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INFLUENCE OF CHILD CARE LEAVE POLICY ON SHARING GENDER ROLES IN FAMILY. COMPARATIVE ASPECT: ICELAND AND LITHUANIA

Master Thesis

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS 4
MAIN CONCEPTS 5
INTRODUCTION 6
1. FAMILY POLICY CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING 9
1.1. Theoretical approaches on family policy 12
1.2. Family policy from gender perspective 13
1.3. Work-family reconciliation policy 15
2. PROVISION OF FAMILY SUPPORT IN DIFFERENT WELFARE STATES 19
2.1. Family support measures in welfare states 19
2.2. EU influence on state family policy 22
2.3. Variation of family support provisions 24
2.4. Implementation and effects of family support in Lithuania and Iceland 26
2.4.1. Child care schemes 29
2.4.2. Men on parental leave 32
2.4.3. Child care leave in Lithuania 35
2.4.4. Child care leave in Iceland 39
3. CHILD CARE LEAVE POLICIES' INFLUENCE ON GENDER ROLES IN FAMILIES: EMPIRICAL COMPARISON OF SITUATIONS IN LITHUANIA AND ICELAND 44
3.1. Methodology of the empirical research 45
3.2 Findings of the empirical research 50
3.2.1. Characteristics of the in-depth interviews participants 50
3.2.2. Decision-making process to take parental leave 51
3.2.3. Practical experience during the parental leave period 55
3.2.4. Development of father's on parental leave relationship with a child 59
3.2.5. Sharing gender roles in child care approach 61
3.2.6. Subjective opinions on national parental leave system 64
CONCLUSIONS 69
RECOMMENDATIONS 71
BIBLIOGRAPHY 72
SUMMARY 81
SANTRAUKA 83

ANNEXES 85
Annex 1. Interview guidelines 86
Annex 2. Interview No. 1: Arnar (IS) 88
Annex 3. Interview No. 2: Marco (IS) 92
Annex 4. Interview No. 3: Klaudijus (LT) 96
Annex 5. Interview No. 4: Pavel (LT) 99

ABBREVIATIONS

EEC – European Economic Community

EU – European Union

Eurostat – the Statistical Office of the European Union

IS – Iceland

LT – Lithuania

NGO – Non-governmental Organizations

UN – Organization of United Nations

MAIN CONCEPTS

Family policy: identification and implementation of the principles and objectives of state policy governance and development, in order to create the necessary legal, social, economic, cultural and other conditions for strengthening the family, promoting its stability and full functioning (Lietuvos Respublikos šeimos stiprinimo įstatymas, 2017).

Parental leave: care measure that provides an equal opportunity for mother and father to spend time caring for a young child; it is usually can only be taken after the end of maternity leave (Blum et al., 2018, p. 6).

Gender equality: linked to the equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women and men, as well as girls and boys. Equality means that women and men are equal in their rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for an indicator of, sustainable people-centered development (UN women, 2019).

INTRODUCTION

Relevance and novelty of the research. The family institute is one of the fundamental values that ensures the stability of the society. Meanwhile, family policy serves for meeting the needs and requirements of the families. Nowadays, when both mothers and fathers more or less equally are involved into the labour market, one of the core family needs is child care, especially, child care of small age children. In such context, the following and much more questions arise: what are possibilities for man and women (mother and father) to reconcile work and family? What is the contribution of family policy in work – family duties' reconciliation? How man and women share child care duty in the family? Whether family policy measures make difference in mother's and father's roles in child care?

Because of limited in scope, this Master Thesis focus on one aspect – father's relation with a small age child determined by the time spent with child during parental leave. In several last decades, special attention is given to possibilities of working fathers to take more responsibilities in child care. This role for fathers became more relevant and possible as laws on parental leave changed in numerous countries. However, the process isn't developed uniformly in various countries. Egalitarian ideas related to equality between men and women to reconcile work and family and to spend more time with children, are more common and implemented in state policies of Nordic countries, also, of more economically developed countries. Meanwhile, in other countries processes of implementation of the latter family policy measures are in the progress only. Therefore, in this Master Thesis, examples of two different in senses of cultural, historical, political, economic and other aspects' development countries – Iceland and Lithuania analysed. The historical development of these two counties in gender equality and child care are different, so differences, on one hand, and common things, on another hand, will help us to understand better the existing processes.

Researches on the topic were already made by Lithuanian scholars (Tereškinas, 2011; Jančaitytė, 2006; Jančaitytė, 2008; Jančaitytė, 2011; Reingardė, 2006), as well, by numerous scholars from other countries (Carlson et al. 2011; Eydal and Gíslason, 2014; Meil, 2013; Jonsdottir, 2008; Thorgeirsdóttir, 2007). A review of academic literature and other sources on previously conducted researches let to state that progress is being made, but there is still a lot of work to do to increase awareness and ensure that gender equality and equal opportunities become commonplace in science and in society in general. However, still not enough is known about relationship between father and child. Some previous researches (Carlson et al. 2011) revealed that quantity of time influence men's connection with a child. But this research differs

from previously done researches by investigating qualitative and deeper look at the relationship between father and child in particular cases – Lithuanian and Icelandic societies. By interviewing men from so different in many aspects (cultural, historical, political, economic, etc.) societies but in both cases they take care on small age child, we expect to identify new aspects and tendencies. This issue is relevant in today's life in Lithuania and Iceland as important to take into account the opinion of the citizens about existing family policy laws and get to know if they meet existing community's needs. The results of this Master Thesis may become useful tool for increasing men's use of parental leave until gender balance in respect to work – family reconciliation will be reached. This could foster social change and use our research to advocate for policy changes and program development.

The following main **research questions** define the **research problem** of the Master Thesis: how family policy measure – parental leave contribute to father's role? How this his experience important for men? How time spend with child during parental leave contributed to father – child relationship? This research seeks to highlight possible challenges in child care systems, and seek to contribute to positive social changes.

The main **research object** of the Master Thesis is influence of child care leave policy on father's role in a small age child care.

The **main aim** of the Master Thesis is to investigate the influence of child care leave policies' on sharing gender roles in a small age child care.

The **objectives** of the Master Thesis are the following:

1. To provide theoretical analysis on family policy conceptual understandings, including family policy models and measures that ensure gender equality in work – family reconciliation.
2. To compare implementation of family policy measures like parental leave and child care possibilities for fathers in different welfare states, including Lithuania and Iceland.
3. To analyze and compare how parental leave taken by fathers influence their connection with a child in Lithuania and Iceland based on empirical data collected in these countries.
4. To provide conclusions and recommendations on the influence of child care leave policy on sharing gender roles in a small age child care, focussing on father's role in a small age child care.

The main **research methods** used in master thesis:

1) Analysis, comparison and summary of scientific literature, legal and other related to the theoretical analysis documents, as well, data of official statistics (Eurostat; OECD; Statistics Iceland, socmin.lt, etc.).
2) Qualitative empirical data collection method – in-depth interviews. Participants of the interviews – fathers from Lithuania and Iceland who are on parental leave and take care of small age child. In total, two interviews in Lithuania, and two interviews in Iceland (via Skype) conducted in March, 2019.
3) Qualitative content analysis method for analysis, interpretation and comparison of empirical data collected via in-depth interviews.

The **structure of the Master Thesis** includes Introduction, three main parts, Conclusions, and Recommendations. In the first part "Family policy conceptual understanding", scientific literature review on family policy measures, gender equality in work – family reconciliation and child care provided. The main theoretical approaches presented in the three chapters. The second part "Provision of family support in different welfare states" is dedicated for the analysis of family support provisions in different welfare states, the European Union influence on family policy, family support. The analysis is based on international and national research findings, attention payed on parental leave implementation and effects in Lithuania and Iceland. The analysis presented in four chapters. In the third part "Child care leave policies' influence on gender roles in families: empirical comparison of situations in Lithuania and Iceland", analysis of the empirical data collected via an in-depth interviews in Lithuania and Iceland provided. First in the chapter, the report of the collected data, analysis process and the main characteristics of study participants and the findings presented. Further, the insights shared by the participants explored, research data collected from Lithuanian and Icelandic participants compared. Finally, based on the theoretical findings and empirical research results, sound conclusions followed by recommendations are made. Masters Thesis is finished with Bibliography that includes 81 sources among which – 58 are in English, and 23 are in Lithuanian. Summary in English and Lithuanian, and 5 Annexes follow the Bibliography.

1. FAMILY POLICY CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING

The family concept is based on three aspects: family as a unit, gender, and paid work beyond the family, and remains the most important public institution. According to Šarlauskas and Telešienė, "*the family is also the main source of child welfare, policy, and assurance*" (Šarlauskas and Telešienė, 2014, p. 97). Each country chooses its own model towards social well-being and stability. Such important factors as family's positive outlook provision, flexibility (balance between work and family), inside communication, financial management and support networks must match family needs and lead the family to a good functioning. Word 'policy' is linked to legislative and executive functions of the state government. Therefore, "*family policy(ies) is mostly analyzed through the study of the legislators' decisions and choices at various levels of government*" (Sagatys, 2009, p. 218). Based on Thévenon and Neyer, "*family policies cover a broad spectrum of state's interventions related to many aspects of the life of women and men, of couples, parents, and children*" (Thévenon, and Neyer, 2014, p. 2).

Today, there is no one universal family policy concept definition which would explicitly identify it, so in the scientific literature, there are different variations of it (Stankūnienė, Maslauskaitė, and Baublytė, 2013). Sociological, demographic and employment surveys in different countries prove that there are different family policy concepts which lead to debates in the scientific and political spheres. For example, The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines family policy through the work – family reconciliation: it is a "*career-oriented means, which, taking into account the need for parental care for minors, to participate in child care, as well as the need for child development, facilitates reconciliation of professional activities and family responsibilities, emphasizes the application of the principle of gender equality in the labor market*" (OECD, 2018). What is more, the family policy includes various concepts such as family-friendly policies, family social policy, family policy reconciliation, child and family well-being policy, family support policy. Each concept is based on different criteria, depending on which family's vision and attitude towards the family institution are promoted by the state (Juraitė, 2012).

The family policy can be considered as a perspective and as a sphere/field. There are two attitudes toward it - broad and narrow, direct and indirect, traditional and modern policy, and the concept of family-friendly policy. The wide definition includes all areas of public policy that affect family life such as education, family law, employment policy measures, etc. Narrow family policy definition covers pre-school or elder children or single parents and social assistance, benefits, privileges and services (Juraitė, 2012).

The obligation of the Government is to create the basis for the implementation of the concept of the state family policy. For example, Lithuania its implementation plan "*design in the Action Program of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania while the Regulations of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour, approved by the Government, provide for an objective of the Ministry to coordinate the implementation of the family policy*" (Sagatys, 2009, p. 219). Family policy in Lithuania described as identification and implementation of the directions, goals, and tasks of the principles and development of public administration in order to create the necessary legal, social, economic, cultural and other conditions, strengthening the family, promoting its stability and full functioning (Lithuanian Parliament, 2016). The appearance of family policy term in Lithuania is linked to the 1990s when the country regained its independence from the Soviet Union. At this period, started economic and social changes which required Lithuanian governments to formulate a new concept of family policy which would be based on the welfare states models which cover the needs and benefits of Lithuanian population on that period of time. So, the political aim in the field of the family policy was to identify the existing problems and propose alternative solutions. Family policies "*are rooted, in particular, historical and institutional circumstances, which influence their design*" (Thévenon, and Neyer, 2014, p. 73). Concept formation is a long-term process in which various political models are shaped and implemented, and political decisions are taken in order to search the solutions of potential problems (Juraitė, 2012). What concerns Iceland, this country took the first steps in development regarding entitlements to paid parental leave in 1981 with the first law on universal rights to a 3-month paid parental leave. The key law on parental leave adopted by the Icelandic parliament in 2000, which ensure that children receive care from both parents. The main aim of this law was to ensure that children enjoy the care of both parents and for both women and men to be able to organize family life and employment (Act on Maternity/Paternity and Parental Leave no. 95/2000). By this law, nine months were divided between the parents so that fathers were allotted three months, mothers – three months, and the remaining three divided between the two. As some results of the research studies carried out between 1997 to 2009 show, "*there is a direct correlation between the length of leave taken by the father and his involvement in care afterwards*"(Arnalds et al., 2013, p. 323). This make a clear image of family policy formation development in selected countries.

Nonetheless important, women roles in family policy and its link to family life and work. According to Thévenon, "*driving female employment in recent decades has been institutional support to help working parents cope with family responsibilities*" (Thévenon, and Neyer, 2014, p. 7). Concerning the link between family policy and female labour market

outcomes, the key factors in explaining variations in female employment patterns are cross-national differences in a household and fertility behavior.

In the last decades men role in family policy become more important in relation to their wife, children and existing law system in the country. Family policy influence men personal life through community traditions, values, norms and standards. Key role in parenting model plays such factors as government, law system, public health system, institutional discourses, media, and education system which are linked to parents experience formation (Tereškinas, 2011). As mention in Miller (2010) book, "*most of the fathers in the research said that they do not think there is a difference between what mothers and fathers can do in relation to caring for the child except breastfeeding*" (Miller, 2010, p. 147).

In the past three decades, "*the family diversity and the decline of fertility which have shifted the public and political interest in family policies to policies addressing family formation, the support for diverse family forms, and childbearing issues increased in Europe*" (Thévenon, and Neyer, 2014, p. 2). In particular, a possible instrument which could encourage fertility is policies which help parents to balance work and family life (leave entitlements and child care services) (Thévenon, and Neyer, 2014). Talking about Nordic family policies aim, they do promote equal gender division of child care and economic responsibility. Duvander et al. (2016) studies show that fathers' participation in parental leave use might increase fertility, improve the compatibility of child caring and female employment, and may also stimulate fathers' interest in children (Duvander et al., 2016). For example, in Iceland, the fertility rate in 2016 was higher than in Lithuania, but it has lower divorce rates. Lithuania has a lower number of kids who are born in unmarried couples (Statistic Iceland, 2016; Eurostat, 2016).

What is more, the active involvement of civil society in family policy formation increases the relevance of family policy issues. In some countries, influence of NGO's involvement, the domination of Catholic organizations play significant role in family policy formation. On the other hand, in some cases, their low intervention resulting in an inadequate representation of interests in forming family policy prevents from the establishment of a family-friendly environment.

In order to develop a family policy which would meet people's needs, it is important to address work and family reconciliation problems by assuring gender equality in both public and private sectors based on a gender justice paradigm, and treat men and women as equal partners (Jančaitytė, 2011).

1.1. Theoretical approaches on family policy

To begin with, consequences and results of the policies depend on the specific design of instruments. Such instruments can be seen in the diverse mix of cash benefits, flexible working time arrangements, and combination of different kinds of family support in the child caring years. According to Thévenon and Neyer, "*mixes of policy instruments are rooted in welfare state histories, they are related to prevailing attitudes towards families, the government's role, and current family patterns*" (Thévenon, and Neyer, 2014, p. 3). Theory is interlinked with family policy as well as it is do prove or deny specific model.

For a better understanding of what was the background of formation nowadays family policy, Gauthier (2002) presented factors which affected family policy. Family policies of the old the EU Member States from the 1970s affected by the following factors (Gauthier, 2002; Maslauskaitė, 2005):

- demographic changes: first fertility decline, has led to the view of the family policy, previously focused on one employee (usually the father) family;
- increasing economic vulnerability of families in all industrialized countries (economic cycles, unemployment translates to protect the family from the risk of poverty);
- common the European Economic Area and the emergence of social policy;
- economic globalization and increased global competition, the conditions the welfare state is quite expensive, so there are limits in family support.

That is, demographic situation and economy are important factors which affect family policy in the country. While, Thévenon (2011) identified six main aims of family-support policies: "*1) poverty reduction and income maintenance* which usually addressed by allocating special benefits to low-income families with children; *2) direct cash benefits/compensation* for the economic cost of children which transfers to families*; 3) fostering employment cover work and family reconciliation* as higher participation in the labour market contributes to the economic and financial sustainability of the welfare state*; 4) improving gender equity policies* which make impact on equal sharing of paid and unpaid work between partners, including child care*; 5) ssupport for early childhood development*" (Thévenon, 2011, p. 59).

Thévenon (2011) presents family support policy mix and family reconciliation in OECD countries, which can be divided into three main groups. First one is the Nordic countries (Iceland, Finland, Norway and Sweden) with most generous in terms of total investment and investment in child care systems. Working parents with young children (under age three) get comprehensive support which covers of generous leave arrangements after the birth of a child

and wide child care services. This allows for the reconciliation of work and family. Pre-school child care services are subsidized by the state for children under the age of three are freely accessible. Still, the family policy in Nordic countries is not identical, as Iceland and Denmark developed better child care services up to three years old. What is more, an important element in this group is gender equality: the child care leave system is geared towards both parents (Thévenon, 2011). In all countries, employment and fertility rates are highest and poverty low.

The second group includes Anglo-Saxon countries (Ireland and the United Kingdom, Canada) with a weaker support provision for working parents with young children and generous financial support which primarily targeted at helping low-income families. Parental leave is short and low paid. One more group cover the Western continental and Eastern European countries with a middle position between the Anglophone and Nordic countries where family policy is unclear and quite different. Family policy generous, support for families large, diversified forms of support. Generally, they focus on financial benefits and support for dual-earner families with kids is more limited. Concerning Southern European countries, family policy characteristics, is rather weak: long, but poorly paid leave, low financial benefits, and poorly developed child care services. They have limited support for working families and low public spending on family cash benefits as well as on child care services.

Finally, continental European countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, France, the Netherlands, etc.) - according to family policy, these are significantly different countries. In some countries, the main interest of a family-friendly family-based family model is family preservation in others the low birth rate, which requires state intervention (Thévenon, 2011; Stankūnienė, Maslauskaitė, and Baublytė, 2013).

To sum up, there are three main groups of family support policy mix and family reconciliation in OECD countries. Each country uses them by implementing its aims.

1.2. Family policy from gender perspective

The emergence of a European dimension in the processes of demographic, globalization and emancipation has brought new challenges that have shown that full gender equality can only be achieved only by meeting such priorities as promoting gender equality, gender representation in the important decision-making process and the integration of the principle of equality between women and men. This would mean that any EU state, by "*developing basic democratic principles, must make decisions that are beneficial to both sexes, and the main motive of these decisions must be the consistent and systematic distribution of gender and economic potential" (*Juraitė, 2012, p. 38).

Gender equality policy in different welfare models was analyzed through the social class's aspect by Korpi (1999). The author pointed out the relationship between the labour market and differences in earnings of paid and unpaid work. Family wellbeing policy systems include universal family support, dual-earner support and market-oriented family policy (Kolbergytė, 2008). According to Reingardė, "*roots of gender relations are determined by the historical ideological concept of the individual and family/community's importance in society and the role of the state in social welfare processes. For example, the Nordic countries characterize the ideology of universal equality of citizens and social rights, equal opportunities and social partnership*" (Reingardė, 2006, p. 87).

Gender inequality determined by ideology, welfare state structure and social security system. As Reingardė and Tereškinas state, "*the role of the welfare state (maternity, paternity support policy, single parent support system, child care) is exposed to and at the same time strengthens the dominant position on gender roles in society*"(Reingardė, and Tereškinas, 2006, p. 87). A big part of the history woman was seen as a housewife's who take care of the kids and do housework. Only several decades ago, the woman started to combine work and family that led to the flexibility of existing family policies and labour market. Family-friendly policies help families to balance their families between their participation in the labor market.

Today, we can see in the world-systemic inequalities that disadvantage women and advantage men. Gender inequality can be found in media, political powers and authority's, in decision-making processes or cultures. They usually are "*sustained in part by constructions of masculinity – by the cultural meanings associated with being a man, the practices which men adopt, and the collective and institutional organization of men's lives and relations*" (Flood, and Howson, 2015, p. 1). An important element in the designing of parental leave policy in Nordic countries is gender equality, where fathers entitled to a specific period of paternity leave. This leave entitlements also include "daddy's quota" in Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, where a specified proportion of the leave can be taken only by fathers (Thévenon, 2011). "*The father's quota in parental leave aims to shorten the duration of women's leave, thereby facilitating their entry into the labor market after childbirth*" (Meil, 2013, p. 559). Yet, despite the introduction of a gender-equal parental-leave entitlement in the EU member states, fathers' uptake of parental leave is low in the vast majority of European countries. Although "*specific entitlements for father have been introduced in many countries, the number of weeks reserved for fathers exclusively remains far below the number of weeks required for a gender-equal sharing of parental leave (except Iceland)*" (Thévenon, and Neyer, 2014, p. 4).

Castro-García and Pazos-Moran (2016) state, that by "*spending time with a child, father establish and shape emotional ties, develops gendered patterns of sharing care between*

partners; and influences the way care responsibilities are allocated to family and friends" (Castro-García, and Pazos-Moran, 2016, p. 52). Men's increasing involvement in the family is can be named as a gender revolution which results leads within female labor force participation. Some researchers state that parental leave has a positive effect on gender equality and promotes two-breadwinner families.

Flood and Howson (2015) in their article analyze fatherhood and see fatherhood as a social construction rather than biological phenomena. She suggests one model which help to understand the links between fatherhood, work and gender equality. Moreover, she considers the relationship between fatherhood and work as dynamic and as socially constructed at three interrelated and competing levels of cultural practices: state (institutional), workplace (interactional) and individual levels. "*First one sets the formal legal framework under which men are the social construction of caring fathers. The second one, includes employers and employees, through the father's relation to work. The last one, fathers are involved in child caregiving were offered by the government and the workplace*" (Flood, and Howson, 2015, p. 225). Policies on parental leave have the potential to establish new cultural norms and values that support men's interest in involving fatherhood by granting them time off work. What is more, they also contribute to the "*acknowledgment of caregiving as socially valued work, making child care more prestigious to share, undermining the motherhood wage penalty and increasing the desegregation of care occupations*" (Flood, and Howson, 2015, p. 227). As a result, integration of gender-equal policy system in the country would lead to greater equal sharing responsibilities in the couples.

To sum up, in the Nordic countries, gender equality is an explicit policy goal. The concept of equality is understood more like relation as options to choose. Use of parental leave by men has a positive impact on gender equality. A growing number of fathers are seeking to be more involved in caregiving. Studies show that "s*ocial policies geared to furthering gender equality, unlike policies designed to promote work-family life balance, have a positive impact on the gender division of unpaid family responsibilities*" (Meil, 2013, p. 561).

1.3. Work-family reconciliation policy

Every family policy faced with a gender perspective. It depends not only on the personal attitude toward the concept of gender equality but also to opportunities and attitudes which employees provide in combating these two life aspects (Kolbergytė, 2008). In the EU, the country responsible for persons social security, including family benefits (child benefits, child-raising allowances and so on), depends on economic status and place of residence.

"*National laws determine the conditions under which parents are paid family benefits*" (Europe, 2019). Important to mention, as children wellbeing depends on their parents, the family policy should bring interventions to combat child poverty and ensuring equal opportunities for children from different backgrounds. Family economic well-being is an important component of family life.

