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Family Policy in Latvia

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In Latvia not only there is a decrease of total population but also the number of children has decreased **by more than 30% in the last 15 years, the number of families has decreased **by 10%**, also the size of families is decreasing**

2000

Total population - 2,38 millions

Families – 624 thousand

Children – 538,8 thousand

Average family size –
2,84 people

2011

Total population – 2,07 million

Family - 588 thousand

Children – 360,2 thousand

Average family size –
2,74 people

2015

Total population - 1.98 million

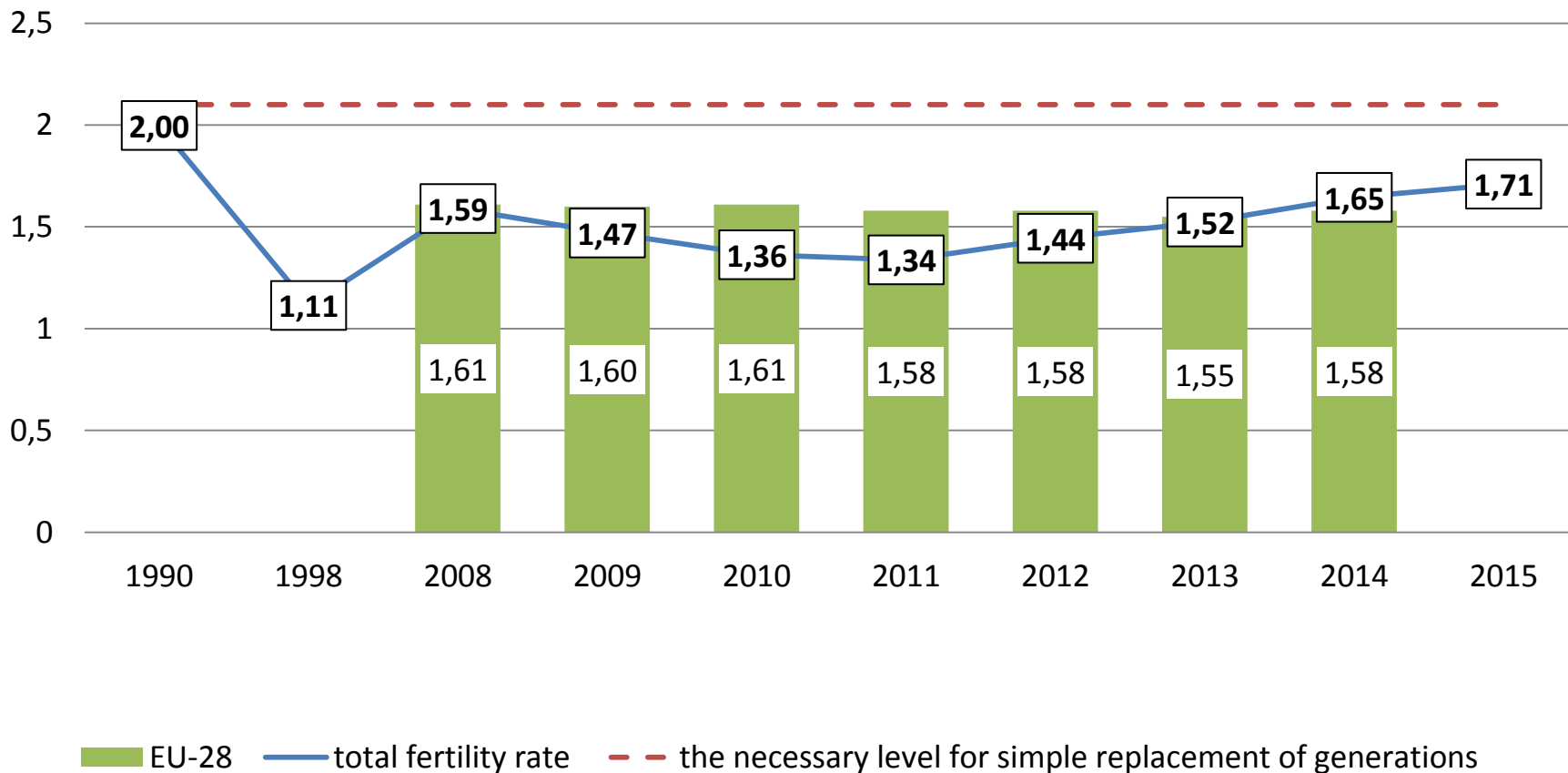
Families ~ 565 thousand

Children– 348,7 thousand



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In 2015 total fertility rate reaches the highest level since 1990 (2.0)



