

Ministry of Welfare
Republic of Latvia

Women and children in Latvia: social context, support, legal framework



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Reconciling work and
family life

Gender equality in
economic decision making

Preventing and combating
violence against women
and domestic violence



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Reconciling work and family life



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Reconciling work and family life: basic facts

Men in Latvia spent more time in unpaid and housekeeping work than men in the EU on average.

Latvian women stand out with the longest paid working hours compared to the situation in other EU countries.

Latvian men spent 40 hours per week in paid employment and 18.2 hours in unpaid care and responsibilities.

Women spend in paid employment 38.1 hours per week and 28.4 in unpaid housekeeping work.

The number of fathers sharing care responsibilities for their little children is increasing. 42% of men use paternity leave (10 days before the child is two months old).



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Reconciling work and family life: basic facts

The overall employment rate in Latvia for parents with at least one child is improving; however, women with children still tend to be unemployed.

The level of employment of those women from 20 to 49 years of age who have at least one child is about 9, 6% lower than the same group of women without any children; the employment rate of men who have at least one child is about 12,6% higher than that of men of the same age without children.

Thus, the decision to become a parent still tends to have a more negative influence to female rather than male employment.



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Reconciling work and family life: some basic facts

The proportion of both women and men in part-time employment in 2012 was low in all age groups; the highest part-time employment rate can be observed amongst youngsters – almost every fifth women in Latvia from 15 to 24 years of age work in a part-time job.

The survey conducted by the Eurobarometer on working conditions show that only 68% of employed residents in Latvia are satisfied with opportunities to reconcile work and family life, while the average rate in the EU is about 74%.



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Reconciling work and family life: childcare

Availability of childcare for children after the age of one is an essential precondition to reconcile work and family life. It promotes return of women in employment after childcare leave.

Latvia is among those EU member states where the proportion of children under the age of 3 in childcare is approx. 15%.

The number of available places in childcare facilities is relatively sufficient for children from three to seven years of age; however, it is more than insufficient for children up to three years of age, especially in the biggest towns of Latvia, including Riga.



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Challenges of Latvian early childhood education and care system before 2013

Autonomous function of local governments is to provide for the education of residents. Municipal pre-school educational institutions (kindergartens) are financed by municipalities, parents cover costs of meals only. Municipal kindergarten was the only option for parents to use subsidized child-care.

Cost of a place in a private kindergarten is covered by parents.
Costs of an individual childminder is covered by parents.

Low availability of municipal pre-school educational institutions (long waiting lists). In 2012 11,3 thousands children have been in the waiting list for a place in the pre-school educational institutions

Alternative childcare services not legally regulated. No special education, safety or hygiene standards to providers of child care and child-minders services. Individual childminders in most cases have been employed illegally, without contracts and taxpaying, as a result these nurses haven't been socially insured and not always qualified for work with small children.



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Reconciling work and family life: childcare

In 2013 the Latvian government started a pilot project with the aim to introduce alternative childcare services (diversification of childcare services) as well as to provide financial support for parents who need child care support for their children aged 1,5 to 4 years and who do not benefit from public childcare.

As the result, 1500 private child minders were legally recognized and registered themselves as tax payers. The number of children queuing for municipality childcare services has decreased by 22-32%. The number of families receiving subsidies increased up to 8,3 thousand.



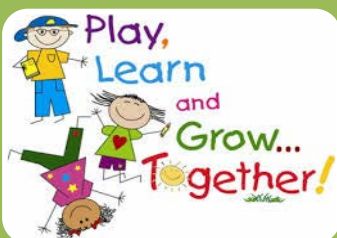
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Pilot project “Child care support and child-minders service” – III PILLARS



financial support for parents with children aged 1,5 to 4 years who are not benefiting from public childcare

- co-funding of the state
- co-funding of local governments
- cash transfer to the private provider of service



introducing of child-minders service

- improving the quality of childcare and protection of the child health
- skilled and educated child minders which can help to acquire pre-school education programs in family
- requirements, registration and supervision for all child care services



promoting employment and labour market legalization

- legalization of private service providers, involving them in social insurance scheme and accumulating their social security rights
- parents are assisted in work and family life. Parents are enabled to faster return to work after parental leave and earn incomes, thereby reducing the potential risk of unemployment and poverty



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Who can provide child care services



state and municipal institutions

- preschool educational institutions
- interest educational institutions and municipal child minders services



private legal persons

- businessmen, cooperative enterprises, NGOs, associations, which deal with child care and child-minding (child care (day care) centers, playrooms)



physical persons

- individual entrepreneurs, self-employed, which deal with child care and child-minding (child-minders, babysitters, nannies)



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Forms of child supervision / requirements

service duration

Temporary (up to four hours a day)

Full-time (more than four hours a day)

place where the service provided

at the place of residence of the child

outside the place of residence of the child

If full-time service is provided to a child from 18 months of age, the service provider has to promote acquisition of a preschool education programme (in the child's family, receiving methodological assistance from a local government preschool education institution or advisory centre of preschool education).