Person's wellbeing depend on participation in the labour market, income, satisfaction of the job conditions. So, work becomes an important value in human life. It is the main source of family income, moreover, psychological and social needs are implemented at work. That is, family and work are core values of people life, but often it is not easy to set priorities between roles in these two different spheres (Kolbergytė, 2008).

Talking about women's labour market participation, it is the best and most effective protection against the poverty of a family with children. It was recognized that the reproductive"*obligation*"of women should not be a discriminatory factor and should not restrict their ability to participate in public life. For "*child care, women must reduce their hours of work, change their job or give up career opportunities*" (Thévenon, 2011, p. 90). As it was already mentioned, gender equality is an important aspect for family policy formation. Gender roles are important, as after woman entering the labour market, family relations become more flexible than it used to be in history. Today woman combines work and family responsibilities, that's why it is important to have a deeper look at how changing family relations after childbirth. Meaningful aspects of family policy are woman participation in the labour force and gender roles. There was always a hot issue about gender equality in the labour market as a society usually sees a woman as wives, mothers and workers who must combine all at the same time. EU faces challenges combining family and work commitments, Lithuania is not an exception. "*Women in Lithuania still carry the heaviest burden of familial responsibilities and face the problem of work-family balance*" (Brazienė, 2013, p. 8). The system of support provision to working mothers are prolonged, diversified, and continuous. This allows women to participate in the labour market full-time even during family formation period and provide family and work balance with a mix of generous parental leave payments which secure household income after the childbirth. This followed with affordable child care services and direct income transfers to the family which secures income during parental leave. Flexible work-time practices also contribute to achieve a balance between work and family. "*However, the Nordic countries show a high degree of occupational segregation*" (Thévenon, 2011, p. 75). A woman should participate in political processes that develop gender equality strategies, otherwise, a large amount of knowledge and opportunities can be lost (Reingardė, and Tereškinas, 2006).

Division in unpaid labour helps to understand why gender inequality in leave uptake is so hard to change. In the countries with a high uptake of parental leave by fathers, women still do most of the unpaid domestic work as women spend on average 12 hours per week more doing unpaid housework (Van Belle, 2016). The survey highlight that men work more overtime and more women work part-time. Women are more often experience conflict between work and family than men (Reingardė, and Tereškinas, 2006). The attitude towards the family at the workplace is one more important factor in combining the conflicting demands of the work and family roles. Meanwhile, "*fathers, where, how and what caring constitutes in relation to their children is and has been, significantly influenced by structural condition of paid work outside the home*" (Miller et al., 2012, p. 15).

Talking about employers, their attitudes and initiatives to apply family-friendly policies. They are "*valuable components which facilitate the reconciliation of professional and family responsibilities, increase the employment of women, and define the political trajectory that the state moves in support of the distribution of more paid and/or more unpaid work by gender*" (Juraitė, 2012, p. 21). Today, still some company's cultures tend to be gendered with the belief that mothers are more responsible than fathers for caregiving (Flood, and Howson, 2015). "*Professional requirements prevent men from playing a more active parental role and mostly the support is offered for women, and men are not offered any alternative or other support*" (Kolbergytė, 2008, p. 31). In the last decades, researchers have increasingly recognized that work stress can shape the quality of fathers' relationships with their children. Previous research indicates that a "*variety of occupational stressors predict lower quality parent-child interactions, including long hours at work, nonstandard work schedules, high levels of job pressure and low levels of workplace support*" (Goodman et al., 2011, p. 588).

All that might influence the quality of parenting. It is important to remember that even parenting might bring a lot of stress as well. If we discuss the outcomes for a child of fatherhood, fathers sensitive and supportive involvement. This is "*associated with children's later social and cognitive development, including fewer internalizing and externalizing behavior problems, greater social competence with peers greater attachment security and greater problem-solving ability and receptive vocabulary*" (Goodman et al., 2011, p. 589). Parental sensitivity and language use both make meaningful contributions to children's socioemotional development. In addition, women roles, they are seen as family oriented with less little labour force perspiration, career-oriented and more likely remain childless and adaptive, combining work and family (Oláh, 2015). In other words, policies in relation to employers, supplement gender equal policy implementation measures that depend on not only on government decisions. The role of the EU is significant in gender equality and anti-discrimination field as policies that they

provide are widespread. The issue of both parents participation in child care focuses on Scandinavia.

Based on European Member States Council Directive on parental leave for the purpose of establishing equal treatment for men and women, were establishes a number of provisions: the right to parental leave for working parents upon the birth or adoption of a child without the right to transfer it to another person. In this way, parents are required to take care of the child from 3 months until the child reaches 8 years age old. By general agreement, "*Member States have committed to apply flexible forms of work, thus creating at least the minimum conditions for parents to combine their professional obligations with family responsibilities*" (Juraitė, 2012, p. 40).

European Commission presented study results, by which in EU, household tasks, child-care, cleaning and spending are still a primarily feminine affair (European Commission, 2017b). According to the presented numbers, men in the EU are working average 39 hours while women work 33 hours. To compare with, women spend 22 unpaid hours on child-care and housework, while their male counterparts spend 10 hours on such work. Taking into account these results, European Commission introduces the proposal on a directive on work-life balance for parents, in whom it is suggested that member states adopt, among other things, a 10-day minimum for obligatory paternity leave. For today, almost all EU countries guarantee for men the right to have of average 11 days off after childbirth. According to the European Commission, care responsibilities are the cause of inactivity for almost 20% of women outside the workforce, but less than 2% of men (European Commission, 2017a).

"*Children are seen as "future invitation" so availability and quality of care services of taking care of the children are important. Men involvement in sharing work is a key to gender equality which supports a system of dual bread winner model*" (Davidavičius, 2006, p. 212). A fairer distribution of time spent on care would improve gender parity and ensure stronger involvement of women in the workforce, thereby reducing the gender pay gap – and empowering women. Children too would benefit from such changes as they would get greater emotional and intellectual development if spent more time with fathers. However, "*it is difficult to change corporate culture because of the deep prejudices people have concerning gender, e.g., toward men as caregiving fathers*" (Flood, and Howson, 2015, p. 229).

2. PROVISION OF FAMILY SUPPORT IN DIFFERENT WELFARE STATES

2.1. Family support measures in welfare states

Each welfare state model has its own characteristics for family support provision. Esping-Andersen (1990) assigned three types of social welfare states: social democratic, liberal welfare state and conservative. A family support package is usually made up of a variety of measures: from child allowance and tax breaks for families to state child care centers for children from 3 years of age to school age. Often emphasizing the benefits of longer maternity leave and, on average, supporting working parents.

The United Nations (UN) welfare state concept stated explicitly that "*everyone has the right to a decent standard of living for his or her family's health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing and healthcare, and the necessary social protection, and the right to protection from unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other circumstances beyond his control, if he loses his livelihood*" (UN, 1948). The political system of the welfare state must be oriented towards ensuring the rights of social citizens and meeting their needs. Due to the existing wide spectrum of welfare states' classifications, exclusive attention will be focused on the typology of Esping-Andersen's social welfare patterns that reveal the differences between the family, the labor market and the state (Juraitė, 2012).

The cornerstone of the Social Democratic model is the state and its support. Very often the social policies of Nordic countries representing this model are characterized as policies that are oriented towards equality and universality. "*The emphasis here is on individual autonomy and equal rights; the high degree of defamiliarization and the degree of decomposition is prevalent, the social democratic model is often criticized for over-spending on social spending while maintaining a high standard of living*" (Juraitė, 2012, p. 50). In the Nordic countries, large family support is provided by the public sector, which helps families to combine work and family. The state supports the dual breadwinner model, not only promoting the participation of women in the labor market but also redistribution of care work in society and in the family thus contributing to gender equality. In addition, in the case of childbirth and pregnancy, the workplace is preserved, and the conditions for the development of a good career are created when a child is born. In the context of facilitating work-life balance, there is a strong development of public child care facilities that provide parental leave for paid leave. "*The guarantee of prosperity in society largely depends on the interaction between the family, the*

labor market, the government's policies and the government itself, and the general consensus, i.e. the state social policy model, succeeds in adopting and implementing it“ (Juraitė, 2012, p. 14). There is a well-developed day care system for children from a very young age (0-2 years old) to school age. Child care is provided all day, all week (Jančaitytė, 2008). There are strong political position of the Social Democratic Party in the state and society, and therefore, organized interest groups are involved in shaping the policy strategy and influencing the political process at various stages. The traditional processes have remained, during which the main stakeholders are co-intensively debating before the action is taken. “*Changes in the division of household work brought from men breadwinner to dual family breadwinner model*“ (Reingardė, 2006, p. 13). The core values of this model are welfare based on citizenship, financing through taxation, equal rights status, equal opportunities and results, dominant role played by the state, decentralized services, high-quality services, generous benefits and high level of employment.

Anglo-Saxon countries, with its Liberal welfare regime, usually have means-tested policy support and apply market-based solutions regarding welfare provision. This model has a limit of the generosity of family benefits and women face less discrimination because general skills are gender-neutral and portable. “*This welfare model create risk for low –income individual workers as employers can use selective provision of private employment-based benefits to attract the highest skilled workers*“ (Eydal and Rostgaard, 2018, p. 68). Specifically, it is attached to low-income female workers who may need protection, in particular, child care or maternity leave. Liberal model is emphasizing on means-tested benefits (Esping-Andersen, 1990). It is focused on the rights and responsibilities of individuals within the market competition, rather than relying on government intervention to intervene in inequality. ”*Changes such as increased dual-earner households, class and gender inequalities in the balance of time and work, and difficulties finding and affording quality child care*“ (Bolzendahl, and Olafsdottir, 2008, p. 284). The fundamental principle of the liberal model is to protect individual human rights and freedoms, a market economy, but if it is necessary, the country does provide the country minimal support for families who face poverty, unemployment, inequality or other social problem. Social well-being depends on the market where the family is a provider of social welfare. The ability of mothers to stay in the labor market depends on their individual ability. “*Such a state ideology demonstrates little financial support for public child care and limited access to parental leave. As family welfare is highly dependent on market conditions and the availability of parental/maternity leave is limited, a flexible labor market is, in this case, conditional on compensation for the burden of women's daily work and family reunification*“ (Juraitė, 2012, p. 48).

The Conservative welfare regime type mostly located in Western Europe that supports men's primacy at the labour market but also provides possibilities for women to combine paid work and family responsibilities. Generous family policies that perpetuate traditional gender roles. "*The state supports the model of a family breadwinner by law, thus maintaining the prerogative of women and protecting the traditional role and status of the husband and wife of the family*" (Jančaitytė, 2006, p. 24). "*Policies reflect the interaction of coordinated production regimes, built on a tradition of industry-specific entitlement, with family policies that have been structured by traditional family and gender values that prioritize women's work in the home*" (Eydal and Rostgaard, 2018, p. 69). It is less supportive for women's labour force participation than countries in Western Europe. In Southern Europe, the Mediterranean or Familistic welfare regime type with extremely limited policy provision to families and pronounced gender role differentiation. "*Central-Eastern Europe, the Transition Post-Socialist cluster with large variations in the range of state support to families and to women to facilitate the combination of paid work and family*" (Oláh, 2015, p. 1). The conservative welfare states are characterized by rather pronounced social stratification: the policy focuses on the preservation of status differences and the traditional form of the family. Work-family reconciliation is only partially encouraged. The welfare state policy pursued in countries with this welfare model is marked by strong social stratification, i.e. y the division of society into certain layers. Due to existing classes and families with different social status, this type of state has different social insurance systems, which grant both individuals and families the rights to various social benefits and services. The amount of these allowances and allowances depends on the individual's position in the labor market and the income received. "*The support of the traditional family model suggests that women's contribution to family budgets is not central, which makes them more often paid unpaid work than men*" (Juraitė, 2012, p. 17).

To sum up, there are four main models of welfare state family policy: male - family breadwinner, parental care, universal family breadwinner and universal career models. Which model dominate in the country, depend on its welfare model. The male-breadwinner model is based on the traditional division of gender roles when a man is responsible for family income, and a woman's responsibilities are home and care. The supervisory parity model also retains the traditional gender roles but evaluates the level of current positions. "*The universal family breadwinner model is in line with the two-family model already mentioned at work. The model of the universal caretaker is based on the goal of changing the traditional gender roles in the family and the labor market. It is aimed at involving men in care work*" (Šarlauskas, and Telešienė, 2014, p. 98). Historical policy decisions on family support provisions have influence and link to social policy.

2.2. EU influence on state family policy

European Union countries have different variety of concepts, status and approaches of family policy. Although there is a number of measures relevant to family welfare which all EU Member States have on different levels: financial support to families, child care leave, flexible employment forms, child care services, tax incentives and etc.

International documents emphasize the importance of the family, the child's well-being, the development of human capital, the government's cooperation with employers in ensuring the implementation of family-friendly policies (Jančaitytė, 2006). The family has the right to social, legal and economic protection states the revised European Social Charter. "*Family policy contributes a great deal to ensuring these rights, particularly in the social and economic spheres*" (Wall et al., 2009, p. 6). There are priorities which are set for EU member states financial support for families through benefits, allowances, grants or benefit supplements; the reconciliation of work and family life, which is often related in respondents' discourse to gender policy. "*Investment in new facilities and/or improving service provision to families in order to increase coverage rates*" (Wall et al., 2009). "*The EU identifies three main interlinked objectives: child welfare, gender equality and reconciliation of work and family life*" (Stankūnienė, Maslauskaitė, and Baublytė, 2013, p. 22). EU being developed family-friendly policies such as "*expanding the infrastructure of public care services, introducing more flexible patterns of maternity (paternity) leave, developing more flexible forms of work organization*" (Kelly, 2014, p. 87). Different countries may have different family policy goals or sets of different developmental periods at different stages of development and can give different importance or priority for different purposes.

The beginning of the last century is linked with the origin of family policy. In 1919, at the International Labor Conference, an important document was adopted - the first Maternity Protection Convention. The Council of Europe adopted a directive (92/85 / EEC), which set out two main tasks. First, to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for pregnant women, newly born or nursing workers. Second, to oblige the Member States to grant maternity leave of at least 14 weeks before and after the birth of a woman, of which 2 weeks are compulsory. In addition, "*maternity leave must be granted to women during maternity leave for a maximum period of 12 months or less, protection against possible redundancy, and a ban to work at night work*" (Juraitė, 2012, p. 39). Strategy "Europe 2020" has a priority objective for improving the employment rate of men and women by 2020 in 75%, which would mean that the Member States will be obliged to eliminate any barriers to women's participation in the labor market.

EU has left a variety of imprints on national family policies and family and fertility discourses. It has set basic standards in employment and gender-related family policies, it has set guidelines which have influenced national policy formation, it has become a normative authority with regard to family and fertility-relevant policies and it has stimulated cross-country policy comparisons and influence (Thévenon, 2014).

In the last decades, promoting women's employment and gender equality have been clear policy priorities for the EU. "*The dual-earner family model is now the most common family structure in Europe, due to the increased labour participation of women and increased living costs*" (Van Belle, 2016, p. 18). This lead European countries development to greater gender equality. The role of the state is particularly important in generating family welfare in tackling gender equality, women's employment, burden sharing in the family, and other sensitive issues. Most importantly, "*taking into account the good practice of foreign countries, the state aims to pursue family policy in a targeted and consistent way, paying particular attention to supporting parents in combining family and working careers and growing instability in the family institute*" (Juraitė, 2012, p. 23).

At European level, the family policy pursued in the Member States is geared towards a single objective: the provision of family support and the guarantee of prosperity. The focus of the European Union on labor and family reconciliation policies, as one of the priority family policies and potential measures to reduce gender inequalities. What is more, demographic challenges, has grown in recent decades as evidence of the implementation of various measures to support the balance between women and men's work and life balance. However, the "*development of institutional measures at national level shows that EU objectives for the successful continuation of family policy development are not being fully realized*" (Juraitė, 2012, p. 6). There are three different public policy-making strategies or paradigms in the EU that respond to the challenges that arise. They can be called such as the traditional view of gender disparities, while at the same time seeking to modernize it, social investment and seeking gender equality (Davidavičius, 2006).

Common characteristics to the political discourse of EU Member States in policy-making system based on: variety of welfare regimes, changes in social and economic policies, internal factors (demographic, labor market and family change), public prosperity system reforms are quite different in terms of regimes types in different regions of the European Union, need for harmonization policy development, at the same time there is and less politically influential. Based on past expert opinions analysis, "*most women are interested in policy coordination measures (as being in an unbalanced position of the breadwinner/guardian) and medium or small business*" (Davidavičius, 2006, p. 215-216).

In all participating countries, the law provides for various measures to protect against dismissal during child-care leave, but they are very different in all countries. In each country, the number of days allocated to father and mother varies, and the different economic factors during the holidays: whether the holiday is fully or partially offset, or whether there is any intermediate solution. In addition, in all four countries, the length of child care leave shared between the mother and father and both parents are different (Reingardė, 2006).

2.3. Variation of family support provisions

The term social support is complex which can be implemented in three levels: "1*)support is defined in terms of the level of the person's integration, 2) support as a link between individual and a social network with specific structural properties, and 3)social support understood as access to resources typically present in one's most intimate relationships*" (García-Faroldi, 2015, p. 697). All EU Member States are implementing a number of measures relevant to family welfare: financial support to families, child care leave, flexible employment forms, child care services, tax incentives etc. Though similar measures implemented in different countries, the results in each country are different. This means that in "*developing family friendly environment in some selected countries family policy formation scenarios are effective, in other countries there is no effect*" (Jančaitytė, 2011, p. 3).

In general state support instruments could be divided into several. First one, is direct financial payments which are one-time and periodic benefits, tax incentives, free or subsidized services and goods for children (childbirth allowances, family/child benefits). Second, indirect transfers in the balance between work and family (paid maternity, parental/parental leave, child care services, and flexible forms of employment, anti-discrimination laws, and gender equality at the workplace). Last one, implicit measures and social changes (support to parents-friendly employment policy, child-friendly, family-friendly preconditions for developing a positive attitude towards motherhood/parenthood and children and linked to various other policy aspects) (Stankūnienė, Maslauskaitė, and Baublytė, 2013). Four family policy models: day care services; income-transfer; work and family flexibility and imposed home care.

Family support provisions are maternity, paternity, parental leave and child care which they differ by its types and length. Maternity leave is a work-related health and welfare measure, available for mothers at and around childbirth, but fathers may be eligible under special circumstances. "*The EU Pregnant Workers Directive (Directive 92/85/EEC) set minimum provisions for maternity leave of 14 weeks at the level of sick pay*" (Oláh, 2015, p 13). Maternity leave includes the period of the birth of a child, that is, a certain number of weeks/months before

and after childbirth. Paternity leave is a job-protected period of leave for employed men with income support provided in some cases. What about parental leave, parents are eligible to take it. Moreover, there is the opportunity to work part-time and receive benefits during parental leave. Child care leave may be paid or not and might be taken by father or mother. Parental care services include such as things as kindergarten are easily accessible to all families, regardless of their social status. What is more, they might be provided by public or private institutions with flexible working hours for example in non-governmental organizations. An important factor, flexible forms of work institution where the worker is allowed to use short-term "holidays" as a result of family problems. Parents can take leave at home for child's home care as well until the child is two or three years old, but usually, such home care leave is unpaid in the EU. "*Anti-discrimination laws and gender equality in the labor market ensuring equal rights at the workplace*" (Juraitė, 2012, p. 47). The level of income support varies between countries. Important factors that determine uptake, which varies widely across Europe are: "*eligibility criteria directly influence who can take leave; flexibility in the timing of uptake has a positive effect on uptake; availability and access to child care are positively related to uptake; the tax system can produce disincentives to take leave; cultural norms and beliefs affect uptake*" (Van Belle, 2016, p. 5). Measures to coordinate paid work and care can be divided into three groups: temporary cessation of professional activity (maternity and paternity leave schemes and flexible forms of work), cash benefits (like tax relief, social security and social assistance), and services (child care organization).

Family support provision aimed to reduce poverty and maintain income (focus more on low-income families with children). These common in countries with liberal welfare state model, although family-support policies remain fragmented in the latter. Policies may vary both in the coverage of such benefits (universal or targeted on low-income families) and in the degree to which transfers are retrogressive with income and progressive with family size. What is more, direct compensation for the economic cost of children such as cash benefits or fiscal transfers with the aim to narrow the gap in living standards between families with children and the childless (Thévenon, 2014). Fostering employment, as higher participation rate contributes to the economic and financial sustainability of the welfare state. As women participation in the labour market increase in employment and foster economic growth. Provision of a family-friendly context typically combines three measures: entitlement to parental leave, child care services and a tax and benefit system that contains incentives to work. Improving gender equity through policies to promote equal sharing of paid and unpaid work between partners, including child care (Thévenon, 2011). Talking aboutsupport for early childhood development, this "*could be encouraged by family policies which bring benefices for children as they would spent*

time with parents, develop positive child well-being and development“ (Thévenon, 2011, p. 58 -60).

2.4. Implementation and effects of family support in Lithuania and Iceland

In Iceland and Lithuania, there are differences and common thing in the implementation and consequences of family support.

Lithuanian system pays maternity leave, birth grant, parental leave, universal child care allowance up to the child 2 / 3rd birthday monthly, additional amount for the child care benefit (monthly), family benefit for large family monthly, disable child allowance, allowance for child whose parents are in military, orphan’s allowance/benefits and public child care facilities for preschool-aged children. ”*There are also certain tax concessions to persons raising children or a disabled child (reduction of taxable income by increasing the non-taxable income)*“ (Bernotas, and Guogis, 2007, p.12). The system of maternity leave, parental leave and child care leave are well developed in Lithuania, but child care services and difficulties in reconcile work require improvement. In general family life corresponds to international recommendations and EU directives. What is already mentioned above, in the country prevails in mean-tested benefits for poor families. “*The main focus of the Lithuanian family policy is on financial measures, mostly ignoring other non-financial forms for family support*“ (Brazienė, 2013, p. 4). It could be said, that there is a lack of research on the specific features which leads to the lack of cooperation between national authorities, relevant institutions and sectors. “*In order to develop an adequate family policy, it is important to address work and family reconciliation problems by assuring gender equality in public and private sector based on gender equality, and treat men and women as equal partners*“ (Jančaitytė, 2011, p. 15). Research in Lithuania conducted in municipalities about quality of services. Its results showed that implemented measures concentrate more on social risk families and for the poor when they were asked about family policy measures. “*Twenty years of work in this direction can slow down the transition to more universal forms of support for all families*“ (Kulbauskas, and Nedzveckas, 2018, p. 35).

According to Gauthier (2002) presented factors, Lithuanian family support system meets requirements of the narrow definition because monetary measures and benefits are government trying to design the support for families with different level of income who is raising children. Moreover, there are signs of gender equality such as giving a month of parental leave and the opportunity to choose whether a woman or man will make use of parental leave.

