

Maternity leave as a beginning of own business



Blanka Lednická, today 34 years old, went to Brno office every working day. Job in leading international IT company amused her so much she wanted to return back to part-time work right after the birth of her child. "My boss declined my plan" Blanka says.

Soon-to-be-mother, awaiting her first child, didn't want to accept the thought her full job would be "only" child-care. "I didn't want to be dependent on my husband and I'm also very go-ahead person and I was afraid I would be bored during the maternity leave," she describes what she was thinking about six years ago. And what she saw among her friends and acquaintances, made her sure she must think of something: "Some girls around just became dumb during the maternity leave."

She didn't have to go far for an idea. She asked herself simple question: What else do I know than being a manager? Creating family trees. "I created a website before I left to maternity leave providing information about my offer. I had first customer in about ten days" she describes next events.

Day as a race

Reasons to start their own business after the birth of their children are the same, but in different varieties. Some mothers - as Blanka Lednická - can't imagine that they wouldn't do anything else than care for their children and home. Fear of impossibility to fit both maternal and business life is the next impulse. "Women know that 8 working hours, travel time and care for the family do a race from their days" states Mona Nechvátalová, head of Czech Women in Business Association.

Some women receive signals from their previous employers that return of mother is not welcomed. Part-time jobs are also not too often offered in CZ. Czech Republic has one of the worst positions in part-time jobs in European Union - European Committee study of 2013 showed that only 8,5 percent of women had part-time jobs, when European average is 32 percent. Women are also disqualified from the work market that they are on maternity leave with not only one, but often two children. And if they are at home, they have almost no chance to catch up in their professions.

Another evergreen is a fact that the parents have no place where to leave their children. There are too few places in the kindergartens sponsored by the state, those private are often too expensive and there are too few company kindergartens in CZ (there should be some improvement connected to the current law about child groups).

There is no surprise that young mothers start to think about how to be more free, independent - and they choose to begin their own business. They are allowed to organise their day due to their needs. "If the children are ill, I can stay home with them and work too," agrees Blanka Lednická, who gave birth to two another children in the first three years of her business. When she delivered her second child, she even moved her office in the maternal hospital, where she had her notebook with internet connection. Part of the parish books was already digitized so she could work from there.

Blanka also hit the best time - genealogy became popular around 2010. Many people wanted to find out where are they from and when had no time to visit archives. "Detective" services of the genealogists were in fashion. In 2012, when Blanka gave birth to third daughter, she had so many clients that her husband went to parental leave instead of her. Today Blanka lives in small village in Vysočina region and employs two women, both on maternal leave too. But she has no plans to enlarge the company. "Yes, I could hire more people, lead the company and have even higher income, but I won't do that. The part which is most amusing for me is the research itself - and I want to do it."