

The problem of reconciliation of work and family life has been of cardinal importance over the past few years not only in the Czech Republic but in most European countries. For most families it is becoming more and more difficult to reconcile the duties connected with the care of children and other dependent persons with the occupation. This situation is caused by many factors such as the growth of women employment, changes in family structure, demographic effects, development of human rights and many others. Social policy must take these aspects into account and carry out such activities that will enable families to face the challenges of the present society and won't make them decide either work or family.

As a part of theory there are quite many particular methods and ways how to help families to cope with their employment and family duties. Some sources distinguish these strategies among individual and family, employers' strategies and strategies of the welfare state. But the European states differ as to how they view family and social policy as well. In the Czech republic there has been a traditionally high level of women employment rate but the birth of a child has a negative impact on a woman's staying or (re)entry into labour market. The possibilities of flexible work arrangements are highly limited.

In the international context it is not only the European Union that focuses on the subject of work and family life but also other organisations such as the United Nations, the International Labour Organization and the Council of Europe. These organizations have adopted a lot of documents which offer some recommendations as how to contribute to the effective connection of work and family life.