In recent years more and more men taking leave and improve gender statistics in Lithuania. Still, there are things in the system which could be improved (Marcinkevičiūtė, and Balžekienė, 2014).

If we will analyze the outcomes of Icelandic family policy system, we will see visible progress in gender equality, like in other countries with the Nordic welfare model (Thorgeirsdóttir, 2007). This model is applied to increase the birth rate, driven to better opportunities for women in the work of creation, child care facilitation, gender relations in public and private sphere change (Maslauskaitė, 2005, p. 12). In Iceland, all families with children are entitled to various forms of assistance from central and local authorities. Child benefits are paid to parents till the child becomes 18 years old and they are paid four times a year, 1 February, 1 May, 1 August and 1 November. The amount of these benefits depends on the income of the supporters, their marital status and the number of children. The higher income of the supporters - the lower the number of child benefits which family can relieve. There is support during pregnancy and the birth of a child, like in Lithuania. Citizens of Iceland who have been working in Iceland for six consecutive months prior to the child's date of birth (at least 25% employment participation) and have been employed in Iceland for 6 consecutive months are eligible for benefits (European Commission, 2016a). To sum up, Lithuanian welfare regimes it is difficult to identify as it was shifting from conservative and liberal and created the post-communist welfare state in the country.

In Iceland, family services are according to family needs and all families are eligible (universal), while in Lithuania is targeting principle - families which are in risk (medium income families cannot get any services) and low service availability. What is more, in Lithuania family concept is more traditional, while in Iceland is a modern family. In modern society's family policy is commonly defined as a social policy, a set of specific policies to support, promote socially the desired behavior of families in relation to fertility, family commitments and intergenerational solidarity on issues of gender equality (Žalimienė, 2015, p. 42). Family policy tools in Lithuania are fragmented and do not have one clear direction, while in Iceland – it is targeted and continuous. In Lithuania, there is a flexible not obligatory division of maternity leave for mothers and fathers. While in Iceland – it is delivered 3 months for mother, 3 months for fathers and 3 they can divide (if dad did not use his "daddy quota" that reserves part of the parental leave period, the family loses it) (Jonsdottir, 2008). There is a difference in coverage of maternity leave – in Lithuania covers 100% during 1 year, in Iceland, maternity/paternity leave covers 80% during 9 months. In Iceland, there is no separate regulation for maternity leave with stipulations instead integrated into the parental leave scheme. In Lithuania the amount depends on the payment duration chosen by the parent: 1 or 2

years. In Iceland it depends on if he/she has been active in the domestic labour market for six consecutive months prior to the first day of the maternity/paternity leave.

Existing family policy depends on family welfare, social security and stability. While they depend on the states of existing social protection principles. For the better understanding of family policy could help the analysis of the economic, socio-cultural and demographic contexts (Jančaitytė, 2011). Partly, development and implementation of family policy depend on the state culture, traditions and history (Marcinkevičiūtė, Balžekienė, 2014). There are more factors which have a significant influence on family policy such as: the influence of the ruling parties (ideology which usually highlight social democratic, liberal or conservative views); financial support/resources; institutional structures of the state; social structures of experts working in the provisions (the work on social programs); financial aspect (economic security of family); demographic changes (population ageing, reduction in birth rate, unstable marriages and etc.). All in all, changes in the social, economic and cultural environment are important in family policy development. "*Challenges include increased migration, deinstitutionalization of the family, ageing of the population and increasing global trade competition*" (Aidukaitė et al., 2012, p. 408).

Moreover, it is interlinked with a lower number of marriages, mean age of entering parenthood, growing instability of the marriage, unregistered marriages, the spread of cohabitation, childbirth at an older age, children born in unregistered families is increasing and also of single and childless people (Stankūnienė, Jasilionienė, and Jančaitytė, 2005). What about childbirth at an older age, it could be mention that nowadays, there is a raise of priorities for a big part of woman's such as education and work while getting married/give birth to child letter. Eurostat data show that in EU marriages are getting older and the age of the woman who gets birth to a first child is earlier. The more divorce, the lower family stability – it is shown that indicator of family stability in society is divorce. Statistic data shows that during the independence period, in Lithuania has increased the number of children that are born in unregistered marriage (Maslauskaitė, 2005). Here raise the issue of children wellbeing, as it depends on the parent's well-being, which employment and stable income guarantee. Recent researches show that family development model has changed in Lithuania in recent decades as every ear more and more couples do not get married.

Talking about fertility rates in selected countries, as literature shows, from the beginning of the 1990s in Lithuania total fertility rate fell down from 2 till 1,26. Eurostat database shows that in 2014 EU average was 1,58 and in Lithuania level was 1,63, while in Iceland in 2014 it was 1,93 (it is decreasing as 2004 – 2012 it was more than 2) (Eurostat, 2016). This shows that to compare with previous years last year fertility rate grow in Lithuania, while

in Iceland it falls down. It shows interesting results and idea for new research – why and what influence decline in Iceland and grow in Lithuania. What is more, there is a declining birth rate in the first delivered in a child grows older. If in 1990 the average age of women at first childbirth child was 22.9 years, now, in the last 10 years in Lithuania woman get birth to child in 25 - 29 years old, and in Iceland - mostly in - 27, 29 years (Maslauskaitė, 2005; Statistics Iceland, 2016; Statistics Lithuania, 2016).

According to the statistical data, the financial situation of families raising children is much worse than that of the childless families. The majority of young families don‘t want to have children or have only one child because of the bad financial situation and lack of a possibility to reconcile work and family life. The number of unregistered marriages and children born in unregistered families is increasing. Half of the married couples split up and this shows the instability of marital family. "*Such a family situation requires special attention of politicians and adequate decisions in the field of family policy*" (Jančaitytė, 2011, p. 6).

The new partnership patterns have also had implications for family stability. Couples relationships have become less stable over time as consensual unions, which are more fragile than marriages have spread and divorce rates increased. The propensity to divorce increased steeply in Scandinavia, Western Europe and the German-speaking countries from the 1970s. Along with Anglo Saxon countries, "*about half of marriages may end in divorce in these regions if early 21st century-trends will hold*" (Oláh, 2015, p. 5). Low fertility is often explained by subjective reasons for choosing such women, i.e. the reluctance or fear of giving birth to more children due to a gap in professional life and personal life, the expected loss of professional qualifications, a possible lower pay and economic dependence on a man (Juraitė, 2012, p. 16).

2.4.1. Child care schemes

The arrival of a newborn and the transformation from a couple to a nuclear family brings changes in a relationship as appears on new responsibilities. Much time and energy taking care of the child and the household. This part will present the relationship which develops during the child care period between parents and their child and the key elements of child care scheme.

Carlson et al. (2011) research found that better relationship quality predicted greater parental engagement for both mothers and fathers, although little evidence that parental engagement predicted future relationship quality. "*In general, married and cohabiting couples were similar in how relationship quality and parenting were linked*" (Carlson et al., 2011,

p. 317). There is a positive correlation between effect or stress and/or overload in the marital relationship and parenting (Carlson et al., 2011). The fathers' quota policy supports the dual-earner family model while the cash-for-care scheme is based on a family model, providing cash benefits irrespective of the parent's work activities. The special quota for fathers has had a positive effect on the participation of fathers in child care. Study in the Netherlands found that married couples were less likely to break up when fathers were more engaged in childrearing because the wife was more satisfied with the marriage. From this, we can predict that it can positively affect marital quality as well. What is more, "*possible, that a stronger relationship between relationship quality and parenting over child ages 1 - 3 (than ages 3-5)*" (Carlson et al., 2011, p. 319). This shows the importance of that care period when the child has less developed self-regulation skills and requires greater time or energy input, or both from parents. During the preschool years, language is increasingly used as the mechanism for gaining access to information about the physical and social world (Carlson et al., 2011).

In Table 1, presented child care definitions and characteristics of parental leave policies. Where presented type of the leave, reason, time period and who can take it.

Table 1. Definitions and characteristics of parental leave policies

Type of leave	Who can take it	When	Reason
Maternity	Mothers	After giving birth	Recovery from childbirth and child care
Paternity	Only fathers	After birth	To help during recovery from childbirth
Parental	It is usually transferable from one parent to the other	After maternity leave and before a maximum age of the child	Child careChild care
Leave to care for children who are ill	Both	After the birth of the child	Care of the child when he is ill

Source: Adapted according Blum et al. (2018).

Maternity leave: generally available only to mothers (except few cases) after giving birth to a child. It is a health and welfare measure, intended to protect the health of the mother

and newborn child and to be taken just before, during and immediately after childbirth (Blum et al., 2018, p. 5).

Paternity leave: leave generally available to fathers only, usually to be taken soon after the birth of a child, and intended to enable the father to spend time with his partner, child and help during recovery from childbirth (Blum et al., 2018, p. 5)

Parental leave: leave available equally to mothers and fathers, which can be a non-transferable and transferable individual right or has the right to divide it between themselves as they choose. Generally, this care measure, "*intended to give both parents an equal opportunity to spend time caring for a young child; it usually can only be taken after the end of maternity leave. Some countries, parental leave may be available to both partners in same-sex partnerships*" (Blum et al., 2018, p. 5-6).

Child care leave: services and flexible forms of work constitute a system of measures that helps parents reconcile work and family. "*The category of leave for child care includes maternity leave, parental leave, parental/parental leave, child care leave and other types of termination of professional activity for family reasons*" (Jančaitytė, 2006, p. 25). Comparing presented leaves, four factors are important: 1) wage payments, legal provisions (the scope of support can be universal or only for a certain category of people) and eligibility for support. 2) Duration of the leave which may be differed by social support in different periods. 3) Preservation of the workplace. 4) Cash benefits that depend on leave schemes used in different countries (might be free of charge, pay a fixed benefit, partial or full compensation of salary).

Leave to care for children who are ill: care varies considerably between countries in terms of length, age of children included and payment. For example, in Iceland, there is a single period of post-natal leave that does not distinguish between the three different kinds of leave (Blum et al., 2018, p. 6).

Child care benefit: payable for each child or placed under guardianship in a family according to family income if there are one or two children and regardless of family income if there are three or more children. The amount of benefit depends on the age of the child (Blum et al., 2018, p. 6).

Entitlement varies considerably between countries in terms of length, age of children and payment. Duration and payment depend on the country, and the aim of the leave schemes is different and depend on the country. All do their best to ensure and protect a child's health and development by giving both parents the opportunity to take care of the child. Supporting with cash transfers, proportioning of gender balance between men and women in the labor market and increase men participation in family life and child raising (Jančaitytė, 2006).

2.4.2. Men on parental leave

In the traditional understanding of the family, home life is interlinked with women and men are seen as a helper as their main self-realization sphere is interlinked with public life. Nerveless, men can be sensitive and take care of the child (Tereškinas, 2011). Nowadays parenting ideology is changing because it should match requirement and needs of the families. Emotional well-being influence parenting through its impact upon satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the parent-child relationship. "*Dimensions across gender, biological determinism, models of welfare, caring responsibilities and patriarchy determinate different disciplinary positions*" (Miller et al., 2012, p. 12).

Parenting is the process, linked to parents experience formation which influenced by community traditions, values, norms and standards. Government, law system, public health, media and education system implement it in life as well. Wider cultural beliefs and attitudes about gender divisions influence parents' behavior, to compare with traditional men breadwinner model, men, are more likely to take parental leave. Moreover, fathers who take leave are more likely to have partners that have higher levels of education and are employed. Men appealing to three main groups of ideas: biology, personal preferences and choice, social forces and gendered obligations. Miller research shows that "*fathers do not think there is a difference between what mothers and fathers can do in relation to caring for the child except breastfeeding*" (Miller et al., 2012, p. 147).

The balance between labour and home, caring for children and the workplace. Researches states that still spend less time in parenting activities than do mothers and their involvement in housework reminds low (Miller et al., 2012). Work stress can shape the quality of a father's relationship with their children. Such factors as long hours at work, nonstandard work shifts, high pressure and no supportive work environment, were associated with patterns of fathers' parenting are linked to fathers' parenting (Goodman et al., 2011). "*The level of employers' support affects uptake of leave by fathers. In the companies which offer work–life balance arrangements, flexible working timetable and collective agreements on working time are more likely that male employees to take up parental leave*" (Van Belle, 2016, p. 15). So, the company culture is an important factor that determines leave uptake by fathers.

The legal basis of parental leave entitlements varies widely across countries. Parental leave can be granted as "*family right which they can divide between themselves as they choose, individual right which can be transferred to the other parent and a non-transferable individual right whereby both parents have an entitlement to a specified amount of leave*" (Thévenon, and Neyer, 2014, p. 25). Parental leave policies developing in different ways across countries due

to differences in emphasis on underlying policy objectives and dimensions. "*Dimensions might be economic, as parental leave affects labour market participation and its outcomes; social, as this leave might affect the health of working mothers as well as the physical, intellectual and emotional development of children; demographic, since parents' decisions about whether or not to have children may be affected by leave, because parental leave is an integral part of the policies which shape work-life balance; gender-related ethics, as men and women are not affected equally by leave legislation*" (Thévenon, and Neyer, 2014, p. 20). Parental care is one of the key tools for helping parents combine work with family. These services may be private or publicly funded, formal or informal, paid or free of charge. "*A paramount aspect of child care is accessibility, cost, quality, working hours and child's age limit*" (Jančaitytė, 2014, p. 33). During the parental leave is a possibility for the father to develop a closer relationship with the child and slowly changing the attitudes of men towards child care and care.

Men who take long-term parental leave in the Nordic countries are more involved in the care of their children throughout their lives. They do more household work and domestic chores, communicate better with their partners about the needs of their children and have a better understanding of their children and partners' daily life. Haas, and Hwang (2008) research provide the results that early close connection between fathers and children continues throughout childhood. In their study participate fathers from Sweden and the results show that for them matters the length of leave. "*The number of days of leave taken had a positive impact on the time the father spent with the child and on specific child care tasks such as preparing food and playing with the child. Fathers who took longer leaves were also the ones most likely to report satisfaction with the amount of contact they had with their children*" (Arnalds et al., 2013, p. 329). Previous research suggests that greater gender equality in family-related work leads to higher fertility. One more important factor which faces positive changes during parental leave is men's increased participation in domestic work (Eydal, and Gíslason, 2014). Parental leave provides both parents with the opportunity to supervise their children until they can start attending pre-school education. Employers in this situation are winning as well, as they retain skilled workers, accumulated human capital and avoids a constant change in the number of new employees.

Men can experience difficulties in being both a breadwinner and supportive partner and home. The connections between there – masculine identities, fatherhood and father practices – have been explored in relation to structural conditions – for example, "*employment practices and models of welfare – together with cultural, familiar and individual understandings of caring responsibilities and practices*" (Miller et al., 2012, p. 10). Despite these difficulties, there are several reasons why it is important for the father being present in

the child's life. First, not stereotypical behavior in relation to male and female roles lead to a lower possibility that children have gender-stereotyped attitudes. Secondly, these children may benefit from having two highly involved parents instead of one. The third issue has to do with the family environment, how to take on parent's roles and find rewarding and fulfilling. What is more, this may result in less conflict between the parents, which then benefits the child (Arnalds et al., 2013, p. 330). "*During such leaves, fathers not only become involved in instrumental tasks but also emotionally involved with their children, laying the groundwork for greater dedication to subsequent child development*" (Meil, 2013, p. 558). Moreover, when a father takes the parental leave, it has a positive impact on gender equality in child care and ensures that women will not be excluded from the job market (Wall, et al., 2009). There is also some evidence "*that fathers who take leave, especially those taking two weeks or more, are more likely to carry out child care related activities when children are young*" (Thévenon, 2014, p. 21). Fathers who take leave have an opportunity to get closer emotional contact with a child. "*Sometimes existing stereotypes in society influence their decision to take child care leave*" (Wall et al., 2009, p. 42). Involvement of fathers in child care has a positive effect on mothers' full-time employment too (Reingardė et al., 2005).

Parental behavior is determined by expectations formed through past experience in similar relationships, availability of alternative sources of reward, beliefs based upon exposure to models of this type of relationship, the degree of correspondence between the child's actions and the parent's hierarchy of valued outcomes and the like (Simons et al., 1993, p. 104). Results from the Simons et al. (1993) study indicated that the parenting an individual received as a child affects the quality of his or her parenting as an adult. "*Parenting experienced as a child was indirectly related to the current parenting of mothers and fathers through its association with their parenting beliefs, emotional well-being, and satisfaction with the child*" (Simons et al., 1993, p. 103). To sum up, parent's behavior have a direct effect upon his or her current parenting practices.

Some study shows that extending parental leave to fathers has an important equalizing effect on the household division of work. "*Taking parental leave may not only affect the father's involvement in child care but also his participation in housework, like both types of unpaid work*" (Meil, 2013, p. 560). Over the years a profusion of studies has documented the influence of parenting practices upon child psychosocial develop. Emotional well-being influenced by parenting indirectly through its impact upon satisfaction with the parent-child relationship.

2.4.3. Child care leave in Lithuania

In Lithuania, there is support for families through social services and monetary allowance. The main measures of welfare provided within families are cared benefit; a monthly objective addition of care benefit and lump sum settlement benefit (European Commission, 2016b). Family support measures in Lithuania are following*:* "*education (positive parenting training), health care (psychosocial services), equal integration into the labor market, compensations (public transport for children) and other measures (children summer camps)*" (Kulbauskas, and Nedzveckas, 2018, p. 13). Depending on the historical socio-cultural context, each European country, including Lithuania, chooses a family-friendly policy framework that is just the most appropriate for the country (Juraitė, 2012).

In 2016, the Lithuanian Parliament approved the Law on Sickness and Maternity Social Insurance. By this Law, a parent who takes child care leaves for 1 year will cover 100% of the compensated earnings. If he/she decides to take 2 years, the amount of this payment first year will covet 70%, and next year 40% of earnings. The amount of parental benefit for the period of parental leave granted in accordance with Paragraph 2 of Article 134 of the Labor Code is 70 percent of the recipient's compensatory amount (Lithuanian Parliament, 2016). To compare with, till the economic crisis in 2008 child care leave was covered by 100% for the first year and 85% for the second one.

In 2017, there were new policy implementations in Lithuanian family policy. The Seimas approved the draft Law on Family Enforcement which aims to consolidate the principles and directions of family empowerment in ensuring the coherence, sustainability and continuity of family policy in creating a family-friendly environment. This law aiming to strengthen the family in these areas: education and culture, material security, housing, social support and family services, family health, family safety and parental responsibility for the implementation of the rights of the child. The government planning to develop a long-term family enhancement program, providing for measures to provide families with the necessary comprehensive assistance with a special focus on preventing harmful habits, allowing spouses to avail themselves of mediation services, resolving child disputes or divorces and other measures. On project basis suggested to create of new institutions - the National Family Council and the Family Policy Commission. The first one would be an advisory body for the assessment and implementation of family policy. While the second one will be involved in formulating family policy and identifying strategic family policy priorities and family-building priorities, maintaining contacts with Lithuanian families, family organizations and family-based organizations, analyzing their expectations, providing conclusions and suggestions to the

Seimas and the Government on the implementation of family policy (Lithuanian Parliament, 2017).

SODRA (2017) present the update of the law about fathers child care leave. From July 2017, come in force new Labour Code in Lithuania so the procedure for parental leave is changed, which will allow for 30 calendar days of paternity leave for men to go at any time until the child reaches 3 months. Before, men could take paternity leave only during the first month after the baby was born. What is more, presented parental benefit statistics by which in 2016 15,6 thousand people received a paternity benefit. At the same year, in October Seimas adopted the Family Strengthening Act (XIII-700). The draft law was first publicly presented to the Seimas in 2015 (Kulbauskas, and Nedzveckas, 2018). "*The aim is to improve the organization of family policies and to clarify the institutional division of functions and responsibilities. In the directions of education and culture, assistance in purchasing/renting housing, providing material security, social assistance and family services, family health and protect children's rights*" (Kulbauskas, and Nedzveckas, 2018, p. 10).

According to the data about concept of family presented in the article of Purvaneckienė (2010), most respondents identify family as men and woman with children (about 98,4%-94,4%), and unmarried man and woman (75,6%) this shows that family policy should take into account changing social attitudes towards the family (Purvaneckienė, 2010, p. 56). According to data of the quantitative research of Jančaitytė (2011), a traditional attitude to family is being replaced in Lithuania by a modern approach, and the young generation is especially liberal toward family so it requires adequate response of national authorities, i.e. family policy should address the needs of young families and support post-modern families. Researches show that family policy formation faces the following obstacles: "*the problem of family policy as a priority area, change of political powers, inadequate situation analysis and the use of its results in the decision-making process, lack of coordination of family policy issues, insufficient cooperation between different authorities, politicians and scientists, comparatively weak non-governmental organizations and inadequate representation of interests, lack of financial resources, insufficient attention to monitoring and evaluation of implemented family policy measures*" (Jančaitytė, 2011, p. 16). For the development of family policy, we need to focus on developing a family-friendly environment, pay more attention to gender justice paradigm and gender equality. Take into account changes in society, the family policy should be priority sphere of politics. And "*desired family behavior pattern of the promotion, the fertility rate, women's participation in the labor market and etc*" (Žalimienė, 2015, p. 41).

The Ministry of Social Security and Labour are the responsible institution that provides family care. Municipalities implement family policy measures and NGO's are involved in

service provision process. Key aims of family policy in Lithuania seek "*to increase birth rate, reduce emigration, and reduce poverty and social exclusion*" (Kulbauskas, and Nedzveckas, 2018, p. 13). What is more, "*develop and implement measures to enable the family to be an autonomous, responsible, robust, stable, active and independent institute capable of performing its functions independently*" (Lietuvos Respublikos socialinės apsaugos ir darbo ministerija, 2019). Moreover, implementation of family policies helping to develop legal and organizational measures to create a family-friendly environment that will stimulate positive demographic trends.

In Lithuania, during the last decades was changing the content and priorities of various family policy components. "*Initiatives and decisions to change the elements of family policy have direct relation to the political life of the state such as Seimas elections and changes in governing parties*" (Stankūnienė, Jasilionienė, and Jančaitytė, 2005, p. 42). The economic downturn in 2008-2012 has led to a significant reduction in family support. "*In 2009, when the generous family policy measures adopted during the pre-crisis period were still in place, the child care allowance was up to one year and cover 100% and the parental leave for the second year was 85%*" (Kulbauskas, and Nedzveckas, 2018, p. 10). In the framework of National Research Programme Social Challenges to the National Security by the Research Council of Lithuania in 2010-2013 several research projects were completed or are being implemented. They seek to increase ferity rate in the country and seek for greater gender inequality (Braziene, 2018, p. 268). What about the challenges of the 21st century for Lithuania and its social welfare systems. Slow population growth is caused by the decreasing number of children, lowering population number does not ensure a replacement of the generations and this is leading with low life expectancy and de-institutionalization of family life (Aidukaite, 2010). As a result, there is loss of demographic balance, rapid ageing of the population and growing difference between the producing and consuming parts of the society and increasing of psychological and economic costs of child-rearing (Stankūnienė, Jasilionienė, and Jančaitytė, 2005, p. 211-212; Maslauskaitė, 2005).

