

Research, concepts and recommendations
for improving the financial well-being of
parents and beyond

**open
future
lab**

NAVIGATING PARENTHOOD

*A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY
TO ACT LONG-TERM*

***‘As the child grows, you too grow
and learn new things and find
out what you need’***

Quote from an interview with a parent

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WORDS FROM BORIS MARTE

The Open Future Lab has been initiated to continue what was started with the pan-European research project “Human-centered approach for increasing financial well-being of individuals and societies,” conducted in partnership by the University of Tartu and ERSTE Foundation. As a collaborative lab, it is set up to convert the assumptions and conclusions of that research into ideas and potential solutions by experimenting and playing with concepts and prototypes. This singular fresh database is its source for further investigations. In a creative Lab it’s all about questioning existing habits, analysing data, developing ideas and dismissing them again and starting from anew. Because the aim is big: Designing financial life beyond an existing reality in a new and different way – in the best case to discover new needs and opportunities in a rapidly changing world.

The Open Future Lab is driven by the radical openness for new answers. It works across disciplines and solution-oriented. Founded by ERSTE Foundation, it follows a human-centric approach to find out how to improve people’s financial lives.

As a first example, the Open Future Lab takes a close look at the fragile moment of starting a family in a changing world. In its initial report the lab explores how this life-changing moment can be turned beyond new burdens into a better financial life in the longer term.

Boris Marte

CEO, ERSTE Stiftung

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report explores how expecting and new parents navigate one of life's most transformative periods—juggling day-to-day demands and big-picture hopes for their children's future. By examining diverse family structures, we reveal that parenthood comes in many different forms and shapes. Whether single, co-parenting, blended, LGBTQ+ or multi-generational, each family faces unique emotional and financial pressures. What unites them is a shared desire for long-term security.

Our multidisciplinary research—spanning interviews with families, literature reviews, stakeholder mapping and solution concepts—highlights several key insights.

- **Early-stage parenthood is a pivotal window for long-term thinking:** despite overwhelming short-term demands, many parents are newly motivated to secure their child's future but often lack trustworthy guidance and tailored financial tools.
- **A supportive ecosystem is crucial:** coordinated efforts by policymakers, the financial sector, workplaces, health services and creative industries can transform parental stress into opportunities for sustained empowerment.
- **Financial well-being amounts to more than sheer numbers:** it directly impacts mental health, familial relationships and the ability to make meaningful choices.

We propose two solution concepts, **Bloom** and **Blossom**, illustrating how user-centred design can address both practical and emotional needs. From financial planning tools to interactive conversation starters, these ideas demonstrate how financial stability and well-being are inextricably linked. Additionally, we introduce **Boost Fund**, a child-centred, no-loss investment product model for banks or insurers that champions future-focused, community-driven investing.

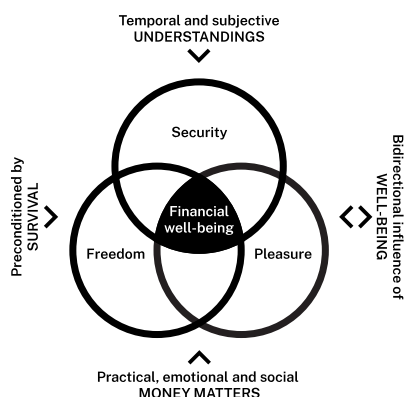
The report is organised into sections covering research foundations, real-world parental experiences, solution prototypes, and recommendations. Our goal is to spark discussions and encourage collaboration toward a more parent-friendly future. We aim to inspire the professional community by sharing human-centred research insights and design ideas that can be applied broadly by financial institutions, policymakers, educators, healthcare providers, employers, civil society organisations and creative professionals to benefit families and society as a whole.

ABOUT

open future lab

Open Future Lab is a curious, people-first, evidence-based and future-building research and design lab initiated by ERSTE Foundation. The Lab aims to address financial well-being not just as wealth but as security, freedom and pleasure that enable people to live meaningful lives. It serves as a collaborative social change agent and facilitator for exploring and designing financial life.

At the heart of our work is a deep commitment to transforming research into real change. The Lab builds on the findings of a ground-breaking three-year transdisciplinary, mixed-method research project titled “Human-centred approach for increasing financial well-being of individuals and societies”, jointly conducted by the University of Tartu and ERSTE Foundation¹. The research shows that financial well-being (FWB) isn’t just about the numbers in a bank account; it’s about feeling secure, having the freedom to make choices, and enjoying life with pleasure (see diagram below). Closely linked to overall well-being, FWB evolves over time and is influenced by social interactions and communities. The study also highlighted that people often wish they had learned about or reflected on financial decision-making earlier, underscoring the importance of long-term thinking — drawing on the past, present and future.



Triad of financial well-being.

Johan Skytte
Institute of Political
Studies, University
of Tartu and ERSTE
Foundation

But today, short-term thinking is deeply embedded in our world, with the pressure and desire to achieve quick gains affecting all aspects of life. Short-termism shapes everything from economic policy and societal structures to personal finances and mental health, undermining long-term development, sustainability and financial stability.

As populations age, healthcare, social services and pensions come under increasing stress, while shifting family structures and rising numbers of single-person households weaken traditional support networks. Many people lack financial security, living from pay cheque to pay cheque, and face heightened mental stress as a result. Rapid technological disruptions outpace conventional job markets, raise privacy concerns and fuel social polarisation, eroding the trust and collaboration that are essential for resilience. In this complex environment, overwhelming amounts of information — along with language barriers and issues of trust — generate further anxiety and make effective decision-making more difficult.

We believe that decisive action must be taken to confront these interconnected challenges. We need to inspire long-term thinking and craft solutions that bring prosperity and peace of mind, helping people build lives filled with financial security, freedom and pleasure. By engaging individuals, organisations and policymakers in a shared commitment, we can spark meaningful action and build resilience for the future.

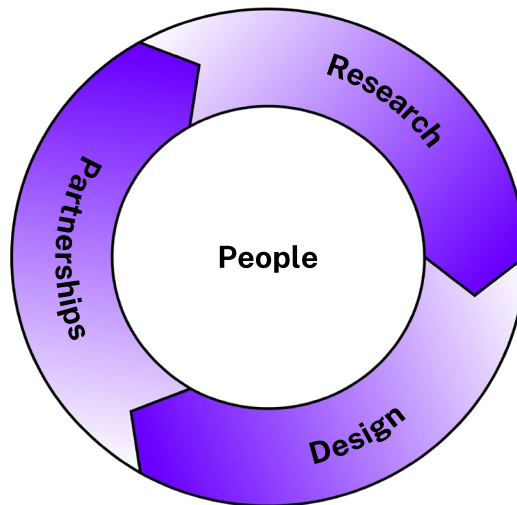
We challenge the status quo to create a more equitable future, bridging everyday experiences, academic insights and real-world applications. We drive people-centric, forward-thinking change across industry, policy and society by transforming research into practical strategies, recommendations and concepts. Our aim is clear: to inspire long-term thinking and action, foster financial well-being and autonomy, and help create resilient, inclusive communities where people have the freedom and pleasure to shape their own lives.



The flywheel of the Lab: building momentum for systemic change

Long-term thinking and action require us to bridge future and present, prepare for multiple possible scenarios, and actively shape society towards a sustainable and equitable future. We aim to drive collective, long-term action for enhanced financial well-being through research, design, partnerships and advocacy, proposing tangible and actionable steps to take.

This cycle encourages human-centric innovation and collaborative knowledge-sharing and reframes long-term thinking as self-care, empowering individuals and communities to achieve greater financial resilience and better financial lives.



Our self-reinforcing, people-centric flywheel integrates three key elements:

1. Research and exploration
2. Design and prototyping
3. Partnerships for transfer and collaboration

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS FOR FAMILIES: WHY FOCUS ON EXPECTING AND NEW PARENTS?



Quote from an
interview with a
parent

‘You start to realise the huge responsibility, given that from now on, everything you do will have an impact on your kid’s life and well-being.’

Becoming a parent is a transformative journey — a mix of joy, uncertainty and responsibility. From imagining a child’s future to navigating everyday tasks and expenses, new and expecting parents experience one of the most profound transitions in life. Significant behavioural changes take root during this deeply emotional period, particularly when parents receive practical and emotional support from their environment. Expecting and new parents are not just caring for a newborn; they make critical decisions for the family’s future while dealing with uncertainty and stress. Financial, emotional and societal pressures shape those decisions, often in ways that extend far beyond the early years. Yet these complex dynamics of preparing for and navigating parenthood remain underexplored. By investigating and understanding these experiences, we can design interventions, policies and support systems that don’t just address immediate needs but create lasting, positive change for families and future generations. We can begin to shape ideas on how to better support parents to make decisions and plan for both the short and the long term while swimming in an ocean of information and endless to-do lists. We can help them have meaningful conversations with the people they consider to be family that will make them feel less alone in doing so. And we can find ways to establish mechanisms that allow them to more effortlessly design the future financial life of their family.

Parenthood and financial well-being

Raising a child involves balancing immediate costs with future goals — often without sufficient guidance. This balance is not easy to achieve, leading parents to struggle not only financially, but also emotionally. Greater financial well-being often translates into the possibility to make life choices freely, and enjoy life without undue stress.

Quote from an
interview with a
parent

‘I generally don’t worry much about my finances. I’ve felt secure and have been able to scale up or down if needed. But now, with having to take care of a child, everything feels much more fragile. It becomes emotional in a way.’

When finances feel unstable, the stress ripples through every part of life, affecting mental health, relationships, and parenting itself. Helping families build financial stability early on creates a stronger, more secure foundation — fostering healthier relationships and lasting prosperity.

Embracing the evolving family unit

There's no single way to be a family. Parenting is only one possible aspect of it, and parenthood itself takes many forms, from single-parent and extended households to chosen families and beyond (see table below). In fact, 42 percent of children in the EU are born outside of marriage². This includes mothers and birth-giving parents who are single or cohabiting with a partner as well as those who are divorced, widowed, or living in a “common-law” or “de facto” union. Research reveals that the quality of relationships matters more for well-being than a family's particular structure³. Cultural and social changes — such as greater acceptance of LGBTQ+ families and co-parenting — reflect this broader shift. However, research has shown that LGBTQ+ families often navigate complex social landscapes that include stigma and legal challenges, which can affect their parenting experiences and family dynamics⁴. Additionally, we can see shifts in traditional gender roles: in highly gender-egalitarian countries such as those in the Nordic region, for instance, men already contribute roughly 40 percent of the housework and childcare, whereas in regions with lower gender equality — such as Southern and Eastern Europe — their participation still lags significantly behind⁵.

Therefore, imposing a singular, unified definition of family is neither practical nor desirable. Families are deeply personal and context-specific, shaped by culture, history and individual needs. To truly support families, policies and solutions must reflect the realities of diverse family structures, ensuring that every parent — regardless of gender, marital status, or background — has access to financial security and support. That is why, **whenever we mention “family” in this report, we include families of all shapes, sizes and structures.**

‘I think the privilege that we have to pursue our wish for a biological child as a same-sex couple is insanely neglected in society. So, from a society point of view and an institutional point of view, how do you pursue that dream? I felt super unsupported... There's not much knowledge around surrogacy processes. They're illegal in most countries, at least in Europe... The system doesn't support you because you have to shoulder all of the costs yourself. Nobody's supporting anything.’