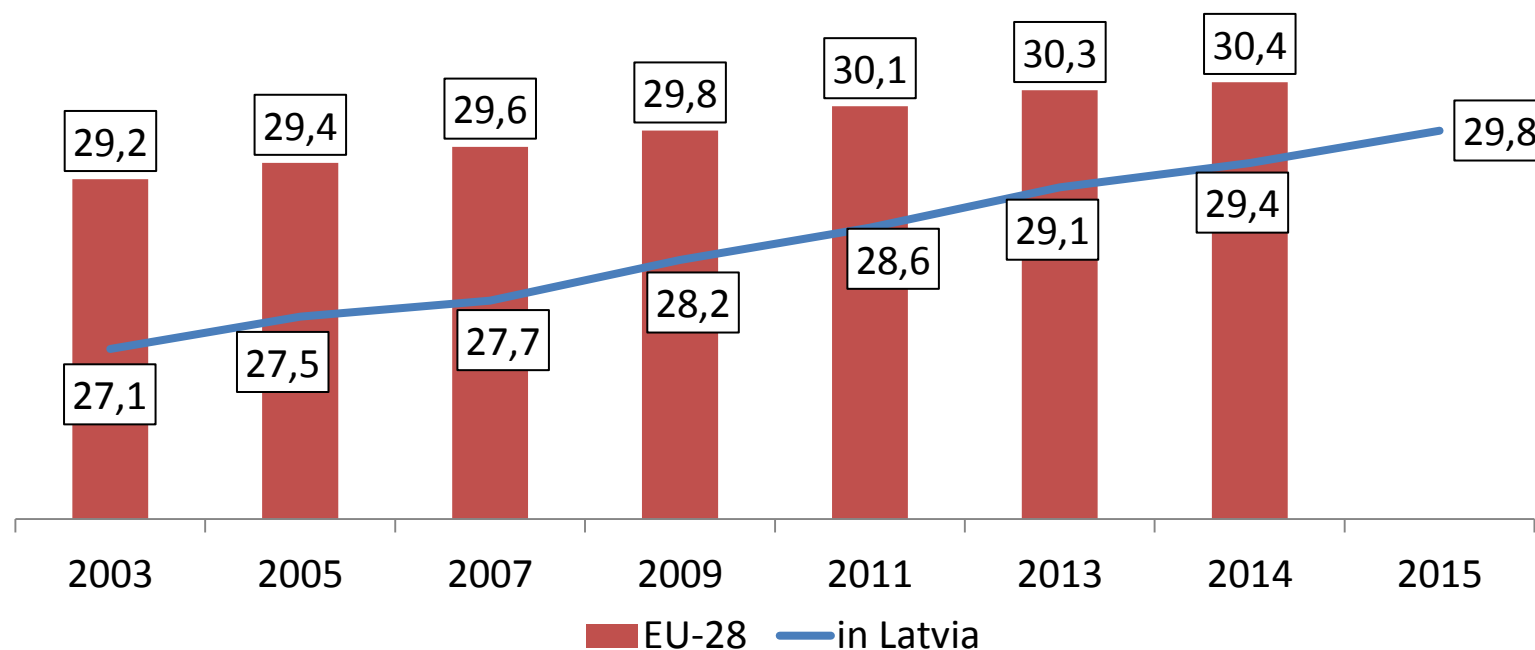
Eventhough the fertility rate increases, it does not reach the necessary amount for simple replacement of generations in the economically developed countries



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The number of young women (in the age group 20 - 34) as potential mothers is decreasing; the age of mothers is increasing