In Lithuania, there are two main family support provisions: financial incentives and services. There is a strong orientation to the problem of reducing poverty and social exclusion, which plays an important role. First, financial child care allowance, in 2019 are counting in this way: when child care leave is chosen until the child reaches the age of 1 year, the parent gets 77.58 % of the person's compensatory wage, but if he decides to take two years parental leave then during the first year he will get 54.31 % and during the second one 31.03 % of his wage (SODRA, 2019). The amount of child care allowance depends on the amount of the person's compensatory earnings, which is determined by the person's insured income and the"floor" and

“ceiling” of the benefits. In terms of “floor” and ”ceiling”, the following minimum and maximum payment limits are set: child care benefits 'ceilings' may not exceed 2 average minimal salaries; the 'floor' of child care benefits since 2018 may not be less than 6 basic social benefits (SODRA, 2019). Tereškinas (2011) research, which was made among men in Lithuania who took parental leave state that this leave do not harm man as they see it as one of self-realization forms and develop such skills as empathy, compassion, ability to listen and learn custody.

The second main group of family policy measures is services. In Lithuania there are such child care provisions: child care allowance, maternity, paternity, parental and sickness leave for the sick child (Kulbauskas, and Nedzveckas, 2018). “*Child care leave can be taken by men of women, grandparents by family choice till child become 2 years old*“ (Tereškinas, 2011, p 196). The services provided to families consist mainly as social, educational and health services. The main ones are co-financing such things as “*local pre-school education, child care in day care centers, support for non-formal education for children, positive parenting training etc.*” (Kulbauskas, and Nedzveckas, 2018, p. 11). The quality of the services in the municipalities depends on: the quality of the services which are provided and the competence of the service providers and difficulty for municipalities to evaluate the quality of provided the services. How exactly the support provided in non-monetary form is determined by each municipal council. “*Mostly it is provided with food, clothes, footwear, hygiene goods and other items necessary for children, social cards for shopping in grocery stores, catering vouchers*“ (Kulbauskas, and Nedzveckas, 2018, p. 16). Kulbauskas and Nedzveckas (2018) research conducted municipalities about quality of services that highlight that family policy measures are mostly focused on families who are in social risk and poor one. Such results show that work in this direction can slow down the transition to more universal forms of support for all families.

Maternity, paternity and parental leaves in Lithuania have different circumstances and payment length. Maternity leave in Lithuania related to employment or family circumstances and all employed mothers who have paid at least 12 months of social insurance contributions during the last 24 months are eligible for maternity leave (Braziene., 2018, p. 264). This leave pay to mother during pregnancy and childbirth. The amount of the benefit is calculated on the basis of the person's insured income for the last 12 months, but the maximum compensated earnings may not exceed two average monthly salaries of the country. Paternal benefit designed to create an equal attitude towards sharing family responsibilities between a man and a woman. This leave is a special leave granted to the baby’s father and is one of the longest in the EU as its duration is one month (28 days) within the three months immediately following childbirth. It is 100% covered and depend on the previous net earnings (Blum et al., 2018). This leave can

be used at any time during the child's birth until the child reaches three months. Parents can use the right to parental leave until the child is three years old. This leave can be shared between parents. There is flexibility in use, for example, parents can work whilst on leave/collecting parental benefit. Parents are eligible for the parental benefit if they have paid social insurance taxes at least for 12 months during the last 24 months; as social insurance is compulsory for all workers, self-employed workers are eligible. "*Grandfather, grandmother or any actual caregiver of a child (if parents do not use leave themselves) is eligible for Parental leave, but not for parental benefit*" (Braziene, 2018, p. 266). During the second year of parental leave, it is common, that the baby is supervised by the mother and the allowance goes to the father's account. This is the reality of some families now because the law allows for a return to work in the second year of the child, but for an allowance.

2.4.4. Child care leave in Iceland

The development of family policy and child care leave in Iceland partly depend on the country's historical context. Looking back at the history, in the XX century, in the country's economy prevailed agriculture and fishing. Later, developed services and high technology. Today, its citizens enjoy high life standards (Reingardienė, and Tereškinas 2006).

As it was already mentioned, more usually woman has part-time jobs, while men usually work more hours. Talking about politics, in North countries dominant was a social democratic political party which almost all XX was in power. In Iceland, there was a right-center party called neutral, while social democrats there were not so much. They made an influence on the country's care system which in some aspects are different from the Scandinavian model and in some aspects are more similar to the United Kingdom and Australian models. In 1975 employed mothers were entitled to 3 months paid maternity leave. In Icelandic parliament (*Alþingi*) until the 1980s hardly debate about the 'family policy' concept. In that year legislation on universal rights for paid parental leave came into action and women were entitled to universal scheme of 3 months paid parental leave which in 1987 changed to 6 months (Eydal, and Gíslason, 2018). Iceland was the last Nordic country to develop a scheme with universal entitlements. In 1998 fathers received the rights to 2 weeks paternity leave (Eydal, and Ólafsson, 2003).

The issue of the reconciliation of work and family life gained greater political attention from policymakers. "*This has been reflected in legislation in various ways, most importantly in the law on paid parental leave from 2000, but also in both family law and gender equality legislation*" (Arnalds et al., 2013, p. 324). The core year in the child care system for Iceland

was 2000 when was adopted the Act on Maternity/Paternity and Parental Leave (no. 95/2000) in *Alþingi* new child care system law. One of the reasons why this law was implemented in life was the result of the research's which show that fathers do want to spend more time with their children. What is more, this leads to women and men more equal participation in labour market. Till that year it was quite challenging for families to combine work and home duties. There was a need to integrate men more in child care and motivate employers to hire women equally as men. The main aim of this law was based on the principle to coordinate family life and work outside the home and ensure try to ensure that children can enjoy the care from both parents (Eydal, and Ólafsson, 2018). In 2001, fathers had the right to one-month paternity leave, two months in 2002 and in 2003 they gained the full entitlement of three months (Arnalds et al., 2013). In Iceland, by the existing scheme in 2001, provide for three months for the mother, three for the father, and a further three to be shared as the partners wish (Meil, 2013).

In December 2012, *Alþingi* revised the law on paid parental leave and corrected some of the cuts to economic compensation, while extending the leave period to 12 months. Each parent is entitled to 5 months non-transferable leave and then they can divide 2 months between them. "*The act was accepted unanimously, but in October 2013 a new government announced that the increase would be delayed due to the financial difficulties of the state*" (Arnalds et al., 2013, p. 326). This law should take place in steps and be fully implemented by 2016. It was as therefore revoked in 2017, but some proposals currently under discussion. If this law will pass the Parliament, then each parent will have five months paid leave, and a remaining two months to share. Part of the reasoning behind the bill is that municipalities around the country have been having difficulties bridging the gap between when parental leaves end and when slots in playschool open up (Fontaine, 2018). What is more, data show that during the period the division of care between the mother and father has changed significantly as a higher proportion of children born after the law had been enacted and enjoy care from both parents (Arnalds et al., 2013).

"*Nordic family policies aim to promote a gender equal division of child care and economic responsibility*" (Duvander et al., 2016, p. 2). Nordic policies focus on fathers' participation in child care and were the first countries in the world to introduce a father's quotas of paid parental leave with the specific aim to encourage fathers' early involvement in childrearing, and they have done so with great success. "*The Nordic countries have approximately 20 years of experience with the father's quota, and the fathers' share of leave use is substantial by international standards*" (Duvander et al., 2016, p. 3). Father goes on parental leave after the first child, have a higher risk of having a second child than couples in which the father takes no leave.

The term *fæðingarorlof* (birth leave) is used in law to refer to paid parental leave. Nerveless, the existing 3 months quota, the law does not apply the concepts of maternity or paternity leave, except that it is used in the translation of the title of the law. Sometimes the paternity leave term *feðraorlof* is used with the same meanings as father's quota. In 2006, was made the law and "*address parents without mentioning the sex of the parent, in order not to discriminate on the basis of gender or sexual orientations*" (Eydal et al., 2018, p. 205). *The Nordic countries have approximately 20 years of experience with the father's quota, and the fathers' share of leave use is substantial by international standards* (Duvander et al., 2016, p. 3). "Father Quota", began to be designed in the nineteen-nineties, researches results in the UK and USA on paternity leave and child care involvement showed that fathers who take parental leave become more involved with caring for their children (Arnalds et al., 2013; Meil, 2013). Iceland does not offer "*paternity leave per se, but three months of leave are available for the use of fathers only, to take as and when they choose (to add to the confusion, although the law covers all nine months with the same name – 'birth leave' – the three months for fathers is commonly referred to as 'paternity leave'*" (Blum et al., 2018, p. 12).

Responsibility about such leaves a parental (parents' join rights) till 1st of January 2019 was the responsibility of the Ministry of Welfare, but today two new ministries handle the tasks of the former ministry, which no longer exists. The new ministries are, respectively, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Health. Eighty of parental leave base on 80 % of average total earnings for a twelve months period ending six months before birth. The wage compensation was 80 percent at the time of introduction, but it was reduced significantly in 2010 as a consequence of the economic crisis as a result this possibly reduced fathers' leave use (Eydal, and Gíslason, 2014). The total leave length of 9 months is not sufficient to cover the period up to a preschool start, especially and other informal solutions are often sought for this child care gap. "*The total of nine months leave (covering maternity, paternity and joint rights) can be used until 24 months after the birth and this has to be negotiated with the employer*" (Eydal et al., 2018, p. 207). As a result, shared parental leave indicates a shared responsibility for child care during the child's first years (Duvander et al., 2016).

Today, one of the issues why child care system needs changes is the time gap "*between the end of paternity leave and when child starts attending pre-school, at around two years old. On one hand, we have the lines that show that mothers are the main caretakers and on the other the lines that show that caretaking is equally divided*" (Kyzer, 2019). It is still usual for family members (grandparents, relatives etc.) to take care of young children. Child care institutions seem to be generally accepted for children aged 2 years and above. Research on how Icelandic parents bridge the care gap shows that they use a variety of solutions: they make use of the

flexibility of the paid parental leave e.g. by taking part-time leave to extend the period that they can stay at home with the child; they use family day care, regulated and subsidized by the municipalities; relatives and friends help out; or the parents work irregular working hours and take turns staying at home (Eydal and Rostgaard, 2018). "*No legislation of home care allowances has been enacted in Iceland but since autumn 2006, a few Icelandic municipalities have paid parents' home care allowance, in those instances when the children are not enrolled in day care institutions*" (Arnalds et al., 2013, p. 326). Home care of the child is unpaid leave from work, which either parent may take for up to 13 weeks in order to care for the child. This entitlement is attached to each child up to 8 years of age (Kyzer, 2019). "*The parents of a child are entitled to paid leave at childbirth, when adopting a child and when becoming a permanent foster parent. They receive holiday allowance or childbirth allowance, depending on their situation in the labour market*" (Kyzer, 2019).

In Iceland, both parents are entitled to up to 3 months for 'unpaid maternity leave and additional 3 months' leave that can be taken by one parent or the can share this leave (Reingardė, 2006). Sometimes parents, in order to make longer stay with their child after this leave use their holiday days. This gives them the possibility to stay longer with their child at home. There are pre-school institutions for children from 0 to 5 years old or until children start attending primary school, such pre-schools are state-funded with day care facilities. Parents pay monthly contributions that vary from one municipality to another. Single parents (parent or mother) and students who have children applied the discount. The goal of the dual earner-dual career system is well developed in this country. One of the main obstacles to the realization of that goal has been the care gap that remains from the time of the end of parental leave to the time when playschools admit children. (Eydal, and Gíslason, 2014).

Not the last role play gender equality recommendations for employers that their employees could combine work and family responsibilities. Nerveless, marital status does not affect women participation in the labor market. Research, which was made in Reykjavik showed that very important are the common decisions making the process in couples when they decide how to share housework, child care and other daily activities. So, important an agreement between partners as it does helps to achieve a better balance in everyday life. Still, in some aspects women is more important as usually she is the one who plans child care leave. What is more, results of the same research state that in Iceland, for society is much more beneficial when both family members are working and share in between household functions. "*The Icelandic social insurance system has generally based its benefit payments on a flat rate and/or means-tested benefits*" (Eydal, and Ólafsson, 2003, p. 26).

During the first years of child life, in Iceland applied family-friendly forms such as flexible leave policy, working hours, support for child care and training during holidays (Juraitė, 2012). "*According to the Nordic experience, equal use of the intellectual and economic potential of men and women and the reliance of women on the dependence of the welfare state is the source of economic strength and social well-being of the state, destroying the stereotypical approach to gender roles and strengthening the fundamental egalitarian principles underlying the model of the two survivors' family*" (Juraitė, 2012, p. 48). Icelandic law system has the best practice in this field of study. Since 2000, Iceland has 9 months of child care leave during which 3 months dedicated for mothers, 3 for fathers and 3 they can share between each other. It is impossible to pass on to someone that three months, the exception is only when one of the parents dies. "*These child care leave parents must use until the child becomes 18 months old*" (Reingardienė et al., 2005, p. 9). People who are active in labour market gets 80% of their salary while others get fixed payments. Fathers leave is not transferable and given only for them to look after the newborn. In this country, child care leave takes 13 weeks for mothers and 13 weeks for fathers. Such child care model could be named as "win-win-win" as fathers "win" the possibility to spent more time with their child. Mothers "win" as they can spend more time on their career and children "win" as well, as they get attention and time from both parents. Although this seems to look good, some people think that child care leave is too short time period.

3. CHILD CARE LEAVE POLICIES' INFLUENCE ON GENDER ROLES IN FAMILIES: EMPIRICAL COMPARISON OF SITUATIONS IN LITHUANIA AND ICELAND

In this analysis, the selected countries belong to different welfare states models. Iceland represents a social-democratic model of well-being (Esping-Andersen, 1990) and Lithuania is a post-communist state, one of the members of the Central and Eastern European Bloc, and can be regarded as a middle ground - between the conservative and liberal social welfare system (Reingardė, 2006). "*Political support from Lithuania which was provided by the Nordic countries after the end of the Cold War and the demonstration of the successful example of the creation of a welfare state has become a major starting point for internally-initiated change*" (Juraitė, 2012, p. 14).

Lithuanian family policy system is more focused on risk families and is dominated by small service availability. Although both have strong protection from dismissal and the right to return to the same or equivalent job after maternity leave. To sum up, comparative analysis revealed the following factors as differences in gender equality, labor market, parental leave influences of family policy development. Jonsdottir (2008) showed that less than 30% of respondents who took a part in her research consider the status of couples as more equal after paternal leave, and see a woman at home and taking care of children. Talking generally about the laws on maternity/-paternity leaves, development of involvement men and women have had a positive impact on Icelandic society and it increased their possibilities. What is more, the duration of parental leave in Iceland is 9 months: 3 months for woman, 3 for men and 3 they can share. In Lithuania, it is more flexible, there is no pressure for a man to take this leave. However, "*Icelandic women have now taken the absolute lead with respect to labor force participation, and Icelandic men have had an impressive increase in their take-up of parental leave days*" (Datta Gupta et al., 2006, p. 34).

As a literature review revealed, the availability of child care services in Lithuania, child care are rather limited. In addition, there is an insufficient number of places in public kindergartens in most urban and rural areas. While in Iceland rather an extensive coverage for children in all age categories (Plantenga, and Remery, 2009). The percentage of young children receiving formal child care is also much higher in the Nordic countries. One reason is that subsidized formal care services are available for children at a younger age than in other countries. The percentage of young children receiving formal child care is also much higher in

the Nordic countries. "*One reason is that subsidized formal care services are available for children at a younger age than in other countries*" (Thévenon, 2011, p. 68).

Although from the first look Lithuania and Iceland are two different countries, they might have some overlaps and similarities in the area of child care leave policies. Both systems have stronger protection against dismissal and a right to return to the same job or an equivalent one after maternity leave. Moreover, in both countries, both parents are entitled to maternity/paternity benefits. Institutional Framework of Family policies in Lithuania – Ministry of Social Security and Labour (2 main departments); Iceland - The Ministry for social affairs and social security is responsible for family policies (One main coordinating institution).

Literature review helped to understand previous researches which were made in the field of child care leave policies in Lithuania and Iceland. The propositions of the empirical research of this Master Thesis are to understand how child care leave systems work in selected countries and how childbirth influence gender roles in the family. It will help to understand why Nordic countries have developed more universal and generous policies. This research will contribute to social studies and understand why social policy developed in quite different directions, or maybe they are similar? What influence the changes? The research results will help to understand social phenomena in countries with different geolocation, welfare models, cultures and history. This research might be useful not only to social studies of family policy but for future researches and development of parental leave policies in both countries. What is more, results might help for future researches being one of the sources in the social science field, for example, making research with selected couples or kids involved.

3.1. Methodology of the empirical research

The aim of the empirical research is to analyze and compare the influence of child care leave policies' on sharing gender roles in a small age child care in Lithuania and Iceland.

The object of the research is influence of child care leave policy on father's role in a small age child care.

The **research questions** are the following: how family policy measure – parental leave contribute to father's role? How this his experience important for men? How time spend with child during parental leave contributed to father – child relationship?

Objectives of the empirical research are the following:

1. To create in-depth interview guidelines based on finding of the literature review and information about Lithuanian and Icelandic family policy measures from the gender perspective.

2. To carry out in-depth interviews with men on parental leave in Lithuania and Iceland.
3. To analyze and compare an empirical data collected within the in-depth interviews.

This research contributes to the discussion of parental leave influence on men, quality of parent-child relationship, hope to provide deeper insight into decision making process, gender roles balance and responsibilities in the family. In this research work, expected to find out more about influence of parental leave on men and their relationship with the child. That is, the aim is not only to find out about opportunities for men to balance work and family, but also to collect their practical experiences during parental leave, and find out what is the connection between father and the child and how fatherhood influence men. Additionally, research highlights how effective is parenting system in both selected countries from the subjective perspective, and ambition to provide as many innovative ideas as possible by taking into account the information from participants. The main **assumption** on which the research is based is the following: the greater use of leave by men translates into their greater involvement in unpaid household work, particularly in child care.

Research method. The qualitative research method was chosen for this case study. Four goals in which qualitative methods benefit researchers can be identified: 1) obtaining family members' parental leave and its influence on their mutual relationships; 2) acquiring family insiders' views about relational processes and observing family interactions; 3) examining families within contexts; and 4) giving voice to marginalized families and family members.

Capturing the influence of family policy on father's role and relationship father – child meanings using in-depth qualitative methods help to develop stronger theory and build more content bodies of knowledge. In most family research, individuals are asked to self-report behaviors, thoughts, attitudes and beliefs using researcher-developed questions in formats that often limit the range of responses. In contrast, qualitative interviews, consisting primarily of open-ended questions, allow individuals to explain in their own words what they think, feel, or believe about their family relationships (Ganong, and Coleman, 2014).

The method used in empirical data collection in this research is qualitative with its instrument – in-depth interview. The in-depth interview is the best option as it can give more detail information for analyzing personal experiences. Academic literature show, that qualitative interviews, consisting primarily from open questions, allow individuals to explain in their own words what they think, feel, or believe about their family relationships which help us to get more information on few particular cases. This helps us to "*understand the meanings that men attach to experiences, how they perceive and value their relationships, and what it feels like to be a member of the family*" (Ganong, and Coleman, 2014, p. 452). With elected

qualitative instrument there is an aim to know survey participants experience on parental leave, what they think about various aspects which are connected to this look for the processes involved. Previous research shows that among "*the respondent's paternal age and education level, as older and better-educated fathers may provide higher levels of engagement, sensitivity and linguistic stimulation to their children*" (Goodman et al., 2011, p. 592).

However, the trustworthiness of the survey participants is an important factor as well, so atmosphere and tone of the interview might influence the answers of participants. Qualitative design, help to discover the complexity of parental leave decision-making process and the underlying rationale for the complicated processes by which couples moved into and out of cohabiting relationships (Manning, and Smock, 2005). This design, "*help to discover the complexity of decision-making and the main justification for the complex processes that couples moved into and out of their relationships*" (Manning, and Smock, 2005). A qualitative approach is useful for accomplishing such tasks as theory and model building, concept development or the delineation of social processes. Understanding the intersections of cultural themes and practices and individual live the hypotheses that compose the model.

In qualitative research, there are two general sources of models: those whose components are drawn from analysis of qualitative data only or models that integrate these analyses with related research and theory that enhance, amplify, and lend significance to the results of the analysis. This research method focuses on description of men individual experiences and beliefs and helps to know how parents of young children balanced labour participation and the care of their children. To know if there is increasing participation of fathers is a result of the family policy system on paid parental leave specifically.

The instrument of the quantitative social research. The research instrument is interview guidelines consisting from open qualitative questions (Annex 1). As qualitative data use open-ended questions, participants are free to express their opinions which leads to collecting more detailed information. There are several parts of interview:

- decision-making process to take parental leave,
- practical experience during the parental leave period,
- development of the relationship with a child,
- gender roles in child care approach,
- parental leave system,
- demographic indicators.

Research sample. Non-probability sampling applied in this research. Non-probability samplings are characteristic of qualitative research. Researchers, in general, seek to understand subjective human experience. Non-probability samplings are characteristic of qualitative

research, so this help to find specific people for this research. What is more, qualitative approaches are excellent ways to investigate family dynamics and family relationships.

Description of sampling procedure and criteria's was following. In the research four men from two different (selected) countries were invited to participate in in-depth interview. Participants were selected based on first criteria two participants – men are from Lithuania and the other two are from Iceland. In Lithuania, they were invited by asking members of the social network who may know someone who are on the last months of parental leave and stay at home with their kid(s). The requirement was following: men should be first time on parental leave, have a child under the 3 years old and was working before parental leave. Interviews with the participants from Lithuania were carried out in the middle of March, 2019.

In case of Iceland, it was more difficult to find participants as several potential participants who correspond sampling criteria refused to participate. Therefore, with assistance of personal network in Iceland there were made several publications on the social media platform such as Facebook groups (Spurningakannanir, Pabbar á Nesinu, Brask og brall (allt leyfilegt)). This was the best and comfortable process of selecting research participants. Meanwhile, sending letters to Reykjavík University research center did not give any answers. In the end, two persons from Facebook group, in which was posted the note about the need for the participants, replied that he meet the requested requirements. As a consequence, author of the Master Thesis had a Skype call for an in-depth interviews with the first participant from Iceland (Reykjavík) – at the end of March, 2019, and with the second participant – at the beginning of April, 2019.

So, 4 interviewers – two from Lithuania and two from Iceland were planned in the research.

Organization and the proceeding of the research. Empirical data collection and the interviews were conducted via voice recording tools – Skype and Google hangouts call. Data collected via phone recorder with men's permission that all collected information will be used only for this research. The interviews were recorded with the word agreement of the participants and made sound generalizations.