Quote from an
interview

The many different kinds of families

Same-sex couples	Couples of the same sex who raise children, share responsibilities, and provide mutual support.
Married couples / domestic partnerships	Two committed adults who form the core of a family unit, sharing legal, emotional and financial mutual support to each other.
Co-parenting families	Parents who share childcare responsibilities without cohabiting or maintaining a romantic partnership, emphasising collaboration and support.
Intentional co-parenting	Individuals, often friends or relatives, who intentionally join forces to raise a child outside a traditional partnership, fostering shared parenting.
Queer co-parenting	LGBTQ+ individuals who collaborate to raise children, irrespective of their romantic relationship status, building supportive networks.
Chosen families	Groups of friends, allies and community members who create close bonds and offer mutual emotional and social support as an alternative family structure.
Blended families	Families that merge children from previous relationships with new parental figures, forming a unified household that includes step-parents and step-siblings.
Trans and non-binary families	Families that include one or more members who identify as trans or non-binary, reflecting diverse gender identities and experiences.
Polyamorous families	Families that engage in consensually non-monogamous relationships, forming networks of multiple partners and children and sharing support and responsibility.
Foster families	Families that provide temporary care and nurturing for children awaiting reunification or adoption, ensuring stability and support during transitional periods.
Single-parent by choice	Individuals who intentionally choose to parent alone through adoption, sperm donation or other means, independently raising one or more children with dedication and resilience.
Single-parent (separation or divorce)	Individuals who raise children independently following separation, divorce or similar circumstances, often managing varying levels of involvement from the other parent.
Childfree families	Couples or individuals who remain childfree by choice or circumstance, navigating distinct societal expectations and embracing alternative family dynamics.
Families with disabilities	Families that include one or more members with disabilities — physical, intellectual, sensory or neurodevelopmental — who may require additional care, support and advocacy to overcome social and financial challenges.
Adoptive families	Families established when adults legally adopt a child not born to them, fostering a strong sense of belonging and long-term stability.
Extended or multi-generational families	Households that incorporate grandparents, aunts, uncles or other extended relatives, collaboratively sharing responsibilities and resources across generations.
Grandfamilies (skip-generation families)	Families in which grandparents or other relatives primarily raise children, often as a result of circumstances affecting the biological parents.
Neurodivergent families	Families that include one or more neurodivergent individuals (such as those on the autism spectrum, with ADHD, dyslexia, etc.), who cultivate adaptive strategies and supportive environments characterised by understanding, creativity and resilience.

Empowering parents and families for long-term security

Family-related decisions arise from emotions, social norms and deeply held assumptions about what is achievable. Therefore, a systems-level perspective is essential — one that addresses both personal mindsets and the external supports that can shape behaviour. Short-term thinking, or present bias, often magnifies financial stress, making planning and investing in children’s futures harder. Economic strain undermines parents’ financial and overall well-being⁶ and can also affect child development⁷ and the parent-child relationship⁸.

Our goal is to start a conversation about the tools, resources and knowledge parents need to secure a stable and prosperous future for themselves and generations to come. This report provides evidence-based insights and proposes exploration paths to financial institutions, policy-makers, employers, civil society agents, and innovators, to find ways to bring meaningful change to the complex problems parents face.

NOTES ON METHODOLOGY



To truly understand the financial realities of parents, we adopted a multidisciplinary methodology, ensuring that our insights were both deeply evidence-based and genuinely reflective of lived experiences. Our approach brought together design science research, design thinking, and creative problem-solving as well as elements of systems theory and design, allowing us to explore not just what parents face, what parents face but also why and how we can create meaningful solutions. Thinking in terms of systems helped us understand the complex and often hidden connections between individual struggles, organisational policies, financial institutions and broader social structures. Design science helped us test and refine ideas, ensuring that the solutions we propose are not just theoretical but practical, relevant and ready for real-world impact.

Our research at a glance.

*Our study included **146 participants** from diverse backgrounds across 13 countries, engaged at various stages of the project (details in Appendix). We combined qualitative and quantitative methods, including:*

38 in-depth interviews with individuals and couples

2 focus group discussions

99 survey responses for validation

To bridge theory and everyday reality, we conducted both a thorough review of existing research and direct conversations with parents. Our literature review examined a broad range of perspectives— the theory of planned behaviour, economic and choice theories, joint decision-making, cultural perspectives on parenting, and intergenerational financial behaviours. We also drew insights from queer and feminist studies, recognising the importance of inclusive and diverse family structures. Beyond theory, we listened to parents. Through semi-structured interviews with mothers, fathers, and co-parents across nine countries, we gained firsthand accounts of the emotional and financial challenges of early-stage parenthood. Although our sample primarily consisted of women, with fewer male and queer voices represented, these personal stories made our research more grounded, human and actionable.

This kind of research that directly engaged parents was supported by different forms of desktop research. We used journey mapping to trace the paths to parenthood, identify the barriers they encounter, and map out key stakeholders, partnerships and support networks. We examined existing solutions across industries, identifying what works, what doesn't, and where opportunities for intervention or innovation exist. Through signals analysis, we monitored emerging trends in finance, technology and family policy, ensuring that the solutions we propose are adaptable to the ever-changing financial and social landscapes.

INSIGHTS FROM PAST, PRESENT,
AND POSSIBLE FUTURES

3



Learnings from existing research

Research shows that parenting is a continuous balancing act rather than a straightforward, optimisable process. It involves navigating financial realities, cultural expectations and the complexities of decision-making, all while adapting to shifting societal norms. By examining various theoretical frameworks, we gain a deeper understanding of how these factors intertwine.

What is “rational” behaviour?

Economic theories, such as those proposed by Gary Becker⁹, view parenting decisions as “rational” choices for maximising their benefits. This perspective has been widely adopted to show how financial aspects and parenting relate to one another. Studies indicate that higher family income and better access to resources and services such as early-childhood programs are linked to more supportive and enriching parenting practices¹⁰. On the other hand, financial stress can heighten anxiety and negatively impact parenting quality, which can contribute to cycles of disadvantage¹¹. Research also shows that financial habits, attitudes and decisions are passed down from one generation to the next, as parents, guardians or older generations directly or indirectly teach the younger family members¹².

However, the assumption that parents always make “rational” choices from a purely economic perspective overlooks the complex realities of everyday life. What may appear to be irrational behaviour may, in fact, be understood as entirely reasonable when we take into account the specific context comprising social, cultural and emotional aspects¹³. For instance, the Theory of Planned Behaviour highlights how “subjective norms” — an individual’s perception of the social pressure exerted on them by people who are important to them, such as family and friends — shapes choice-making¹⁴.

The broader contexts

Psychological theories have made significant contributions to the exploration of emotional aspects. Prospect Theory¹⁵, for example, highlights that people tend to fear financial losses more than they value potential gains, influencing how people manage risk. Moreover, research on joint decision-making — such as those based on the Dyadic Model — emphasise that effective communication and collaboration between family members are crucial for tackling complex issues, such as disease in the family¹⁶.

Perspectives that focus on the cultural aspects remind us that parenting practices are embedded within social situations. This is particularly evident in migrant families, where cross-cultural influences and differences shape financial decision-making¹⁷. It is also important to note that these “broader contexts” now include the digital environment that creates a flood of information that parents need to navigate¹⁸.

Parenting is not one thing

We must keep questioning our assumptions about what a family is. Feminist and queer theories challenge traditional family models by recognising diverse caregiving arrangements and questioning conventional gender roles¹⁹. From these points of view, family is not something determined by blood relations but something that people choose to build through mutual care. Care can take all kinds of forms and is a particularly important aspect for families including people with disabilities²⁰ or in need of informal care²¹.

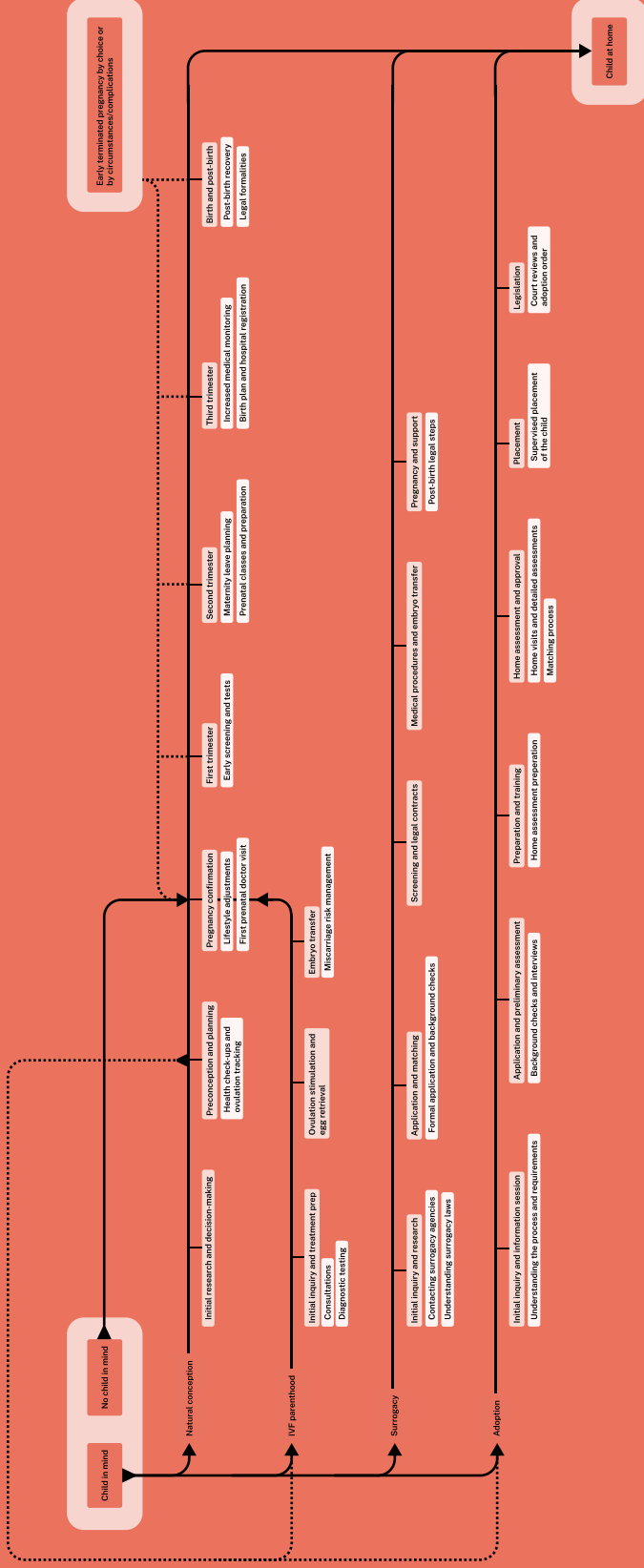
In light of these studies, **we see parenting as an intricate, multidimensional practice and process**. We believe that recognising this complexity is key to designing effective support systems and policies that truly foster long-term financial well-being and resilience.

Journeys to parenthood

The paths to parenthood are deeply personal and no two experiences are the same. Some parents experience smooth transitions, while others navigate unexpected challenges, medical hurdles or financial stress. Recognising this diversity, it is essential to develop flexible, inclusive solutions that reflect the many ways people become and are parents.