The average age of mothers at the time of childbirth

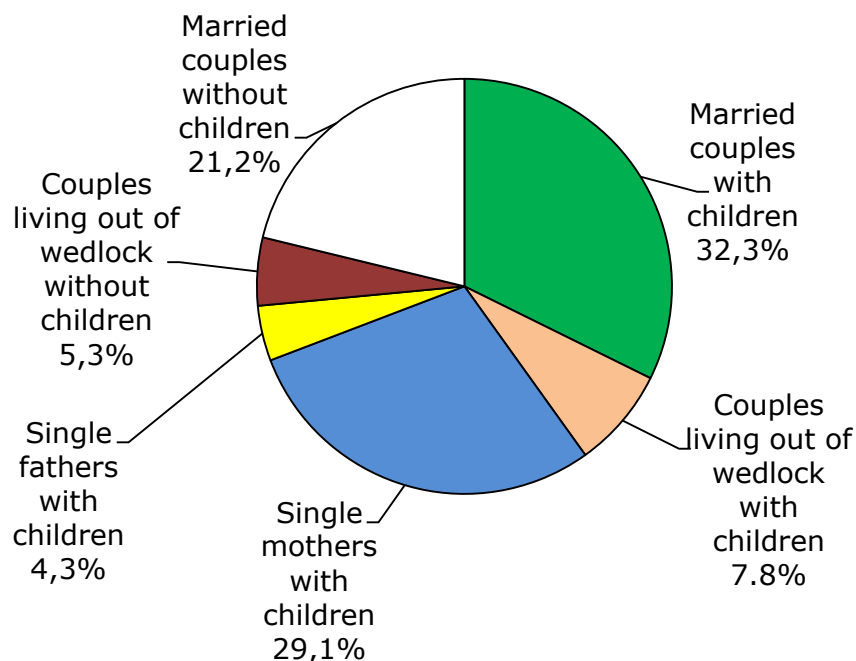


- In future despite of the possible increase of the total fertility rate, most likely the number of newborn babies will decrease year after year due to the decrease of the number of women.
- In comparison to the European Union (EU) in Latvia mothers are one of the youngest; however their average age has increased by 10% faster than in EU

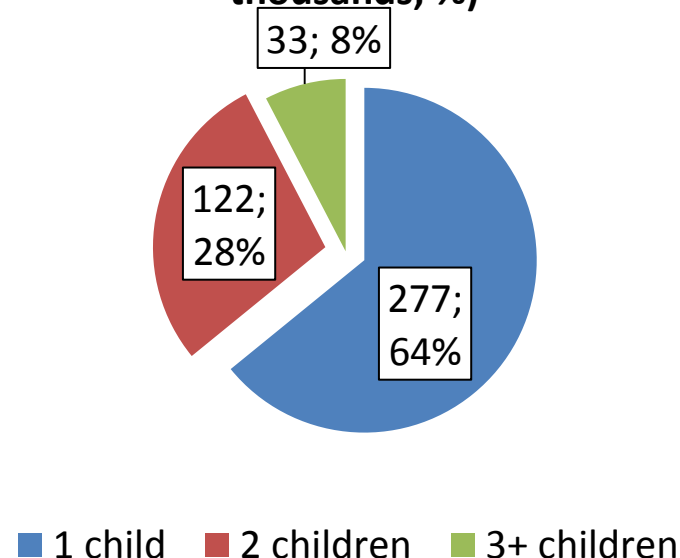


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Family structures and the number of children in families in 2011



Families with children distributed by the number of children (in thousands; %)



