

# The course of young family parenthood construction and work reconciliation model with reference to qualitative research

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## Introduction

The goal of this empirical study - to present common ground covering the experiences of young parents and employers, and define career counsellors' role in the process of work and family/family and work **reconciliation**.

The **object** of the research is reconciliation of work and family/family and work.

## Methods

**The analysis of literature:** Work-family live; Work-family conflict construct; Work-family conflict models; Work-family role conflict; Work-family linking mechanisms; Work social support and family social support; Career management; Work-family facilitation; Family-work reconciliation.

**Narrative interviews with young parents:** 15 narrative-interviews with young families (both mother and father). In the narrative interviews the following sequence of life stages has been followed: child birth -> maternity/paternity leave (1-2 years) -> mother's/father's return to work -> child's entry to kindergarten -> child's entry to school.

**Semi-structured interview with employers:** 14 interviews with the employers representing private and public sectors in the different counties. The semi-structured interview instruments were focused on the following topics: a) creation of family-friendly work place; b) necessity for flexible work schedule; c) development of decrees regulating support in respect to the needs of young parents.

**Focus group with career guidance and human resource specialists:** Focus group of 6 experts. Career counsellors and human resource specialists are expected to be those facilitators who actively participate in the process of searching balance between family and work.

## Results

**Young families' narrative interview results - Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006, Soderberg 2006):**

**Changing family model:** Role reconciliation; Experience of internal conflicts; Search for compromises;

**Change management:** Returning to the labour market; Setting priorities; Planning of financial and time resources; Search for work and family balance;

**Career management:** Different types of career; Expedient career planning; Searching for intrinsic „Me“; Career development decision-making;

**Supportive environment:** State support; Organisation's nature and inner culture; Comparison of work and family skills; Family relations' harmony.



**Employers' interview results - Content analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007):**

**Creation of young family-friendly workplace:** Setting up of flexible work schedule; Providing engaging working conditions; Maintaining active employee-employer dialogue; Fostering social relations in organisation; Influence of employment specifics; Workplace adjustments to young families' needs;

**Definition of formally regulated young family support:** Formalisation of common agreements; Effectiveness of information provided by Personnel Department /Administration; The level of determining young parents' legal status;

**Employer's options to adjust to the various forms of support:** Employer's possibilities to establish child-friendly environment; Influence of organisation's internal culture; Anticipating career development opportunities.



**Experts' focus group results - Content analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007):**

**Categorization of career counsellors' and human resource specialists' approach to facilitation of family and work reconciliation:**

- Pressure experienced by employees with small children;
- Development of career counselling services;
- Recommendations provided by career counsellors to employees;
- Keeping a consistent system/order determining child-care support during maternity/paternity leave and later.



## References

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