We have mapped multiple pathways to parenthood, including natural conception, assisted reproductive technologies, surrogacy, adoption and co-parenting. Additionally, we have outlined examples of key steps, timelines and dependencies within Europe. While this mapping does not encompass every possible route, it highlights the range of parental experiences and identifies critical points where support can make a difference.

Beyond these pathways, the emotional experience of becoming a parent is just as varied. Some parents find it easier to experience joy and stability, while others face significant stress or even trauma. Financial factors add another layer of complexity. People become parents with vastly different resources, shaping their readiness to think and act long-term. The financial factors are particularly present for those taking less conventional routes. For example, costs for assisted reproductive technologies vary widely across countries, often requiring families to seek loans or rely on extended family support. Surrogacy can be both expensive and controversial, reflecting diverse legal and ethical stances worldwide. These variations also affect when parents are most open to, and in need of, support.



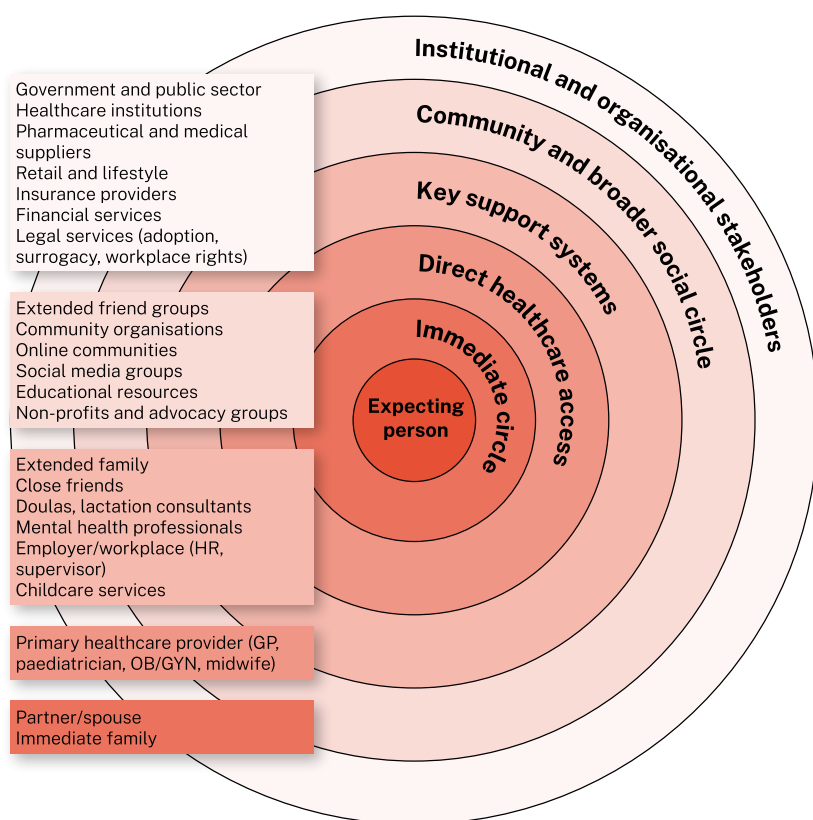
Some possible pathways
to parenthood

Parenthood ecosystem

As part of our research, we mapped the ecosystem surrounding parenthood. Although having a child is a deeply personal milestone, it occurs within a broader ecosystem of relationships, institutions and societal structures. Parents and caregivers interact with a wide range of stakeholders, each influencing the financial, emotional and practical facets of parenthood.

We grouped these stakeholders into several key categories, noting that geographic and cultural contexts may shape which actors are most relevant. Nonetheless, this broad framework helps illustrate how healthcare providers, employers, policymakers, financial institutions, educators, community organisations and extended family members all play interconnected roles in shaping parenthood experiences.

Effective solutions must account for these interdependencies, align incentives, and integrate diverse stakeholder perspectives. By doing so, we can create holistic, sustainable support systems that genuinely benefit parents, caregivers and children.



*Relationships, institutions
and societal structures
surrounding parenthood*

Landscape of existing tools

We mapped and analysed various industry solutions to better understand the tools available to parents and parents-to-be. These can be grouped into two broad categories — financial and non-financial — and further organised by the child’s age. Financial solutions focus on managing expenses, savings and long-term planning, while non-financial solutions address healthcare, education, community-building and child development. We can pinpoint crucial support moments and identify gaps where additional resources are needed by looking at each category across various life stages — from prenatal care to early and later childhood.

Below is an overview of the primary solution categories relevant to our research, along with illustrative examples. This list is not exhaustive but serves as a starting point for deeper exploration.

	Category	Examples of common features		
Financial apps	Couples' banking and joint accounts	Joint spending and savings for couples		
	Accounts and debit cards for children	Smart parental controls on children spending	Learning about money management by usage (pocket money)	
	Family-oriented financial propositions	Custodial savings and investment accounts	Allowance and task management	Financial literacy and educational tools
Non-financial apps	Pregnancy and prenatal care tracking	Fetal development (milestones and insights)	Educational resources for parents-to-be	
	Baby tracking and health monitoring	Sleep cycle tracking	Feeding cycle tracking	
	Developmental support and educational resources	Cognitive play-based developmental exercises	Online parenting classes	Children's behaviour changes and leap tracking
	Parental organisation and time management	Location tracking and children security and safety	To-dos, tasks and grocery shopping lists	Shared calendars
	Parental self-care and mental health	Self-reflection and meditation tools	Community building and peer-to-peer networks	

Types of existing apps available for parents and parents-to-be

Financial apps

Couples' banking and joint accounts

These tools help partners manage shared expenses, savings and financial goals. Traditional banks often offer joint accounts with spending controls, while fintech platforms offer digital-first solutions with expense tracking and automated savings.

- **One**²²: Creates shared and individual sub-accounts for better budgeting.
- **Zeta**²³: Specialises in joint finances with expense tracking and goal-setting features for couples at different life stages.

Accounts and debit cards for children

Designed to build financial responsibility early on, these solutions allow parents to oversee spending while encouraging children to develop smart money habits.

- **GoHenry**²⁴: Offers a prepaid debit card paired with financial education tools.
- **Revolut <18**²⁵: Provides similar features with linked parental supervision.
- **Till Financial**²⁶: Enables collaborative family banking, where parents set savings goals and monitor spending.
- **George Junior by Erste Bank**²⁷: Provides a child-friendly digital banking app for ages 0–14 with parental control and easily understandable financial education.

Family-oriented financial propositions

These platforms aim at teaching financial habits, managing allowances, and planning for long-term security. Many incorporate automated investing and goal-based savings.

- **Greenlight**²⁸: Combines a debit card with parental controls and financial education features.
- **Acorns Early**²⁹: Automates savings by creating custodial investment accounts for children.
- **Goalsetter**³⁰: Offers goal-based savings and financial literacy resources.
- **Crew**³¹: Provides a digital banking experience to handle allowances, savings, and spending.

Non-financial apps

Pregnancy and prenatal care tracking

These apps guide expectant parents with pregnancy tracking, medical advice, and planning resources.

- **BabyCenter**³² and **Pregnancy+**³³: Offer weekly pregnancy updates, baby development insights and expert-led parenting content.
- **The Bump**³⁴: Features an interactive foetal development tracker and tailored guidance for expecting parents.

Baby tracking and health monitoring

These apps focus on postnatal care, log feedings, diaper changes, sleep patterns and other important information, enabling parents to track their infants' health.

- **Huckleberry**³⁵: Specialises in sleep tracking and personalised schedules for newborns.
- **Baby Tracker**³⁶: Provides customisable dashboards and syncing across devices for co-parenting convenience.

Developmental support and educational resources

These platforms link developmental psychology with practical activities.

- **BabySparks**³⁷: Suggests daily, age-based exercises to foster motor and cognitive skills.
- **Wonder Weeks**³⁸: Explains developmental “leaps”, helping parents anticipate behavioural shifts linked to brain maturation.

Parental organisation and time management

Parenting apps in this category streamline scheduling, tasks and responsibilities.

- **FamilyWall**³⁹: Consolidates calendars, shopping lists and secure communication in one platform.
- **My First Five Years**⁴⁰: Offers expert guidance on early childhood milestones and builds parental confidence.

Parental self-care and mental health

Recognising the emotional toll of caregiving, these apps promote mindfulness and community support.

- **Headspace**⁴¹ and **Calm**⁴²: Provide guided meditations tailored to stressed or overwhelmed parents.
- **Peanut**⁴³: Connects users with local parenting groups to combat postpartum isolation.

Emerging trends and opportunities

Emerging trends in the parenting sector increasingly focus on innovative technologies and more holistic support. One prominent shift is the growing influence of advanced tools like artificial intelligence (AI). AI-powered tools can, for example, analyse a baby’s crying patterns to diagnose potential concerns such as colic. However, these advancements also raise important questions about data privacy and parental autonomy. At the same time, augmented reality (AR) is making early inroads with prototypes that generate virtual “growth charts” based on genetic data. Another development involves “whole-family ecosystems”, in which a single app can integrate diverse services and aggregate data for paediatricians, teachers, and even extended family members.

Alongside these technological advances, parents continue to seek robust financial solutions that help them manage both immediate and long-term responsibilities, opening opportunities for innovative budgeting, saving, and investing platforms. Finally, the need for comprehensive support remains a key priority: from booking doctor appointments and finding age-appropriate recipes to hiring babysitters and managing emotional well-being, parents juggle countless tasks every day. The most effective solutions will combine practical guidance with emotional reassurance, helping parents feel more confident and supported.

Signals guiding the future for families

Parenting is never static—it requires continual adaptation to a changing environment while actively shaping the future. As families navigate increasing uncertainty, they must adjust to evolving financial, environmental and societal challenges. By anticipating these shifts, we can help create a future where families feel empowered despite the challenges ahead. In this section, we outline a number of signals that reflect significant shifts in technology, society and demographics that have an impact on how people live, work and connect.

Turbulence across multiple dimensions

Families today face increasing uncertainty across economic, environmental and social fronts. Financial volatility, geopolitical instability, health crises, and climate-related disruptions complicate long-term planning. Prolonged exposure to high-stress situations can lead to “crisis fatigue” and “decision paralysis”, i.e., mental and emotional exhaustion that makes it harder to respond to new challenges. Furthermore, rising loneliness and social isolation amplify the need for stronger support for families⁴⁴.

Climate change and family life

The effects of climate change span physical, mental and financial concerns. 2024 marked Earth’s hottest year on record, highlighting escalating climate pressures. Climate change will increasingly affect where and how families live. More frequent natural disasters—such as floods, wildfires and hurricanes—pose financial risks, with insurers raising premiums or refusing coverage in high-risk areas. Furthermore, climate change impacts mental well-being, with 59 percent of people aged 16-25 reporting being extremely worried about it⁴⁵.

Europe’s evolving demographics

Urbanisation, delayed parenthood and an ageing population are reshaping family structures. As birth rates remain below replacement levels and life expectancy rises, generational dependencies reshape work, caregiving and financial security. Projections indicate that the EU’s fertility rate will remain below the 2.1 replacement level, rising from the current 1.41 to only 1.58 by 2100⁴⁶. Meanwhile, the EU’s old-age dependency ratio is expected to double by 2050⁴⁷. This, combined with rising caregiving responsibilities⁴⁸, will likely increase financial pressures on families.