All interviews were carried out without video call. During an interview carried out with the first participant, he said that feel more comfortable to have audio call interview conditions. In order to collect the information on the same conditions from all other participants, the decision made to have an audio call with each person who participates in this interview.

The prepared interview guidelines were sent to interviews' participants in advance in order that they could have a look at the questions and be prepared for the interview.

Average interview duration is 25 minutes, minimum duration – 20 minutes, and

maximum duration – 35 minutes. Each interview recorded and then transcribed into a Word document (Annex 2 – Annex 5). Later the transcribed texts analyzed in order to answer the research question.

The next step in the empirical research was the collected data description and analysis. In the latter stage, the technique of qualitative data analysis method – content analysis applied.

Ethics of the research. Ethical issues of this Master Thesis were taking into account as well. First, the principle of awareness ensured: at beginning, each participant was informed about the main aim of the interview and research in general, also, purpose on which empirical data is going to be used, and how it will be presented.

Second, the principle of the consent was guaranteed via freedom of choice by the participants to take part in this social research or not, there were no push towards the participants, thus the participation is only voluntary.

Third, the principle of objectivity is guaranteed once each participant is respected and his will as well. The participant allowed freely to end the interview since the moment he wishes. The participant was able to choose to answer to questions or not, but if he decides to answer, so he is asked to do it honestly. All participants gave their positive answer for the being honest. As well, the researcher tries keep being impartial as much as it was possible, and guarantee that formulated questions do not offend the participants.

Fourth, the principle of confidentiality also addressed in the research: all answers were coded, so the confidentiality of the survey participants is guaranteed and it will cause no harm to any person participated in the interviews. Formalized interview guidelines guarantees the anonymity of the participants. Furthermore, the link to this survey was sent through social media, so there were no contact between researcher and the participants.

Limitations of the research are several ones. First, the time period of parental leave is different in Lithuania and Iceland that might little influence the results of this research.

Second, taking into account that living place may shape the results of this survey, as there is a possibility that families who live in courtside answers may differ from families who live in cities capital. In this case, target group is man from Vilnius, capital of Lithuania, and Reykjavik, capital of Iceland. Moreover, the work sphere may be a factor as well. Fathers living in nonmetropolitan communities may be particularly vulnerable to experiences of workplace stress, as previous research suggests that fewer employment opportunities are available in rural communities and, further, that an available jobs are likely to be of lower quality compared to jobs available in urban areas. Results of this research might not be applied for a couple in the villages and countryside. As their lifestyle and job-specific might be different from the city.

Third limitation related to factor of non-face-by-face contact during the interviews, as

the interview was carried out via Skype. An additional challenge is difficult to evaluate quality of the relationships father – child. It is not easy to make assumptions, as there is not a lot of researches done in this field. Informants may have presented themselves differently with different researchers under different conditions at different times.

3.2. Findings of empirical research

3.2.1. Characteristics of the in-depth interviews participants

In total, four interviews there were conducted. Two men from Reykjavík and two from Vilnius who are in the last period of the parental leave interviewed (Table 2).

Table 2. The main characteristics of the in-depth interviews' participants from Lithuania and Iceland

Interview No.	Name of the participant	Country	Age	Number and ages of children	Duration on parental leave	Interview duration
1	Arnar	IS	27	1 child: 9 months old	3 months	21 min
2	Marco	IS	35	1 child: 9 months old	3 months	22 min
3	Klaudijus	LT	49	4 kids: 2, 12, 7, 20 years old.	3 years	20 min
4	Pavel	LT	33	2 kids:1,5 and 3 years old	2 years	35 min

The age of the survey participants balanced between 27 and 49 years of the participants who have not older than 3 years old children and are on last months of parental leave were carried out. Children age was elected because "*possible, that a stronger relationship between relationship quality and parenting over child ages 1-3* (than ages 3-5)" (Carlson et al., 2011, p. 319). In both countries, the maximum period till when parents can take parental leave is 3 years.

The participant from Iceland is Arnar who is 27 years old who have one daughter and is on the third month of parental leave. He finished bachelor in Computer Science and work as Stack Software Developer.

The second participant from the same country is 35 years old Marco who has one son who is almost 9 months old, now he is on his last parental leave month. He has bachelor and master degree in radiographer.

The participant from Lithuania is 49 years old Klaudijus who have four kids (3 boys and one daughter): 2, 12, 7 and 20 years old. He is on the last year of his parental leave - the third one. He has a bachelor in economics and has his own car business.

The second participant from Lithuania, Pavel who is 33 years old and has two daughters who are 1, 5 and 3 years old. He has a bachelor in IT information system designing. At the moment when he took parental leave, he was working as an IT project manager and today he is working in the furniture production business.

3.2.2. Decision-making process to take parental leave

First of all, the interview participants were asked the main question: **"When did you decide to take parental leave and what was the motivation?"**, and some related additional questions. During analysis of the obtained answer during interviews, two categories were identified: decision to take parental leave, and source of information and assistance. During further analysis, seven subcategories were identified (Table 3).

Table 3. Decision-making process to take parental leave

Category	Subcategory	Substantiations
Decision to take parental leave	Motivation	*When we had the first child, my wife was on parental leave <…> the opportunity to have more time with the kids and see their daily life (Pavel LT).* *My business allowed me to take it, as I had time and was able to go on parental leave (Klaudijus LT).* *Help to my fiancé and stay at home with my child and enjoy the time with my family (Marco IS).* *With the arrival of your first child <…> decision in which direction your priority must lay upon (Arnar IS)*
	Reaction of family members	*The family was very happy because they understand life values (Pavel LT).* *In general positively, maybe someone was surprised, but in general positively (Klaudijus LT).* *It had been well spoken through decision with my wife and my family. All of them had generally a positive opinion and I had their support as well (Arnar IS).* *It was a little bit strange because I am from Italy and my father though it was strange (Marco IS).*

Category	Subcategory	Substantiations
	Reaction of coworkers	*It was various. Some, do not understand why a man has to go, <…> on their opinion, taking a year or two to stop career, development in professional life, is not reasonable. There are priorities, and my family priorities are higher than professional life (Pavel LT).* *I think positively, maybe someone was surprised but in general, normal (Klaudijus LT).* *They were not shocked (Arnar IS).* *They were just normal, excited for me they say ' Marco, finally you will be a father'. I hope, they were very excited for me (Marco IS).*
Source of information and assistance	Partner, wife, fiancé	*My main source is of course my wife (Pavel LT).* *I call my fiancé, look at the books, internet, friends, who have a child can help us if we have some kind of questions (Marco IS).*
	Parents	*Everything is going intuitively or as my wife says (laughs). I do <…> not ask parents how to do and what <…> I ask my wife. That's maybe a wife's model over here (Pavel LT).* *Most my mother and mother of my wife. They are always support us with a good advice or a trick that can help us out (Arnar IS).*
	Friends	*About friends <…> Everyone has his or her own point of view, so need to be careful, listen to everyone, but do it the way you think is the best, as everyone tries to live in their own way (Pavel LT).*
	Nanny	*I would say we were lucky because we had a nanny who helped me a lot <…> the nanny and something intuitive, something read, somewhere on the Internet and I was looking for. Words from various sources*

To begin with a first category, in order to find out father's motivation on decision making process, reaction of family members and coworkers to take parental leave they we asked to share their experience. What is more, they were asked to describe the reaction of their family members and coworkers after they were informed that men is taking the leave and stay at home with a child. In general, three participants highlight that this decision was taken on mutual agreement together with their partners. All participants families reacted positively and some coworkers could not understand such decision, why men stay at home with a child. While decision making process was similar in both countries among all participants as all four participants decided to take parental leave after the birth of their child, only one participant from Iceland Arnar decided to take the parental leave what day when his child was born "*I decided to take the parental leave at the day of birth of our daughter*". Talking about the motivation to take the leave, three participants highlight that this decision was taken on mutual

agreement together with their partners. Klaudijus (LT): "*We decided amongst ourselves that I would go <…> My business allowed me to take it, as I had time and was able to go on parental leave*". What about Pavel (LT), he had two reasons, first one is: when the first child was born his wife was on parental leave and the second one is "*the opportunity to have more time with the kids and see their daily life*". Arnar (IS) pointed out about the priority "*it does not take a mass of time to make a decision in which direction your priority must lay upon*". Marco (IS) made this decision as he wants to help his "*fiancé and stay at home with my child and enjoy the time with my family*". Here we can see a similarity in the Marco and Pavel answers, that both took it in order to spend more time with their partner and child. To sum up, all participants decided to take parental leave after the birth of their child on mutual agreement with their partner and main motivation among men was the wish to spend more time with their children.

Family reaction on decision to take parental leave, mostly was positive and were happy. Arnar (IS): "*All of them had generally a positive opinion and I had their support as well*". Pavel (LT): "*The family was very happy because they understand values in life*". "*In general positively, maybe someone was surprised, but in general positively"* in Klaudijus (LT) case. Only Marco (IS) family react '*a little bit strange',* as his family is from Italy and there it is not common that men would take the parental leave. By the given answers we can state participants family members reacted positively on their decision to take child care leave.

What about coworker's reaction, it was different. Goodman et al. (2011) indicates that a variety of occupational stressors predict lower quality parent-child interactions, including long hours at work, nonstandard work schedules, high levels of job pressure and low levels of workplace support. This lead to the position on the reaction at the workplace about men on parental leave. Participants of this research were asked to describe their coworker's reaction as well, when they found out that participants will take parental leave. At Klaudijus (LT) workplace coworkers reacted in a positively way, but "*…maybe someone was surprised but in general, normal"*. While Pavel (LT) shares his experience "*…the family was so positive, so happy and coworker's reaction was various. Some, do not understand why a man has to go, <…> on their opinion, taking a year or two to stop career, development in professional life, is not reasonable <…> but I do appreciate their opinion, but for me, my family's decision is more important in my life and really did not bother me, just have different opinions. There are priorities, and my family priorities are higher than professional life"*. In Lithuania, at workplaces of the participants, reactions were different. To compare with Iceland, where Arnar and Marco coworkers reacted in normal way and were not shocked. Marco (IS) told that coworkers were "…*excited for me they say 'Marco, finally you will be a father"*. Here is visible the contrast, while in Lithuania people do accept this news differently, while in Iceland it is

normal and people accept it as casual thing. The level of employers' support affects the uptake of leave by fathers. In the companies which offer work-life balance arrangements, flexible working timetable and collective agreements on working time are more likely than male employees to take up parental leave. So the company culture is an important factor that determines leave uptake by fathers (Van Belle, 2016). In Lithuania in both cases coworkers reacted differently, some give positive feedback while others were surprised and do not know why men behave in that way. To compare, in Iceland, it is normal that men are taking parental leave.

Moving to the second category, parental leave raise variety of questions which require answers, men were asked what and who are the source of information and assistance for them. For Pavel (LT) and Marco (IS) their partner play the key role, Pavel (LT) *"My main source is of course my wife'* he added that '*Everything is going intuitively or as my wife says (laughs). I do <…> not ask parents how to do and what <…> I ask my wife. That's maybe a wife's model over here*". The same participant pointed out the role of the friends, "…*everyone has their own point of view, so be careful to listen to everyone, but do it the way you thing it is right, as everyone tries to learn how to live*". In Lithuania, one participant gets answers from his wife and friends, while the second one mostly getting the answers from nanny. What about Marco (IS), he call his "fiancé, *look at the books, internet, friends, who have a child can help us if we have some kind of questions*". He use several sources for getting answers for raising questions similar as the second participant from Lithuania, Klaudijus (LT) who was "*lucky because we had a nanny who helped me a lot <…> the nanny and something intuitive, something read, somewhere on the Internet and I was looking for. Words from various sources*". Arnar (IS) lay on "*Most my mother and mother of my wife. They are always support us with a good advice or a trick that can help us out* ". From his answer we can see how important the role of parents in child care process is.

Taking into account the results of Simons et al. (1993) study that indicate that the parenting an individual received as a child affects the quality of his or her parenting as an adult there was the question about the link between childhood of the participant of this research and their kid's childhood, they were asked to tell about their life. In Lithuania, Kaludijus (LT), spent a lot of his childhood time with his grandparents as "*…parents…they spent with me not a lot of time as they divorced quite early*". Pavel (LT), told that "*<…> had to spend time with the grandparents a lot, and to play with parents as well. So I had that and that*". Both participants spend a lot of their childhood with their grandparents. In Iceland, Arnar (IS) in childhood" *<…>me and my three brothers spent all our time as a family. My father and grandfather used to work a lot to be able to support our family, therefore, we spend time with our mother and*

grandmother, cousins and relatives that lived in the same small town in the north of Iceland". What about Marco (IS), he said that "*my father was working every day and my mother was at home with me. Usually, grandparents came to visit one time a week* ". He added that he spends more time with his child to compare with his parents: "*I spent more time, I think it is very different. As I told you, my father does not have a lot of parental leave to stay at home and the thing change in time in Italy, but not like in Iceland <…> So it was completely different*". So far, all getting answers for the raising questions from different sources such as their partner, friends, nanny and parents. Four participants highlight the role of their grandparents in their childhood. Moreover, Marco form Iceland think that he does spend more time with his child to compare with his parents. Parenting experienced as a child indirectly related to the current parenting of mothers and fathers through its association with their parenting beliefs.

3.2.3. Practical experience during the parental leave period

Further, the interview participants were asked the main question: **„What is like to take a parental leave?"**, and some related additional questions. During analysis of the obtained answer during interviews, one category was identified: practical experience description. During further analysis, three subcategories identified (Table 4).

Table 4. Practical experience during the parental leave period

Category	Subcategory	Substantiations
Practical experience description	Positive aspects	*Banal, simple, but for me it is very important – hugging (Pavel LT).* *Maybe the first steps, sitting down, first teeth. A lot of excitement that you see every day is definitely enough (Klaudijus LT).* *To be able to be with my family and get to know the child you made with my wife, perhaps not fully by yourself but it is largely giving (Arnar IS).* *Just stay with both my son and my fiancé. You know, see the child every day open the eyes (Marco IS).*
	Challenging aspects	*It was very difficult to concentrate on some personal matters <…> It's not the biggest, but it is a challenge <…> for the most part of the day I had very little free time (Pavel LT).* *Challenges (laugh) such as not much. We solve everything with my wife. There were nothing like child would be sick. We went through without stress (Klaudijus LT).* *To be a father (laugh), just make a connection for the first time in my life with my son and try to understand*

Category	Subcategory	Substantiations
		what he needs and how can I help my fiancé with everything in the house. Everything is new, I never been a father so this is the biggest challenge for me (Marco IS). *Lack of sleep and irritation it is hard, having enough rest and avoid breakdowns, eating healthy food and getting enough of exercise <…> the biggest challenge to keep it all together and move forward in life (Arnar IS).*
	Quality indicator	*<…> security matters <…> hygiene, nutrition <…>* *I emphasize that you are close to your fetus, even the meaning of your life, and you have an opportunity to see these details, as children are really growing very fast (Pavel LT).* *Educating as a human being, is very important (Klaudijus LT).* *Being a parent is a work which takes a little bit of adjustment time to learn how to do duties correctly, for example things like look after a baby and use available time wisely (Arnar IS).* *I do believe that it always better to give your kid something that you might have not received when you have been little <…> Making sure that the child receives her or his basic needs such a food, bath, play with me and also learn. Teaching by your own example is the hardest (Arnar IS).* *Make sure he is safe, not hungry, healthy, and loved and just seeing my son growing up healthy (Marco IS).*

In order to answer the research question and find out how the relations between father and his child do change by implementing family policy measures, important to know what does it means for the fathers to take and to be on parental leave. Klaudijus (LT) thinks that they were lucky as they had a nanny who helped a lot "*I had more free time and it wasn't that I had to spend the whole day with the child because the child had a nanny*…". Another participant from Lithuania, Pavel (LT), who put the accent on meaningfulness to be nearby your child, "…*would like to see how kids are growing up*", for him important to see delates in daily life. In daily life, kids woke parents up "…*preparing breakfast, then changing pampers*…". Here, he also pointed out that "*… a big part of the day I had very little free time. There was some personal work, but I was doing that only when the children were sleeping. Because when you do not sleep, you need to take care of them, or ... clean up at home*". This show that cases in Lithuania are different as one father had a more free time with the help of the nanny, others had less free time as did everything on his own. What about the answers of the participants, from Iceland, Marco

(IS) think that "…*my child wakes up twice in the night or maybe 3 times at night, he needs to eat and get a new diaper. And this is the same for every day. Like for example the rest of the day every 2 to 3 hours need to eat, plus take care of the house, cleaning, make food for us, help my fiancé. Just do a lot of things*". He does help at housework and involved it he n childcare process. Arnar explain what does in mean for him to be a parent "…*is a work which takes a little bit of adjustment time to learn how to do duties correctly, for example, things like look after a baby and use available time wisely. My wife Ásta and I do take a turn putting our daughter Íris to sleep but mostly it is Ásta who was doing work. On my side, I try to make sure that everything is in stock at home that is required for a baby and that we both get an equal amount of sleep…. I can do most of the meals while she is breastfeeding*". In Arnar (IS) case, his wife is responsible for doing work, but he is doing the cooking. The answers of the participants about their understanding about parental leave we can see that in Lithuania there are two cases in one there was a big help from nanny and the second had less free time as did everything by his own. In Iceland one participant does help at housework and involved in childcare process, while the second one does the cooking, but for other work responsible his wife.

Parenting has positive and challenging aspects as well, in order to know more about positive and negative parenting experience participants were giving different answers. First subcategory consists from positive aspects of parenthood. Klaudijus (LT) mention such important things for him as "*… first steps... fist teeth… There are a lot of impressions as every day you see them*". Pavel (LT) remembered the "*…simple, but very important – the hug*". For both participants, simple things are the most valuable such as first steps and hug from their kids. For fathers in Iceland, Marco it is "*just stay with both my son and my fiancé. You know, see the child every day open the eyes*". Arnar pointed out similar though, he said "… *to be able to be with my family and get to know the child you made with my wife, perhaps not fully by yourself but it is largely giving*". For all participants the positive things in their parenting are such things as spending time with their family, knowing more about their child and casual things which their child do. Question about challenges on their parental leave was challenging for some participants. For Klaudijus (LT) there were *… no challenges, we at home with wife solve everything. There was nothing that the child would be ill or smth. We went through without stresses*". Pavel (LT) gave similar thought while answering the question, he said that "…*it was hard to concentrate on some of my businesses which I had. But when it was so urgent that you had to do that day, to find those moments when kids didn't sleep it was hard. It's not the biggest, but it was quite a challenge*". One participant going through parenting without challenges while for other the biggest challenge was lack of possibilities to concentrate on personal business.

Arnar in Iceland mentions that there were many challenges "…*most basic ones as lack of sleep and irritation it is hard, having enough rest and avoid breakdowns, eating healthy food and getting enough of exercise. There are many aspects that need to be ticked during the day and probably the biggest challenge to keep it all together and move forward in life*'. For Marco (IS), the biggest challenge was '*to be a father (laugh), just make a connection for the first time in my life with my son and try to understand what he needs and how can I help my fiancé with everything in the house. Everything is new, I never been a father so this is the biggest challenge for me*". For Lithuanian participants the biggest challenges were difficulty to concentrate and second one had no stress which he would like to mention. In Iceland father faced with biological challenges such as lack of sleep, the understanding child needs, keeping all together while moving forward in life and such thing as being a father.

Carlson et al. (2011) research highlight that better relationship quality predicted greater parental engagement for both mothers and fathers, although little evidence that parental engagement predicted future relationship quality. Participants gave different answers on their perception changes on child education after they take parental leave. Taking a deeper look at quality of parental leave, Marco and Arnar from Iceland said that their perception does not change at least not yet and Pavel from Lithuania said that cardinally do not change "…*It was almost as I expected. I knew it wouldn't be easy, but I knew it would be a fain and it was hard. That's what I can say - it hasn't changed*". He thinks that "*<…> security matters <…> hygiene, nutrition <…> I emphasize that you are close to your fetus, even the meaning of your life, and you have an opportunity to see these details, as children are really growing very fast*". While Klaudijus (LT) state that "*Educating as a human being, is very important*". In Iceland, Arnar (IS) explained that "*Being a parent is a work which takes a little bit of adjustment time to learn how to do duties correctly, for example things like look after a baby and use available time wisely <…> I do believe that it always better to give your kid something that you might have not received when you have been little <…> Making sure that the child receives her or his basic needs such a food, bath, play with me and also learn. Teaching by your own example is the hardest*". While on Marco (IS) point of view, important to "*Make sure he is safe, not hungry, healthy, and loved and just seeing my son growing up healthy*". The quality of the parental leave for Lithuanian participants depend on child security, hygiene, nutrition, educating as a human being, doing father duties and give the best for the child what he do not had.

Flood and Howson (2015) considers the relationship between fatherhood and work as a dynamic which influences men through the state, workplace and personally as well. Looking closer at the work and home, important to highlight that work is the main source of income and results of work for families is a source to live. In order to discover if there is a link between the

working schedule and formation of the connection with child participants were asked their opinion about this factor. In Klaudijus (LT) case, schedule for sure would have influenced as "*less time would be spent with him, I wouldn't be such close relationship*". Meanwhile, Povel (LT) noticed that there is the difference as well as "…*when I spent a lot of time with the child, that relationship was stronger. Now I am coming back really late... It feels the difference when it comes to influencing*". In both situations in Lithuania, the working schedule would have an influence on their connection with their kids. Arnar from Iceland thinks that "*living in Iceland especially in the north of Iceland makes distances shorter which gives more time to be able to spend engaging in a meaningful activity*". Marco (IS) think that it would have influence because of his job specific "*I am working in the hospital, and have shifts like morning shifts, night shifts also on call so it is a little bit hard in the future*". In Iceland, participants think that it would have as well, in one case because of job specific. In both countries, four fathers think that working schedule does make an influence on child and father relation.

3.2.4. Development of father's on parental leave relationship with a child

Further, the interview participants were asked the main question: **„How you would describe your connection with a child ?"**, and some related additional questions. During analysis of the obtained answer during interviews, one category was identified: father and child relationship. During further analysis, two subcategories identified (Table 5).

