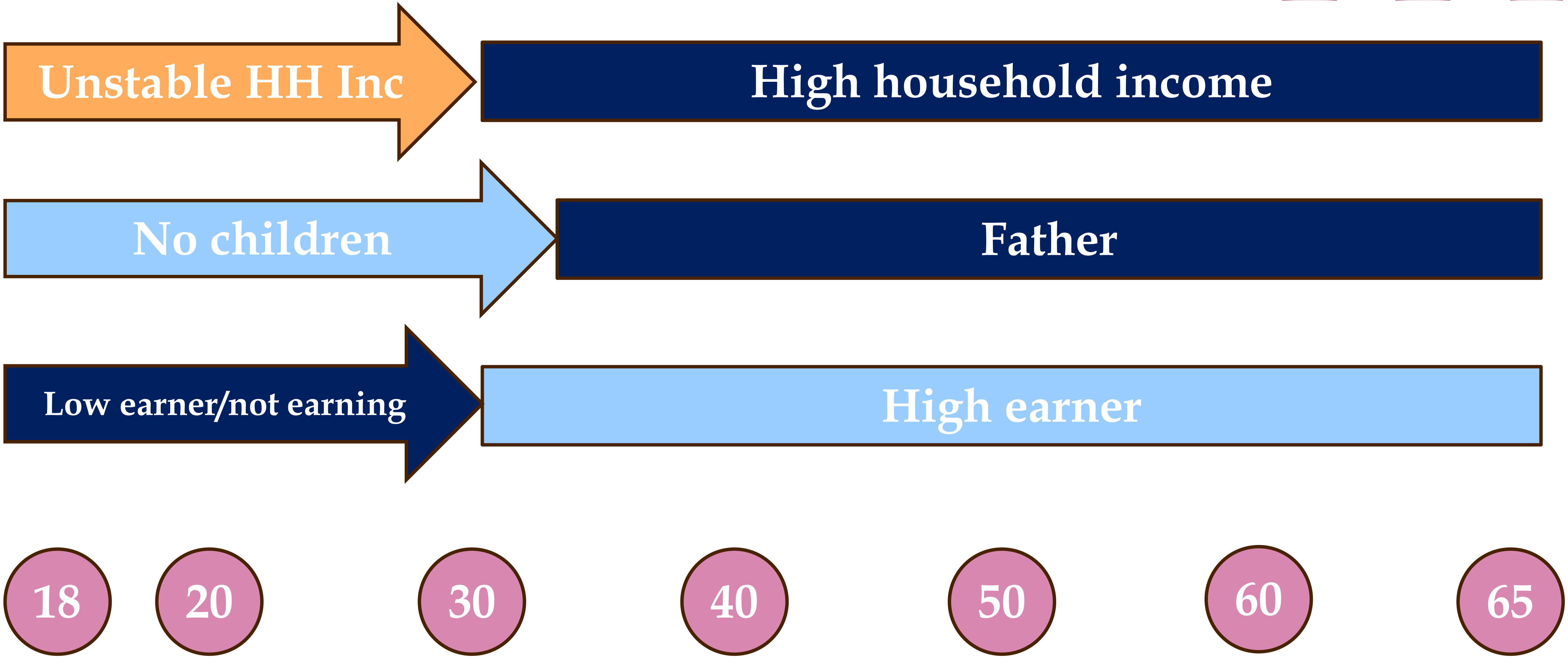
- Particularly challenging from a policy perspective because there is a lot of uncertainty about their future.

- It is difficult to determine the ideal balance of pension vs working life finances for this individual, but there may be other considerations, such as saving for a house or building a pension saving habit.

# Precarious man



# Precarious man

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- Represents 1% of men.
- Similar to highly qualified woman in early career.
- May not be able to “make up for lost time” to the same degree, as he the primary earner.
- Equally, he is likely to earn more than an equivalent woman as a high earner.

# Precarious man



- Hourly pay is one proxy for insecure employment.
- Lower rates of saving among people with insecure employment may be a conscious decision based on financial insecurity.
- However, there are other reasons why rates of saving may be lower.

# Conclusions

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- These vignettes show a variety of household circumstances, saving behaviours and uncertainties around the future.

- How can policymakers best identify and guide these individuals?

- How should employers interact with each of these individuals?

- How should schemes interact with each of these individuals?