The rise of AI and rapid tech growth

Advancements in AI and other emerging technologies are reshaping industries, economies and daily life. AI-driven parenting tools, automation in household management, and digital financial services are transforming how families make decisions, manage resources, and plan for the future. While these innovations offer greater convenience and efficiency, they raise concerns about data privacy, algorithmic bias and the erosion of

human connections. They also have the potential to reshape caregiving roles, shifting responsibilities between humans and technologies in ways not yet fully understood.

Assisted reproduction and evolving families

Technological advancements and regulatory shifts are playing a pivotal role in reshaping parenthood. Innovations like egg freezing, fertility treatments and surrogacy provide new opportunities for individuals and couples to have children. Meanwhile, genetic screening and advancements in reproductive health allow for greater control in family planning. Regulatory differences across Europe have facilitated the rise of fertility tourism. Artificial wombs⁴⁹, which are currently being tested on animals, may redefine societal norms and practices surrounding reproduction. These changes will shift parenthood from something unexpected to a more planned, deliberate choice.

Work life and housing

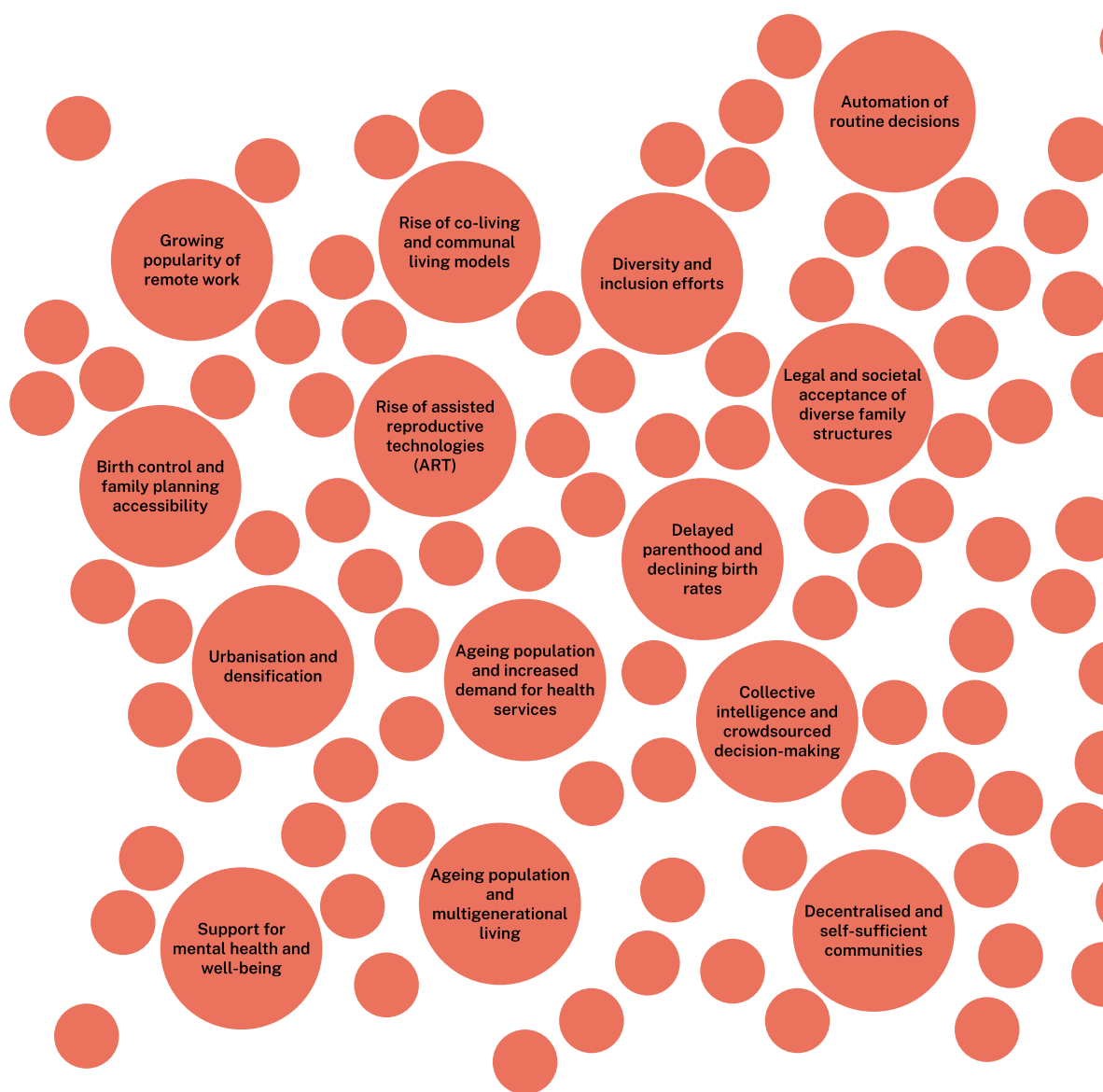
The widespread adoption of remote work has reshaped family life, enabling families to move to areas offering a better quality of life or more affordable housing. At the same time, continued urbanisation is driving up demand for housing in cities, with 75.7 percent of the EU population living in cities in 2023⁵⁰, projected to rise to 84 percent by 2050⁵¹. This will likely lead to smaller living spaces (e.g. micro-apartments), more shared living models, and heightened real estate pressures. In parallel, the formation of co-housing and self-sufficient communities hints at a shift toward more resilient, affordable lifestyles. While large-scale off-grid living remains niche, small eco-conscious communities⁵² that integrate renewable energy, local food production, and shared childcare resources are emerging. For instance, co-operative housing initiatives offer affordable living where residents collectively own property and often adopt a sustainable lifestyle. Moreover, technological advancements like solar power, water filtration and waste management could further enable sustainable, community-driven living that reduces reliance on urban infrastructures.

At the same time, “brain drain” — the large-scale emigration of highly skilled workers from one region to another — continues to influence family life and work dynamics across Europe. Currently, one in ten people in the EU lives in a region facing the challenge of brain drain⁵³. As skilled professionals migrate westward in search of higher wages and better career opportunities, their departure places additional economic strain on their home countries while increasing housing demand in Western European cities.

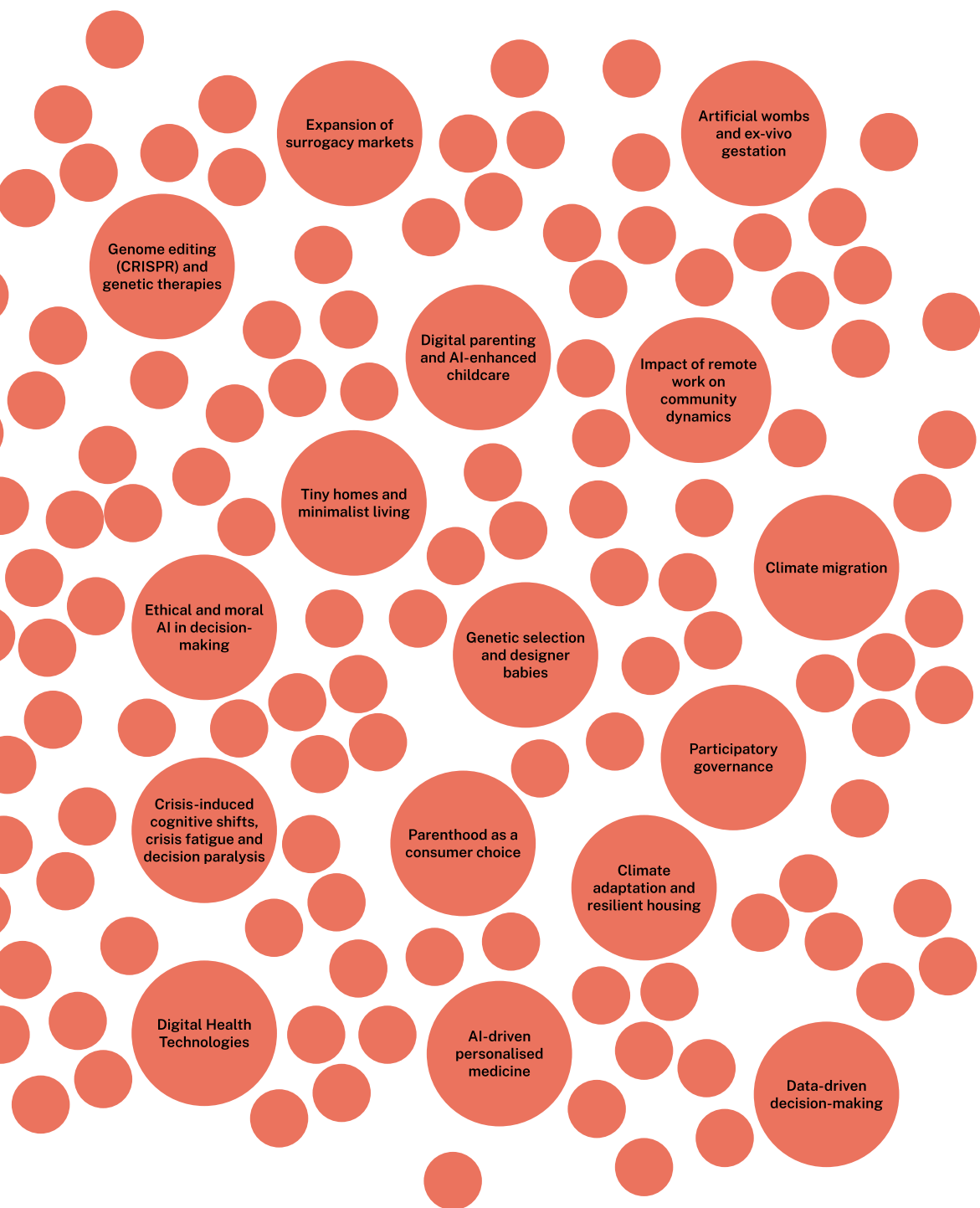
Futures taking shape

These changes will profoundly shape the future of family life. They will influence societal norms, family structures and financial security in ways both predictable and unexpected. They will put pressure on our support systems and the financial sector. Decreasing birth rates, an ageing population, and increasing caregiving responsibilities will strain support systems. The growing frequency of climate-related events will reshape

insurance policies, putting financial pressure on families in high-risk areas, potentially making home insurance unaffordable or unavailable. Additionally, delayed parenthood and advancements in assisted reproduction will impose further financial pressure on families as the process of having children itself can become costly. What's important to remember is that the future is not set in stone. Together, here and now, we are significant actors with the ability to shape what's to come.



Signals of a change that is beginning to shape the future of families



WHAT PARENTS TOLD US: INSIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEWS

4

The background is a vibrant blue with a complex, wavy, and distorted pattern. This pattern appears to be a digital manipulation of a photograph, showing faces and human figures that are heavily warped and stretched, creating a surreal and abstract effect. A large, white, sans-serif number '4' is centered in the middle of the image, overlapping the distorted patterns.