Table 5. Development of father's on parental leave relationship with a child

Category	Subcategory	Substantiations
Father and child relationship	Emotional factor	*I'm happy to see their growth every day <…>. And as a relationship ... when mostly I was with the child was attached. Now I <…> see that children are more attached to their mother because they spend more time. When I spent more time with the child, the connection was stronger. It is a bit weaker now (Pavel LT).* *Relationships good, close (Klaudijus LT).* *I try to spend as much time as possible at home. I try to keep in touch online (Arnar IS).* *My connection I think it's special like all connection between father and son, mother and son. Basically I spend all day with my son and my fiancé also. Now with parental leave I can spend a lot of time with my family (Marco IS).*

Category	Subcategory	Substantiations
	Physical factor	*When I spent more time with the child that relationship was stronger. <…> It feels like there is difference when it comes to influence of working schedule (Pavel Lt).* *I had more free time and it wasn't that, I had to spend the whole day with the child because the child had a nanny who played a big role <…> If I would spend less time with him, I think we wouldn't be in such close relationship (Klaudijus LT).* *My job it's very particular. I am working in the hospital, and have shifts like morning shifts, night shifts also on call so it is a little bit hard in the future (Marco IS).*

In the table 5, participants understanding on their relationship with a child which is based on emotional and physical indicators presented. This Master Thesis research seeks to find out how the relations between the father and his child do change by implementing family policy measures. Part of the questions belongs to the development of the father's relationship with a child. Klaudijus (LT), described the connection as good one and Povel (LT) said that during his first year of parental leave when he was home the connection was more tied "*the child was very connected. Now I notice that … children are more connected to their mother because they spend more time with her. When I spent more time with the child, the connection was stronger'. It is a bit weaker now*". This show that the more time a father and child spend together the stronger connection between them. In Iceland, Marco's connection "*special like all connection between father and son, mother and son*" as he spends all day with his son and fiancé. What is more, parental leave gives him the possibility to spend a lot of time with his family. Arnar (IS) spend as much time as possible at home "*I try to keep in touch online and evenings I am mostly with my family*". In Lithuania, results show that the more time father and child spend together the stronger connection between them and in Iceland fathers try to spend as much as they can time with their child and partner. As Castro-García and, Pazos-Moran (2016) state, by spending time with a child, father establish and shape emotional ties, develops gendered patterns of sharing care between partners; and influences the way care responsibilities are allocated to family and friends. In Lithuania, participants share their emotional connection with a child, for example Pavel (LT) is "*happy to see their growth every day <…>. And as a relationship ... when mostly I was with the child was attached. Now I <…> see that children are more attached to their mother because they spend more time. When I spent more time with the child, the connection was stronger. It is a bit weaker now*". In Iceland, participants try to spend with their child as much as possible time. What about physical connection between father and a child, Pavel (LT) say that "*When I spent more time with the child that relationship was stronger. <…> It feels*

like there is difference when it comes to influence of working schedule". Klaudijus (LT) during parental leave "*have more free time and it wasn't that, I had to spend the whole day with the child because the child had a nanny who played a big role <…> If I would spend less time with him, I think we wouldn't be in such close relationship*. In Iceland, Marco said that his '*job it's very particular. I am working in the hospital, and have shifts like morning shifts, night shifts also on call so it is a little bit hard in the future*". Working timetable do matter and on participant's opinion might influence their relationship with a child.

3.2.5. Sharing gender roles in child care approach

The interview participants also were asked the main question: **„ Is there are any changes in the division of housework in your couple after you took parental leave ?"**, and some related additional questions. During analysis of the obtained answer during interviews, one category which identified: gender equality balance. During further analysis, three subcategories identified (Table 6).

Table 6. Sharing gender roles in child care approach

Category	Subcategory	Substantiations
Gender equality balance	Housework division	*Well, I had to do more of what my wife used to do<…>When I was actively supervising the child, I did more housework (Pavel LT).* *It is do change (Klaudijus LT).* *My wife does laundry, I cook, she cleans the bathroom – I in my turn clean the kitchen. We take turns changing nappies (Arnar IS).* *I do a lot of housework like my fiancé. We do the same in the house work (Marco IS).*
	Perceptions	*Mmm … to make a radical change, for sure no <…> I knew it would be not easy, but I also knew that it will be fun and hard (Pavel LT).* *So called gender roles are pretty equal in Iceland, we both do roughly the same amount of work for own good and common goals (Arnar IS).* *I think in Iceland it is more balanced between father and mother <…> In Iceland I found more balance between mother and father, women and men (Marco IS).*
	Child education	*Wife, because she has experience and first of all, her studies are related to children's development, child psychology <…> the wife plays as a key role (Pavel LT).* *Fifty on fifty with my wife (Klaudijus LT).*

Category	Subcategory	Substantiations
		I would say we both actually. We try to make it equal, we try to spent one-to-one time with a baby and also with each other which is also important (Arnar IS). Both, me and my fiancé (Marco IS).

Gender roles equality is an important aspect in child care approach. Meil (2010) state that social policies geared to furthering gender equality, unlike policies designed to promote work-family life balance, have a positive impact on the gender division of unpaid family responsibilities. Life in Lithuania and Iceland might have gender roles negotiations in couples. Klaudijus (LT) said that there is no influence, while Pavel (LT) mention cultural differences which exist in Lithuania "*...still are a quite young independent country. These many cultures still remain from such consequences are from the times of the Soviet Union culture. Clearly, this is already going away, as generations are changing, but we are still in a long process of change, and in Scandinavia, those cultural norms have long been alive. That's just the way we go there and we'll need a few years*". In his opinion, if young people from Lithuania bring from Scandinavian countries good cultural practices through young people to Lithuania then in ten years will be similar to gender equality as in Scandinavian countries. In Iceland, Arnar (IS) say that "*...gender roles are pretty equal in Iceland, we both do roughly the same amount of work for own good and common goals*" Marco (IS) compare Italy and Iceland cases, as his relatives from Italy, so he thinks that "*…I think in Iceland it is more balanced between father and mother. In Italy maybe it is old school, you know what I mean, the women stay at home and the men bring money at home and now it is a little bit different, but, you know, the mentality is very old, sometimes in Italy. In Iceland, I found more balance between mother and father, women and men*". In Lithuania still, there is a place for improvement in gender equality and one of the instruments is bringing positive cultural practices from Scandinavia through youth. While in Iceland participants evaluate gender equality as balanced and pretty equal.

Division in unpaid housework between in a couple where men are on parental leave is interesting aspect too. In order to find out if there are any changes, participants give different answers. Klaudijus (LT) think that after he took parental leave the division of housework do change. Another participant, Pavel (LT) state that housework division has changed as there are things that his wife was doing before and on parental he needs to do it " *…Well, I had to do more of what my wife used to do<…>When I was actively supervising the child, I did more housework*". Talking about Iceland, the division of housework are divided between partners. Marco (IS): "*… do a lot of housework like my fiancé. We do the same in the housework <…> I do a lot of housework like my fiancé. We do the same in the house work*" and Arnar (IS) said

that not many differences as "…*my wife does laundry, I cook, she cleans the bathroom – I in my turn clean the kitchen. We take turns changing nappies*". To sum up, three participants housework do change after taking parental leave in both countries, while one respondent in Lithuania said that it did not change.

Participants were asked about their perceptions on childcare and responsibility of childcare taking as well. Pavel (LT) aid that "*Mmm ... to make a radical change, for sure no <…> I knew it would be not easy, but I also knew that it will be fun and hard*". While in Iceland, participants highlight the balance between mother and the father. Arnar (IS) said that " *so called gender roles are pretty equal in Iceland, we both do roughly the same amount of work for own good and common goals* and Marco (IS) thinks that '*in Iceland it is more balanced between father and mother <…> In Iceland I found more balance between mother and father, women and men".*

With the following question, aim was to find out about the leading role in child education. In Lithuania, Klaudijus (LT) said that it is "*fifty on fifty*", so both parents in this couple participate in the child education process. What about Pavel (LT), on his point of view, "*Wife, because she has experience and first of all, her studies are related to children's development, child psychology <…> the wife plays as a key role*". Here we can see that in one couple more balanced child education while in the second the leading role belongs to women. In Iceland, Marco (IS) said that they both with fiancé make input in child education. In Arnar (IS) family as well, both participate "*we try to make it equal, we try to spend one-to-one time with a baby and also with each other which is also important. But of course, when you're a parent in can be pretty difficult being a young parent*" So in three couples out of four main role-play the mother of the child, while in one couple from Lithuania leading role belong to the wife of the participant.

Next question helped to find the link between parenting model which fathers receive from their parents. Kaludijus (LT) think that "*…there is something, but not a lot. Maybe even more no, than yes*". On Pavel (LT) point of view that there is "*… something that he did not take, as everything happening intuitively or as the wife says (laugh)… there is no way that I would ask parents how to do or how they did. More, I would say that I am taking my wife's model over here*". In Lithuania, participants think that there is no link between their parents' parenting model and the one which they apply in their kids' education. In Iceland similar, for example, Arnar (IS) say that "*probably… keeping the traditional approach with developing our own modernized way of raising a child as a good person*".

3.2.6. Subjective opinions on national parental leave system

Finally, the interview participants were asked the main question: **„ Are you satisfied with existing family policy system today?“**, and some related additional questions. From the answer obtained during interviews, one category was were identified: evaluation of parental leave system. During further analysis, four subcategories identified (Table 7).

Table 7. Subjective opinions on national parental leave system

Category	Subcategory	Substantiations
Evaluation of parental leave system	Positive aspect	*I <…> talk to my friends from other countries, 90% are jealous of the existing system in Lithuania, so I'm pleased that there are such opportunities <…> you get a paternity leave for a month and it is already a lot to compare with the another countries (Pavel LT). This is very good (Marco IS).*
	Negative aspect	*In our case, it was those benefits, financial part <…> as I expected, I receive 70% of your salary for the first year and 40% of your salary for the second year <…> it is normal for the first year, but it is harder for the next year (Pavel LT).* *I think there is a lot of tax on the parental pay, and the time it's not long enough. I would like to spend more time with my child (Marco IS).*
	Indicator to change	*The law about the 'roof' (Pavel LT).* *I think there is always something to change, and improve <…> I would pay more attention on financial issues (Klaudijus LT).* *Governmental system or raising child at home system… I would like to spend less time on restricting children and more time on encouraging to be responsible for your own time, money and life from early on <…>well, the total amount for parental leave is 80% of your salary from a previous financial year on work you have done. I believe having a full salary is not unreasonable as you're still doing work - just different kind of work (Arnar IS).* *Length of leave, tax and maybe the kindergarten system (Marco IS).*
	State role	*We had to count the financial part, the higher the benefits are higher <…> influenced by whether I will go for one or two years and we counted <…> In my case, my salary was higher than that of the 'roof'<…> For the first year was normal, calmly, and for the second year it is more difficult <…> the state, played a role in that we needed to be interested in financial circumstances (Pavel LT).*

Category	Subcategory	Substantiations
		Being a male and a father in Iceland is pretty good (Arnar IS).

Participants were asked to evaluate existing parental leave system in their countries. Pavel (LT) told that he pleased that fathers from other countries are jealous of existing paternity leave duration in Lithuania "*I <…> talk to my friends from other countries, 90% are jealous of the existing system in Lithuania, so I'm pleased that there are such opportunities <…> you get a paternity leave for a month and it is already a lot to compare with the another countries*". This is positive evaluation as well as Marco (IS) noted that Islandic parental leave system "*This is very good*". As a positive aspect of existing family polices in both countries could be the result that all four participants would like to take parental leave for the second time. Duvander (2016) study results showed that fathers' participation in parental leave use might increase fertility, improve the compatibility of childrearing and female employment and may also stimulate fathers' interest in children. In Iceland, as literature review showed, "*with increasing fathers' leave use the second birth risk increases, and when fathers use more than the quota, the propensity of a second child unexpectedly is even higher than if fathers use only up to the quota*" (Duvander, 2016, p. 13). Similar results we can see in this research as well and apply for Icelandic participants as they defiantly would take the parental leave again. Arnar (IS) "*Yes I would definitely take it*". What about Lithuanian participants, they highlight the importance of specific factors such as the financial one. Klaudijus (LT): "*(laugh), if there would be conditions in my personal life, would not change, so why not? I do not see that nothing bad. This can be repeated*". Pavel (LT) had a similar opinion, just highlight financial aspect "*if these… financial facts would let, then defiantly yes… children grow very fast. There is a lot of such little detail in their growth…for me, it is very valuable that I could be in those moments. I would really take it*". So to sum up, all participants would take parental leave again in both countries. In Lithuanian answers kay role was the conditions, as in Iceland they would take it without any other options.

As the coin has two sides, same existing policies has negative aspects as well, which participants announced. In Lithuania, Pavel (LT) share his family experience *"In our case, it was those benefits, financial part <…> as I expected, I receive 70% of your salary for the first year and 40% of your salary for the second year <…> it is normal for the first year, but it is harder for the next year*". This shows that second year of parental leave are more challenging for families as the level of benefit, to compare with the first year, visibly lower. What about

Iceland, Marco (IS) think that "*there is a lot of tax on the parental pay, and the time it's not long enough. I would like to spend more time with my child*".

In order to hear their propositions how and what can be changed they pounded out following aspects: Pavel (LT) would suggest to review "*The law about the "roof*"and Klaudijus (LT) think that *"there is always something to change, and improve <…> I would pay more attention on financial issues*". In Lithuania, both participants express their opinion to pay more attention to financial issues of parental leave. To compare with Iceland, key aspect which was mention is the duration of parental leave. Marco (IS) pointed out "*length of leave, tax and maybe the kindergarten system*". While Arnar (IS) think that "*Governmental system or raising child at home system… I would like to spend less time on restricting children and more time on encouraging to be responsible for your own time, money and life from early on <…>well, the total amount for parental leave is 80% of your salary from a previous financial year on work you have done. I believe having a full salary is not unreasonable as you're still doing work - just different kind of work"*. From this results we can see, that in Iceland one participant mention financial issue as well as length of the leave and child care at home questions.

Existing family policy systems in Lithuania and Iceland differ and have some crossing points in some aspects. Klaudijus (LT) thinks that there are things to be changed and make it better. Pavel (LT) share that during a conversation with "*… people from other countries, 90% jealous for Lithuanian system, that's why I satisfied that in Lithuania there are such opportunities*". He explained that in Lithuania is quite long paternity leave to compare with other countries which have had a positive effect on the participation of fathers in child care "*…is quite a lot in comparison with other countries and when you say that you can go for one, two or three years with some financial conditions, but at all the possibility of such a long period of time is definitely people jealous*". Thevenon (2014) state that fathers who take leave, especially those taking two weeks or more, are more likely to carry out childcare related activities when children are young. As a result, it has a positive effect on the participation of fathers in child care. What is more, he highlight his family case, they felt the importance of financial benefits. He thinks that the proportion of Sodra which is first year 70% payment and 40% next one, he thinks "*it's a little wrong because it affects self-determination, others come to people. As I said, it is normal for the first year, but it is harder for financial years to come next year*". In Iceland, Arnar (IS) have a similar position as Klaudijus (LT), more or less, there is always room for improvement. Marco (IS) think that existing family policy "*this is very good, I think there is a lot of tax on parental pay, and the time it's not long enough. I would like to spend more time with my child*". In both countries, participants satisfy with existing policy. Changes which whey would suggest were narrow, Klaudijus (LT) position that there are things

which could be changed and improved. Arnar (IS) say that in Iceland, "*governmental system or raising a child at home system… I would like to spend less time on restricting children and more time on encouraging to be responsible for your own time, money and life from early on*". Marco (IS) would like to change "*length of leave, tax and maybe the kindergarten system*". In Iceland, the length of the parental leave is the main thing which participants would like to change, they would like to make it longer and in Lithuanian more or fewer participants are satisfied with everything. In December 2012, *Alþingi* revised the law on paid parental leave and corrected some of the cuts to economic compensation, while extending the leave period to 12 months. Each parent is entitled to 5 months non-transferable leave and then they can divide 2 months between them. "*The act was accepted unanimously, but in October 2013 a new government announced that the increase would be delayed due to the financial difficulties of the state*" (Arnalds et al., 2013, p. 326). If this law will pass the Parliament, then each parent will have five months paid leave, and a remaining two months to share. Implementation of this law might follow the request of the participants. Participants were asked which law they want to change. In Lithuania, Klaudijus suggest to pay more attention to financial issues and Pavel pointed out the 'roof' in child care leave payment. What about Iceland, Marco doesn't know any low which could be changed and Arnar say that "*total amount for parental leave is 80% of your salary from a previous financial year on work you have done. I believe having a full salary is not unreasonable as you're still doing work - just different kind of work*". To sum up, the financial issue could be reviewed in both countries.

While discussing and analyzing parental leave system impossible to avoid the role of the state. As academic literature and previous research highlight, the state play quite an important role in family policy and parental leave policy formation, development and implementation. Anar (IS) note that "*Being a male and a father in Iceland is pretty good*". In Lithuania, Pavel (LT) pointed out the importance of financial part of the leave on which depend on for how long he will take the leave "*We had to count the financial part, the higher the benefits are higher <…> influenced by whether I will go for one or two years and we counted <…> In my case, my salary was higher than that of the 'roof'<…> For the first year was normal, calmly, and for the second year it is more difficult <…> the state, played a role in that we needed to be interested in financial circumstances*". In order to find out about participants opinion on the state support in the decision-making process, they were asked to express their own position. Klaudijus (LT) and Marco (IS) say that the state does not play any role in their decision process. While Pavel (LT) and Arnar (IS) explained specific sides of the existing systems in Lithuania and Iceland. For example, a participant from Lithuania said that "*We had to count the financial part*" as benefit level depends on for how long he will go on parental

leave. This answer shows the importance of the financial part of parental leave in Lithuania. All that shows that the state partly made influence on participants as two participants from two different countries highlight two different aspects – finance in Lithuania and good parental leave system for men and women in Iceland. Parental leave good examples of other countries possibly might influence men's decision, but participants said that they do not make influence them. Pavel (LT) "…*in Lithuania, it is not so common that the father would go, but for me personally, nobody was an example, there was just our family's decision, and other countries had no influence*" In Iceland, the same, men gave a negative answer as well. Marco (IS) "*No, honestly, no*". All four participants highlight that the example of other countries does not influence their decision.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The theoretical analysis on family policy conceptual understandings, including family policy models and measures that ensure gender equality in work – family reconciliation let to conclude that involving men in parental leave make greater balance for women participation in labour market and men participation in child care and household.
2. Comparison of implementation of family policy measures like parental leave and child care possibilities for fathers in different welfare states, including Lithuania and Iceland, let to conclude that influence of child care leave policies' on sharing gender roles in a small age child care have positive impact on child development and men's perceptions on child raising.
3. The empirical research conducted in the Master Thesis let to answer the main research question in the following way: parentale leave do make positive contribution of men's role in child life and dhelp to establish and develop positive relationship. This experience important for men as they get important contact with their child and a partner. Time spent together with a child help man to have better undertsnading of a child development.
4. Moreover, empirical research let to make more conclusions:
    a) Comperisonof experiences of men in parental leave in Iceland and Lithunia highlighted that family policy measures provided by the government in selected countries from the gender perspective looks like family policy supports the dual breadwinner model by giving the option for fathers and mother to take parental leave.
    b) Analyisi and comparison of empirical data collected during in-depth interviews revealed that decision to take parental leave was taken on mutual agreement together with their partners and the wish to to spend more time with their children. All participants' families reacted positively, while in Lithuania, some coworkers have mixed reaction. In Iceland they acept it as normal, casual thing.
    c) Men on parental leave, in both countries are involved in childcare process which help father to develop a close relationship with their children. The more time a father and child spend together the stronger connection between them. The relations between father and his child do change by implementing family policy measures such as parental leave as it helps men and women share care and house responsibilities. Participant's housework do change after taking parental leave in both countries as they share with their partner's housework responsibilities.
    d) Parental leave important for men as in both countries, participants list such positive things as hugging, first steps of their child, being with their partner and child.

e) For Lithuanian participants underline the biggest challenges: difficulty to concentrate on duties. In Iceland, fathers in parental leave underline the most pleasant moments are simple like being with their partner and child.
f) The quality of the parental leave for the participants depend on child security, hygiene, nutrition, educating as a human being, doing father duties and give the best for the child what he do not had.
g) As the research showed, the working schedule might influence building the relationship between father and the child (for example night shifts).
h) In Lithuania, still, there is a place for improvement in gender equality and one of the instruments is bringing positive cultural practices from Scandinavia through youth. While in Iceland participants evaluate positively gender equality as balanced and pretty equal.
i) In Lithuania and Iceland, participants think that there is no link between their parents's parenting model and the one which they apply in their kids' education.
j) As a positive aspect of existing family polices in both countries could be the result that all four participants would like to take parental leave for the second time. Although in Lithuania, they highlight the importance of specific factors such as the financial one. The financial issue could be reviewed in both countries. In Iceland, one participant mention financial issue as well as length of the leave and child care at home questions.
k) When the father is presented in the child's life, it helps to build not stereotypical behavior in relation to male and female roles and children get both parents involved in the care process.
l) For all participants, the positive things in their parenting are such things as spending time with their family, knowing more about their child and casual things which their child do. In Iceland father faced with biological challenges such as lack of sleep, the understanding child needs, keeping all together while moving forward in life and such thing as being a father. For some, the biggest challenge was lack of possibilities to concentrate on personal business.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To Ministry of Social Security and Labour of Lithuania|: it would be reasonable to encourage man to take parental leave could be information campaigns with public campaigns by raising awareness and encourage them to take leave.
2. To Ministry of Education, Science and Sport: it is suggested to educate and inform people by providing examples of good practice in society on taking parental leave for men.
3. To Lithunian and Icelandic governments: to pay more attention to financial issues of parental leave. SODRA in Lithuania could review the “roof” law and the payment of the second year during parental leave as this year is more challenging for families in Lithuania.
4. To the Parliament of Iceland: to review the law about the length of the leave, child care at home and children garden gerulations. Also, it is recommended to approve the existing act, suggested in 2012 by which entitled to 5 months non-transferable leave for each parent. This law should take place in steps and be fully implemented by 2016. It was as therefore revoked in 2017, but some proposals currently under discussion. If this law will pass the Parliament, then each parent will have five months paid leave, and a remaining two months to share.
5. To overall society: As Nordic countries have about 20 years of experience with the father’s quota, this is a good example for Lithuania as well. If in the future young people will bring a positive things of Scandinavian culture in raising children, soon in Lithuania there will be similar gender equality understanding of parental leave.

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Stefanova, A. *Influence of Child Care Leave Policy on Sharing Gender Roles in Family. Comparative Aspect: Iceland and Lithuania*. Master's Thesis. Vilnius: Mykolas Romeris University, 2019.

SUMMARY

Today, changing social beliefs about gender roles and parenting influence involvement of the father in children cearing and development. The **main aim** of the Master Thesis is to investigate the influence of child care leave policies' on sharing gender roles in a small age child care. The following main **research questions** define the **research problem**: how family policy measure – parental leave contribute to father's role? How this his experience important for men? How time spend with child during parental leave contributed to father – child relationship? This research seeks to highlight possible challenges in child care systems, and seek to contribute to positive social changes. The main **research object** is influence of child care leave policy on father's role in a small age child care.

The **objectives** of the Master Thesis are the following: (1) To provide theoretical analysis on family policy conceptual understandings, including family policy models and measures that ensure gender equality in work – family reconciliation; (2) To compare implementation of family policy measures like parental leave and child care possibilities for fathers in different welfare states, including Lithuania and Iceland; (3) To analyze and compare how parental leave taken by fathers influence their connection with a child in Lithuania and Iceland based on empirical data collected in these countries; (4) To provide conclusions and recommendations on the influence of child care leave policy on sharing gender roles in a small age child care, focussing on father's role in a small age child care.

