Toolkit for designing parent-friendly workplaces in the ICT sector: Methodology & tools to enable the design & creation of sustainable & impactful childcare/eldercare workplace facilities & related benefits

Based on literature review, international best practices and FEMIN-ICT partners' expertise.

Created by Lydia Manitsidou, Workplace Architect

Table of contents

Introduction

About FEMIN-ICT

The gender gap in ICT courses, jobs and functions is a well-documented global phenomenon. FEMIN-ICT aims at **fighting** stereotypes and other barriers within institutions that can enable or hinder the participation of women and femininities in the ICT sector, **equipping** the ICT sector with the necessary skills, tools and knowledge to empower women in ICT and better integrate both sexes in all functions and levels of responsibility, as well as **assisting** all structural, law-making, academic and grass-roots efforts towards closing the gender gap within the ICT sector.

The underlying idea of the project is that by training and supporting the wider ICT ecosystem to embrace gender equality measures and offer spaces, products and services that respond to womens' and femininities' needs, then the ICT sector will be able to attract/absorb/retain/empower more of them and thus become more diversified, equitable and inclusive.

To that end, FEMIN-ICT will offer a unique training and support programme, equipping, on the one hand, ICT Businesses, ICT business ecosystem and public authorities with those skills and tools, to empower women in the ICT sector and integrate the gender dimension in all their practices and, on the other hand, women who are either employed in the ICT sector, or already running ICT businesses, or even unemployed but interested in pursuing an ICT career to initiate or advance their careers in the digital economy.

Through the project's results, we aim to achieve the following objectives:

- ICT businesses as existing and prospective employers will be supported and trained towards fostering a more inclusive working environment.
- Business support ecosystems will be trained and better prepared to provide more gender-responsive services, adopt gender communication and outreach strategies and support women ICT entrepreneurs more effectively, rebalancing their gender gap
- Academic institutions, municipalities and prefectures will be trained and better prepared to design and implement more women-friendly empowerment initiatives and structures, such as upskilling programs, networking activities, co-working spaces and hubs, and community-led ICT projects.
- Women will be empowered to pursue careers in ICT and supported to continue their work and have productive and rewarding careers in parallel to those experienced by their male counterparts.

Scope and content of the toolkit

Who is the FEMIN-ICT methodology for?

This tool aims to address the need and equity, diversity and inclusion priorities of:

- Employers (i.e. enterprises, businesses, etc.) in the ICT sector, interested in diversifying their ICT staff and wishing to integrate the principles of gender mainstreaming in their everyday work
- Business incubators supporting new and small tech start-ups and wishing to endorse gender equality mandates in their practices
- Academic institutions and local governmental agents (i.e. municipalities, prefectures, etc.) who aim to support gender equality in the ICT field and wish to incorporate relevant activities in their spectrum of operations

Through this methodological tool we aim to empower each and every tech-related ecosystem to begin their journey towards creating more gender-responsive policies, practices and operations to support a more and more equitable ICT field in the process.

We are looking forward to receiving your impressions, comments and adaptations of this material in order to make it even more effective and inclusive for all.

Who will benefit?

Employees, incubees, students and citizens, freelancers of the ICT sector with caring responsibilities.

Why a toolkit for parent-friendly workplaces?

Working parents are struggling in their everyday effort to efficiently reconcile their professional/educational and private/family lives. Especially professionals, entrepreneurs and students in the ICT sector have to deal with demanding jobs in terms of schedules, deadlines, working hours. They may work remotely, in the office or on a hybrid mode, nevertheless they usually need to accomplish a lot of tasks, often under tight deadlines, communicate with many different colleagues, providers, clients and other stakeholders on a regular basis and often do independent work that requires concentration and full attention to detail.

One of many surveys that refer to the challenges and complexity especially for working parents, published in the _International Journal of Human Resources Studies_, indicated five main areas of concern: **work-life conflict, stereotyping, exhaustion, changing work schedule, and career growth opportunities.** In the wake of COVID-19, conditions for working, studying and entrepreneurial parents have become even more complicated.

This toolkit is designed to help companies, organizations, incubators and academic institutions address this complex and multilayered issue by providing practical ideas and solutions.

What are the actual issues?

- No access to childcare for babies and young children
- School schedules that do not match parents' work schedules, both because of a different daily timing, but also because of a mismatch between vacation time for children and adults
- Unexpected professional or childcare needs

Childcare facilitation from the organization's/employer's part would lead to better work and life quality. Less stress and better time management for working and learning parents would help with productivity and absenteeism issues. Companies and other institutions that offer childcare support generally enjoy higher satisfaction and loyalty from the part of their employees and beneficiaries and thus attract, motivate and retain better talent in their workforce and stakeholders base.

We now live in the transition period between the pandemic and a new workplace reality. Many companies and academic institutions need to deal with how their population will get back to the office and how they can best support remote working/learning or even an optimized combination of both. This is a great opportunity for organizations to design and implement strategies that support and facilitate parents.

There are various strategies and policies that may address this issue in various scales and modes.

In this toolkit we will present options that support **the practical childcare needs** for working parents in the ICT sector in two categories:

1. options that offer childcare **not** related to the physical workplace/learning space
2. options that are provided **in** the physical workplace/learning space

Both **small scale** and **big scale** options will be presented, some of them are flexible.

Since there are multiple regulations and differences between countries, this toolkit presents a general approach that must be further customized to fit the needs and circumstances of each case or company.

Apart from various practical ways to facilitate parents in the ICT sector, users can also find here a guide designed to help with decision-making and with selecting the most appropriate solutions, according to the organization's size, demographics and goals.

How to use

In this toolkit we focus on parents and specifically on strategies aiming to facilitate childcare in the workplace or during learning and work. The issue is complicated and multi dimensional. Decision-making around the most appropriate strategies, needs to be a process based on a careful needs assessment. The size and demographics of the company or institution, its building capacity, feasibility conditions, budget and expected impact are the key factors to guide decisions.

Options for all scales will be presented in the toolkit -some are simple, some are more demanding and some are flexible. In order to focus on the most appropriate ones for each case we have designed a simple guide with indicators for the key factors which imply the size, scale and other characteristics relatively. In the following paragraphs the above key features will be analyzed and categorized. Later in the toolkit each proposal will be accredited with indicators to help with a first level assessment.

Demographics

For this toolkit, when we refer to the demographics of an organization, we focus on the number of employees/beneficiaries and their specific characteristics (age, gender, potential or existing parental responsibilities, number of children and children's ages). We also encourage organizations to go deeper and research the childcare needs/preferences of their employees or students, based on their location and, as needed, on their distance from office buildings. The table below can be used to determine an organization's scale according to demographics. We use the overall number of beneficiaries/employees or, for site-specific proposals, the number of people per company location.

DEMOGRAPHICS	
D1	VERY SMALL < 10 employees
D2	SMALL < 50 employees
D3	MEDIUM < 250 employees
D4	LARGE > 250 employees

Building capacity / Space availability

Usually demographics and building capacity are interconnected. There are different types of premises which relate to the size, type and industry. Offices or learning spaces may use a floor or part of a building, an independent building unit or a campus. This toolkit includes proposals for all the types of premises described above. For feasibility assessment reasons, here we focus mostly on the size of available spaces which could be used or transformed as childcare facilities.

SPACE AVAILABILITY	
S1	SMALL < 20M2
S2	MEDIUM < 100 M2
S3	LARGE > 200 M2
SF	FLEXIBLE[1]

Budget

Budget scaling relates to one-off or periodical costs as well as cost per beneficiary or per event / occasion. Construction cost, procurement cost or fees and services costs vary from country to country. For classification and decision-making purposes, the table below refers

---

[1] Flexible spaces are mostly spaces which can have multiple uses or may transform to multifunctional spaces. For better decision-making, more specifications are presented later.

to Low, Medium, and High budget, i.e. Low = under 5.000 € and High = more than 50.000€ for one-off costs.

BUDGET	LOW L	MEDIUM	HIGH	FLEXIBLE
B1 - ONCE	B1 **L**	B1 **M**	B1 **H**	B1 **F**
B12 - MONTHLY	B12 **L**	B12 **M**	B12 **H**	B12 **F**
BPE - PER EVENT OR OCCASION	BPE **L**	BPE **M**	BPE **H**	BPE **F**
BPB - PER BENEFICIARY	BPB **L**	BPB **M**	BPB **H**	BPB **F**

impact factor

All the above key features mainly refer to feasibility. Impact presents the actual reason for investing in childcare benefits for employees and their families. Focused research may be conducted to understand the potential of each applied strategy. In this chapter we try to facilitate first level decision-making. For this reason the following table will help you get a general idea of the number of people and the needs that each proposal can cater to.