To better understand the realities of new and expecting parents, we conducted 28 in-depth interviews across nine countries (Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Sweden and the United States) with parents from diverse backgrounds—single parents, same-sex couples, migrant families, and those facing financial hardship or raising children with health issues. Despite describing moments of deep fulfilment and purpose that helped them grow, parents also navigate a world that feels more expensive, isolating and unpredictable than ever.

“It’s not about me anymore”

A central theme emerging from interviews is the **loss of personal agency** that parenthood entails. Many parents describe how their own needs, ambitions, and even identity take a backseat. *“It’s not about what I want anymore; it’s about making sure the baby has everything she/he needs first. I have to make sure of that before I consider my own needs.”*

This isn’t just about sacrifice — it’s about feeling as if your life is no longer your own. Parents describe a shift from making intentional decisions to simply reacting to endless demands. *“When you don’t have the time, that’s the hardest part. You don’t have the necessary time to explore ways to save or invest money for the long term.”*

On top of this, many parents express a feeling of physical and mental exhaustion. This is usually made worse when parents compare themselves to others. *“You see parents who seem to have it all together, and you wonder — am I doing something wrong?”* Social comparisons, particularly between families living in different countries with different living standards, make parents even more uncertain about whether they’re doing the right thing or doing enough.

Gaps in support

While some parents benefit from strong support networks, many feel alone in the experience. Family and friends can be a crucial source of help: *“That’s how we got the pram, that’s how we got the baby cot. Everyone helps where they can.”*

However, migrant parents, single parents and non-traditional families are more likely to lack a reliable support system. *“My family lives far away, so when you are on your own, you need to rely on yourself for everything.”* **Without a safety net, every decision, challenge and financial setback falls entirely on their shoulders.**

Beyond personal networks, workplaces and institutions often fail to provide the necessary support. Many parents feel let down or even discriminated against. *“From the moment I became pregnant, I felt like I was being bullied. When I left, they told me I had merely been tolerated.”* Instead of receiving guidance, parents often feel abandoned to figure things out on their own.

“I know I should save, but how?”

Financial stress is a constant companion. Parents want to save for the future, invest in education and build stability, yet many feel stuck in survival mode. *“We definitely want to start saving somehow . . . but this doesn’t happen overnight.”* Moreover, many parents struggle to grasp the future costs related to raising a child. One parent echoed many other voices, saying that *“parents only gradually find out, for example, how much childcare costs in the city where you are raising your child. . . . What are the expenses when the child reaches three to six years, or how much does it cost if he goes to study in another region or even abroad? If I saw this information in some sort of calculator . . . then I’d know better how much I should set aside monthly.”*

Fear of making the wrong financial decision can lead to inaction. *“I don’t know about investment accounts, how they work, or anything like that — no one has ever explained or offered them to me.”* Many regret not having started to invest or save sooner, with lack of knowledge cited as the main barrier. *“If only I had had access to this information when I was young,”* one parent remarked. It is also important to note that for heterosexual couples, finance-related issues often prompted them to revert to traditional gendered roles, with men being seen as solely in charge of financial aspects.

Many parents also mentioned an inability to trust institutions in general, and financial ones in particular, which prevents them from seeking financial advice. Even when they do, they often leave feeling more confused than before. Parents feel rushed, dismissed, or even taken advantage of rather than supported.

Breaking the silence

One major takeaway from the interviews is that parents often don’t talk openly about money. **Money largely remains a taboo topic, even in close relationships.** *“I don’t talk to people about money, and I don’t let anyone get*

into my finances. It bothers me.” Among couples, parents often think of it as adding emotional weight to an already difficult situation. “We don’t discuss [financial matters] because now we have to prioritise our basic needs. It would stress me out unnecessarily.” Yet when these conversations do happen, they can make a difference. One interviewee even mentioned how the interview itself felt beneficial: “I’m finally talking to someone. To an adult, no less.”

Many parents also expressed a need for clear and accessible financial information to help guide these conversations and decisions. A centralised, easy-to-understand resource could help parents feel less lost, more informed, and more confident in engaging in dialogue and making decisions together.

A readiness to think and act long-term

The interviews reveal that the loss of agency that comes with early stage parenthood isn’t just about financial uncertainty—it’s about feeling trapped in a cycle where parents are too tired, too unsupported, and too overwhelmed by short-term needs to act on their long-term aspirations and dreams.

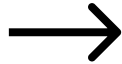
At the same time, early-stage parenthood is imbued with a remarkable readiness to think and act long term. Many parents and those on the brink of parenthood light up when envisioning their children’s future—a future marked by the best education, a stable financial footing, and a life full of opportunities. Early-stage parenthood emerges as a powerful juncture for embarking on the journey of long-term financial well-being. It offers a unique chance to engage with innovative investment approaches and establish secure, educational financial strategies that not only benefit children but also serve as an introduction to broader financial opportunities and literacy.

This period presents an unparalleled opportunity for the financial sector, policymakers and other stakeholders to connect with families at a moment when hope and forward-thinking are at their peak. By providing clear options, practical knowledge and supportive resources during family planning and pregnancy, early-stage parenthood can be transformed into a launching pad for enduring financial well-being. **The solutions that are provided must be inclusive, culturally sensitive and aligned with parents’ values to truly resonate with their needs and aspirations.** Empowering parents to embrace long-term planning while finding joy in the small moments in the present enriches not only their own future but also lays a robust foundation for improved financial security for generations to come.

TWO EXPLORATION PATHS

5

The concepts presented here have been sketched and tested as evidence-based ideas — but they are far from final products. They serve as inspiration for innovative approaches to empower parents and parents-to-be, translating research insights into possible practical tools that address real-world challenges.



Blossom: let the money conversations flourish

The challenge: money talk is taboo

Our interviews revealed that while some parents feel comfortable discussing finances, others see money as a private or even taboo subject. Many fear that financial discussions might feel too personal or lead to conflict. This echoes research showing that emotional, psychological and cultural factors make money talk complex⁵⁴.

Let's make money talk accessible and engaging

In response, we set out to design a game that would spark financial conversations in an engaging, accessible way. Our first attempt was a strategic board game. However, testing revealed that its focus on winning and competition hindered meaningful dialogue. Consequently, we pivoted our approach and, after several workshops, created **Blossom — a conversation starter designed to make financial discussions both accessible and engaging**.

Blossom in play

Blossom is designed for two players — two people who share child-care duties. Players take turns drawing a **question card** and reading it aloud. Each question follows the format:

“Who is more likely to...?”

Both players choose one of their **voting cards** — “Me”, “You”, “Both of us”, or “Neither of us” — and reveal their choices:

- Matching answers connect the card to the branch side, symbolising a shared understanding.
- Different answers connect with the trunk side, representing misalignment.

The goal is to build a “tree” together, as a visual representation of the strength of their conversation. An “end card” can be included to signal when to stop and reflect. By **turning money talk into a structured yet playful experience**, Blossom helps break down barriers, making discussions easier and more meaningful.

Testing and feedback, learnings

In addition to internal testing — including tests run by team members at home with their partners — we tested Blossom with three pairs of heterosexual parents residing in Vienna, representing diverse age groups (25–54) and hailing from four different countries. Their children ranged in age from 12 months to 19 years. Five of the six participants rated their financial literacy as moderate, while one rated it as high. The group was highly educated, with four individuals holding master's degrees and two holding doctorates.



Who is most likely to tear up over baby clothes that don't fit anymore?

Who is more likely to turn a toy-shopping trip into a lesson on "Do we really need this?"

Who is more likely to hand the kid a piggy bank and call it their "first step toward responsibility"?

Across the three tests, parents found Blossom **engaging and thought-provoking**.

Quotes from testing

‘I really felt engaged... I was paying attention.’

‘It was fun to play. It made me realise that we need to do more thinking, especially together, about this issue, and to go about it proactively rather than in a reactive manner.’

Additionally, participants appreciated the **tactile, non-digital format** and its symbolic design, though some felt the visual style was somewhat foreign.

‘I like that it’s something to feel, not just another screen.’

‘Beautiful, like colourful chewing gum.’

‘I liked that you made the difference between the root — when we are misaligned, everything starts from the root, and when we are aligned, we have a full tree, and it blossoms.’

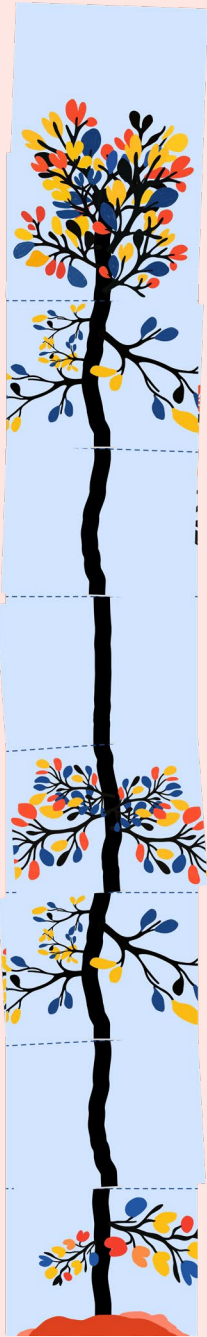
Further, while some participants clearly understood the purpose, others were unsure of the end goal.

‘A conversation initiator.’

‘It’s good that it makes two people discuss what can be improved or cannot be improved.’

‘Where are we going with this? What is the goal?’

‘Sometimes I’m not sure which strategy to pursue with this game, like, should I answer honestly, or should I try to win the game?’



Regarding the relevance of individual questions, some participants found some questions “hard to resonate with”, and requested “more specific, even bolder questions”. Further, many couples highlighted a lack of connection between individual and reflection questions.

‘They were like random questions, random reflection questions.’

‘It’s hard for me to see how the reflection questions relate to this specific question.’

Despite these challenges, overall, participants valued Blossom as a conversation starter but suggested refinements for deeper engagement and clarity.

Looking ahead

Developing Blossom has been an iterative process. In order to enhance the game, there is a number of possible improvements that could be made:

- **A stronger connection between reflection and main questions** would help to move along the discussion.
- **Difficulty levels or progressive question tiers** would allow parents to start light and go deeper.
- **Optional resources or facilitation tools** would help hesitant parents feel more supported after playing.
- **Translation into other languages** would allow people to have a deeper understanding of each question in their mother tongues, fostering a more personal connection.
- **Expand the game to include extended family and trusted friends**, fostering inclusive and supportive discussions across diverse family structures—even those where caregiving responsibilities are not directly shared.

By refining the flow, clarity and depth of the questions, Blossom can become an even more effective catalyst for meaningful financial conversations among parents. Testing also revealed that developing Blossom further in collaboration with (future) parents would enhance both the quality of the questions and the overall flow of conversations. We just got started—if you share our excitement about bringing Blossom to life, let’s join forces. We are eager to share our insights and experience to help take it to the next level.

Bloom: a digital companion for navigating parenthood

Delivering clarity and support

As our research has shown, parenthood is one of the most rewarding experiences—but also one of the most overwhelming. Between managing daily tasks, planning for the future, and filtering through endless information online, parents often struggle to find clear, reliable and supportive guidance.