Qualitative in-depth interviews applied in the empirical investigation. Two men on parental leave in Lithuania, and two men on parental leave in Iceland were interviewed in March-April, 2019. The research findings revealed that in modern welfare states family policy development lead with the increasing economic vulnerability of family. An important aspect for children and father relationship formation play parental leave which increases men involvement in housework and child care. Men on parental leave in Iceland and Lithunia share their experince and describe their relationship with their child. Men on parental leave, in both countries are involved in childcare process which help father to develop a close relationship with their children. The more time a father and child spend together the stronger connection between them. The relations between father and his child do change by implementing family policy measures such as parental leave as it helps men and women share care and house responsibilities. Participant's housework do change after taking parental leave in both countries

as they share with their partner's housework responsibilities. When the father is presented in the child’s life, it helps to build not stereotypical behavior in relation to male and female roles and children get both parents involved in the care process.

Stefanova, A. Vaikų priežiūros atostogų politikos įtaka lyčių vaidmenų pasiskirstymui šeimoje. Lyginamasis aspektas: Islandija ir Lietuva Baigiamasis magistro darbas. Vilnius: Mykolo Romerio universitetas, 2019.

SANTRAUKA

Šiandien besikeičiantys socialiniai įsitikinimai apie lyčių vaidmenis ir tėvystę daro įtaką tėvo dalyvavimui vaikų auginimo ir vystymosi procese. Pagrindinis magistro baigiamojo darbo tikslas - ištirti vaiko priežiūros atostogų politikos įtaką lytčių vadmenų pasiskirtstimui mažamečių vaikų globoje. Pagrindiniai mokslinių tyrimų klausimai apibrėžia tyrimo problemą: kaip šeimos politikos priemonė - vaiko priežiūros atostogos prisideda prie tėvo vaidmens? Kokia tai patirtis vyrams? Kaip laik praleidimas su vaiku. vaiko priežiūros atostogų metu prisidėda prie tėvo ir vaiko santykių? Šis tyrimas skirtas atkreipti dėmesį į galimus vaikų priežiūros sistemų iššūkius ir siekti prisidėti prie teigiamų socialinių pokyčių. Pagrindinis tyrimo objektas yra vaiko priežiūros atostogų politikos įtaka tėvo vaidmeniui mažamečių vaikų globoje.

Magistro baigiamojo darbo tikslai yra šie: (1) pateikti teorinę šeimos politikos koncepcijų analizę, įskaitant šeimos politikos modelius ir priemones, užtikrinančias lyčių lygybę darbe - šeimos susitaikymą; (2) Palyginti šeimos politikos priemonių, pvz., Tėvų atostogų ir tėvų vaikų priežiūros galimybių įgyvendinimą įvairiose gerovės valstybėse, įskaitant Lietuvą ir Islandiją; (3) Išanalizuoti ir palyginti, kokia įtaką daro vaiko priežiūros atostogos vyro ryšiui su vaiku Lietuvoje ir Islandijoje, remiantis šiose šalyse surinktais empiriniais duomenimis; (4) Pateikti išvadas ir rekomendacijas dėl vaiko priežiūros atostogų politikos poveikio dalinantis lyties vaidmenis mažamečių vaikų globoje, sutelkiant dėmesį į tėvo vaidmenį mažamečio vaikų globoje.

Kokybiniai išsamūs interviu buvo taikomi empiriniame tyrime. Du vyrai vaiko priežiūros atostogų Lietuvoje ir du vyrai vaiko priežiūros atostogų Islandijoje buvo apklausti 2019 m. Kovo – balandžio mėn. Tyrimo rezultatai parodė, kad šiuolaikinėje gerovės valstybėje šeimos politikos plėtra lemia vis didesnį šeimos pažeidžiamumą. Svarbus vaikų ir tėvų santykių formavimo aspektas yra vaiko priežiūros atostogos, kurios padidina vyrų dalyvavimą namų ruošos ir vaikų priežiūros srityse. Vyrai, kurie naudojasi vaiko priežiūros atostogomis Islandijoje ir Litunijoje, dalijasi savo patirtimi ir apibūdina savo santykius su vaiku. Vyrai, kurie naudojasi vaiko priežiūros atostogomis, abiejose šalyse dalyvauja vaikų priežiūros procese, kurie padeda tėvui plėtoti glaudžius ryšius su savo vaikais. Kuo daugiau laiko tėvas ir vaikas praleidžia tuo stipresns tarp jų ryšys. Tėvo ir vaiko santykiai keičiasi įgyvendinant šeimos politikos priemones, pvz., Vaiko priežiūros atostogas, nes tai padeda vyrams ir moterims dalytis

priežiūros ir namų atsakomybe. Tyrimo dalyvių namų ruošos darbas pasikeičia po abiejų šalių tėvystės atostogų, nes jie dalijasi savo partnerių namų ruošos pareigomis. Kai tėvas dalyvauja vaiko gyvenime, tai padeda sukurti ne stereotipinį elgesį, susijusį su vyrų ir moterų vaidmenimis, o vaikai abu tėvus įtraukia į priežiūros procesą.

ANNEXES

Annex 1.

Interview guidelines

Main guidelines	Questions
Decision-making process to take parental leave	• When did you decide to take parental leave? Before the birth of a child or after? • What was your motivation to take parental leave? • What was the reaction of your family members when you informed them about taking parental leave? • What was the role of the state support in your decision? • How examples of other countries have had influenced your decision to take parental leave? • If you would have a chance to take parental leave for the second time, would you take it?
Practical experience during the parental leave period	• What is like to take a parental leave? Please, describe your standard day during parental leave. • How it was in your childhood? How much time your parents / grandparents were spending with their children? And what about you? • From where you were getting answers on the child raising questions: call wife, internet, friends or etc.? • In your child education process, who takes the leading role: you or your wife?
Development of the relationship with a child	• How you would describe your connection with a child? How many hours do you spend together during the day? • What was the most pleasant moment during parental leave? • What was the biggest challenge for you on parental leave? • How do you think, what kind of influence of your parental leave will make on your child? • How do you think, your working schedule would make an influence on formation of your relationship with a child? • On your point of view, what is responsibility on childcare taking? • How do you think, you took parenting model from your parents?
Gender roles in child care approach	• How does living in the Iceland/ Lithuania affect the gender roles' negotiations in a couple? • Is there are any changes in the division of housework in your couple after you took parental leave?

	• Did you change your perception about child education after you took parental leave? • What was the reaction of your coworkers when they found out that you are taking parental leave? • What do you think about the traditional model, when women stays home after giving birth and taking care of a child while husband helps when she ask him for help?
Parental leave system	• Are you satisfied with existing family policy system today? • What you would like to change in the childcare system if any? • Talking about parental leave, which law you would like to change? Why?
Demographic indicators	• Age, gender, number of children. • Duration of parental leave. How long you are on it and how long you will be on it? • Education and occupation.

Annex 2.

Interview No. 1: Arnar (IS)

A: *Thank you that you agree to give me the interview and let's start with the first question which will be about the decision making process to take parental leave. When did you decide to take parental leave? Before the birth of a child or after?*

R: Hi, thank you for the interview, I decided to take the parental leave at the day of birth of our daughter.

A: *What about your motivation, what was your motivation to take parental leave?*

R: With the arrival of your first child it does not take a mass of time to make a decision in which direction your priority must lay upon.

A: *What was the reaction of your family members when you informed them about taking parental leave?*

R: Well, it had been well spoken through decision with my wife and my family. All of them had generally a positive opinion and I had their support as well.

A: *Thank you. What was the role of the state support in your decision?*

R: Being a male and a father in Iceland is pretty good. Parental leave here in total is nine months between parents of which are generally we can deposit time as we wish. Often it is divided into three months for mother, three months for father and three months to be split as we wish. In our case my wife had been working almost till the due date of giving birth and have taken 6 months of parental leave after our daughter was born. I have taken remaining three months.

A: *How examples of other countries have had influenced your decision to take parental leave?*

R: We are actually lucky to be friends with a few people in Iceland who have had more than one child which makes it easier to figure out how would we want to spread the available time.

A: *If you would have a chance to take parental leave for the second time, would you take it?*

R: Yes I would defiantly take it.

A: *Then I would like to ask some questions about your practical experience during the parental leave period. What is like to take a parental leave? Please, describe your standard day during parental leave.*

R: yes, I can do it, being a parent is a work which takes a little bit of adjustment time to learn how to do duties correctly, for example thing slike look after a baby and use available time wisely. My wife Ásta and I do take turn putting our daughter Íris to sleep but mostly it is Ásta who was doing work at the first weeks postpartum. On my side I try to make sure that everything is in stock at home that is required for a baby and that we both get equal amount

of sleep. I also workout while Ásta body was recovering after pregnancy. I can do most of the meals while she is breastfeeding.

A: *How it was in your childhood? How much time your parents / grandparents were spending with their children? And what about you?*

R: Childhood had been joyful and me and my three brother spent all our time as a family. My father and grandfather used to work a lot to be able to support our family therefore we spend time with our mother and grandmother, cousins and relatives that lived in the same small town in north of Iceland. We had always been busy doing some sort of activities, playing sports such as football in our school team, friends or family.

A: *From where you were getting answers on the child raising questions: call wife, internet, friends or etc.?*

R: Most my mother and mother of my wife. They are always support us with a good advice or a trick that can help us out. So far it had not been overly difficult since we have managed to create a decent routine for feeding a baby, getting excessive milk stored in vacuums correctly and changing diapers. Baby is still way too young to create any sort of discipline so we don't thing about it now, we just go along trying to stay flexible and adjust by situation progression.

A: *In your child education process, who takes the leading role: you or your wife?*

R: I would say we both actually. We try to make it equal, we try to spent one-to-one time with a baby and also with each other which is also important. But of course, when you're a parent in can be pretty difficult being young parent, luckily our parents do often give us kindly an opportunity to slack off and have a meal out or a movie night together.

A: *Nice. Moving to the second part of the questions, it will be about the development of the relationship with your child. How you would describe your connection with a child? How many hours do you spend together during the day?*

R: Well, as it is now, our daughter is 7 months old now and I have started working I try to spend as much time as possible at home. I try to keep in touch online. I go to the gym and evenings I am mostly with my family.

A: *What was the most pleasant moment during parental leave?*

R: well, to be able to be with my family and get to know the child you made with my wife, perhaps not fully by yourself but it is largely giving.

A: *Let's talk about challenges, what was the biggest challenge for you on parental leave?*

R: There are many challenges, most basic ones as lack of sleep and irritation it is hard, having enough rest and avoid breakdowns, eating healthy food and getting enough of exercise. There are many aspects that need to be ticked during the day and probably the biggest challenge to keep it all together and move forward in life.

A: *How do you think, what kind of influence of your parental leave will make on your child?*

R: It is hard to say because a child is way too young to be able to remember any of this time period, however I do believe that it always better to give your kid something that you might have not received when you have been little.

A: *How do you think, your working schedule would make an influence on formation of your relationship with a child?*

R: Again, living in Iceland especially in the north of Iceland makes distances shorter which gives more time to be able to spend engaging in a meaningful activity.

A: *On your point of view, what is responsibility on child care taking?*

R: Making sure that the child receives her or his basic needs such a food, bath, play with me and also learn. Teaching by your own example is the hardest, but most giving single things as well.

A: *How do you think, you took parenting model from your parents?*

R: Probably and most likely, keeping the traditional approach with developing our own modernized way of raising a child as good person.

A: *How do you think, how does living in the Iceland affect the gender roles' negotiations in a couple?*

R: So called gender roles are pretty equal in Iceland, we both do roughly the same amount of work for own good and common goals.

A: *Is there are any changes in the division of housework in your couple after you took parental leave?*

R: Not that much, my wife does laundry, I cook, she cleans the bathroom – I in my turn clean the kitchen. We take turns changing nappies. I work 80 %, she just started working after maternity leave.

A: *Did you change your perception about child education after you took parental leave?*

R: No.

A: *What was the reaction of your coworkers when they found out that you are taking parental leave?*

R: They were not shocked.

A: *What do you think about the traditional model, when women stays home after giving birth and taking care of a child while husband helps when she ask him for help?*

R: I believe it is not a bad way of raising a child as I have been raised that way myself, however in my case I want to be there for my daughter and not feel like I've missed out of important life events because I had to work.

A: *Are you satisfied with existing family policy system today?*

R: More or less, there is always room for improvement.

A: *What you would like to change in the child care system if any?*

R: Governmental system or raising child at home system… I would like to spend less time on restricting children and more time on encouraging to be responsible for your own time, money and life from early on.

A*: Talking about parental leave, which law you would like to change? Why?*

R: well, the total amount for parental leave is 80% of your salary from a previous financial year on work you have done. I believe having a full salary is not unreasonable as you're still doing work - just different kind of work.

A: *What is your age, gender, number of children.*

R: 27, male, I have one child.

A: *Duration of parental leave. How long you are on it and how long you will be on it?*

R: I have been for 3 months

A: *Education and occupation.*

R: BA in Computer Science, Full Stack Software Developer

A: *Do you belong to informal group for 'fathers on leave'? Did you attend any special courses for fathers?*

R: No, I do not

Annex 3.

Interview No. 2: Marco (IS)

A: *If you agree of course I will record our interview and all the information is confidential and will be used for my research. Is it okay for you?*

M: Yes, it is fine.

A: *Okay if you ready we can start it.*

M: Yes of course.

A*: I would like to ask, when did you decide to take parental leave? Before the birth of a child or after?*

M: Before, I talked with my fiancé and we decided together that I will take the parental leave

A: *Okay, thank you and what was the motivation to take parental leave for you?*

M: Basically, help to my fiancé and stay at home with my child and enjoy the time with my family.

A: *Okay, thank you and what was the reaction of your family members when you informed them about taking parental leave?*

M: It was a little bit strange because I am from Italy and my father though it was strange, because in Italy it is very short time you can take parental leave, I think it is about 4 days.

A: *Interesting and what was the role of the state support in your decision?*

M: It was no role, it was by myself, you know.

A: *How examples of other countries have had influenced your decision to take parental leave?*

M: No, honestly, just no.

A: *If you would have a chance to take parental leave for the second time, would you take it?*

M: Yes of course. You know, for this motivation, you take the parental live for the first time (laugh).

A: *What is like to take a parental leave? Please, describe your standard day during parental leave.*

M: Yes, for example…my child wakes up twice in the night or maybe 3 times at night, he need to eat and get a new diaper. And this is the same for every day. Like for example the rest of the day every 2 to 3 hours need to eat, plus take care of the house, cleaning, make food for us, help my fiancé. Just do a lot of things.

A: *Okay and how it was in your childhood for example? How much time your parents / grandparents were spending with their children? To compare with you?*

M: My father was working every day and my mother was at home with me. Usually,

grandparents came to visit one time a week, maybe two times just to see what's going on. You know.

A: *So would you say that there is a difference between how it is now with you and your child?*

M: Yes, I spent more time, I think it is very different. As I told you, my father do not have a lot parental leave to stay at home and the thing change in time in Italy, but not like in Iceland. So in Iceland we have 3 months, we can take 3 months so I decided to take fist month and if I compare to Italy, to my father, he just need to go to work and after work take care of the house and help my mother with me. So it was completely different.

A: *Thank you. From where you were getting answers on the child raising questions: fiancé, internet, friends or etc.?*

M: I call my fiancé, look at the books, internet, friends, who have a child can help us if we have some kind of questions.

A: *In your child education process, who takes the leading role: you or your fiancé*?

M: Both, me and my fiancé.

A: *And for example, how you would describe your connection with a child? How many hours do you spend together during the day with a child?*

M: (laugh) basically all day. My connection I think it's special like all connection between father and son, mother and son. Basically I spend all day with my son and my fiancé also. Now with parental leave I can spend a lot of time with my family.

A: *Nice… and what was the most pleasant moment during parental leave?*

M: Just stay with both my son and my fiancé. You know, see the child every day open the eyes, you know, everything.

A: *Okay, thank you and what was the biggest challenge for you on parental leave?*

M: To be a father (laugh), just make a connection for the first time in my life with my son and try to understand what he needs and how can I help my fiancé with everything in the house. Everything is new, I never been a father so this is the biggest challenge for me.

A: *How do you think, what kind of influence of your parental leave will make on your child?*

M: Honestly, I do not, I hope a good one (laugh).

A: *How do you think, your working schedule would make an influence on formation of your relationship with a child?*

M: Yes, because my job it's very very particular. I am working in the hospital, and have shifts like morning shifts, night shifts also on call so it is a little bit hard in the future.

A: *On your point of view, what is responsibility on child care taking?*

M: Make sure he is safe, not hungry, healthy, and loved and just seeing my son growing up healthy.

A: *How do you think, you took parenting model from your parents? Would you say that?*

M: Honestly, I do not know.

A: *How does living in the Iceland affect the gender roles' negotiations in a couple for example?*

M: Okay, if I think about the Italy and Iceland, I think in Iceland it is more balanced between father and mother. In Italy maybe it is old school, you know what I mean, the women stay at home and the men bring money at home and now it is a little bit different, but, you know, the mentality is very old, sometimes in Italy. In Iceland I found more balance between mother and father, women and men.

A: *Is there are any changes in the division of housework in your couple after you took parental leave?*

M: No, I do a lot of housework like my fiancé. We do the same in the house work.

A: *Did you change your perception about child education after you took parental leave?*

M: Honestly, not yet, because he is 9 months old. He is very very young.

A: *What was the reaction of your coworkers when they found out that you are taking parental leave?* M: They were just normal, excited for me they say ' Marco, finally you will be a father'. I hope, they were very excited for me.

A: *What do you think about the traditional model, the one you already mention, in Italy, when women stays home after giving birth and taking care of a child while husband helps when she ask him for help?*

M: I think this is in Italy a really big and huge bullshit, because we are in 2019 and both we are parents together, and we have the same rights and duties. It is not… the old thinking is like we are in the future now a lot of thing changing now. We need to be mentality ready. We basically the same, there is no different between me and my fiancé.

A: *Are you satisfied with existing family policy system today in Iceland?*

M: Yes, this is very good, I think there is a lot of tax on the parental pay, and the time it's not long enough. I would like to spend more time with my child.

A: Wh*at you would like to change in the child care system if any?*

M: Length of leave, tax and maybe the kindergarten system.

A: I think it is only from two years?

M: Yes.

A: *Talking about parental leave, which law you would like to change? Why?*

M: I do not know any specific law. I am sorry.

A: *The last part can you please tell me your age, gender, number of children and how old are they.*

M: I am male, 35 years old, male, I have one child who is 9 months old.

A: *Duration of parental leave. How long you are on it and how long you will be?*

M: I started with one month then I had a break and now I am on the last month of the leave.

A: *Your education and occupation*.

M: I am bachelor degree and master degree in radiographer.

A*: Do you belong to informal group for 'fathers on leave'? Did you attend any special courses for fathers? Maybe you attending now or planning?*

M: No, but I and my fiancée went to a course together.

A: *Thank you.*

M: No problem.

Annex 4.

Interview No. 3: Klaudijus (LT)

A: *Ačiū kad sutikote dalyvauti šiame tyrime. Jums leidus pradėsiu nuo primojo klausimo, Jūsų pasirinkimo dėl vaiko priežiūros atostogų. Kada Jus nusprendėte paimti tėvystes atostogas? Prieš vaiko gimimą ar po jo?*

K: Apsisprendėme dar prieš nes aš, mano kaip ir verslo reikalai leido, buvo laiko ir galėjau išeiti vaiko priežiūros atostogų.

A: *Supratau, ačiū. O kas motyvavo Jus paimti vaiko priežiūros atostogas*?

K: Mes tarpusavyje nusprendėme, kad aš eisiu.

A: *O žiūrėkite, kokia buvo Jūsų šeimos narių reakcija kai informavote, kad imsite tėvystes atostogas?*

K: Šiaip teigiama, aišku gal kažkas buvo nustebės, bet šiaip iš esmes teigiama. Viskas gerai.

A: *Kokį vaidmenį atliko valstybė priimant spendimą?*

K: Manau kad jokio.

A: *Čia labiau buvo jūsų šeimos sprendimas, kaip supratau.*

K: Taip.

A: *Pavyzdžiui, kaip kitų šalių pavyzdžiai turėjo įtakos Jūsų sprendimui paimti vaiko priežiūros atostogas?*

K: Kažkiek aš buvau domėjęsis. Taip, tai yra visiškai populiaru ir ne vienetiniai atvejai, bet kad kažkaip tai lemtų irgi nepasakyčiau. Tai buvo grynai mūsų šeimynos sprendimas.

A: *O jei būtų galimybė dar karta paimti tėvystes atostogas ar Jus ją pasinaudosite?*

K: (juokiasi) jei butu, sakykim tos sąlygos, mano asmenines aplinkybes nesikeistų, tai kodėl gi ne. Nematau tame nieko čia baisaus ar blogo. Galima tai pakartoti.

A: *Ką reiškia imti tėvystes atostogas? Prašau, apibūdinkite jūsų standartinę dieną tėvystes atostogose*.

K: Mums sakyčiau pasisekė, nes mes turėjome auklę, kuri labai man labai padėjo. Tai aš laisvo laiko turėjau daugiau ir tai nebuvo tai kad, man reikėjo visą dieną su vaiku prabūti, nes vaikas turėjo auklę, kuri vaidino gan didelį vaidmenį.

A: O kaip buvo Jūsų vaikystėje? Kiek laiko Jūsų tėvai / seneliai leisdavo su savo vaikais? O kiek Jus?

K: Su tėvais, sakykim su manim laiko leido gan mažai, nes mano tėvai gan anksti išsiskyrė. Ir aš realiai daug laiko praleisdavau su seneliais.

A: *Supratau, o iš kur ėmėte atsakymus į iškilusius klausimus apie vaikų auklėjimą: internetas, žmona, auklė ir pan.? kai kildavo klausimai, kur ieškojote atsakymų?*

K: Be abejo ir auklė ir kažkas intuityviai, kažkas perskaityta, kažkur internete ir ieškojau. Žodžių iš įvairių šaltinių. Iš tų pačių senelių. Vieno šaltinio nebuvo, buvo įvarus.

A: *O jūsų vaiko auklėjimo procese, kas atlieka pagrindinį vaidmenį: Jus ar žmona?*

K: Gal net penkiasdešimt ant penkiasdešimt sakyčiau.

A: *Supratau, o kaip Jus apibudintumėte Jūsų santykį su vaiku? Dienos metu, k valandų Jūs praleidžiate kartu? Kaip apibildentumėte tą santykį?*

K: Santykiai geri, artimi. Laukiam kada pradės lankyti darželį, o dabar kokias 4-5 valandas.