IMPACT FACTOR	**P**ARENTS **C**HILDREN/**B**ABIES < 2,5 YR **PC B**	**P**ARENTS **C**HILDREN/**T**ODDLERS < 2,5 -5 YR **PC T**	**P**ARENTS **C**HILDREN 6-12 **PC C**	EMPLOYEES E	ONLY **B**REASTFEEDING **M**OTHERS M B
EVERY **D**AY - **ED**	PC B / ED	PC T / ED	PC / ED	E / ED	M B / ED
SPECIFIC **D**AYS **SD**	PC B / SD	PC T / SD	PC / SD	E / SD	
OCCASIONALLY **O**	PC B / O	PC T / O	PC / O	E / O	

After each proposal presented in this toolkit, you will find a table with all the applicable indicators. When you go looking for specific types of solutions, you can refer to the indicators that reflect those. Or you can identify which proposals can be further examined or excluded from your strategy. More detailed guidance is included after the proposals chapter.

example

DEMOGRAPHICS	D1, D2
BUILDING CAPACITY	S1, S2
BUDGET	B1 L, BF
IMPACT FACTOR	PC B / SD

proposed strategies / benefits / implementation methodologies

There are multiple ways for companies and other institutions to support their employees and beneficiaries in their work-life balance challenges. Culture and values should be the starting point. A culture that promotes flexibility, trust and understanding is a prerequisite. This handbook will not refer to values and culture, as it is taken for granted that organizations who are going to use it have already taken the initial steps and are now looking for practical ways to assist their population. Flexible schedules and time management, flexibility and remote working are some general strategies that may facilitate parents, but are not included in this toolkit. You can find more information about these in the general FEMIN-ICT methodology, under the Work/life balance chapter.

Here we focus on parents and especially on strategies related to facilitating childcare in the workplace or during work and learning.

We will begin by identifying two distinct categories of supporting strategies;

1. Childcare benefits and services **not** related to the physical workplace or learning space.

2. Spatial interventions related to the physical space, using company premises for flexible or dedicated childcare.

A general assumption that we take for granted in this toolkit is that work/learning and childcare cannot be conducted simultaneously by the same person in the same space. Working or studying from home with children cannot happen unless there is an isolated space and a person who takes care of children independently. Of course there are cases where work/studying and childcare may be combined, depending on the type of work, the children's ages and the number of children in the family, but this cannot become an everyday long term practice for adults who also want to develop professionally in an ever evolving workplace.

non-spatial benefits and services[2]

collaboration with daycare centers

A basic and easy to offer benefit for parents is to subsidize their child's (or children's) place in a daycare center. There are multiple criteria that parents use when trying to choose a daycare center. Quality of services and location are key ones. Availability, cost and accessibility also matter. If work/study and childcare are in the same destination or, even better, in the same area, time management optimization for parents may be a great plus. If quality and cost are covered, it forms an ideal condition.

Considering the organisation's location and neighborhood, offering a standard collaboration with daycare centers in the area may make the choice for parents easier. Organisations can agree with neighboring daycare centers to fully or partially subsidize places for their employees'/students' children. The collaboration would be mutually beneficial both for the organisation and the daycare center, since the center will have a standard stream of children and the organisation may achieve better cost agreements.

How to plan

- Research to identify needs / how many parents would benefit
- Research to identify service providers in the area / rating potential providers in collaboration with a parents' committee or ERG.
- Estimation of cost and budgeting / according to the number of beneficiaries
- Business plan
- Regulation

DEMOGRAPHICS	D1, D2, D3, D4	for all companies
BUILDING CAPACITY		outsourcing services / no need for onsite spaces
BUDGET	BPB F	very flexible budget
IMPACT FACTOR	PC B / ED , PC T / ED	services that can apply to all parents with

---

[2] Because the non-spatial solutions proposed in this chapter come with on-going costs attached not to an organisation but to the individuals who need them, academic institutions (especially public ones) may find it harder to secure this kind of budget, compared, let's say, with space-based solutions that may be considered as an infrastructure attached to the institution itself.

		children under 5 yrs everyday

collaboration with home-based providers

An alternative for daycare centers is childcare at home with childcare professionals, baby-sitters, nannies, tutors or teachers, depending on the children's age and needs. Since choosing a baby-siiter / nanny / tutor is a family matter, what an organisation may offer as a benefit is a collaboration with baby-sitting / childcare service providers, ensuring greater reliability in childcare or backup childcare.

There are companies and platforms that offer access to a network of professionals and guarantee quality, professionalism and availability. There are also subscription-based babysitting services which give access to a pool of expertly pre-screened nannies for at-home babysitting appointments and can even guarantee a reliable last minute nanny for high-quality temporary back-up care.

There are many choices on how and to what extent to provide this kind of benefit. It may be in terms of standard collaboration with a network of professionals or on an on-demand basis collaboration. Both research on what the local market has to offer in this area and research on beneficiaries' needs is essential to conclude on the best option.

How to plan

- Research to identify needs / how many parents would use it on a daily basis or on demand / use data for absenteeism and feedback from parents
- Research to identify service providers in the area / include parents on the process
- Estimation of cost and budgeting
- Business plan
- Regulation

DEMOGRAPHICS	D1, D2, D3, D4	for all companies
BUILDING CAPACITY		outsourcing services / no need for onsite spaces
BUDGET	BPB F, BPE F	very flexible budget
IMPACT FACTOR	PC B / ED, PC T / ED, PC / ED PC B / SD, PC T / SD, PC / SD	services that can apply to all parents range everyday

	PC B / O, PC T / O, PC / O	and occasionally, backup care, flexible working

---

What about eldercare?

Eldercare is another everyday challenge for a considerable part of the population. According to employees' identified needs, an organisation could expand its strategy to offering eldercare benefits, by collaborating with platforms and service providers in this field.

---

collaboration with co-working spaces with on-site childcare

Coworking spaces offer flexible working stations in most cities and serve as an alternative office-space for employees and companies. They provide different scales and types of services in a domain which continuously evolves and adapts to current conditions and professionals' or companies' needs. Subsidized spots in coworking centers may be an everyday facility provided by some companies or an on-demand service for specific occasions or a subsidiary for remote working.

Coworking centers that offer childcare are an option for parents who also practice remote working/studying. Either on a daily basis or on an on demand basis coworking centers with childcare may be a life-saving option for remote working/studying parents. They can be combined with at-home childcare by family members or nannies or with after school/daycare center working hours.

The truth is that there are not yet many coworking centers offering childcare globally. At the same time the need and demand for childcare rises when hybrid working models are preferred. As a result, more coworking spaces are expected to make an effort to include childcare for the growing working parents target market.

Organisations may offer standard subscriptions or flexible collaborations with coworking centers for their employees after evaluating needs, cost and impact. Municipalities and prefectures could plan for building such community hubs as a service to all workers and learners with caring responsibilities.

How to plan

- Research to identify needs
- Research to identify service providers in the area.
- Estimation of cost and budgeting
- Business plan

DEMOGRAPHICS	D1, D2, D3, D4	for all companies
BUILDING CAPACITY		outsourcing services / no need for onsite spaces
BUDGET	BPB F, BPE F	very flexible budget
IMPACT FACTOR	PC B / ED, PC T / ED, PC / ED PC B / SD, PC T / SD, PC / SD PC B / O, PC T / O, PC / O	services that can apply to all needs everyday and occasionally, backup care, flexible working

Note

All the above childcare/eldercare options -collaborations with daycare centers/study centers, platforms and services for childcare professionals and coworking centers including childcare- can -and sometimes need to- be combined to offer a holistic plan for a company, incubator or learning institution to address the childcare/eldercare challenges of its beneficiaries and employees. The best combination will come out of carefully researching options and needs and should be flexible to adapt, over time, to changing organisational demographics.

When collaborations are established it is important that all information is well organized and accessible for the employees/students/beneficiaries to use. A family consultant can also help them choose the more appropriate solutions for their circumstances.

space-related structures and facilities

In this chapter we refer to facilities that are provided in the physical workplace or learning space. Specific spaces which are dedicated or flexible to serve childcare and/or parent care activities.

We can identify two categories according to scale and requirements and an additional one which is facilities which are nice to have for all beneficiaries, but would be even more appreciated by parents.

- **Small scale** interventions are easy to apply and can really make a difference for those who may need it. They can meet occasional needs and do not need specific professional staff to support it.
- **Large scale** interventions that are more complicated to implement, are more demanding in terms of space, cost and policies, but have an important impact factor for those who use it. Professionals are needed for implementation and operation.
- **Additional** facilities that support wellbeing for everybody.

In order to choose which option suits best for an organisation, research to identify needs and expected impact is essential.

small scale interventions

Small scale interventions refer to limited space, budget and complexity requirements. Spaces that can be reused or transformed to family friendly spaces, with minimum requirements and infrastructure and some extra equipment. The following proposals include spaces that are either dedicated to parents - children use, or multifunctional meaning that they can be occasionally used for special occasions.

Special occasions

- sudden illness/unexpected event of the person who is responsible for childcare
- school closes unexpectedly or school holiday that is not an official bank holiday

---

We use a template with standards for every proposed space so as to facilitate understanding and decision - making.