Bloom is a conceptual exploration, imagining a trusted digital companion that could offer a holistic solution to organise, inform and empower parents throughout their journey. Whether it's simplifying parental leave paperwork, exploring ways to set meaningful savings goals, or visualising how parents could effortlessly track milestones, Bloom investigates ideas that, hopefully, will bring clarity to the chaos and help parents regain a sense of control.

‘I think the biggest challenge is not being sure whether you are doing things right. Expert tips and the option to consult experts would be a big plus. Some support would go a long way to mitigate the sense of isolation.’

The challenges

Through our interviews and research, we identified two major struggles faced by parents:

- **The loss of agency.** Many parents feel like they've lost control over their own lives. Their personal goals, financial independence, and even their sense of identity take a backseat to the immediate needs of their child. The overwhelming flood of responsibilities makes it difficult to think and act long-term, especially when time and energy are in short supply.
- **Gaps in support, trust and information.** Parents need trustworthy information—but also emotional support. Yet, many feel isolated, unsure where to turn as they try to navigate complex bureaucratic systems and a sea of information on their own.

From challenges to a concept

With these challenges in mind, **we asked:**

- How might we help parents feel more in control of their lives?
- How can we help parents feel more confident so that they can deal with their short term tasks and act on their long-term aspirations at the same time?
- How do we ensure parents feel supported, not judged?

In developing Bloom, we followed a research-driven, user-first process. We conducted workshops with designers, researchers and tech specialists to explore solutions that are both innovative and practical. Using insights from these workshops, we mapped out user personas (see figure below) which formed the basis for brainstorming features, prioritising key functions, and sketching out initial ideas. This led us to develop a concept for a digital tool.

The solution: a parent-centred app

Bloom is devised as a one-stop solution, combining planning tools, expert-backed advice and emotional support in one intuitive platform.

Key features that matter to parents:

- **Interactive timeline:** helps parents track both short-term tasks (like babyproofing) and long-term goals (like planning for a child's education).
- **Parental leave calculator:** simplifies complex policies, helping parents understand leave options and financial implications specific to their location.
- **Savings circles:** enable parents to collaborate with family and friends to set shared financial goals, from baby gear to college funds.
- **Digital keepsake:** turns milestones, exchanged messages, photos and voice messages into a beautiful, auto-generated digital scrapbook.
- **Personalised guidance:** a curated feed of trusted parenting advice, based on a parent's unique circumstances and needs.

Each feature was conceived with simplicity, transparency, and usability in mind. The features offer built-in suggestions for discussion among the people that are part of the journey as well as clear action points, directly guiding users from getting the needed information to having conversations and to action.

User personas



Emily (30) Single parent, first-time mom to a 3-month-old baby.
Goals: Manage stress/anxiety of early parenthood, gain confidence in parenting and family planning decisions, and get long-term career and financial advice.
Pain Points: Feeling isolated, overwhelmed by parenting information, unsure about trusted sources, difficulty planning long-term amid newborn care.



Sarah (32) & Ben (34) Expecting parents, first child in three months.
Goals: Clear financial planning including savings, learn best practices and newborn recommendations, gain confidence as future parents.
Pain Points: Overwhelmed by financial/logistical planning, emotionally unprepared for life changes, worried about balancing work/home/future responsibilities.



Lina (28) & Omar (30) Immigrant parents with a 2-year-old daughter, recently moved countries.
Goals: Establish financial stability and support child's future in a new country.
Pain Points: Language barrier, unfamiliar social systems, lack of local network, balancing cultural identity with new community integration.



Alex (35) & Jordan (33) Queer parents, adopted a 6-year-old son (Leo).
Goals: Inclusive and safe environment, addressing unique LGBTQ+ parenting challenges, building strong supportive community.
Pain Points: Facing discrimination/judgment, struggling to find inclusive resources, navigating adoption/family dynamics, social isolation.

bloom



Your Partner in Parenting

Bloom empowers new parents to make today's tasks manageable and future dreams present.

Why Bloom?

Take control of your family's journey with our **easy-to-use guide**. Whether it's your child's first steps, their first day at kindergarten, picking up a new language, or discovering a fun hobby, Bloom is here to support you every step of the way.

Our app highlights **key moments** and offers **tips to help you prepare**, so you can focus on creating memories instead of worrying about what's next.

Zoom in to tackle today's priorities or **zoom out to plan for the future**. With Bloom, you'll feel ready for every stage — emotionally, practically and financially.

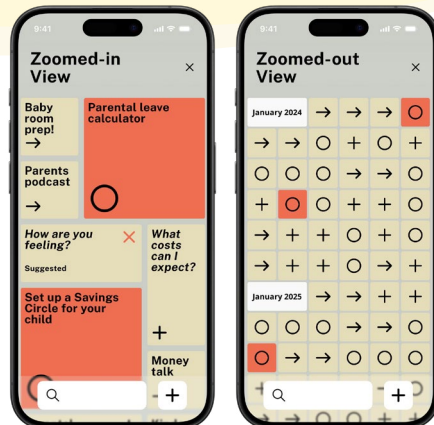
From First Steps to Big Dreams, All in One Place

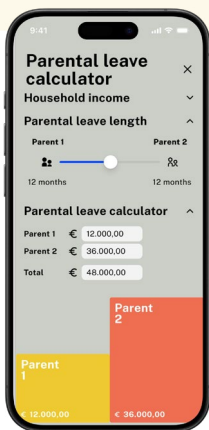
1

Parenthood is a journey of milestones — some you plan for, others may surprise you. Bloom's interactive timeline brings clarity to the chaos, helping you prioritise today's tasks while preparing for tomorrow's dreams.

Get a clear and focused view of your day with the **zoomed-in view**, where you'll find the tasks and topics that need your attention today. Switch to the **zoomed-out view**, and watch everything mapped over time: milestones related to your chosen topic are highlighted in the same colour, giving you a bird's-eye view of your journey.

It's like connecting the dots of your parenting path, helping you see progress and priorities at a glance, all while staying on top of what truly matters.



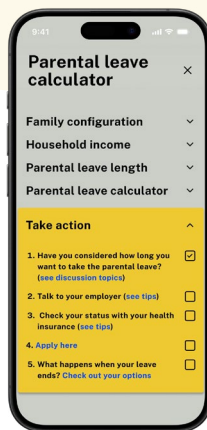


2

Parental leave made simple

Parental leave can be overwhelming — figuring out how much time to take, balancing responsibilities, and staying financially secure. Our smart calculator helps you quickly understand your leave duration, financial impact and key considerations — tailored to your unique situation.

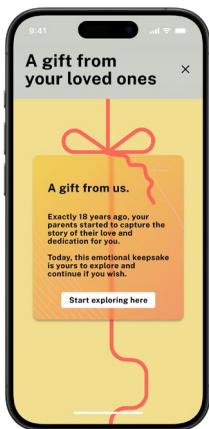
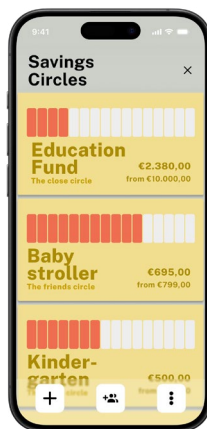
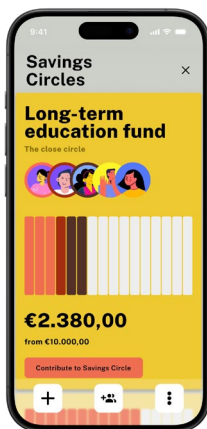
Gain clarity within minutes and start meaningful conversations with your partner, employer, or anyone else involved to navigate this important chapter together.



Build Your Child's Future Together

3

Bring your village of friends and family together to invest in your child's future — one goal at a time. Whether it's a first stroller, a dream vacation or a college fund, you can create a wishlist of shared goals and invite family and friends to chip in, or they can start a new circle.

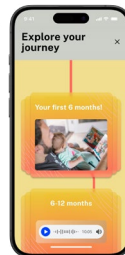


4

A Timeless Treasure

Every laugh, every step, every moment — Bloom turns your family's journey into a gift that lasts a lifetime. Bloom automatically transforms the actions and achievements you track and the words you exchange into a beautifully designed digital keepsake. You can also add photos and voice messages that capture laughter and firsts, creating memories your child or children can feel long after they've grown.

It's a gift to everyone involved that captures the story of your love and dedication and will remind your child of the experiences you shared and the lessons you learned together.



Testing and feedback, learnings

To ensure Bloom met real needs, we developed a landing page that showcased the app's key features and tested it with parents through focus groups, individual interviews, and a survey. In total, we spoke to 14 parents and collected 99 survey responses to gather responses and insights.

Overall feedback was very positive: many participants said they would use — or wish they could have used — the app during pregnancy.

Quotes from testing

'I think it would help to have some benchmarks for these objectives, like let's say, baby stroller or education fund. I think it would help if you'd have like, an average amount?'

Across the interviews, some key themes emerged:

Parents need clear guidance in money matters. They value financial planning tools that work seamlessly — easy to use yet robust — while also requiring reassurance to feel confident about their future, such as understanding how much to set aside for school.

'I'd love to know deadlines for applications for school, but also for the vaccines or funding. The government funds a certain number of hours, but it's really difficult to find out when you're supposed to apply.'

They also crave practical and organisational help that frees up time. Parents want tools that manage administrative tasks — like reminders for deadlines or quick access to official paperwork — so they can spend more time being present, whether they prefer an all-in-one parenting app or a streamlined, finance-focused tool.

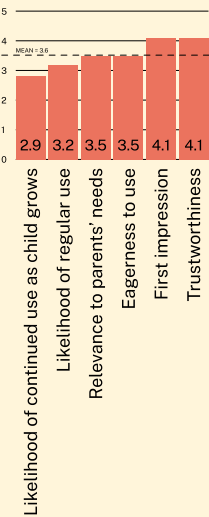
'I would trust the app more if I knew the information was sourced from reliable, verified experts or institutions rather than user-generated content.'

Trust and security remain non-negotiable. Many are reluctant to share sensitive data like financial details or family photos, so robust data protection is essential, ideally with trusted institutions such as banks supporting or being integrated into the solution.

‘It would be helpful if other people could join, like grandparents, but also to have privacy settings so not everyone sees everything. Maybe something like a grandparent setting and a friend setting.’

Finally, support networks are crucial. Parents benefit from community-driven features like shared savings goals that help them feel less isolated, and digital keepsake options provide a meaningful way to capture and share the journey with those involved in their child’s life.

Survey results



Survey ratings largely mirrored the positive feedback from the focus groups (see chart on the left). Participants rated their first impression of Bloom at 4.1/5, finding it welcoming, and trustworthiness also scored 4.1/5. Relevance earned 3.5/5, with expecting parents showing more enthusiasm than current parents—suggesting the app is more beneficial early in the parenting journey. Meanwhile, 3.2/5 for likelihood of regular use indicates that long-term engagement may depend on features remaining valuable over time.

Looking ahead

With Bloom, we set out to imagine a way to make parenting feel less overwhelming and disorienting so that parents may enjoy being present with their children. Beyond offering clarity, **Bloom is about creating a space where reflection leads to action and meaningful connections**—whether that’s through financial tools that support future goals, reminders that ease the mental load, or features that strengthen our bond with the people we choose to call family.

