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REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Subsiding employer's childcare and promotion of family and work life reconciliation at work place Experience of Estonia

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Entitlement to ECEC and costs for parents in Estonia

- **Compulsory for local governments to offer childcare**
- 1,5-7 years old children
- Municipal or private preschool institution/childcare services
- Mainly, working hours from 7AM to 7 PM from Monday to Friday
- Financial contribution by parents
 - Max 20% of minimum wage (500 eur, 2018)
 - Average 44 eur per month with food costs (2015 RAKE)

Children in ECEC system (2016/2017 data)

1,5-3 years old children:

- 77% in preschool education (27 000 children)
- 10% in childcare service (3900 children)

4-7 years old children:

- 94% in preschool education (40 000 children)

New Act of early childhood education

- Ministry of Education and Research - early childhood education
- Ministry of Social Affairs – childcare services (firstly developed for disabled children)
- The purpose of the new Act - ensure access to high-quality early childhood education and care
- To establish an integrated approach instead of two parallel systems
- For local governments more flexibility

Results of the survey (2015 RAKE)

Survey of pre-education and childcare service:

- Collecting data about ECEC
- Needs of parents for childcare
- Legal analyze about changes in ECEC system
- Suggestions for improvement

Results of the survey (2015 RAKE)

25% of parents need unregular or part-time childcare

- 33% of parents with under 3 years old children
- 29% of not working parents
- 24% of working parents

10% of parents would like to use employer`s childcare

11% of parents childcare after 7 PM

7% of parents childcare before 7AM

9% of parents during weekends or national holidays

4% of parents 24 hours childcare

Employer`s childcare

- Not very common
- More often just special room for children without childminder
- Still, some employer`s have started offering their own childcare
- For example some banks (Swedbank), IT or science firms (in Tallinn science park Tehnopolis), universities (Defense Academy)

Help from European Social Fund during 2014-2020

- ESF fund to create 1200 new childcare places over Estonia
- ESF support 6,5 miljon eur
- First call for proposal to cover the shortage of places (2015)
- **Second call for proposal focuses on the special needs of families and children (2018)**
 - Including the needs of parents who work by non-standard working hours
 - Including employer`s childcare

Subsidizing employer`s childcare

- Call for proposal opened 26th of February until 25th of April 2018
- **Employer, private childcare offer and local government - making cooperation to support parents**
- Supporting only new childcare places
- Only official pre-education institutions and childcare services
- Subsidy for maximum two years
- Grant applicant must analyze the real need for childcare (target group)
- Rules for filling created childcare places

Financial scheme for employer`s childcare

- Financial scheme based on Eurostat data about price per unit in Estonia (childcare place)
- Childcare place costs 245 eur in one month, 2941 eur in one year
- Subsidy 75% of price per unit (183,75 eur)
- Co-financing 25% (61,25 eur)

Do not have any results yet!

Promotion of family and work life reconciliation at work place

The **program for the ‘family-friendly employer’ label** is a multi-stage assessment and consultation process in the course of which the needs of employees and the options available to employers to make their organisational culture more family-friendly are assessed and family-friendly measures are adopted in the organisation.



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‘Family-friendly employer’ label

The ‘family-friendly employer’ label certifies that an employer cares about their employees, values their needs and wishes in balancing working and home life and has made their organisational structure more family-friendly to this end.

Family-friendly measures have a positive impact on balancing employees’ working and home lives and on growth in the competitive advantage of the employer themselves and may have a long-term positive impact on society more broadly.

Similar models elsewhere and partners

- Similar models found elsewhere: Germany: Career and Family Audit (1998), Slovenia: Family Friendly Certification (2005), Italy: Family Audit Certification (2008), Austria: Work and Family Audit
- Partners: Estonian Employers' Confederation, PARE (Estonian Human Resource Management Association), Labour Inspectorate, Estonian Trade Union Confederation, Tallinn University, Estonian Human Rights Centre

Two competitions to participate in the program

- **Two competitions run, March 2017 and February 2018**
 - Micro-, small, average-sized and large companies
 - Public-sector organisations
 - Third-sector
- Employers with different momentary levels
- The model could be implemented by organisations of as many different sizes and with as many different backgrounds as possible and so that all organisations enjoy the same opportunities to implement family- and employee-friendly management culture.
- Free for employer

Employers in the program

- **First competition 70 employers for 44 places in program**
 - Benefits from this - 10 840 employees, 7297 children (2889 of them under 7 years old)
- **Second competition 51 employers for 30 places in program**
- From different sectors, also from public sector but mainly from private sector
- Different fields
- From office workers to line workers

Steps to become family-friendly

- **Participation in pre-assessment**
- **Active participation** in the project, including taking part in **workshops – meetings with management and representatives of employees**
- Drafting documents
- The family- and employee-friendliness categories that are important to employees are selected
- **Independent implementation of measures**
- Participation in **support group events**
- Participation in recognition events (with our minister)
- Participation in interim, final and follow-up assessment
- **Contribution to making Estonian working culture more family- and employee-friendly**

Categories of the family- and employee-friendly measures

- There are 13 different categories: recruitment; making job offers; professional support and development; the communication climate, synergy and culture; working time; the movement of information; the next generation; the promotion of health; recognition; motivation; dedication to work and involvement; surveys; and terminating employment contracts.
- There are 153 measures in total. Information bank of measures (constantly evolving)
- Mandatory categories: working time; the movement of information; the communication climate, synergy and culture

Examples of measures for the 'working time' category

Planning working time:

- Flexible (moving) working time
- Employees can work at home or anywhere there are sufficient resources for them to do their work
- The cost of childcare is compensated or childcare is offered in employer`s rooms
- The employee organises their working time and place themselves
- Working part-time, sharing positions between two or more employees

Planning holidays:

- The length and timing of breaks during the working day can be regulated independently
- Shortening working days that precede public holidays even if the law does not require this
- Additional paid leave (a day off for an employee on their child's first day at school etc)



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