Template for small scale interventions

This template includes and categorizes all the information related to the proposed interventions. The type of information is presented and explained on the generic template and the info for every type of space follows.

definition of use	who needs it / who will take advantage of it / in which occasions
surface	minimum and maximum space needed
position	where it should be located according to use and specifications
space requirements /spatial characteristics / functionality	spatial characteristics like natural lighting, ventilation, access, privacy, etc
infrastructure	needed infrastructure in terms of electromechanical installations and provisions
equipment basic	minimum equipment which is essential for the specific use
equipment additional	additional equipment which will make the use of space better / nice to have equipment
estimation of cost	cost cannot be estimated accurately because of differences between countries in terms of construction and procurement costs and multiple choices
who do you need to design and construct	technical staff / decision and policy makers / stakeholders / experts that are needed to make this implementation happen
next steps	step by step guidance for implementation

pros	what are the advantages and impact
cons	what are the challenges that may occur
supporting policies	policies and regulations that may be essential to reassure health, safety, feasibility and impact
number of spaces	advice on how many implementations would be needed

supporting mothers in the workplace through breastfeeding facilities

One of the most effective and practical support structures that organisations can easily provide is lactation rooms. These are spaces where a mother can express and preserve breast milk to feed her baby later. Breastfeeding mothers who return to their work or studies often need to express milk many times during the day, for a period of their choosing. Since this is a basic need for many mothers, support from companies should be obligatory, which is the case in many countries and/or companies. There are laws and policies that provide lactation breaks and define lactation rooms requirements.

The spaces that are meant to cover breastfeeding needs are called lactation rooms. They are easy to create and operate. They offer more than just practical support for new mothers. They are proof that an organisation cares about making parents feel included and comfortable in public spaces, after bringing home a new family member. They embrace parenthood.

definition of use	nursing mothers / future nursing mothers
surface	6 - 15 m2
position	ideally, a lactation space is close to where an employee works and no farther than a 5-minute walk. Spaces should be evenly distributed within large buildings, as well as across a large campus, in easily accessible locations. Limiting a breastfeeding mother's travel time minimizes the overall amount of break time she will need to pump.

	centralized locations also make it possible for the greatest number of employees to access the space. easy access to water supply and drainage would be ideal, which would be an extra condition to identify a suitable space.
space requirements /spatial characteristics / functionality	the actual function of the space is to accommodate a sitting person using a breast pump on a table. There should be a place to put personal things, a refrigerator to conserve expressed milk, a sink to wash hands and breast pump parts, a microwave to disinfect breast pump parts. Visual and sound privacy is essential. Natural lighting, ventilation and climatisation are obligatory. Due to hygiene and safety matters a bathroom cannot be used.
infrastructure	electrical outlet water supply and drainage ventilation and climatisation
equipment basic	1. a chair 2. a flat surface such as a table, desk, or shelf for the employee's breast pump and supplies 3. an electrical outlet for the mother's breast pump
equipment additional	1. a hospital-grade, double electric, multi-user breast pump 2. a sink for washing hands and pump parts 3. a small refrigerator for storing milk 4. a microwave so mothers can keep their equipment clean 5. soft lighting 6. an ottoman or footstool

	7. framed photos or posters, a place for mothers to hang photos of their infants, to help with relaxation and milk flow
	8. a locker or hooks for a woman's belongings (helpful for employees who do not have their own office space or cubicle)
	9. a space where moms can store their pumps
	10. a full-length mirror for a woman to readjust clothing after pumping
	11. cleaning supplies to keep the space clean
	12. a white noise machine
	13. a phone charging station
	14. a tea or coffee machine for mothers to use
	15. reading material, such as parenting books or magazines
estimation of cost	create a list of equipment to estimate procurement cost -if space modifications or additions are needed consult a technician
who do you need to design and construct	technical staff or facility management to check infrastructure and space availability / HR to identify the needs / designer (or it can be a team building activity)
next steps	1. identify needs (how many women, how many spaces) 2. identify possible spaces that meet the requirements 3. design phase / could ask help from parents or even all employees 4. construction phase 5. identify, buy and install equipment 6. spread the news
pros	Breastfeeding support is crucial as esearch has found that returning to work without adequate support mechanisms can hamper optimal breastfeeding practices.

	Breastfeeding support is important for children's health and development, for mothers and for society as a whole. The provision of breastfeeding rooms, nursing breaks and an enabling breastfeeding environment and culture are low-cost interventions that can contribute to improve job productivity and employee retention.
cons	None. The only challenge is to identify the right space for this use and take care for privacy.
supporting policies	provide reasonable (paid) break time to express milk
number of spaces	organisations need to consider how many women of reproductive age (usually 18 to 50 years of age) are employed, the number and size of buildings, and the beneficiaries' schedules and circumstances. A general guideline is to provide at least one permanent milk expression space for every 50 to 100 women employed by the organisation or using its premises, and to adjust as population needs increase.

DEMOGRAPHICS	D1, D2, D3, D4	for all companies
BUILDING CAPACITY	S1	limited space is needed
BUDGET	B1 **L,** B1 **F**	low budget / flexible
IMPACT FACTOR	MB / ED	for breastfeeding mothers it is basic and covers a many times during a day necessity

Note

If it is not possible to construct a lactation room or rooms a lactation pod can be used. Lactation pods are ready-made pods that support the milk expression activity for breastfeeding mothers. They are small and windowless, but in cases of lack of space they offer a solution.

supporting children's presence in the workplace

Unexpected occasions that disrupt everyday routine can occur for everybody. For working parents, unexpected childcare failures may be really stressful and most possibly lead to absenteeism. If companies and organisations can provide an option for parents to temporarily bring their babies or children to the office, in these difficult to arrange last minute situations, it would help both parents and companies to eliminate occasional workflow disruption and absenteeism.

What kind of unexpected occasions?

- The person who is in charge of childcare may be sick or have to deal with something unexpected. This could happen to anyone, be it a professional or a family member.
- A daycare center may be closed for a short period due to sickness or some other reason.
- Official or unofficial bank holidays when daycare centers or schools are closed but the office is not.
- Days when schools and daycare centers close earlier than usual.
- Christmas, Easter and/or summer holidays, spring and winter breaks that do not coincide with parents' leave and days-off.

These occasions are normally handled either by the parents taking a day off or by family members or friends chipping in, if they are available. In any case they are uncomfortable and stressful moments which would be made easier if parents could bring the children to the office/learning space for a limited amount of time/days. For that there need to be appropriate conditions for children, with spaces that can accommodate children's activities.

Here we will present some types of spaces which could allow and facilitate the presence of children in work or learning spaces, for a short period of time, considering the age of the child and type of engagement of the parent.

Note

Not all workplaces/learning spaces can accommodate the presence of children. For example, children are not allowed to visit industrial sites or chemical industry installations due to health and safety dangers.

Parent and child dedicated offices

These are offices that can be used by a parent, along with their child, in the workplace or learning environment. It has already been mentioned above that work/learning and childcare cannot happen simultaneously in the same space by the same person, at least for young children who cannot be left unattended and are most of the time in need of care. The "offices for parents and children" solution suggested here, though, can be used for limited periods of time to help with some unexpected event. The use of this type of offices cannot, in most cases, be an everyday practice.

Different age groups - different needs

- Babies up to 12 months can stay with their parents in an office using a stroller, a recliner, a baby-gym or other equipment that allows for the baby to sleep.
- Toddlers and preschoolers can play by themselves for some time if they have the space, the toys and the presence of their parents in the same space.
- Children 6 to 12 years can play, read, do their homework, watch a movie or play with phones or tablets.

To create offices for parents and children, it is essential to invest in the space and the equipment that will serve both the parent and their children.

Here we have identified three different parent & child office types which, depending on the space available, can be either combined or form flexible/distinct spaces for children of different age groups.

