

# Paternity and Parental Leave and Father's Involvement in Lithuania

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# Research questions

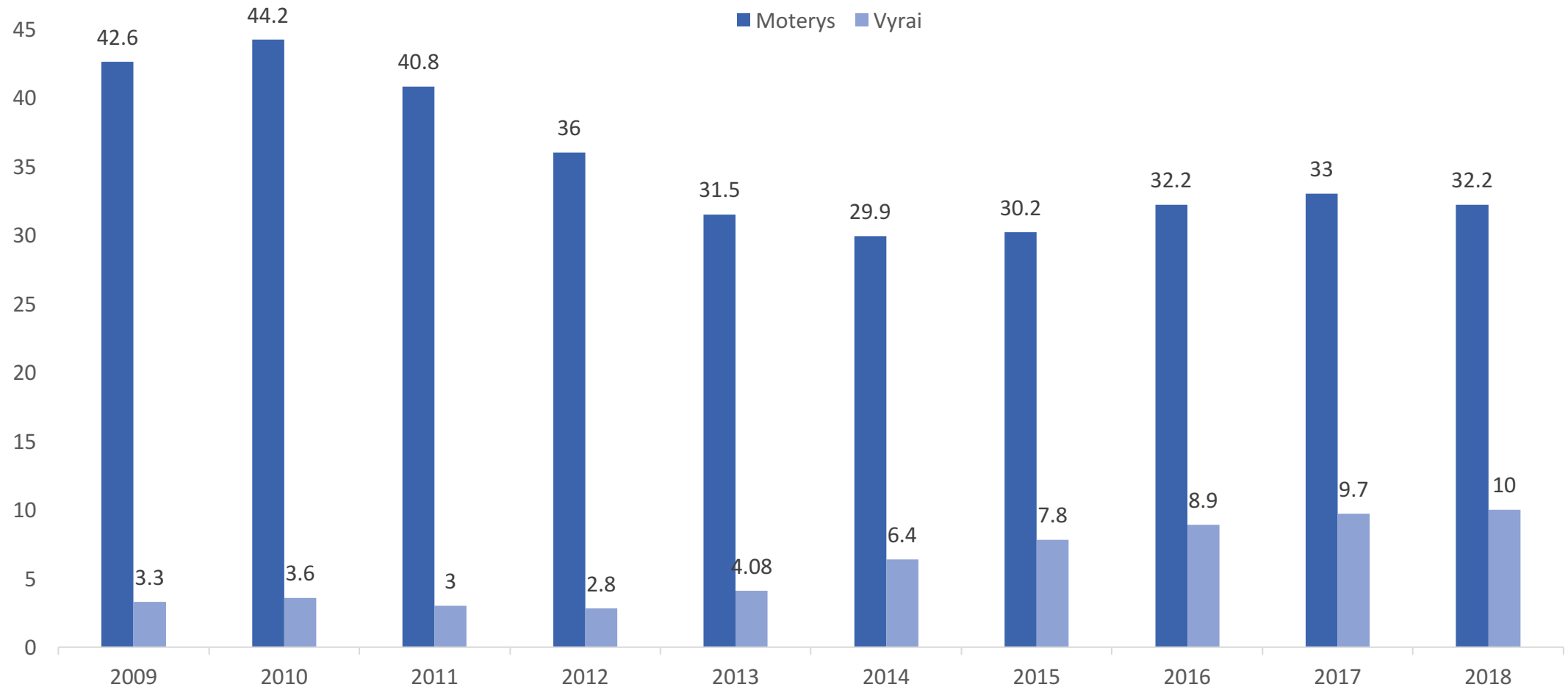
- What are the factors and motivations that encourage fathers' take-up of paid *paternity* and *parental* leave?
- What are the barriers to fathers' take-up of paid *paternity* and *parental* leave?

# Motivation for the study

- Implementation of a directive 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and Council is due to enter into force by 2 August 2022. According to the directive parental leave is being increased up to four months, out of which two are exclusively meant for the use fathers.
- Women still remain the main care providers for young children and father involvement is low, but some men actively engage in the care too.
- Limited research on fathers involvement in parental leave in Lithuania, Baltics States, etc.