Child minder must comply with the following requirements:

- the person has not committed the violations referred to in the Protection of the Rights of the Child Law or criminal offences
- the person has not been suspended or revoked the right of custody or the person has not been revoked from fulfilment of the duties of a guardian or the status of a foster family or guest family
- the person has a certificate regarding first aid skills. This requirement shall not apply to legal persons, if at least one of the persons involved in the provision of the service has medical education
- the person has acquired in-service training educational programme in the field of child care (not less than 40 hours in full-time studies), if full-time service is provided and the person does not have pedagogical education or professional qualification of a nanny



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Financial support for parents with children

State support (cash transfer) is paid to the registered private service providers: private kindergartens, child-minders, child care centers and other care givers, providing full-time service (at least 8 hours per working day).

In order to receive state support parents have to sign a written contract with the provider. Parents have to inform their municipality about the fact that the child is benefitting from such private service. Service provider have to inform about service provided the Ministry of Education and Science in each month; the respective payment should be made to the provider within 10 days.



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Requirements and control

Requirements to the number of children

- person who provides a short-term service may concurrently supervise not more than 10 children; person who provides a full-time service may concurrently supervise not more than five children, except a case if they all are from the same family
- legal person and State or local government institution may concurrently provide full-time service outside the place of residence of a child for not more than 25 children

Other requirements

- service for children with special needs is provided, if the provider is specially trained to work with children with special needs and the place of service is adopted according to child's health and developmental disorders
- the contract in writing should be concluded between service provider and the recipient of the service (one of the parents)

Supervision and control

- registration of child minders is controlled by the State Service of Education Quality, the State Revenue Service and the Register of Enterprises
- registered child minders are supervised by the State Inspectorate For Protection Of Children's Rights and additionally controlled by local governments, the State Fire and Rescue Service, the Food and Veterinary Service, the Medical Inspection in terms of its' competence



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Gender equality in economic decision making



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Gender equality in economic decision making: some basic facts

Women in Latvia are more educated than men. The difference is particularly considerable for higher education. Among graduates, the share of female students was 69% in 2013.

By field of study, female students are underrepresented in technical fields, and it resonates with the current situation in the labour market, which is experiencing labour market segregation by gender.



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Gender equality in economic decision making: some basic facts

Gender pay gap is approx. 13%.

There are only three areas where the pay gap is lower – administrative and service sector, scientific and technical sectors, and state administration; in these sectors women receive higher wages.

The most essential difference can be observed in the finance sector where women receive only 63.1% of the wage that is received by men.



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Gender equality in economic decision making: some basic facts

According to the European Commission Survey on gender pension gap, women in Latvia receive a 9% smaller pension than men. The rate is lower than the average rate in the EU (39%).

During its Presidency Latvia prepares *Council Conclusions on equal income opportunities for women and men: Closing the gender gap in pensions* with the aim to actualize the discussion on gender gap in pensions, inviting Member States to agree on appropriate measures to address the causes and factors impacting the gender differences in the older age.



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Gender equality in economic decision making: some basic facts

About one third of all enterprises registered in Latvia are owned by women; most of the areas of these enterprises are bookkeeping, accounting, auditing and tax consultations.

Latvia is the leading country in the European Union by the proportion of women in management boards of companies listed on the stock exchange - 31.4% of the companies listed on the Latvian Stock Exchange have women in their management boards.



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Project: Gender equality in economic decision making

VAI TIEŠĀM
— *labākais kritērijs* —
ATALGOJUMAM?

.....



.....

SIEVIETES PELNA PAR **17% MAZĀK***

#LĪDZVĒRTĪGAS IESPĒJAS

SAKĀRĪBAS INTEGRĀCIJAS FONDS



Projekts tiek finansēts ar Eiropas Savienības PROGRESS programmas atbalstu.



In 2013, the Society Integration Foundation in cooperation with the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Economy started a project “Gender equality in economic decision making: tool to promote economic competitiveness and equality value”, financed by the PROGRESS programme 2007-2013. The aim of the project was to promote balanced representation of women and men in economic decision-making in Latvia.

ACTIVITIES:

- Analysis of the current situation of gender representation in the biggest companies of Latvia, development of recommendations to companies and a survey about gender equality issues.
- Raising awareness of gender equality issues in the Sustainability Index of Latvian companies.
- Raising awareness of the general public about gender equality issues.