Parent & child offices…

…for babies
…for toddlers
…for children

definition of use	parents that cannot leave their children in another childcare option due to sudden or unexpected changes 3 case studies 1. parents with babies up to 12 - 18 months 2. parents with children 18 months - 5 years 3. parents with children 6-12 years
surface	closed (meaning not an open or semi-open) office space 15-30m2
position	any office can be used if it is closed and has enough space
space requirements / spatial characteristics / functionality	all requirements and comfort conditions that a workspace/learning space is subject to; natural lighting and ventilation, air-conditioning, soundproofing. Visual privacy would be nice to have especially for babies, but is not obligatory
infrastructure	nothing more than what an office space already has. Electrical outlets must be protected with child safety protection. If there are glass walls or windows a protection handle is needed. No spare parts and small objects, sharp or hard elements
equipment basic	**for the parent** what a conventional office space already has 1. desk and chair 2. electrical and data outlet to plug and play for laptop / or pc with access to company's systems **for a baby** 1. baby cot 2. feeding/playing high chair 3. changing table / mat **toddlers**

	1. children's table 2. high chair **children** 1. extra desk with chair 2. pc or tablet
equipment additional	**for the parent** 1. cupboard for storing things **babies** 1. recliner 2. baby play foam mat 3. pillows 4. box with baby toys **toddlers** 1. reading chair or pouf or small sofa 2. floor mat and pillows 3. box with drawing materials 4. games 5. books **children** 1. reading chair or pouf or small sofa 2. floor mat and pillows 3. books, comics, games 4. gaming console
estimation of cost	• this is a low-cost intervention • create a list of equipment to estimate procurement cost • if space modifications or additions are needed consult a technician
who do you need to design and construct	Technical staff or Facility Management or Space Management team to check infrastructure and space availability / HR to identify the needs / Designer or it can be a team building activity / Procurement team

Next steps	1. identify needs (how many parents, how many spaces) 2. identify possible spaces that meet the requirements 3. design phase / could ask help from parents 4. construction / implementation phase 5. identify, buy and install equipment 6. spread the news 7. welcome parents and children when the occasion occurs
Pros	Easy application / Not specific requirements / Mostly extra equipment is needed / Low cost intervention / Flexible
Cons	Laws that do not allow the presence of children in the workplace / Disruption for the parent / These offices do not address the issue of sudden lack of childcare without disrupting workflow and productivity. They are a temporary solution for a short period. The presence of the parent is obligatory all the time / The parent cannot easily participate in physical meetings or work in full productivity mode
Supporting policies	Policies that ensure children safety in the workplace. Regulations about when and in which conditions children can be in the workplace. Cleaning routines should be adjusted.
Number of spaces	In order to define how many parent/child offices to construct, a research with the help of HR should be realized, focusing on how many employees are parents with children and in which age-groups. Create a pilot-project parent and child office and invite parents to use it. Ask the parents' opinion if they would find

	these offices useful and their insights of when and how often they would need it. Since these offices can be used as regular offices too, they do not reserve workspace. They are easy to do or undo according to the needs of people.

Note

All three age-group kinds of parent/child offices can be combined in the same office providing equipment for each age group as presented above with some adjustments. Provide some storage boxes to accommodate each group's games and material.

DEMOGRAPHICS	D1, D2, D3, D4	for all companies
BUILDING CAPACITY	S1	small space or existing space
BUDGET	B1 **L,** B1 **F**	low budget / flexible
IMPACT FACTOR	PC B / O, PC T / O, PC / O	occasional use due to unexpected events / but can be a great last minute alternative and will reduce frustration and absenteeism

Flexible spaces that can accommodate children activities

School age children can spend some time unattended reading, doing homework, playing, communicating with their peers, watching movies or playing games in an appropriate environment where health and safety is ensured and there is no danger or risk posed for them.
We suggest flexible spaces that can accommodate children for some time while their parents are engaged in their work/learning and children are not in school.

Meeting rooms or offices can be used for this reason with some slight improvements and/or adjustments.

definition of use	Children in the age over 6 years old that do not have access to another childcare option due to sudden or unexpected changes /

	Children that return from school (school time is shorter than work hours) after school / or during school holidays
surface	closed (meaning not an open or semi-open) office or meeting space 12-30m2, children of the same or close ages can co-exist, play or study together
position	workplace / any office or meeting room can be used if it is closed and has enough space
space requirements / spatial characteristics / functionality	all requirements and comfort conditions that a workspace is subject to; natural lighting and ventilation, air-conditioning, soundproofing. In these cases visual privacy is not suggested. For supervision and control reasons it is suggested to use spaces with transparent division walls which offer visual contact.
infrastructure	nothing more than what an office or meeting space already has. Electrical outlets must be protected with child safety protection. If there are glass walls or windows a protection handle is needed. No spare parts and no small or sharp objects.
equipment basic	what a conventional office / meeting space already has 1. desk / meeting table and chair 2. electrical and data outlet to plug and play for laptop 3. internet access with parental control software for existing computers
equipment additional	1. cupboard for storing things 2. relax / lounge furniture 3. reading chair or pouf or sofa 4. floor mat or carpet and pillows 5. library with books, comics, games 6. games 7. books 8. tv 9. gaming console

estimation of cost	This is a low-cost intervention Cost cannot be estimated accurately because of differences between countries in terms of equipment costs and multiple choices Create a list of equipment to estimate procurement cost, if space modifications or additions are needed consult a technician
who do you need to design and construct	Technical staff or Facility Management or Space Management team to check infrastructure and space availability / HR to identify the needs / Designer or it can be a team building activity / Procurement team
Next steps	1. identify needs (how many parents would care for such a space for their children) 2. identify possible spaces that meet the requirements 3. design phase / could ask help from parents and children to create it 4. construction / implementation phase 5. identify, buy and install equipment 6. spread the news 7. welcome children when the occasion occurs
Pros	Easy application / No specific requirements / Almost no extra equipment is needed / Low cost intervention / Flexible space which is available for other uses when free. Workplace community building / families meet
Cons	Laws that do not allow the presence of children in the workplace / Disruption for the parent / They are a temporary solution for a short period.

	The parents should take the responsibility for their children / they cannot be in a fully productive mode or participate in physical meetings out of the office at that time.
Supporting policies	Policies that ensure children safety in the workplace. Regulations about when and in which conditions children can be in the workplace. Rulebook for the use of space. Cleaning routines should be adjusted.
Number of spaces	In order to define how many flexible children friendly meeting areas to construct the best approach is to construct a pilot space and test it. Conduct a research with the help of HR on how many employees are parents with children of the target age group who would find such facilities useful. Ask the parents to provide insights of when and how often their children would need it. Since these study/play/meeting rooms can be used as regular meeting rooms they do not reserve workspace. They are easy to do or undo according to the needs of people.

DEMOGRAPHICS	D1, D2, D3, D4	for all companies
BUILDING CAPACITY	S1	small space or existing space
BUDGET	B1 **L,** B1 **F**	low budget / flexible
IMPACT FACTOR	PC / ED, PC / SD, PC / O	for parents that need to work more than a school day's end time it may be an everyday solution, otherwise occasional use due to programmed or unexpected events / it can be a great last minute alternative and will reduce frustration and absenteeism

Note

If there is standard use of these children-friendly rooms, group activities could be organized. Another idea is for a teacher or other childcare professional to be in charge to support children's study or play if there is regular demand and parents agree and organize.

Any desk can serve as a study area for children aged 8-12 years old. The suggestion is to show extra effort to support parents. It is easy to supplement some offices or meeting rooms with children focused equipment / children library / pc / tv

—--

Multifunctional spaces for occasional school free days

In companies or organizations with large scale premises or campuses, which may include big scale auditoriums or multifunctional spaces for big events or other kinds of large spaces like foyers or open spaces outdoors, some organized children events could happen.
These kinds of workplace spaces are usually flexible in terms of use, availability or equipment and can be easily and temporarily transformed to children activities areas.
Organized events can be held for children to spend their day in their parents' workplace/learning space on special occasions when schools are closed (summer holidays, christmas holidays, autumn and spring breaks or other official school holidays).
These events can be arranged and hosted by professionals, contracted by the employer.

We can provide some general guidance to identify and adjust spaces that can be used for these activities..

definition of use	Children from different age groups on scheduled days that are school holidays but not bank holidays
surface	100 - 400 m2
position	auditoriums, multifunctional spaces, foyer, outdoor spaces, according to climate conditions
space requirements /spatial characteristics / functionality	No specific requirements / activities will adjust to available spaces accordingly
infrastructure	Nothing special

	For activities with many children a sound system would be helpful. If there is a projection screen or wall could be used. In any case activities will adjust to available infrastructure.
equipment basic	As above
equipment additional	All additional equipment will be provided by the event organizers
estimation of cost	No cost for space adjustment / cost will be estimated according to the events or activities
who do you need to design and construct	No construction needs HR to identify the needs; how many children / which specific days or periods Event organizer
Next steps	1. identify appropriate dates 2. Identify how many children would participate with the help of HR 3. identify possible spaces that meet the requirements / according to the number of children 4. discuss and organize with the event planner 5. schedule the activity 6. spread the news 7. welcome children in the day of the event
Pros	These activities can be organized on special days when schools are officially closed and provide a solution for parents who will not have to deal with the issue of childcare these days. They just take their children with them and the children participate in organized activities which could be educational or recreational or related to the thematic focus of the company or institution. The cost is flexible, depending on the

	number of children. Reduces stress and absenteeism.
Cons	Laws that do not allow the presence of children in the workplace Outsourced activity which requires experts
Supporting policies	Policies that ensure children safety in the workplace. Regulations about when and in which conditions children can be in the workplace.
Number of spaces / times	The first event can be a pilot for future events. It can become a standard activity for school holidays.

DEMOGRAPHICS	D3, D4	only for big companies
BUILDING CAPACITY	S3, S4	needs big space / flexible for big companies
BUDGET	B1 **M,** B1 **F**	
IMPACT FACTOR	PC B/ SD, PC T/ SD, PC / SD	on specific days or periods it can offer a standard solution for parents and become a custom practise which will support community building

Workplace/learning space daycare is typically an on-site facility that provides childcare. The facility is limited by age. The services are usually available at a fee that is subsidized by the employer/institution, although some companies/organisations may offer this benefit for free. As with off-site care providers, these programs must be licensed, insured, staffed with trained educators and assistants, and provide a safe environment for groups of children.