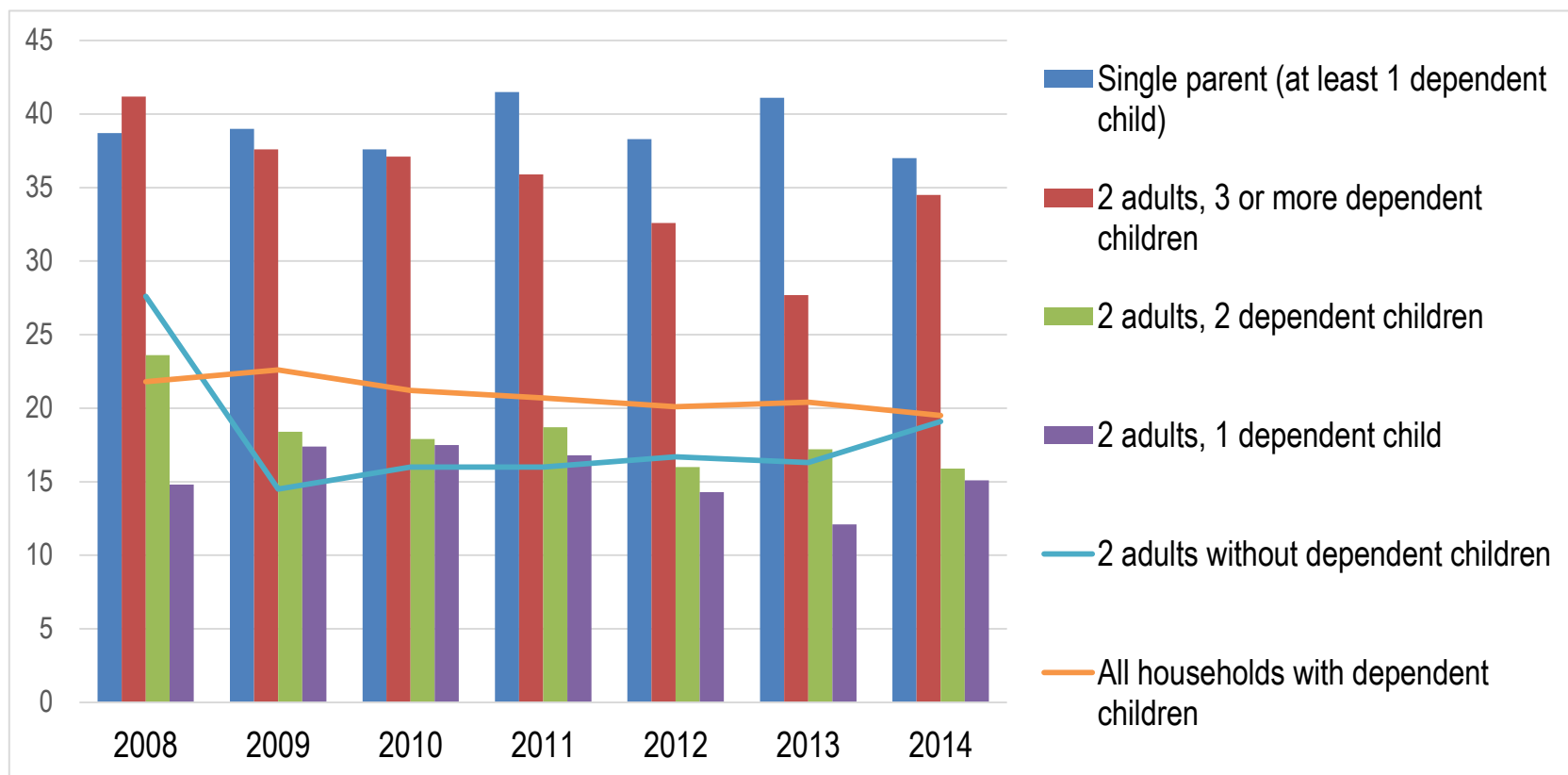
In 2011 there were 588 thousand families, including 432 thousand families with children. Since 2000 the percentage of single parent families remains high – 1/3 of the total number of families.

Altogether more than half of all the families with children have only one child.



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37 % of single parent families with at least one child and **34,5%** of families who care for three and more children are at risk of poverty in Latvia (in 2014)





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Family support policy

Benefit policy -focused
on the support of
children and families

Reliefs for employed
persons for taking care
for their dependent
children



More opportunities
for reconciling work
and family life

Other monetary and
non-monetary family
support and birth
promotion measures



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Social insurance benefits for families with children (from the special budget on social insurance)

Maternity benefit

- 80% of the average insurance contributions salary of the applicant.
- The benefit is paid in two parts - before and after childbirth (each part is 56 or 70 days long).

Paternity benefit

- 80% of the average insurance contributions salary of the applicant.
- For the father of the child for the time period of 10 calendar days long leave

Parents' benefit

- Until the child reaches 1 year of age - 60% of the recipient's average wage subject to insurance contributions; or until child is 1.5 years old - 43,75% *(the benefit is paid in the amount of 30% of the benefit granted, if the parent is working during the time period for which the benefit is being received)*

Sickness benefit for caring for a sick child under the age of 14

- 80% of the average insurance contributions salary of the applicant
- From the 1st until the 14th day of the child's illness, or from the 15th until the 21st day if the child is taken care in hospital for certain period of time