Opinion survey on perception and attitudes to gender equality showed that strong stereotypes on gender roles prevail in the society. At the same time more men are getting involved in care for their children and housework.



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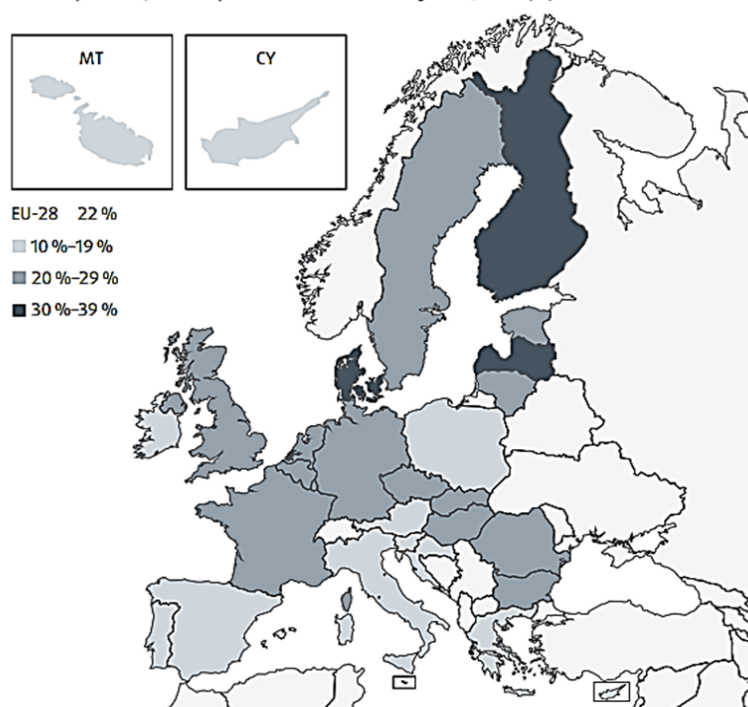
Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence



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Domestic and gender-based violence: FRA survey

Figure 2.1: Physical and/or sexual partner violence since the age of 15, EU-28 (%)



Source: FRA gender-based violence against women survey dataset, 2012

Cases of domestic violence against women in Latvia are more often than in the EU countries on average. 32% of Latvian women have experienced physical and/or sexual partner violence within their lifetime (EU average – 22%).



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Domestic and gender-based violence

Domestic and gender-based violence in Latvia features the same tendencies as everywhere in the world: the majority of cases of violence in public places are conducted by men and victims are men, but within families women and children suffer the most. Partners are violent towards women and parents are violent towards children. Approx. 80% of all registered cases of violence against children and 40% of cases of violence against women take place in families.

The majority of women do not report on the cases of violence neither to police nor to support organizations. 14% of women in the EU on average and 17% of women in Latvia have reported police on the most serious violence incident.



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Prevention and elimination of domestic and gender-based violence

Legal norms to promote elimination of violence:

Violence against a family member is an aggravating circumstance in the Criminal Law.

Violence against a family member in the presence of a child is considered to be emotional violence.

Definition of rape and sexual violence in the Criminal Law was altered to be in compliance with the Istanbul Convention (element of non-consent introduced).

Emergency protection and barring orders introduced that may be applied by police or by court

Law on the Rights of the Child defines those specialists that should mandatory acquire a course on the rights of the child (e.g., social workers, policemen, judges, prosecutors, pedagogues, etc.). The course includes topics on prevention and identification of violence, risks of human trafficking, communication skills with children, etc.



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Services in cases of domestic and gender-based violence

Children and adult victims of violence are eligible to state financed rehabilitation services. Rehabilitation is provided in a crisis center (up to 60 days) or at the place of residence. Approx. 2000 children receive rehabilitation annually. Data on adult service users is not available yet, as the service is new (introduces from January, 2015).

Rehabilitation services are also provided for victims of human trafficking.

Rehabilitation services for perpetrators of violence have also been introduced. Rehabilitation for perpetrators is voluntary and provided as a group therapy course for 4 months.



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White ribbon campaign



Minister of Welfare promotes White Ribbon Campaign in Latvia. In 2014 he has nominated three prominent men to become White Ribbon ambassadors. People could vote online for their favorite candidate. M.Briedis, IBA Cruiserweight World Champion, was chosen as the White Ribbon ambassador. Chief of the State Police I.Ķuzis and a TV show host R.Zeltiņš are two other prominent persons that promote vision of White Ribbon.





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Thank you for attention!

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