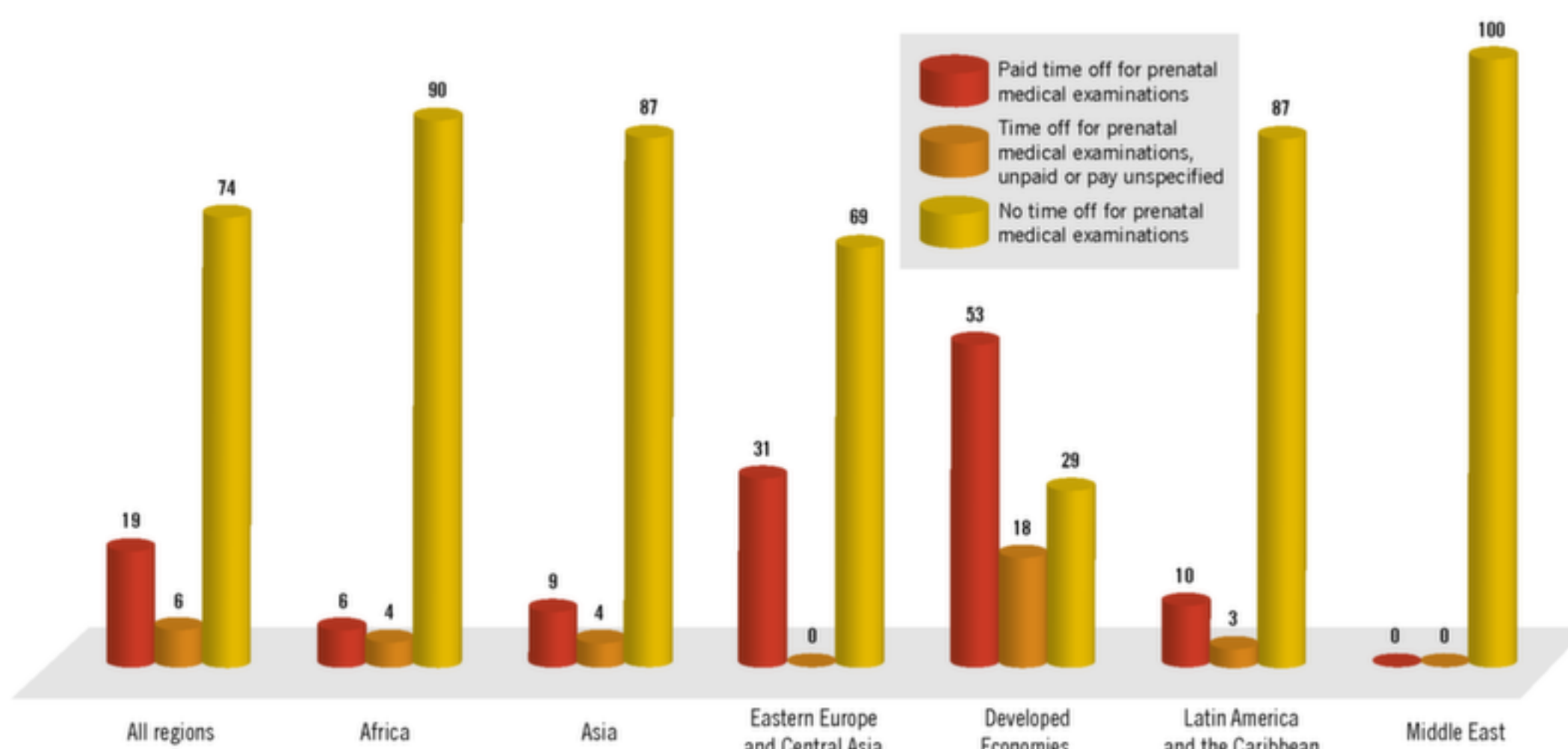


Figure 5.1 Time off for prenatal medical examinations, 2013 (156 countries) (%)

Source: ILO Working Conditions Laws Database – Maternity Protection. Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/travdatabase> [31 Mar. 2014].

in the Middle East. As discussed in Chapter 2, in a few countries in these regions, such as Argentina, Brazil, Bangladesh, India and Indonesia, however, cash transfers can be paid to low-income pregnant women, contingent on completion of prenatal visits.

A total of 40 countries (25 per cent) do, however, provide this right. Of these, 30 specify that this leave is remunerated, while, nine provide for time off without specifying whether the leave must be paid. New Zealand is the only country that specifies that leave is to be granted (ten days) but it will be unpaid. In Africa, paid time off for medical appointments is provided by three countries (Eritrea, Ethiopia and Guinea-Bissau), in Asia, by two (Republic of Korea and Viet Nam); in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, by four (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russian Federation and Turkey); in Latin America and the Caribbean, by three (Cuba, Nicaragua and Trinidad and Tobago); while no countries in the Middle East provide paid time off. In the Developed Economies, 18 countries (53 per cent) out of the 34 for which information is available provide paid time off for medical examinations.

In Viet Nam, pregnant women are entitled to five days of paid leave for prenatal visits. In Cuba, for example, during her pregnancy and for up to 34 weeks before childbirth, a woman worker is entitled to six days or 12 half days of paid leave to receive medical

and dental treatment. During the child's first year, a woman worker is entitled to one day of paid leave every month to attend a paediatric clinic. Similar provisions also exist in Estonia and Japan. In Brazil, pregnant women can take time off for six medical consultations. In Israel, pregnant women are entitled to 40 hours of time off for medical examinations. Paid leave for medical examinations is also available to pregnant women in, among other countries, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Malta and the Netherlands.

In some countries, time off is only granted if the prenatal examinations cannot take place outside working hours (e.g., Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Norway, Slovakia and Spain). This provision is stipulated in the EU Directive on pregnant workers. According to the Directive (Article 9), EU Member States must take the necessary steps to ensure that pregnant workers are entitled to time off, without loss of pay, in order to attend ante-natal examinations, if such examinations have to take place during working hours (EEC, 1992).

The provision of behaviour-changing measures to encourage men's involvement throughout all the stages of maternity, including the prenatal, childbirth and postnatal periods, as well as in all matters involving reproductive and sexual health, is essential for a fulfilling parenthood, children's well-being and gender equality at work and in the home. Health policies,