Aggregation of insurance periods



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State social benefits for families with children (from the state basic budget)

Child birth benefit

- Single payment - 421,17 EUR for each child

Allowance for child care

- Until the child reaches 1.5 years – 171 EUR per month;
- For a child who is 1.5-2 years old – 42,69 EUR per month
- Aggregation of insurance period during parental leave

Supplement to the allowance for child care for twins or more children born in the same labour

- In addition to the amount of the allowance for child care and or parents' benefit: until the child reaches 1.5 years – 171 EUR per month for each next child; for a child 1.5 - 2 years old – 42.69 EUR per month for each next child

Family state benefit

- 11,38 EUR per month for the first child, for the second child - 22,76 EUR, for the third child – 34,14 EUR, for the fourth and the following children – 50,07 EUR



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Other state social benefits for families with children (from the state basic budget)

for children with a disability,

- supplement to the family state benefit is EUR 106,72 per month (applicable also to children suffering from celiac disease);
- child care benefit EUR 213,43 per month for a child with disabilities;
- allowance to compensate transport expenses of persons with mobility disabilities (EUR 79,68 for each six months period);

related to the child's adoption

- remuneration for adoption of a child is 1422.87 EUR (lump sum);
- remuneration for the care of an adopted child is 171 EUR a month

child care provided by the guardian

- benefit to custodian for supporting a child, depending on the child's age either 95 EUR or 114 EUR per month;
- allowance — remuneration for the fulfilment of guardian's duties amounts to EUR 54,07 monthly irrespective of the number of children in guardianship;

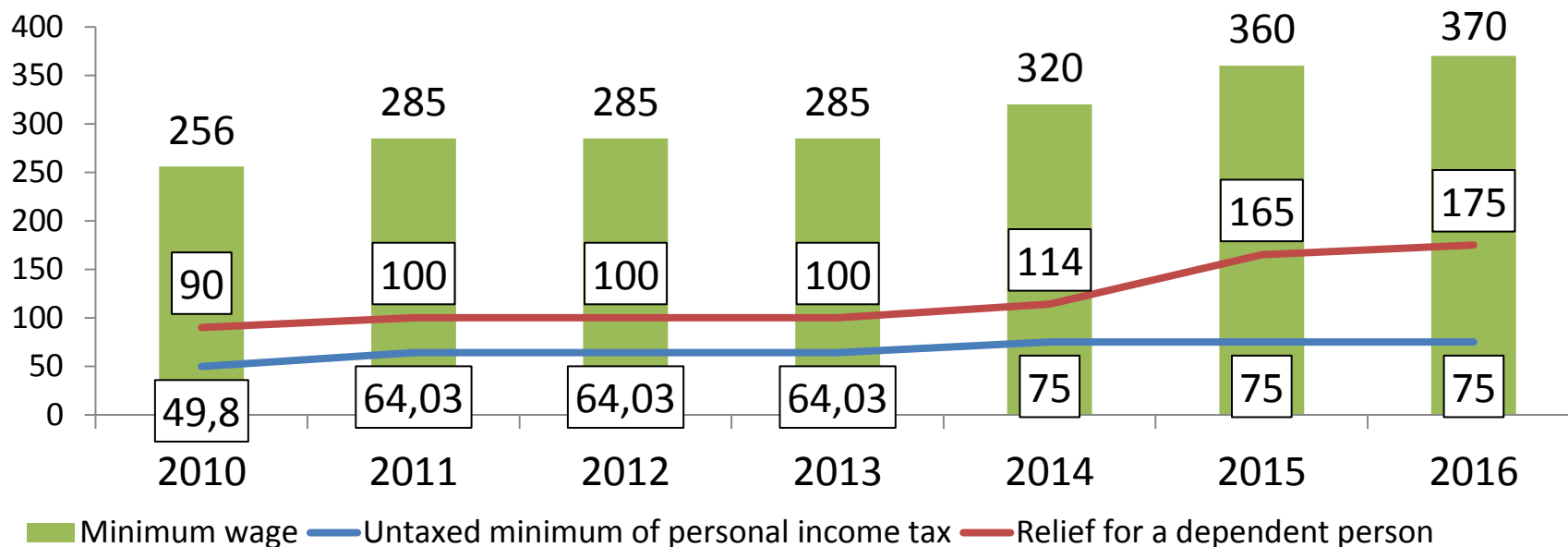
for foster families

- allowance for the fulfilment of foster family duties amounts to EUR 113,83 monthly;
- *The foster family is eligible to acquire financial support provided by local governments.*