A: *O koks maloniausias momentas/ įvykis, kuris įvyko per tėvystes atostogas jums su vaiku?*

K: Nežinau, sunku pasakyti. Labai daug... ir gal pirmi žingsniai, atsisėdo, pirmi dantis. Įspūdžių daug, kad tu kiekvieną dieną matai tai tikrai tų įspūdžių pakanka.

A: *Supratau, o koks didžiausias iššūkis, su kurio teko susidurti tėvystes atostogų metu?*

K: Iššūkis...

A: *Ar sunkumas?*

K: hmmm (juokiasi) sunkumu tokių kaip ir nelabai. Viską buitiškai išsprendžiame su žmona. Nieko nebuvo, ar susirgęs būtų labai ar dar kažkas dar. Apsėjome be streso.

A: *kaip Jus manote, Jūsų darbo grafikas turėtų įtakos santykiui su vaiku formavimui?*

K: Taip be abejo, turėtų įtakos. Mažiau laiko būtų skirti jam, manau nebūtų tokių artimu santykių.

A*: Supratau, o jūsų nuomone, kas yra atsakomybė rūpinantis vaiku? Kas jums yra atsakomybė?*

K: Sudėtingas klausimas. Auklėjimas pats, jo kaip žmogaus formavimas tai yra labai svarbu.

A: *Kaip Jus manote, Jus perėmėte tėvystes modelį iš savo tėvų/senelių*?

K: Kažkiek, gal truputi kažkas ir yra, bet daug ne. Greičiau ne.

A: *Kaip Jus gyvenimas Lietuvoje turėjo įtakos lyčių vaidmenų pasiskirstymui poroje? Kaip Lietuvoje žiūrima į tą lyčių lygybes klausimą ir ant kiek tai turėjo įtakos Lietuvoje gyvenant?*

K: Ne neturėjo.

A: *Ar pasikeitė namų ruošos darbų pasiskirstymas Jūsų poroje po to, kai Jus paėmėte vaikų priežiūros atostogas?*

K: Ne, nemanau kad pasikeitė.

A: *Ar pasikeitė Jūsų suvokimas apie vaiko auklėjimą po to, kai Jus išėjote tėvystės atostogų? Gal turėjote vieną įsivaizdavimą, supratimą, bet susidūrus kažkaip pasikeitė?*

K: Taip, keičiasi, aišku.

A: *Kaip reagavo Jūsų bendradarbiai sužinoję, kad Jus išeinate tėvystės atostogų?*

K: Šiaip teigiamai, aš galvoju teigiamai, gal ir buvo kažkas kas nustebo, bet nebuvo, normaliai, teigiamai.

A: *Kokia Jūsų nuomonė apie tradicinį modelį, kai moteris, po gimdymo pasilieka namuose ir rūpinasi vaiku, tuo tarpu vyras padeda jai tik tais atvejais kai ji jo paprašo?*

K: Aišku reikia daugiau padėti, nes tuo momentu tikrai nėra lengva.

A:*Kokia Jūsų nuomonė apie tėvystes atostogų sistema Lietuvoje. Ar Jus patenkinti vyraujančia šeimos politiko sistema mūsų dienomis?*

K: Aš galvoju, kad tikrai yra ką keisti, galima ir padaryti ją tobulesne.

A: *Ar sistema atitinka šeimų poreikiams?*

K: Galbūt ne vaisiškai atitinka.

A: *Kalbant apie tėvystes atostogas, gal yra minčių kurį įstatymą norėtumėte pakeisti?*

K: Aš galbūt aišku skirčiau daugiau dėmesio finansiniams klausimams. Išmokos kad būtų didesnes.

A: *Jūsų amžius, lytis, vaikų skaičius.*

K: Vaikų skaičius 4, man 49, berniukai ir 1 mergaitė.

A: *Kiek trunka tėvystes atostogos?*

K: Ėmiau 3 metams.

A: *Išsilavinimas ir profesija*.

K: Nuosavą verslą automobilių turiu, turiu bakalaurą ekonomikos srityje.

Annex 5.

Interview No. 4: Pavel (LT)

A: Sveiki, ačiū kad sutikote sudalyvauti šiame interviu. Jums leidus mūsų interviu bus įrašytas ir gauta informacija bus panaudota tik rašant šį magistrinį darbą.

P: Taip, aišku, sutinku.

A*: Gerai, tai pradekime. Kada jus nusprendėte paimti tevystęs atostogas? Prieš vaiko gimimą ar po jo?*

P: Kai mes turėjome pirmąjį vaiką tai mano žmona buvo išėjus vaiko priežiūros atostogų. Jinai ėmė akademines atostogas metus, dar jos bakalauro studijų metu, magistro, o kai antras vaikas gimė tai, kad neimti magistro metu, neimti dar vieno/vienu metu nusprendėm, kad aš paimsiu. Vat. Tai reiškia prieš vaiko gimimą buvo sprendimas.

A*: Supratau. Ačiū. Kas motyvavo jus tai būtent atsekėte*.

P: Jo, tai pagrindine priežastis tai tą kuria minėjau, bet sakyčiau dar ten ta dalis, galimybė būti daug laiko su vaikais ir matyti jų kasdienybe, nes aš buvau išėjės su antru vaiku tai pirmam vaikui buvo 1,5 metu kai gimė antras, tai irgi gan mažas, tai buvo labai džiugu matyti kasdien jų augimą.

A: *O kokia buvo jūsų šeimos narių reakcija kai informavote, kad imsite tevystęs atostogas?*

Jo. Šeimyna labai apsidžiaugė, nes supranta vertybes gyvenimo. Aišku ten, ten su finansais visgi nėra taip paprasta išeiti vaiko priežiūros atostogų, bet tikrai apsidžiaugė šeimyna.

A: *Labai džiugu. O koki vaidmenį atliko valstybe priimant sprendimą? Ar jus kažkaip atsižvelgėte i įstatymus?*

P: Nu taip. Mes turėjome skaičiuot tą finansine dalį, tas išmokas didesnes nes tam turėjo įtakos ar aš išeinu metas ar dviem metams ir mes ten pasiskaičiavom ir galu gale nusprendėm tai pirmus metus Sodra moka 70proc. ne nuo atlyginimo o nuo lūbų, jeigu atlyginimas yra didesnis. Mano atveju mano atlyginimas buvo didesnis tai nuo lūbų, tai o antrus metus – 40proc. Tai va. Pirmus metus sakykim taip normaliai, ramiai, o antrus metus mums taip jau sunkiau yra nes turime kreditą kaip dauguma šeimų, tai valstybė taip apibendrinant valstybe turėjo vaidmenį toki, kad mums reikėjo domėtis finansines aplinkybes.

A: *Supratau, ačiū. Kaip kitų šalių pavyzdžiai turėjo įtakos jūsų sprendimui paimti vaiko priežiūros atostogas. Nes kai kuriuose šalyse...*

P: Taip, taip, net žinau tokį juokelį apie Skandinaviją, ten buvo filmukas, prasidėjo karas, skambina generolui, kuris yra vaiko priežiūros atostogose, jis atsilepia ir sako: ko jus man skambinate? Aš esu vaiko priežiūros atostogose. Su humoru, tačiau daug ką pasakantis apie kultūrą. Tai galėsite užmesti akį į tokį filmuką. Praskaidrinti nuotaiką. O šiaip kalbant

Lietuvoj nėra taip įprasta, kad tėvas išeina, bet man asmeniškai tai ištiktųjų niekas nebuvo pavyzdžiu, čia buvo tiesiog mūsų šeimos sprendimas tai kitos šalys neturėjo įtakos, gal taip reikėtu atsakyti.

A: *Supratau, dėkui. Jeigu butu galimybė dar karta paimti tevystęs atostogas, ar ją pasinaudosite?*

O: Jeigu tie aplinkiniai faktai finansai ir panašiai leistų, tai tikrai taip, nes kaip ir minėjau tai galimybe būti su vaikais daug laiko, o vaikai auga labai sparčiai. Labai daug yra tokiu mažu detaliu jų augimo – tiek ten kažkoks žodelis, tai tiek kažkoks judesiukas naujas, ten emocijos naujos, man asmeniškai tai yra labai vertinga, kad galėjau būti salia tais momentais. Tikrai imčiau.

A: *O dabar būtent apie veiklas norėčiau pakalbėti tevystęs atostogų metu. Ką jums reiškia imti tevystės atostogas? Na ir pavyzdžiui kaip atrodo standartine diena, kokias veiklas atliekat, kažkas tai tokio*.

O: Jeigu imti visas atostogas, tai irgi manau atsakiau anksčiau. Labai akcentuoju, kad tu esi šalia savo vaisiaus, netgi savo gyvenimo prasmes ir turi galimybę matyt tas smulkmenas, nes vaikai tikrai labai greitai auga. Tai labai dažnai žmones sako, O kaip tie vaikai greitai auga, ten net nepastebėjau, tai vat – norisi pastebėti kaip jie auga. Čia nežiūrint į kokias kitas priežastis. O tada kaip standartine diena, taip įprastai – atsikeli, ruoši pusryčius, ai neatsikeli - tave pažadina (juokiasi), ruoši pusryčius, tada kaitelioji pampersus, tada (čia aišku priklauso kokio amžiaus vaikas, ar pirmi mėnesiai ar 1,5 metų, nes labai skiriasi. Vat ... bet ištiktųjų, jeigu sakykim imant tą didžiąja dalį dienos tai laisvo laiko labai mažai turėjau. Ten kažkokius asmeniniu darbus savo būdavo, bet važiuoti jas daryti tai tik kai vaikai miega. Nes kai nemiega, tai juos reik prižiūrėti, arba..., arba pampersus kaitaliot, vis kažkas rasdavau, ar patvarkyt namus po jų išdaigų. Jo, tai tokios standartines dienos.

A*: Supratau. Ačiū. O kaip pavyzdžiui buvo tavo vaikystėje? Kiek laiko leisdavo tėvai, seneliai su vaikais, palyginus tu pavyzdžiui ar jaučiasi skirtumas?*

O; Na, jeigu kalbam apie pirmus mano gyvenimo metus, neatsakysiu nes neatsimenu, bet tokie migloti momentai tai jo, ir su seneliais tekdavo nemažai vaikščioti, ir su tėvais pažaisti, tai buvo to ir to. O kai jau biški paaugau, tai prasidėjo kiemas, ryte išeini, grįžti tik pavalgyti ir vėl išeini, kai jau toks paauglys galima sakyti. Va o kai vaikas buvau, buvo to bendravimo o kiek laiko negaliu atsakyti, tikrai buvo.

A: *O pavyzdžiui iš kur ėmėte atsakymus į klausimus apie vaikų auklėjimą internete, iš tėvų, žmonos, draugų?*

O: Mano pagrindinis šaltinis tai aišku žmona. Jo nes jinai buvo perėjusi per viską, tai turėjau savo ekspertą. Šiaip įdomybė tokia, apie draugus, tai aišku per kažkokius gimtadienius kai

susitinki, pradedi kalbėti tai, kad daug draugų turi savo verslus, ne tik draugų bet ir šeip žmonių. Kiekvienas turi savo nuomonę požiūrį, tai su tuo reikia buti atsargiai gali visus išklausyti, bet daryti taip, kaip tau atrodo, nes kiekvienas savaip bando mokint gyvent. Tai atsakymas į klausimą tai žmoną.

A: *Supratau, ačiū. Vaiko auklėjimo procese kas atlieka pagrindinį vaidmenį: Jus ar žmona?*

P: Žmona, nes jinai turi ir patirties ir pirmiausia, jos studijos yra susijusios su vaikų raida, vaikų psichologija. Plius ten savanoriavo labai daug valandų Vaikų linijoje. Tiek aš, tiek žmona, daug metų jau skautaujam, tai kažkiek tos patirties su vaikas turime. Bet šiaip tai, tai yra žmona atlieka pagrindinį vaidmenį.

A: *Ačiū. O santykiai su vaiku ir apie raidą dabar norėčiau susižinoti. Taip, kaip Jus apibudintumėte savo ir vaiko santykį? Pvz kiek valandų praleidžiate kartu? Kaip apibudintumėte tą santykį?*

P: Mhm... Aš didžiąją dali dienos, geras pusdienis, o žmona būdavo studijose. O kaip santykį... kai aš būdavau didžiąją dalį, tai vaikas buvo labai prisirišęs. Dabar pastebiu, kai aš tik vakarais grįžtu, matosi kad vaikai labiau prilipė prie mamos yra dėl to, kad daugiau laiko praleidžia. Kai daugiau laiko praleisdavau su vaiku, ryšis buvo stipresnis. Dabar yra kiek silpnesnis.

A: *O koks maloniausias momentas/ įvykis buvo per tėvystes atostogas?*

P: Pirmas dalykas kuris man kilo tai toks banalus, paprastas, bet man labai svarbus tai apkabinimas.

A: *O koks didžiausias iššūkis, su kurio teko susidurti tėvystes atostogų metu?*

P: Čia sunku man atsakyti, bet irgi pirmą kas šovė į galvą tai buvo labai sunku susikaupti kažkokiam savo reikaliukui. Jeigu tokių būdavo, o tokiu būdavo. Bet kai buvo tokiu skubiu, kad būtent tą dieną turi padaryti, o rasti vat tų akimirkų kai vaikai nemiega tai buvo sunku. Aišku ten kartais galėjai kokį multiką įjungti pusvalandžiui ir turi tos ramybės, bet jeigu darbeliui atlikti reikia daugiau laiko tai susikaupti tai buvo labai sunku. Tai ne didžiausiais, bet buvo gan dažnas iššūkis. Žodžiu, tai susikaupti kažkokiam svarbiam kitam darbeliui. Nes dėmėsis turi būti vaikams, toks budėjimas. Kai vaikai yra maži tai jie visur gali įlysti ir panašiai.

A: *O kaip manote, Jūsų darbo grafikas turėtų įtakos santykiui su vaiku formavimui?*

P: Aš tai ir pastebiu, kaip minėjau, kai aš daug laiko praleisdavau su vaiku tai tas ryšis buvo stipresnis. Dabar kai aš pastaruoju metu tikrai vėlokai grįžtu ir visada stengiuosi spėti bent jau prieš jiems einant miegot. Tai tikrai labai mažai laiko susimatom, čia darbo dienom. Tai jaučiasi tas skirtumas, kai kad turi įtakos.

A: *Jūsų nuomone, atžvelgiu, kas yra atsakomybė rūpinantis vaiku*?

P: Pirmiausia, tai yra saugumas, nes nu vaikas dažnai nejaučia baimės, gali lysti aukštai ir padaryti kažką apie ko pasekmes neįsivaizduoja. Tai čia pirmas dalykas... arba į burną kažką paimti, nu tokie saugumo reikalai. Tai po to, tokie smagesni tai... kaip higiena, mityba. Kad visą dieną su pilnu pampersu nevaikščiotu. Jo ir kad laiku pavalgytu, nu net ai kad laiku, o kai jaučia poreikį kad jį pamaitintu, kai yra alkanas. Jei vaikas pamaitintas tai jis mažiau verks.

A: *O kaip Jus manote, Jus perėmėte tėvystes modelį, vaikų auklėjimo iš savo tėvų?*

P: Na čia reikėtų tikriausiai visą valandą kalbėti kas yra tėvystes modelis. Aš manau kad kažko tikrai neėmiau, čia viskas vyksta intuityviai arba kaip liepia žmona (juokiasi). Jo.. tai sakyčiau kad, ne, nes nėra taip, kad aš klausčiau tėvų kaip čia reikia daryti, kaip jus darėte, tai to aš nelabai jų klausiu, aš klausiu žmonos. Tai čia gal žmonos modelį perimu, gal taip.

A: *Supratau. Ir dabar lyties vaidmuo, požiūris į vaiko priežiūrą tėvystes atostogose. Kaip gyvenimas Lietuvoje turėjo įtakos lyčių vaidmenų pasiskirstymui poroje? Kokia jūsų santykiuose požiūris į lyčių lygybę ir tokį aspektą?*

P: Čia klausimo pradžioje Kaip gyvenimas Lietuvoje, gal galima truputi patikslinti apie tą dalį?

A: *Taip. Čia pažiūrint kaip yra Lietuvoje lyties lygybė palyginus pvz Skandinavijos šalyse*.

P: Aha, okay. Irgi, kaip anksčiau minėjau, kultūros skirtumas yra, nes Lietuvoje vis dar yra, jauna nepriklausoma valstybė po jos atkūrimo. Tai daug kultūros dar lieka nuo tokių pasekmių yra iš Sovietų Sąjungos laikų iš tos kultūros. Aišku tai jau tikrai nueina, nes jau keičiasi kartos, bet mes dar esame ilgame pokyčio procese, o Skandinavijoje tai tos kultūros normos jau seniai gyvuoja. Tai mes tik dar pakeliui į ten ir dar mums daug nemažai metų prireiks.

A: *Kaip galvojate, kiek laiko dar reikia Lietuvai prieiti prie to?*

P: (Juokiasi) Jeigu tempas nemažės, nes aš pats kaip dirbau ir viename ir kitame Skandinaviškame banke, tai pačiam teko nemažai važinėti į Švediją ir Daniją. Ir tokių kaip aš, jaunų žmonių yra ne mažai Lietuvoje ir kaip aš pats, matau kad ir kiti iš Skandinavijos atsiveža gerų kultūros praktikų tai vat tokiu būdu per jaunus žmones, per jų pasaulėžiūrą į Lietuvą mes atnešame gerąsias praktikas. Tai jei mūsų jaunimas galutinai neišvažiuos iš Lietuvos negrįžtant (juokiasi), tai tada dešimt metų kokių. Ir bus gerai.

A: *O kaip pasikeitė namų ruošos darbai poroje. Kai Jus paėmėte vaikų priežiūros atostogas, ar pasikeitė?*

P: Na taip, nes pačiam reikėjo daugiau daryti tai, ką anksčiau darė žmona, pirmas dalykas, nes jos tiesiog nebūdavo namuose, bet kai jinai ir grįždavo kažkiek padėdavau. Dabar mažiau padedu. Tai kai kai aktyviai prižiūrėjau vaiką, tai daugiau dariau namu ruošos.

A: *Supratau. Ar pasikeitė Jūsų suvokimas apie vaiko auklėjimą po to, kai išėjote tėvystės atostogų?*

P: Mmm... kad kardinaliai pasikeistų, tai tikrai ne. Daugmaž buvo taip, kaip ir tikėjausi. Žinojau, kad nebus lengva, bet ir žinojau kad bus faina ir sunku tai taip ir buvo. Tai taip galiu pasakyti – nepasikeitė. Daugmaž toks ir buvo.

A: *O kaip bendradarbiai reagavo sužinoję, kad Jus išeinate tėvystės atostogų?*

P: Kaip anksčiau minėjau, šeimyna labai taip teigiamai, džiaugėsi. Tai bendradarbiai įvairiai. Kai kurie, matėsi, nesupranta kodėl vyras turi eiti, nes tie mano bendradarbiai tai tokie, nu tokie žmonės siekiantis tikslų. Nežinau ar pavadinti karieristai, gal ne taip blogai. Bet tokie kurių nuomone imti metus ar du, stabdant savo vat karjeros kelią, stabdant savo tobulėjimas profesiniame gyvenime, tai jų manymu nėra protinga. Iš kai kurių tai jaučiau. Tai vat, buvo tokių nuomonių. Bet aš aišku gerbiau jų nuomonę, bet man svarbiau mano šeimos sprendimas mūsų gyvenimas ir tikrai neliūdino manęs tai, tiesiog yra skirtingos nuomones. Yra prioritetai, vat mano prioritetuose šeima yra aukštesne negu profesinis gyvenimas.

A: *Kokia Jūsų nuomonė apie tradicinį modelį, kai moteris, po gimdymo pasilieka namuose ir rūpinasi vaiku, tuo tarpu vyras padeda jai tik tais atvejais kai ji jo paprašo?*

P: Nu pas mus šiuo metu panašiai yra, nes žmona rūpinasi vaikais, o aš kitais reikalais. Ir jinai tikisi iš manęs daugiau pagalbos negu jos gauna. Bet aš manau čia reikia kuo aiškiau tarpusavyje susitarti, nes realiai žiūrint, žmogus fiziškai nespėja visko daryti. Reikia labai aiškiai pasidalinti atsakomybėm kas kuo rūpinasi, kad būtų patenki tie būtiniausiai poreikiai, nuo maisto, finansų, mokesčių ir kūdikio auklėjime ir panašiai.

A: *Apie tėvystes atostogų sistema, ar Jus patenkinti vyraujančia šeimos politikos sistema mūsų dienomis Lietuvoje?*

P: Prisipažinsiu, nežinau jos tobulai, bet kiek tenka pasikalbėti su mano pažįstamais iš kitų šalių tai 90% pavydi sistemai Lietuvoje, todėl esu patenkintas kad Lietuvoje yra tokios galimybes. Nes vienas dalykas tai laiko tarpai kai gimsta vaikas tu eini arba ne eini vaiko priežiūros atostogų, tu gauni tėvystes atostogas mėnesiui ir čia jau yra daug palyginus su kitom šalim ir kai pasakai kad gali eiti metam, dveim arba trim, nu su tam tikrom finansinėm sąlygom, bet išvis galimybė tokiem ilgiem laikotarpiam tai tikrai žmonės pavydi tai toks komentaras.

A: *O ką Jus norėtumėte pakeisti vaikų priežiūros sistemoje? Gal kažkas yra ne tobulo?*

P: Jo, mūsų atveju pasijautė, tai tos išmokos, tai tą finansinę dalis. Yra aišku tie procentai, jeigu eini dveim metam, kaip mano atvėju, tai pirmus metus gauni 70% išmoką nuo atlyginimo, o antrus metus 40% nuo atlyginimo. Kablelis, bet yra lubos, tai mano atveju, atliginimas buvo didesnis negu Sodros lubos tai tie procentai 70, buvo ne nuo mano realaus atliginimo, o nuo lubu. Tai aš manau tai yra šiek tiek neteisinga, nes tai turi įtakos apsisprendimui, kitiems

žmones ateiti. Vat kaip ir sakiau, pirmus metus yra normaliai, bet vat kitus metus jau sunkiau iš finansines puses.

A: *Kalbant apie tėvystes atostogas, kuris įstatymą Jūs norėtumėte pakeisti?*

P: Dėl lubu.

A: *Ačiū, dabar demografiniai klausimai: Amžius ir lytis – Jūsų ir vaikų, bei vaikų skaičius.*

P: Šiuo metu 33,5 metu. Vyras, dvi mergaites: 1,5 ir 3 metai vaikams.

A: *Kiek trunka tėvystes atostogos?*

P: Du metus, dabar kaip tik antri metai.

A: *Jūsų išsilavinimas ir profesija?*

P: Jo tai, bakalauras, aukštasis, IT srityje informacinių sistemų projektavimas Kauno Technologijų Universitete. Profesija: IT projektų vadovas, šiuo metu pradėjau užsiimti baldų gamybą. Ambicija ne grįžti į IT sferą, o padėti broliui augti šitoje srityje.

A: *Ačiū, labai malonu buvo.*

P: Dėkoju.