Creating a daycare or a children activities center is considered to be a large-scale intervention. It is also complicated to implement and demanding in terms of space, cost and policies.

A daycare / children activity center in the workplace is an official center with extra complexity that needs to co-exist with existing offices/learning spaces and be relatively independent at the same time.

Experts and professionals are needed for its implementation and successful operation. Bureaucracy and processes required for its construction can be demanding. Set-up and operational costs need a detailed business plan to estimate impact and return on investment.

On the other hand, including childcare facilities in the workplace or an academic institution reflects a more inclusive culture, which showcases the care for working/learning parents and their needs. On a decision-making level, creating onsite daycare centers makes sense for big companies with efficient premises.

Here we identify two different types of onsite children centers:
    a. daycare center for children up to 5 years - old / babies 6 months - 2,5 years and preschoolers. 2,5-5 years
    b. after school activities / study center for school age children from 5 to 12 years old

The decision to create a daycare center is dependent on multiple factors and must take into consideration at least the following parameters:

    1. size and type of premises and availability of spaces, which are related to company size and number of employees
    2. space and safety requirements (feasibility study)
    3. cost and impact

A business case scenario must be created, answering the following questions:

    1. How many children per age group - employees (parents) will use the facilities, taking into consideration future needs?

2. What are the minimum spatial requirements for the expected daycare center capacity and how can those be met?
3. What is the initial implementation cost? What will the operational cost be?
4. What will the impact of running a daycare center be, compared to other benefits or options?
5. What are the optimization and balancing alternatives?

Here we will present some basic features and parameters to help with decision-making on a first-level approach. The next step is to consult with local professionals, architects, constructors, and daycare professionals to ensure feasibility and create a more detailed scope and business plan.

Regulations and requirements

Minimum Requirements are subject to local regulations and certifications.
Building an onsite daycare center presents the same requirements as building an independent daycare center in terms of building regulations, fire protection laws and technical specifications. There is the additional complexity of the facility co-existing with the workplace/learning space.

The first step is to check if the use of a daycare center is permitted in the area, zone or specific industry. Not all workplaces/institutions are allowed to have childcare facilities. For example, daycare facilities are not allowed in industrial zones or in distances less than 300m from an industrial area, industrial zone or industrial premises.

Every daycare/ activities center should have an operational license in accordance with local laws and regulations which refer to spatial specifications, operational requirements and proof of adequate and expert staff.

Spatial specifications list

The licensed use of space must be in accordance with local laws. In Greece, for example, for daycare centers and facilities the official building use must be in the category of Health and Social Services, which means that the building where the daycare center operates should meet the conditions and prerequisites for this type of use. If this is not the case, modifications and adjustments may be needed, as well as a special license to proceed. In these cases, the advice of an expert on the topic is essential.

You can check some obligatory spatial features as follows:

1. The daycare/children activities center should have an **independent entrance**. This cannot be the same entrance that is used by the employees or visitors to enter the indoor workplace/learning space facilities. A common entrance is not allowed.

2. The daycare/children activities center should be **accessible** to everyone, without the use of stairs. Elevators and ramps are eligible if they meet accessibility regulations and norms.

3. The daycare/children activities center must be developed in a **one level/floor space**, preferably in ground floor spaces that have direct access to outdoor space. Level difference must be avoided. In case of stairs or level differences, appropriate handles must be provided. No sharp or hard surfaces are allowed. The geometry of the stairs has to meet all dimension and form requirements.

4. Safety features should be installed. Glass walls must be avoided. In case of glass walls and windows, protection bars and handles must be installed with a maximum distance of 12cm. Glass surfaces should be safe for children and public use. Window opening parts cannot be under 1,5m height

5. There are minimum space surface and dimensions requirements for indoor and outdoor spaces, according to the specific functionality of each space.

Materials used

1. Flooring materials must be slip-proof, anti-bacterial, warm, easy-cleaning, sound-absorbing, with no joints, if possible.
2. Wall finishings should be easy-cleaning paintings or coverings. Sound-absorbing materials are suggested.
3. WC / DS / kitchen areas should be covered with tiles up to 1,60m of height.
4. Only non-toxic materials can be used.

Infrastructure

1. Air-conditioning is obligatory as in all living spaces.
2. Natural lighting and ventilation is a prerequisite.

Esthetics

Esthetics should be appropriate for baby and children spaces. Light, happy colors and children friendly materials are suggested.

on-site daycare center for children up to 5 years

When designing an onsite daycare center we should refer to two different age-groups:

- Babies from 6 months to 2,5 years
- Toddlers from 2,5 years to 5 years when obligatory preschool education begins

There is the option to create either a daycare center for **babies**, or for **toddlers** or for **both** age groups. The choice is subject to the identified needs and goals.

The minimum requirements in terms of provided uses and surfaces depend on the age-group classification and number of children. Three different tables are presented for each case.

BABY DAYCARE CENTER - MINIMUM SCENARIO 10 BABIES

SPACES	NET SURFACE	MINIMUM DIMENSIONS	NOTES
A. ENTRANCE / ADMINISTRATION			
1. entrance /waiting area	12	2,4	area where parents and children enter the center and wait for personnel to welcome the baby - + space for strolls
2. administration office	7	2,4	standard office
3. general use office	9	2,4	obligatory only for daycare center capacity > 20 babies, it can be used for doctor visit and for parents-teachers meetings
4. personnel area	7	2,2	when more than 6-7 personnel

5. isolation room	6	1,8	obligatory only for daycare center capacity > 20 babies, to isolate a baby in case of sickness
6. WC / DS for staff/public use	6		1 WC per 8 staff persons, 1 DS per 12 staff persons and 1 locker per staff person. If daycare center capacity > 50 kids extra WC for public use
7. Special space for storing strolls	3		obligatory only for daycare center capacity > 25 babies
BABY DAYCARE SPACE	MINIMUM SCENARIO 10 BABIES		
1. Babies Sleeping area	2,5 m2 per baby	3	Minimum surface 15,00m2. Multiple rooms for every 10-12 babies
2. Baby activities area	1,20 m2 per baby	3	Minimum surface 15,00m2 Multiple rooms for every 12-14 babies
3. Changing area / baby bath	2,5 m2 per changing station	1,5m.	1 changing station per 6 babies. Minimum surface 5,00m2 (2 changing stations
4. Milk preparation room	4	1,5m.	
5. Outdoor baby space	3,5m2 / baby		direct access from the indoor daycare center space
TODDLERS SPACES	MINIMUM SCENARIO 15 TODDLERS		
1. Toddlers' activities area	1,80 m2 per baby	3,6	Minimum surface 25,00m2 It can be dining area as well
2. Sleeping area	1,7 m2 per baby	3	1 sleeping position for 4-5 toddlers. Minimum surface 9,00m2
3. Dining room	1,4 m2 /toddler	3	Optional space Minimum surface 15,00m2

4. toddlers WC/bathroom	12,00m2		1 WC / 10 toddlers, 1 sink / 6 toddlers, 1 bathroom / 25 toddlers
Outdoor toddlers' space	4,5m2 / toddler		
ADDITIONAL SPACES			
1. kitchen	8	2,2	minimum surface when there is no food preparation
2. food storage	3		only when food preparation is included
3. washing machine	7	2,2	
4. Cleaning facilities	3		direct exit
5. storage	5		

Equipment

A list of equipment is presented according to typology of use and space. There is basic and additional equipment. We focus on basic equipment in the following list. Additional equipment is free to choose according to ages, locations, pedagogical approach, budget, etc.