This concept is just one possible approach. We hope that our research sparks further ideas on how to allow parents to feel more in control, more supported, and less alone in their journeys. We encourage various stakeholders to explore Bloom and its associated insights—whether by developing it into a standalone app or integrating these learnings into their existing applications and platforms. Reach out to us; we’re happy to share our findings and materials to help you advance more easily, quickly and thoroughly.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS

6

Drawing on our research and conversations with stakeholders and experts, we identified opportunities for diverse groups — from industry and policymakers to the creative sector and beyond — to improve the financial well-being of parents. The complex problems faced by parents require systemic and simultaneous change on multiple fronts. Therefore, the broad ranges of recommendations we offer are not meant to be seen in isolation. We suggest them as actionable steps for key stakeholders. By working together, we can create meaningful support systems that benefit today's families and future generations.

Financial sector

How can financial institutions better serve parents, families and other key stakeholders? The recommendations below offer actionable strategies for product development, communication, policy advocacy, and alignment.

Family-centric packaging, communication and services

Many parents find it difficult to identify with the communication styles and products offered by financial institutions, which often overlook diverse family structures and the specific concerns of new or expecting parents. To build greater trust and help parents feel seen and supported, financial institutions could benefit from better understanding the realities and needs of modern families to help parents more confidently plan for their family's future.

Key ideas:

- **Distinct branding for families:** develop product bundles with family-friendly visuals, language and design — distinct from generic offerings.
- **Inclusive view on family:** recognise the diverse range of family units. Ensure marketing and product content reflect different paths to parenthood, cohabitation models, and blended or LGBTQ+ families.
- **Targeted messaging:** address parents' real concerns, from financial literacy about investments to preparing for new expenses. Launch omnichannel campaigns to reach families at this significant life stage.
- **Prenatal engagement:** capitalise on the pre-delivery period when expectant parents are actively planning and dreaming about their child's future, making it an ideal moment to introduce family packages before

the challenges of newborn care arise.

- **Support for assisted reproductive technologies:** offer low-interest loans, flexible repayment plans, and expanded insurance coverage for fertility treatments to account for diverse paths to parenthood.

The European assisted reproductive technologies market grew to €9.3 billion in 2023 and is projected to reach €13.4 billion by 2030, with a 5.3% annual growth rate.
Horizon Grand View research⁶¹

Empower long-term thinking and action

Many parents experience a “present bias”, focusing heavily on immediate needs rather than long-term planning. Financial institutions can address this tendency by better understanding parental concerns and offering accessible tools and incentives that encourage early, sustained investment. By clearly connecting today’s financial choices to tomorrow’s outcomes, institutions can help families feel empowered to invest confidently in their long-term future.

Connecting the present and future through financial products

- **Scenario-based planning:** provide interactive tools that allow parents to experiment with different contribution levels and visualise compound growth over time.
- **Gamification and milestone tracking:** celebrate progress to foster ongoing commitment and highlight incremental success.
- **Digital financial coaching:** offer personalised insights tailored to family-specific goals, clearly demonstrating how today’s actions yield tomorrow’s benefits.

Only 24% of EU citizens have or have had investment products such as funds, stocks, or bonds.
Eurobarometer⁶²

Investment products for risk-averse parents

Many parents hesitate to invest because they perceive it as risky or complicated. Helping parents better understand the long-term benefits of investing, along with how risks decrease over time, can encourage them to start early and feel more confident about their financial future.

- **Better long-term investment options:** financial institutions should develop and promote well-structured, long-term investment products tailored to risk-averse individuals. These offerings should prioritise stability while helping parents build wealth over time, as longevity is the most effective way to mitigate market risks. A good example of this approach is Flatex AT, which offers a portfolio of long-term investment ETFs that can be acquired for a very small fee, making investing more accessible and cost-effective.
- **Visualised growth potential:** using clear infographics and progress charts can make investment concepts more tangible, demonstrating how financial growth unfolds over time and showcasing the power of compounding returns.

Only 38% of EU respondents trust investment advice from their bank, insurer, or financial advisor, while 45% explicitly do not.
Eurobarometer⁶³

Democratising generational wealth

Long-term financial security should be within everyone’s reach, not just the wealthy. Interviews show that many parents already think carefully about giving their children the best possible future. Financial institutions can build on this natural motivation by offering products and tools that encourage parents to adopt cross-generational thinking and action, helping families secure lasting financial well-being.

- **“Family heritage fund” concept:** make multi-generational wealth-building accessible through structured asset transfers, estate planning and educational tools.

Build a seamless financial ecosystem for families

Collaborative “family alliance” experience

Our research revealed that families operate within a vast ecosystem of stakeholders, with family and friends playing especially important roles. This dynamic could be better reflected in the financial sector by making saving and investing for the child’s future more open and less private. Additionally, by redefining the concept of a gift—not just toys for the present but something that holds significant value for the future—we can create a lasting impact, making it possible to give investments as a meaningful gift.

- **Dedicated child accounts:** provide secure, digital accounts open to multiple contributors.
- **Goal-based contributions:** allow supporters to allocate funds for education, travel or milestones.
- **Automated reminders and scheduling:** set up routine deposits to ensure consistent support.

Transforming gifting into long-term financial security

Turn routine gift-giving into long-term financial empowerment by making investment accounts a standard part of celebrations. This approach helps overcome hesitancy among families and turns everyday gifts into enduring investments that secure a child’s financial future.

- **Seamless gifting integration:** allow family and friends to deposit directly into a child’s investment account for birthdays, holidays and milestones.
- **Incentives for early investment:** provide fee waivers or small bonuses for gift-funded accounts.
- **Make it tangible:** accompany each contribution with collectible stickers or tokens to engage children.

In 2023, among people born in the EU, 32% had one and 42% had two foreign-born parents.
Eurostat⁶⁵

Pioneer bold, future-focused financial strategies

Borderless financial solutions for global families

As remote work and global mobility are on the rise, families need seamless financial solutions. All signals indicate that this trend will not only persist but also expand in the coming years.

- **Multi-currency accounts and tax-efficient transfers:** facilitate seamless financial transactions for mobile families and automate tax declarations regardless of the country of residence or investment location.
- **Emergency fund access:** offer rapid funds availability across jurisdictions.
- **Localised onboarding assistance:** help families navigate regional banking and regulatory requirements.

Over 40 million digital nomads exist worldwide. More than half of whom live with a partner or are married.
Demandsage⁶⁴

Boost Fund: a model for a child-focused investment product

The Boost Fund is a proposal for a generational goodwill programme— a child-centred investment product that preserves the principal while covering fees through investment gains or tax incentives, rather than imposing high upfront charges. By focusing on security and sustainable growth, financial institutions can establish their brand as a trusted, forward-thinking leader for the next generation.

Securing a prosperous future for young generations requires financial tools that promote long-term security, sustainable growth, and inter-generational wealth. Our research shows that while many people want to save, they often feel overwhelmed or don't know where to start. Parents, in particular, are willing to invest in their children's future but lack accessible, tailored solutions. Generational stories of lost savings and failed investments have further deepened fear and risk aversion, discouraging proactive financial planning.

To regain trust from modern families and to support them, financial institutions must offer transparent, long-term investment products. **The Boost Fund** provides a pioneering, child-focused investment model that builds financial security from an early age and fosters a culture of longevity-focused investing — continuing into adulthood and even private pension savings.

This forward-thinking programme can position the financial institutions that take up the idea as the champions of next-generation financial well-being before competitors catch up.

Core components:

- **Safeguarded, no-loss principal:** alleviate parental fears by ensuring every euro deposited can be withdrawn by the child in the future when reaching adulthood — removing one of the biggest barriers to investing.
- **Low minimum contributions:** enable families from all income levels to participate with just a few euros per month.
- **Sustainable, long-term investing:** offer a well-diversified portfolio designed for long-term growth, where risk is mitigated through a longevity-based approach. By focusing on sustained investments over time, families can build wealth securely while avoiding the pitfalls of short-term market fluctuations.
- **Community and gifting features:** introduce “gift links” that allow relatives to contribute on the occasion of birthdays and milestones.
- **Parent-led, child-owned:** let parents manage the account until the child reaches adulthood, ensuring early capital formation and promoting financial literacy.
- **Fair and shared-gain fee structure:** deduct fees only from realised returns, ensuring families keep the majority of their earnings. This approach fosters a true partnership between financial institutions and investors, prioritising long-term growth without excessive fees cutting into profits.
- **Public-private partnerships:** collaborate with government programmes to offer starter grants or child support tie-ins, enhancing your community impact. Advocate for the introduction of tax incentives and benefits as well as automated contributions from non-income-related streams.

Benefits for the institution:

- **Brand differentiation:** stand out with a people-first approach that resonates with socially conscious consumers.
- **Long-term customer loyalty:** engage families at pivotal life moments, creating enduring relationships and cross-selling opportunities.
- **Future talent pipeline:** invest in today's children, who will become tomorrow's customers and employees.
- **CSR and ESG alignment:** meet your corporate responsibility and ESG goals with a product that appeals to responsible investors.

562 million people
(6.8% of the global
population) owned
digital currencies in
2024, a 34% increase
from 2023.
Triple A⁶⁶

Purpose-driven currencies for focused financial outcomes

Emerging technologies, such as blockchain-based currencies, programmable financial products and alternative financial models, offer new opportunities to help families more effectively manage and plan their finances. Blockchain and programmable financial products, for example, enable targeted savings toward specific goals, such as education or health care. Alternative financial models, including local or community-based systems like time banking⁶⁵, also hold promise, but currently remain mostly regional. Expanding awareness, supporting the development of these models, and fostering interregional and international networks would further enhance their potential benefits.

Policymakers

The future is often viewed as being separate from the present, yet today's actions produce our tomorrows. Effective policies and frameworks help families address their immediate needs while also building long-term financial well-being. Support from policymakers—national governments, supranational organisations, regulatory authorities—is crucial to strike this balance. By designing policies and frameworks that integrate future-oriented financial planning and by creating environments that nurture innovative, family-tailored services, we can equip families with the necessary tools to thrive both now and for generations to come.

Integrate long-term savings and investment into social policy

Humans naturally experience present bias; however, our research confirms that families aspire to think and act with a long-term perspective in mind. Policies can effectively address this tension by introducing measures such as automatic programmes or incentives making it mandatory to set aside a portion of money for the future, helping families overcome this natural bias and secure lasting financial well-being for future generations.

- **Automatic allocation:** link a portion of monthly child support to investment funds, ensuring funds are available when the child reaches adulthood. This would help facilitate long-term planning across generations. Parts of the fund can be converted into pension savings later, if not required for more pressing needs while entering adulthood.
- **Tax incentives and matching:** introduce tax incentives and contributions' matching mechanisms to encourage families to invest consistently over time, making long-term financial planning effortless, rewarding and beneficial; ideally, this support would begin automatically from birth, with starter grants or matched contributions, helping families build financial security from the earliest stages of parenthood.

Establish national frameworks for families' financial well-being

Many countries have national frameworks for financial literacy, but these can be further strengthened by incorporating guidelines specifically designed to support parents. Integrating relevant academic research and policy insights can help to develop a more comprehensive and effective approach.

