

ABSTRACT

The current European family is based on the ideal of gender equality and considers the interest of the child to be fundamental. The European Union strategy is to involve as many women as possible in the labour market and encourages national governments to adopt measures to enable women to reconcile their work and care for children. Developed countries also promote both parents being equally involved in the care of children, including preschool children. Czech legislation conforms to European standards and creates the preconditions for reconciling family and work life. In practice, the conservative attitude of both parents and employers persists. The mother usually stays at home with a child under the age of three and employers are not very accommodating to flexible forms of work that enable mothers of young children to get involved in the work process. The way to change the situation is to increase corporate social responsibility and family friendliness and to change the attitudes of parents themselves, increasing the involvement of fathers in care of children in particular. Solutions to the protection and support of pregnancy, maternity and parenthood, as well as the protection of the child in the Czech Republic can be considered as above-standard and comparable to the situation in the most advanced European countries. However, Czech women face a number of obstacles in terms of access to the labour market (lack of care facilities for preschool children, employers' unwillingness to job flexibly, prejudices related to their professional careers, and others). Parental allowance may be taken by both parents according to the law, but evidence indicates that fathers take parental leave in rare cases and mothers usually return to work just before the child reaches the age of three. A modern Czech family is mostly based on a model of two working parents and both parents should look for ways to reconcile work and family life to give them time to raise children, care for their household and their own interests. At the same time, we must respect the fact that there are families with different value orientations (Christian families, ecological families, business families, same-sex families, there is an increasing number of lone mothers, and also families of lone fathers). Understanding male and female roles is and must remain an individual matter of each family; legislation can only ensure the removal of visible and invisible barriers based on gender, ensuring equal opportunities in the labour market, and creating conditions for reconciling work and family life (family-friendly approach).

Keywords

Gender equality, Reconciliation of work and family life, Corporate social responsibility