# The total number of parental leave benefits recipients by gender in Lithuania, 2009-2018, thousands

Sources: <http://atvira.sodra.lt/lt-eur/>



# Direction of the future parental leave reform in Lithuania

- **The first alternative:** childcare for up to 24 months, of which 2 months for the father and 2 months for the mother (in case of father refusal to take parental leave, duration of paid parental leave decreases to 22 months)
- **The second alternative:** childcare for up to 18 months, of which 2 months for the father and 2 months for the mother (in case of father refusal to take parental leave, duration of paid parental leave decreases to 16 months)

# Public support system for families in Lithuania

- Maternity, paternity and parental leave with income related benefit (100/70/40%) until child is 24 months;
- Unpaid childcare leave until child is 36 months;
- Public childcare/pre-primary education;
- Support for private childcare users (up to 100 EUR/month; mainly capital city/larger cities);
- Temporary care leave to take care of sick child until child is 14 years old.

# Direction of the future reform in Lithuania 2

	Current system			First alternative			Second alternative	
<b>Duration</b>	12 months	24months		24 months			18 months	
		1 year	2 year	2+2	Up to 12 months	Up to 24 months	2+2	Up to 18 months
<b>Amount of the benefit</b>	77,58%	54,31 %	31,03 %	78%	45%	25%	78%	60%

# Theoretical background

- Gender equality and fathers involvement (
- **Reconciliation of family and work vs. favourable conditions at the workplace** (Schadler et al 2017; Gloor et al 2018; Vujinovic 2014; Lott 2019)
- **Individual/sociocultural factors** (Bjornberg 2002; Singley and Hynes 2005; Kangas and Rostgaard, 2007).



# Theoretical background

- **Traditional vs. modern gender roles** (*Ridgeway 2011; Esping Andersen 2009; Walker; Thompson 1989, etc.*)
- **Socio- cultural norms and gender equality** (*Castells 2003; Gornick, Meyers, 2004; Merla 2008; Pfau-Effinger 2004, etc.*)
- **Institutional and policy structures** (*Thevenon, Solaz 2013; Schadler et al 2017; Cantillon, Vandenbroucke 2014; Fodor, Kispeter 2014, etc.*)
- **De(familiarisation) and de(commodification)** Kvist (2000)
- **Work family balance vs. favourable work environment** (*Lott 2019; Schadler et al 2017; Tunheim 2016; Boye 2015; Vujinovic 2014; Nowak et al 2010, etc.*)

# Data and method

- Semi structured interviews
- N=27 of fathers with young children aged 0-6
- Survey period **February-April, 2021** (online)
- Age 28-45 years old
- Tertiary education (N=25)
- Employed in private sector (70%)
- Number of children

# Data analysis strategy

- Data analysis method, e.g. categorising strategy as a procedure for encoding qualitative information (thematic categories and subcategories);
- Thematic analysis involves searching across a data set (that is, a number of interviews) to find repeated patterns of meaning (Grunow and Evertsson, 2016; Braun and Clarke, 2006, etc.).

# Paternity leave experiences

- 17 (out of 28 respondents) took paternity leave
- Main reasons not taking paternity leave:
- *<.....it could have negative impact on my career prospects....>*
- *<..... I do not want decrease of my income....>*
- *<..... There are was no demand from our family side....>*
- *<..... I was working abroad when our child was born ....>*
- *<..... The employer did not allow, did not create the necessary conditions....>*

# Factors and motivations that encourage fathers' take-up *parental leave*

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Original quotes</b>
<b>Willingness to spend more time with the child(children)</b>	<...I really liked my experience spending time with my child ...>
<b>Common decision among the partners</b>	<...We decided with my wife that we will share parental leave. She will take first year and I the second...>
<b>Partner not entitled to parental leave</b>	<...My wife (partner) was not entitled to parental leave...>
<b>Support from the family members</b>	<...My wife encouraged to take me parental leave...>
<b>Support from the employer</b>	<...I took parental leave second year...I was really happy that employer allowed me to work part time as well...>

# Main obstacles that create barriers for fathers' to take-up parental leave

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Original quotes</b>
<b>Financial obstacles</b>	<...My partners income are too low, we could not live without my salary...> <...My wife took parental leave because my salary was higher...>
<b>Lack of support from the employer</b>	<...I was afraid even to ask my employer for such a long leave...>
<b>Negative effect to the future career</b>	<...I was afraid even to ask my employer for such a long leave...>
<b>Lack of support from the family members, friends, etc.</b>	<...It is more common that a mother will take care over a child. It will look strange if I will take care over a children and stay at home and my wife will work...>

## To sum up

- The analysis had revealed that the fathers involvement in paid paternity and parental leave is determined by the financial factors (benefit levels vs. gender pay gap), consensus vs. disagreement among the partners on reconciliation of work and family, willingness to spend more time with the child, lack of support and necessary conditions from the employer, etc.
- The decommodified and long paid parental leave and the culture of traditional family roles lead to assigning childcare responsibility mainly to women.