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Reliefs for an employed person for his/her dependent children (euro)



- In recent years the relief for a dependent person has been increased as well as it's proportion. In 2016 – 47% from the minimum wage
- In 2016 the actual relief for a dependent child of the personal income tax that has been received by a person – 40,25 euro per month (*there is a risk that for example the income of one of the parents might not be large enough in order to apply the relief for more than one child*).



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The opportunities for reconciliation of work and family life

In Latvia one of the autonomous functions of a local government is to take care for the education of people, namely it has to provide in its administrative territory equal accessibility of pre-school educational institution for children from the age of one and a half years

From 1 september 2013 until 31 May 2016 provisional support incentive has been implemented in order to eliminate the queues of the local government pre-school educational institutions – the state support for children from 1.5 years of age who acquire this service from a private child minding service provider

The local governments do not have a binding requirement to ensure co-financing for children who are using child minding (nanny) services. Therefore only a number of local governments (20) are providing such a support measure in accordance to their budgetary possibilities

If the local government is not able to ensure the possibility for the child to attend a pre-school educational institution owned by the local government and the child is acquiring pre-school education program at a private pre-school educational institution, then the local government is covering the average expenses for this private service provider (the average support of the local government in 2015 – 166 eur)



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Opportunities for reconciling work and family life: EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation project «Flexible child minding services for employees who are working non-standard working time»

Objectives of the experimental intervention are to find 1) optimal child-care arrangement for workers with nonstandard work schedules 2) optimal conditions for inter-sectorial partnership and self-regulation practices, 3) to develop long-term model of subsidizing and development of flexible childcare service

Implementing bodies: the Ministry of Welfare in cooperation with the municipalities of Jelgava, Rīga and Valmiera and the Corporative sustainability and responsibility institute

Time of implementation: 1 August 2015 – 1 May 2018

The activities implemented in the framework of the project:

- Pilot project: provision of child minding services for children of 150 employees in the selected companies in the time period of 10 months
- Development and implementation of a long term child minding model after the pilot project
- Changes in the setting of legal regulation to facilitate the development of subsidising of private child minding services (informative report)
- Research «On the development of a flexible child minding service in Latvia»
- Expert consultations for companies regarding human resources, organization and optimisation of work processes
- Public relation and social advertisement campaign about the good practices of companies and the challenges of the reconciliation of work and family life
- Integration of the project results in the «Sustainability index» and «Family friendly company's status»
- International conference on the challenges of reconciliation of work and family life



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Other monetary and non-monetary family support and birth promotion measures

- State funded medical insemination procedures
- **Families in which only one parent is taking care for the child** (mostly single parent families) – the opportunity to acquire state guaranteed maintenance from the Maintenance Guarantee Fund
- **For families with children:** housing guarantee program
- **For pupils:** school meals free of charge for grades 1 to 4 (funded by state), for pupils from higher grades – depending on the local government also up to the 9th grade and in the secondary school or depending on the family's material situation.
- **For parents:** the right for employees to apply for 1 day of supplementary leave according to the Labour Law or three days for a child with disabilities.
- **For large families:**
 - discounts provided by 3+ family card for services offered by state, local governments and private companies
 - relief for vehicle exploitation tax – for one vehicle used by the family
 - 3 day long paid supplementary leave (for children up to the age of 16)
 - exemption from the state fee for the registration of civil status
 - relief for the immovable property tax according to the amount approved by the binding regulations of the local government (for example in: Riga - 90%, Ikšķile - 50%)
 - certain reliefs provided constantly or periodically by a number of state, local government and private entities for example Latvian railway company is providing ticket fee exemptions; the right to acquire payment reduction for the electricity; discount for entrance fees of educational, entertainment and recreational events; discount for entrance fees of concerts, museums, theatres etc.
 - Exemptions from the state fee for paid services provided by district (city) courts, regional courts and the Supreme Court
 - faster old age retirement – five years before reaching the age of old age retirement stipulated by law (if the persons has taken care for at least 5 children)

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