SPACES	BASIC EQUIPMENT	ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT
entrance /waiting area	sofa or chair or poufs table welcome office	coat hanger umbrella storage decorations announcement board charging station coffee/tea machine
administration office	regular office equipment desk and chairs	storage equipment
general use office	regular office equipment desk and chairs	meeting table and chairs / lounge seating

personnel area	lockers for staff persons sofa desk or shelf	mirror charging station coat hangers
isolation room	pouf or sofa to relax first aid kit	music happy and relaxing decorations
WC / DS for staff/public use	standard WC equipment	
Special space for storing strolls	empty space	
BABY SPACES		
Babies Sleeping area	one baby cot for every baby pillows and blankets floor mat sofa or chair for supervisor	relaxing lighting teddies music
Babies activities area	floor mat pillows tables and chairs storage boxes toys, tools and materials books	feel free to add
Changing area / baby bath	one changing table storage equipment sink designed for baby bath relax chair for the baby	
Milk preparation room	table sink refrigerator for breast milk microwave kettle storage	
Outdoor baby space	outdoor equipment for babies	
TODDLERS SPACES		
Toddlers activities area	floor mat pillows	feel free to add

	tables and chairs storage boxes toys, tools and materials books	
Sleeping area	children beds pillows blankets floor mat sofa or chair for supervisor	relaxing lighting teddies music
Dining room	children tables and chairs storage boxes and drawers	
toddlers WC/bathroom	regular WC equipment	
Outdoor toddlers' space	outdoor equipment for toddlers	
ADDITIONAL SPACES		
kitchen	regular kitchen equipment	
food storage	shelves and cupboards refrigerator	
washing machine	washing machine tumble dryer ironing system shelves and cupboards	
cleaning equipment	waste bins shelves and cupboards	
storage	shelves and cupboards	

DEMOGRAPHICS	D3, D4
BUILDING CAPACITY	S3
BUDGET	B1 **H** + B12 **M**
IMPACT FACTOR	PC B/ ED and/or PC T/ ED

Note

All equipment must be age-appropriate, tested and certified for children's use, health and safety regulations and norms. Since operating a daycare center is probably not in the scope of an ICT sector company or organization, daycare professionals must be contracted/hired to plan, implement and operate an onsite daycare center. The number of tutors, educators or teachers depends on the number of babies or toddlers and on national laws and regulations.

on-site after school activities / study center

SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN ACTIVITIES CENTER - MINIMUM SCENARIO 15 CHILDREN

SPACES	NET SURFACE	NOTES
1. Activities area	30 m2 or 2 m2 / child	minimum 15 children maximum 25 children
2. Music / theatrical activities space	45 m2 3m2/child	optional minimum 15 children maximum 25 children
3. Construction activities space	30 m2 or 2 m2 / child	optional minimum 15 children maximum 25 children
4. office	10 m2	
5. storage room	4 m2	
6. WC	4 m2 / WC	2 WC / 30 children (one for children with disabilities)

Equipment

A list of equipment is presented according to typologie of use and space. There is basic and additional equipment. We focus on basic equipment in the list presented. Additional equipment is free to choose according to ages, locations, pedagogical approach, budget, etc.

SPACES	BASIC EQUIPMENT	ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT
Activities area	floor mat pillows tables and chairs storage boxes toys, tools and materials books study desks and chairs	feel free to add
Music / theatrical activities space	chairs tables	feel free to add
Construction activities space	desk and chairs storage boxes materials	feel free to add
office	lockers for personnel sofa desk and chairs first aid kit	mirror charging station coat hangers
storage room	shelves and cupboards	
WC	standard WC equipment	

DEMOGRAPHICS	D3, D4
BUILDING CAPACITY	S2, S3
BUDGET	B1 **M** + B12 **M**
IMPACT FACTOR	PC/ ED

other supporting structures

Nowadays wellness factors for workplaces is a common discussion. All contemporary workplace developments focus on employee-centered approaches, having well being in the

center of the design process. There are Certification Systems to ensure that buildings and companies/organisations apply sustainable and wellness policies in their spaces. In this part of the toolkit we will examine some common functions like lounge/relax areas, restaurants, sports facilities which may or may not exist in some workplaces/learning spaces but could be very useful both for parents and non-parents.

Relax / lounge areas

Contemporary life for working parents demands extra effort to deal with everyday obligations. As a result many adults suffer from burnout and exhaustion due to extended lack of sleep or rest. At the same time everybody might need some relaxing time during the working day to refresh and boost productivity.
The provision of relax/lounge areas in the workplace/learning space is beneficial for all employees and students but especially for parents.

definition of use	Relax/lounge areas are used by all employees when they feel like taking a lounge break or changing to a non formal working environment
surface	very flexible, from 12m2 to 50m2 for lounge areas
position	preferably close to workstations/classrooms, so as to be integrated in the everyday routine and not need much time to reach
space requirements / spatial characteristics / functionality	all requirements and comfort conditions that a workspace/learning space is subject to; natural lighting and ventilation, air-conditioning, soundproofing.
infrastructure	nothing more than what an office or meeting space already has.
equipment basic	very flexible 1. lounge furniture, sofas and oversized chairs
equipment additional	1. coffee/tea machine 2. electrical and data outlet to plug and play for laptop to support informal meetings

	3. internet access 4. soft lighting 5. music 6. yoga balls and stretching equipment 7. beanbags and pillows 8. greenery 9. water element 10. feel free to add
estimation of cost	Flexible but it can be a low-cost intervention Cost cannot be estimated accurately because of differences between countries in terms of equipment costs and multiple choices
who do you need to design and construct	Technical staff or Facility Management or Space Management team to check infrastructure and space availability / HR to identify the needs / Designer or it can be a team building activity / Procurement team
Next steps	1. identify needs (how many lounge areas according to number of employees / at least one and/or one every 50 people) 2. identify possible spaces that meet the requirements 3. design phase / could ask help from employees to create it 4. construction / implementation phase 5. identify, buy and install equipment 6. spread the news 7. welcome people
Pros	Easy application / Not specific requirements / Mostly extra equipment is needed / Low cost intervention / Flexible space is needed Workplace community building Relaxing people are happier and more productive

Cons	No cons
Supporting policies	Rulebook for the use of space.
Number of spaces	Lounge areas can be distinct from other workspaces or integrated in them. They can be as many as the space management can afford according to the company's or organisation's policies.

You can offer one large communal relaxation area or smaller areas dispersed around the space. Even small private relaxation areas can be provided for self isolation and detachment (preferably sound-proof and internet-free areas). There are no specific rules for relaxing areas and no expensive office redesigns are needed.

Note

There are even ready-made pods to add small relaxing rooms to any work/learning environment. To experience full detachment and relaxation, spaces without internet access are suggested.

Kitchen and restaurants

Another everyday obligation which adds on stress and time cost is food preparation for oneself and their family. Different and busy time schedules do not allow much time for everyday family meal preparation. It would really help families if all members could eat either at the school or daycare center or at their workplace and if this service was offered by the establishments.

Many workplaces offer kitchen facilities and/or restaurants in their premises. On the condition that the food and snacks they offer are healthy and affordable they could really save time and effort for all the employees and be further appreciated by parents. With fair pricing and healthy oriented nutrition, employees could solve their family everyday nutrition effort by using their workplace restaurant menu even for their families.

Kitchen areas also help employees prepare, conserve and enjoy their meals. If there is no availability of space or potential to have an on-site restaurant collaborating with restaurants in the neighborhood can be a good idea.

Gyms / sports facilities

Onsite gym or sport facilities for workplaces may seem like a luxury. Bigger companies are making an effort to include exercise facilities in their premises so as to make it easy for their employees to move.

Self-care and personal time, especially during the early years of parenthood often seems like a luxury. If exercise facilities were provided in the workplace it could be more feasible for parents to find some time to exercise and care for their wellness. This would help with stress management and self esteem and would boost productivity.

Of course gym services are not in the scope of the ICT sector companies and, in order to create and operate such facilities, extra space and operational costs must be afforded.

how to choose / methodology

Proposals for various scales, complexity, budget and needs are presented above. This chapter will help you make the most appropriate decisions based on the size and capacity of the company/institution, feasibility, building characteristics, budget and expected impact.

Non spatial proposals, which are mostly collaborations and outsourcing services, are very flexible but need careful research to select the appropriate service providers and estimate the number of beneficiaries. The following tables will help you understand how many people would benefit from the selected provisions and their budget scale.

BENEFITS FOR PARENTS WITH CHILDREN UNDER 5 YEARS

	number of children 6 months - 5 years	annual cost / child	cost per occasion	provision of occasions per year	TOTAL
daycare centers					
regular nannies services					
backup care / nannies					
co-working with childcare (regular for remote workers)					
co-working with childcare (back up care)					
				TOTAL	

BENEFITS FOR PARENTS WITH CHILDREN OVER 5 YEARS

	number of	annual cost	cost per	provision of	TOTAL

	children 6-12	/ child	occasion	occasions per year	
study / activity centers after school					
regular childcare professionals after school services					
backup care / nannies					
co-working with childcare (regular for remote workers)					
co-working with childcare (back up care)					
				TOTAL	

For spatial / onsite proposals a table is presented which sums up the basic information on space and budget needs and a rough demographics codification for each category of proposals.

A/A	TYPE	DEMOGRAPHICS				SPACE CAPACITY					BUDGET SCALE			
		D1	D2	D3	D4	S1	S2	S3	S4	SF / EXISTING	BF	BL	BM	BH
	SMALL SCALE													
a	lactation rooms	▦	▦	▦	▦	▨					▧	▧		
b1	Parent and child dedicated offices	▦	▦	▦	▦	▨					▧			
b2	Flexible spaces for children activities Study/library areas / Playroom	▦	▦	▦	▦	▨					▧	▧		
b3	Multifunctional spaces for occasional school free days / bring your child with you days/ auditoriums / open spaces / foyers			▦	▦				▨		▧		▧	
	BIG SCALE													
1	on site daycare center for children up to 5 years - old / babies and preschoolers			▦	▦			▨						▧
2	on site after school activities / study center for school age children from 5 to 12 years old			▦	▦			▨						▧
	FOR EVERYONE													
c1	Relax / lounge areas	▦	▦	▦	▦	▨					▧	▧		
c2	kitchen and restaurants (food for home)		▦	▦	▦		▨	▨	▨				▧	▧
c3	Gyms / sports facilities			▦	▦			▨	▨				▧	▧

➔ If you are representing a very small or small company refer to proposals for D1 or D2 accordingly.

➔ If you have limitations on space availability refer to proposals S1 or **SF**.

➔ For budget allocation see indications on the budget categories.

➔ Big scale onsite proposals make sense only for D3 and D4 companies who can afford the space S3 and S4 and the budget **BH**.

➔ The upper factors concern the feasibility of proposals.

➔ The key decision-making factors are needs assessment and expected impact.

➔ First step is to identify specific needs and the appropriate solutions.

➔ When we identify needs we can estimate the impact and relative cost.

➔ Needs assessment may prove a complicated and delicate process. Some features may be available in the HR department and for others a research with the employees participation may be needed.

In this chapter we have also included an indicative questionnaire list which should be adjusted per case study.

Questionnaires

for HR/general quantitative demographic research

PEOPLE
1. Number of FTEmployees (1a. men/1b. women)
2. Number of FTEmployees aged 18-50 (2a. men/2b. women)
3. Number of parents with children under 12y.
4. Number of children per parent
5. Number of children aged 6m.-2,5 y.
6. Number of children aged 2,5-5y.
7. Number of children aged 6-12
8. Number of children aged 13-17

More specifically:

➔ **2b** will help on how many lactation rooms are needed taking under consideration the possibility and will of having children. This is a very sensitive GDPR issue and should be handled with care.

➔ **3** is the number of possible beneficiaries

➔ **5** and **6** is the number of children who are possible to use onsite daycare center or occasionally parent/children offices

➔ **7** and **8** is the number of children who are possible to use onsite children activity center after, study areas or occasionally parent/children offices

When the above information is established, you can proceed to further needs assessment using a focused questionnaire.

Needs assessment questionnaire for parents

For parents with children aged 6 months - 5 years

How many children do you have?

Ages of children

How do you manage childcare in the day to day routine?
- parents changing shifts / one parent does not work
- family members
- professional childcare at home (nannies, tutors)
- daycare center
- combination of the upper
- currently looking for a solution

Are you satisfied with your current childcare arrangements?
- Yes
- No

If not, what are your biggest difficulties / challenges?
- location / distance
- quality
- time management
- financial
- unexpected failures

Please describe

………………………………………………

What would you change in order to meet all your expectations, preferences and optimize your family schedules?

During the last 6 months, have you been obliged to miss one or more work days due to lack of childcare?
- Yes, up to three days per year for unexpected reasons
- Yes, more than three days per year for unexpected reasons
- Yes, up to three days per year for scheduled reasons (ex. school holidays)
- Yes, more than three days per year for scheduled reasons (ex. school holidays)
- No

During the last 6 months, have you been obliged to come in late or leave earlier one or more work days due to lack of childcare?
- Yes, up to three times per year for unexpected reasons
- Yes, more than three times per year for unexpected reasons
- Yes, up to three times per year for scheduled reasons (ex. school holidays)
- Yes, more than three times per year for scheduled reasons (ex. school holidays)
- No

Would you care for on-site childcare in the workplace?
- Yes
- No

Comments

………………………………………………

Would you care for onsite childcare activities in the workplace held by professionals during official school holidays which are not bank holidays?
- Yes
- No

Comments

………………………………………………

Would you use a specially designed and fully equipped and safe office space where you could have your child with you on unexpected child care failures?
- Yes
- No

Comments

………………………………………………

Would you be interested in participating on a working group for onsite childcare solutions to facilitate parents in the workplace?
- Yes
- No

Please share with us any concerns or ideas on the above issues in general or in specific subjects

For parents with children aged 5 years - 12 years;

How many children do you have?

Ages of children:

How do you manage childcare after school?
- parents changing shifts / one parent does not work
- family members or friends
- professional childcare at home (nannies, tutors)
- study/activity center / summer camp
- combination of the upper
- currently looking for a solution

How do you manage childcare on school holidays?
- parents changing shifts / one parent does not work
- use my official days-off
- family members
- professional childcare at home (nannies, tutors)
- study/activity center/ summer camp
- combination of the upper
- currently looking for a solution

Are you satisfied with your current childcare arrangements?
- Yes
- No

If not, what are your biggest difficulties / challenges?
- location / distance
- quality
- time management
- financial
- always looking for ad-hoc solutions
- unexpected failures

Please describe

………………………………………………

What would you change to meet all your expectations, preferences and optimize your family schedules?

During the last 6 months, have you been obliged to miss one or more work days due to lack of childcare?
- Yes, up to three days per year for unexpected reasons
- Yes, more than three days per year for unexpected reasons
- Yes, up to three days per year for scheduled reasons (ex. school holidays)
- Yes, more than three days per year for scheduled reasons (ex. school holidays)
- No

During the last 6 months, have you been obliged to come in late or leave earlier one or more work days due to lack of childcare?
- Yes, up to three times per year for unexpected reasons
- Yes, more than three times per year for unexpected reasons
- Yes, up to three times per year for scheduled reasons (ex. school holidays)
- Yes, more than three times per year for scheduled reasons (ex. school holidays)
- No

Would you care for onsite after school childcare / study center in the workplace?
- Yes
- No

Comments

……………………………………………

Would you care for onsite childcare activities in the workplace held by professionals during official school holidays which are not bank holidays?
- Yes
- No

Comments

……………………………………………

Would you use a specially designed and fully equipped and safe office space where you could have your child with you on unexpected child care failures?
- Yes
- No

Comments

……………………………………………

Would you use a specially designed and fully equipped and safe study space where your child could study / play / read?

- Yes, on a daily basis with a professional
- Yes, on a daily basis by itself and/or other children
- Yes, occasionally whenever needed
- No

Comments

……………………………………………

Would you be interested in participating on a working group for onsite childcare solutions to facilitate parents in the workplace?

- Yes
- No

Please share with us any concerns or ideas on the above issues in general or in specific subjects

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

When all the above information is gathered and assessed, it will be easier to balance needs, solutions, requirements and impact and to select the most appropriate strategy.

For large scale implementations a pilot project is suggested. You can build a pilot application and ask the employees to test it and provide their feedback. This process would help in deciding on the number and final version of each case. It is also an opportunity to inform and include all employees on this process.

Laws / Policies / Regulations checklist

Like in all building projects, there are regulations to refer to, in terms of requirements, environmental and sustainability issues, building issues, fire resistance issues, comfort conditions, labor and workplace issues, health and safety issues. Before anything, professional advice is needed in order to reassure that proposed implementations are in accordance with general and specific regulations and processes.

1. National Building regulations, general and focused on workplace building regulations and school and daycare centers regulations
2. National Building fire regulations
3. National Workplace regulations

4. Company workplace regulations

Due to multiple regulations and laws complexity the HR team, Facility Management team and Architects team should collaborate.

Co-funded by the European Union

references

general

[Supporting working parents: Making the "impossible" possible](#)
[The childcare conundrum](#)
[Childcare is getting more support from some private companies](#)
[10 ways companies can be more family-friendly | UNICEF](#)

health and safety

https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/safety-and-prevention/hazards/hazards-index/children-in-workplaces

bringing children in the workplace

[Children in the Workplace | Policy Library](#)
[Should Children Be Allowed In The Workplace?](#)

eldercare

[grandmama](#)

best practices for coworking childcare centers

[10 Coworking Spaces Around The World Offering Childcare - Nexudus Blog](#)
[Working with kids: Europe's coworking spaces with childcare | Sifted](#)
[Work and play: the rise of child-friendly co-working spaces | Childcare | The Guardian](#)
[Child-friendly Coworking Spaces: Workspaces for Parents | andcards](#)

lactation rooms

[Breastfeeding support in the workplace](#)
[What Nursing Parents Need from your Workplace Lactation Room - The Bridge Group, LLC](#)
[Location for breaks | Office on Women's Health](#)
[Breastfeeding support in the workplace](#)
[How To Label Lactation Rooms at Work](#)
[Εργασία και θηλασμός. Μπορεί να πετύχει. | Γεώργιος Β. Καλόγηρος](#)

lactation pods

https://www.mamava.com/
https://rustica.com/the-beckon/

parent and child office

Parent-Child-Office | Max Planck Institute for Dynamics of Complex Technical Systems
How These Companies Have Created Kid-Friendly Offices For Working Parents

children's activities in the workplace

https://sleepingshouldbeeasy.com/bring-your-kids-to-work-day/

on-site childcare

The Fortune 100 companies that offer on-site day care to employees | The Outline

Childcare Is a Business Issue

Day Care in the WorkplaceCould on-site childcare lure parents back to the workplace? - BBC
Worklife
Why Workplace Daycare is Growing in Popularity - Workest
Day Care in the Workplace

lounge/relax areas

https://www.decoist.com/nap-pods-office/?chrome=1
https://blog.gebesa.com/en-us/the-importance-of-a-fully-equipped-office-lounge-area

sport facilities in the workplace

https://www.vantagefit.io/blog/sports-and-wellness/
https://www.teamrh.com/en/sport-in-the-workplace-why-look-after-yourself-in-2020/
https://www.onrec.com/news/news-archive/the-importance-of-sports-and-wellness-to-emp
loyees

Best practices for parent-friendly work and learning spaces on a corporate, community and governmental level

belgium

Belgium is leading the way in promoting a healthy work-life balance for its employees. With the introduction of **remote working**, many **part time contracts** and **no work Wednesdays** due to school closures, Belgian employers are providing their employees with more flexibility than ever before. By allowing their workers to balance their professional and personal lives, they are creating an environment that encourages productivity and well-being, while still being able to pursue their career goals. Also, Belgium has recently passed a draft law that allows employees to request **a four-day work week**, with the same salary and benefits as if they were working five days. This move is aimed at improving the quality of life for workers and reducing stress levels. It is also hoped that this law will foster innovation in the workplace, allowing employees to be more productive during their shorter work week.

Of course there are still matters to be considered though for example the use of the phone and response to emails after working hours which makes the separation of working hours and personal time fluid. An example of best practice is that recently civil servants working for Belgium's federal government were given the **right to disconnect**, allowing them to turn off work devices and ignore messages after hours without reprisals from bosses.

cyprus

The Law on Leave (Paternity, Parental, Caring, Force Majeure) and Flexible Work Arrangements for the Balance between Professional and Private Life of 2022" was proposed in August 2022 as a response to the EU Directive on work-life balance. The Directive provides, among other things, a two-month paid leave for working parents with children up to eight years old, a paid paternity allowance that already exists in Cyprus and a series of other facilities for young couples, such as the option for flexible forms of employment for a specific period of time, but also ensures the right to absence from work for reasons of force majeure or to care for another family member.

There is not much systemic push in that regard, but there are initiatives such as the 4-day work week experiment by Grant Thornton Cyprus that concern specific companies.

Moreover, the University of Cyprus has recently introduced a "nursery" to support its employees.

greece

TThe Greek Ministry for Employment and Social Affairs recently launched a call to subsidise the creation of baby care units within 120 medium and large enterprises.

The object of the program - which has a budget of 16 million euros, is financed by the Recovery Fund and is implemented by the General Secretariat of Demographic and Family Policy and Gender Equality - is to subsidize businesses with more than 100 employees (medium) and more than 250 employees (large), including shopping centers, to create baby care spaces within their building facilities.

More specifically, businesses are supported for the configuration of the premises and the supply of the necessary equipment as well as for the salary costs of up to two babysitters for the first two years of operation of the premises. The operation of the care facilities, after the end of the funding, should be maintained by the beneficiaries for at least twice the duration of the funding, i.e. for four years.

Beneficiaries will receive upfront 50% of the costs for setting up the space and the remaining 50% upon the start of their operation. From then on, they will receive every year the subsidy for the salary costs of two childcare workers for the first two years of operation. The maximum eligible expenditure amounts to approximately 150,000 euros for each of the large enterprises with more than 250 employees, and to approximately 107,000 euros for each of the medium-sized enterprises, which employ between 100 and 250 employees.

The program will include two application cycles, with the first cycle starting now (with the publication of the relevant call to business) and the second cycle "opening" later in the year. It is estimated that a total of 120 businesses will join, 70 large and 50 medium, and the spaces that will be created will accommodate approximately 2,500 infants, aged from 6 months to 2.5 years.

The aim is to harmonize family and professional life and to strengthen the participation of women in the labor market, through the provision of complementary baby care services and the creation of friendlier workplaces for new parents - and especially for women. Childcare spaces within businesses are a practice widespread in advanced European countries, which strengthens gender equality in the workplace and in the family and contributes to the well-being of working parents and their children.

Considering that family obligations are cited as the main reason for not participating in the labor market by 20% of "inactive" women aged 25-49, increasing the availability of childcare services could help increase women's employment. The "Neighborhood Babysitters" program, which has started operating as a pilot in 61 municipalities, has exactly the same objective and is in the phase of certifying the babysitters, so that they can then take care of babies for the families that will participate in the program.

italy

Family-friendly companies, which support work-life balance, are aware of the family responsibilities of their employees and strive to ensure this balance. In many European countries, including Italy, more and more companies are moving in this sustainable direction of balancing work and family time.

The first Family Audit certification was introduced in Italy in 2011. This is a management and human resources management tool available to public and private organisations that, on a voluntary basis, wish to certify their commitment to adopting measures to promote work-life balance for their employees. The *Agenzia del Lavoro* (AdL) grants subsidies to companies for the implementation of working time reorganisation projects aimed at favouring work-life balance and/or the enhancement of gender skills in the workplace.

Based on an analysis of company work-life balance policies and considering the impact by size of company beneficiary population, among Italian companies, we count as best practice:

Telecom Italia (Italy) TIM, which over the past three years (through the 'PLAN FOR TIM CITIZENS') has distinguished itself through inclusive business strategies and family and wellness services. Its plan has three main objectives

Work-life balance and shared parenting

On the issue of shared parenting, TIM has decided to double the number of mandatory paternity days to 20 (from the 10 stipulated in the 2021 Budget Law). Family services represent another pillar of TIM's corporate strategy for its employees. The aim is to improve the balance between work and family life. With TIM Summer, in particular, more than six thousand girls and boys each year have had the opportunity to participate in two-weeks stays choosing from more than 40 proposals in Italy and abroad, as well as various scholarships and access to national and international academies for employees' children. Other initiatives concern company crèches and reimbursements for the fees of other crèches, nurseries/babysitting services and the reimbursement of university fees and programmes to help and support children's education. In 2021, a number of innovations were introduced concerning the activation of specific paths to support study and school, academic and career guidance for employees' children. The experience of caring for parents and carers of frail or elderly family members has also been enhanced.

Luxottica has always stood out as a reference model of corporate welfare on the Italian scene with economic, health, educational and social assistance initiatives for employees and their families. Its innovative strength lies mainly in the active participation of employees in the programme and initiatives with tailor-made interventions that take into account the territory and the people involved.

Work-life balance and shared parenting

Luxottica's Family Care project, launched in 2010, has provided for a personalised listening and response to employees' work-life balance needs: extension of flexible working hours, conventions and financial contributions for crèches and summer camps, and an on-demand babysitting service that allows all employees to have a babysitter at their home for emergency situations in a very short time. Company crèches are outsourced and opened in agreement with the municipality, 30% of the places are reserved for company employees and the rest become a support service for the local area. Paternity leave is extended to two compulsory weeks remunerated at 100% and the 'baby week', i.e. a week's paid leave for employees' children's nursery and kindergarten placement, has been introduced. The so-called 'family job sharing' is a measure aimed at maintaining the family unit's income

capacity and encouraging the education of children, through the possibility for the employee's spouse or child to replace him/her for a limited period. The employee thus has the opportunity to take time off for training or seasonal work, or if unable to work, while allowing the unemployed spouse or child nearing the end of their studies to take their place in the company.

spain

The EFR Certificate

The EFR *(Empresa Familiarmente Responsable = Family Responsible Company)* certificate confirms that an organization has good practices that integrate concrete and useful measures for the family- and work-life balance of their employees. The certificate, which was developed by the Spanish foundation *Másfamilia*, has been adopted by more than 850 organizations around the globe and been recognized by the United Nations and by the Interreg Europe program as "Good practice" for promoting work-life balance management policies within companies, considering the needs of employees and offering organizations a series of guidelines to be more aware of the work environment they provide to their employees.

Flexible working hours and more spare time

The Spanish company Repsol has been numerously awarded for their family-friendly company culture. The company offers their employees to work from home and have flexible working hours based on planning and prioritization of tasks. They also have "time banks", which offer services that their employees would have to do in their spare time in order to give them more quality time to spend on other things. Additionally, they are committed to not send any emails or make any phone calls to their employees outside of their working hours.

sweden

Sweden is known for its strong emphasis on work-life balance, and as such, has several good practices to present that people in Sweden follow to maintain a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives. Here are a few of those best practices:

Flexible work arrangements: Many Swedish companies offer flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting, part-time work, and flexible schedules, which can help employees better balance their work and personal lives.

Generous paid time off: Swedish employees are entitled to a minimum of five weeks of paid vacation per year, which provides them with ample time to recharge and spend with their families.

Focus on health and wellness: Swedish culture places a strong emphasis on health and wellness, and many employers encourage their employees to take regular breaks throughout the day to rest, stretch, or exercise.

Support for parents: Sweden has a well-developed system of parental leave, which provides support for parents who need time off to care for their children.

Encouragement of hobbies and interests: Many Swedish employers recognize the importance of their employees having interests and hobbies outside of work, and they provide opportunities for employees to pursue these interests during working hours.

Work-life separation: Swedes are known for being diligent about separating their work and personal lives, which can help prevent burnout and ensure a better balance.