- **Family-centric financial guidelines:** set standards for designing and promoting family-focused products to include diverse paths to parenthood and family structures.
- **Public-private partnerships:** launch accessible, safe and supportive long-term saving and investment options.
- **Early financial education for lifelong impact:** integrate financial literacy into early childhood education, as research shows that having caregivers who teach children to plan ahead and be reflective has a positive impact on the children's future financial behaviour⁵⁶. Storytelling and interactive games in kindergarten can lay the foundation for responsible financial behaviour, fostering long-term financial security.
- **Mandatory financial education for parents:** integrate financial literacy into mandatory pregnancy check-ups and prenatal preparation as part of a national framework. This ensures families are equipped to make informed financial decisions early on, fostering long-term financial stability for future generations.
- **Expertise enhancement:** enrich policymakers' understanding of financial well-being, financial literacy and behavioural insights—along with how these elements interconnect—to enable the development of more effective and supportive financial policies for families. This can be achieved through targeted workshops, training, and knowledge-sharing initiatives designed specifically for policymakers.

Foster supranational collaboration and cross-border financial inclusion

Cross-border collaborations between governments and the financial industry are essential for creating scalable and effective financial solutions. By sharing best practices, harmonising regulations and fostering innovation, these partnerships can enhance financial inclusion, stability and long-term economic well-being on a global scale.

- **Harmonise regulations:** call for and work with bodies like the EU to align cross-border financial products, services and markets.
- **Exchange best practices:** share successful policies and adapt them to local contexts.

Encourage innovation through regulatory sandboxes

Innovation is key, and implementing solutions aimed at changing behaviours is a complex task. Therefore, the need for testbeds is crucial, where solutions and their effects can be thoroughly mapped and assessed.

- **Innovation hubs:** allow fintechs to experiment with family-centric services under controlled regulatory conditions.
- **Grants for R&D:** provide funding for accessible, long-term solutions to families' financial challenges.

Strengthen legal protections for diverse family structures

Not all families have equal access to support today, and these disparities can create lasting ripple effects across generations. Financial and legal systems often fail to accommodate modern family dynamics, making everyday life more complicated. Ensuring equitable support for all family types is essential — not just through equal rights and protection, but also through practical tools that foster financial transparency and ease of management.

- **Expand legal recognition:** update family law to acknowledge cohabitating, LGBTQ+, blended and non-traditional guardianship models.
- **Inheritance and financial protections:** adapt tax, inheritance and parental leave policies for inclusive family setups.
- **Support systems for departure:** ensure legal safeguards for individuals needing financial security to leave a household if necessary.
- **Recognise diverse paths to parenthood:** ease the financial burden of assisted reproductive technologies through subsidies, insurance coverage and tax deductions to ensure accessibility and affordability for all.
- **Facilitate shared financial management:** enable simple-to-open shared accounts (e.g., N26's joint accounts in 21 markets⁵⁷) to make parental life more transparent and manageable.

The adaptation of women to their new role in traditionally male activities in the public sphere and the acceptance of their new roles as equal or primary earners has outpaced the adaptation of men to traditionally female roles as care providers. World Economic Forum⁵⁷

Improve work-life balance

Research shows that women have been quicker to adapt to financial life than men have to caregiving. Support needs to focus on both areas to ensure balanced progress.

- **Flexible work policies:** advocate for hybrid and part-time arrangements that support parents in caregiving roles.
- **Financial safety nets for caregivers:** offer income protection or pension credits for parents taking extended leave.
- **Strengthen parental leave policies:** promote equitable, non-transferable leave to share caregiving responsibilities and reduce gender disparities.
- **Support parental career progression:** develop return-to-work programmes, upskilling initiatives, and employer-sponsored childcare to minimise career penalties for parents.

As people become more worried about their financial situations, their work performance falters. Stanford Social Innovation Review⁶⁹

... infants who have warm and caring parents do better in the long run. Yet our culture tends to downplay the role of men as caregivers. But science tells us that men are biologically prepared to be parents. Scientific American⁶⁸

Creative collaborations

Financial information is often technical, abstract and overwhelming, making it difficult for parents to engage with complex financial planning topics while juggling the daily joys and challenges of family life. Art and creative expression can bridge this gap, transforming financial research into engaging, tangible experiences that speak to real-life concerns. Research has shown that artistic approaches in science communication improve understanding and emotional connection, making information

more relatable for non-expert audiences⁵⁸. A playful approach has also been shown to be beneficial to families. Numerous studies indicate, for example, that when families participate in play, it enhances emotional resilience and mitigates various mental health issues in children, while also improving overall well-being⁵⁹.

This is why we call for creative collaborations to turn research into meaningful, real-world experiences. Instead of presenting abstract data, we encourage a focus on personal, community-driven narratives that resonate with parents' everyday realities. This can empower parents to visualise, reflect, and plan confidently for their families' futures.

Are you an artist, designer, illustrator, storyteller, or multidisciplinary creative mastermind interested in making financial research more accessible? We invite you to collaborate with us on projects that reimagine financial life through creative expression. We seek to connect artists, researchers, and community stakeholders to develop impactful, family-centred experiences.

Key objectives

- **Empower through engagement:** create interactive experiences so parents can naturally explore financial concepts.
- **Tailor to family realities:** address priorities like long-term saving, education costs and day-to-day budgeting.
- **Leverage digital innovation:** simplify complex information through data visualisation, interactive installations, and storytelling.

Process and approach

- **Collaborative partnerships:** unite researchers, artists, designers and community groups to co-create accessible, relevant content.
- **Adaptable projects:** design immersive exhibitions or digital storytelling that can be scaled across platforms and locations.
- **Open dialogue:** spark conversations among parents and stakeholders about financial well-being, encouraging them to share their strategies among each other.

Inspiring examples

- **Interactive exhibitions:** prompt discussions on the future of parenting and the evolving nature of money.
- **Hands-on installations:** let parents simulate financial scenarios, showing how small, regular actions can yield significant returns.
- **Digital storytelling:** highlight real-life journeys of parents, emphasising both challenges and successes.

By embracing collaborations and developing innovative experiences, the creative industry can transform financial research and insights into accessible, impactful solutions that empower parents and parents-to-be to make informed decisions for their families' future.

Miscellaneous: other areas for action

Civil society, employers, the healthcare sector and educational organisations all play critical roles. These stakeholders can help create supportive environments where parents feel financially secure, informed and empowered.

Employers

- **Normalise parental leave:** encourage all employees, regardless of their gender identity, to take parental leave, by implementing equitable policies that support caregiving roles for all parents.
- **Offer meaningful financial benefits:** include salary-linked savings programmes, financial counselling, and budgeting tools in employee packages to empower people and families to manage their finances more effectively.

Healthcare sector

Families grow within an ecosystem where various actors play key roles. One such actor is the healthcare sector, with natural touchpoints before, during and after family building.

- **Integrate financial well-being into routine care:** embed financial conversations into routine check-ups, such as child health appointments, before financial stress escalates. Successful programmes like Healthier Wealthier Families can be scaled.
- **Leverage early intervention:** use healthcare touchpoints to refer families to financial support resources.

Educational organisations and initiatives

Many parents expressed regret about not having learned more about key financial concepts earlier in life, yet they also struggle with how and when to pass on this knowledge effectively to their own children.

- **Incorporate financial literacy in parenting preparation:** incorporate money management, self-efficacy and awareness of potential financial abuse into parenting classes and workshops.
- **Provide accessible resources:** provide clear, relevant resources for families to start financial conversations.
- **Start earlier:** financial conversations can begin as early as age 5-7, when children are able to grasp basic concepts like saving, spending and the value of money⁶⁰. At this stage, parents can introduce simple ideas like saving coins in a piggy bank or discussing the concept of earning money.

The Healthier Wealthier Families (HWF) initiative — successfully implemented in Sweden, Australia, and permanently in Scotland — connects parents with financial counselling through child health services. Healthcare professionals initiate open discussions about finances during routine child health appointments. They identify families at risk and refer them to appropriate financial support services, ensuring no family faces financial difficulties alone.

Glasgow Centre for Population Health⁷⁰

Further research avenues

Although our study included a diverse set of participants from multiple countries, it remained predominantly focused on women in heterosexual relationships and offered limited representation of men, single parents and queer parents. Moreover, our research did not capture the unique cultural and social nuances outside the European contexts we examined. Future research should focus on greater participant diversity and geographical reach to ensure more inclusivity and a deeper understanding. These future directions should complement an awareness of the complexities of parenting that must be continuously explored. There is no single answer to what it means to have a child, what people feel like they are gaining or sacrificing in the process of becoming a parent. The answers to these questions and the nuances will continue to change as society and the ecosystems surrounding parents also inevitably change. This awareness will help strengthen evidence-based approaches that inform product and service design, policy development, educational programmes, and robust support systems for every family, so that we can establish mechanisms for not merely coping but thriving.

Suggested areas for exploration

- **Workplace dynamics:** investigate how diverse parenting experiences intersect with organisational policies.
- **Financial conversations:** assess the sensitivity and frequency of money discussions in various demographics.
- **Inclusive experiences:** conduct studies focused on men, single parents, queer parents and under-researched groups to identify specific gaps.
- **Cultural and geographical nuances:** examine how parenting practices vary across diverse cultural backgrounds and global regions to capture a fuller picture of family dynamics.
- **Behavioural studies:** conduct studies focused on the psychological, cognitive, emotional and social factors that influence the financial behaviour of parents.

CONCLUSION



Parenthood is an extraordinary journey filled with profound emotional, financial and social changes. Expecting and new parents stand at a unique crossroads: despite short-term pressures, they also begin envisioning the long-term future of their children. And all parents are different. Recognising the diverse, evolving realities of today's families is crucial; a one-size-fits-all approach will not work on the multi-faceted shapes of today's families, ranging from co-parenting and same-sex couples to blended and multi-generational households.

Our research reveals that parents often grapple with a loss of agency, feeling weighed down by day-to-day demands while struggling to plan for the future. This tension reflects broader social realities like financial stress, persistent gender inequalities in caregiving, and underexplored paths to parenthood. Equally important, many parents do not fully trust traditional financial institutions or find them lacking in solutions, pointing to a critical gap in both communication and product design.

Through qualitative and quantitative methodologies, we revealed key insights: families need flexible, inclusive tools that help them navigate both the logistical and emotional aspects of parenthood. Practical aids — like streamlined digital platforms, conversation starters or financial planning products — can alleviate immediate burdens. However, meaningful change also requires systemic support: employers that value parental leave, healthcare sectors that recognise the financial strains, policy frameworks that promote family-friendly programmes, and creative collaborations to demystify financial topics.

It is clear that robust collaboration among different sectors can significantly ease the weight parents carry. Human-centred product design holds immense potential for transforming the experience of parenting. In particular, fostering trust is paramount, whether through guaranteed no-loss investment solutions for children's futures, or via non-profit partnerships and innovative government policies that reduce barriers to receiving support.

Looking ahead, we call for both immediate and forward-thinking action. We urge the financial sector to develop accessible, transparent and collaborative products that guide parents along their financial journey; policymakers to create frameworks that value long-term family well-being; and creative practitioners to spark innovative ways of engaging parents with vital information. Further research is also needed to deepen our understanding of underrepresented family contexts, cultural nuances, and the specific needs of queer, migrant and lower-income parents.

Above all, our findings emphasise that parenthood is not just about survival — it is about growth, joy and building a secure future. By combining empathy with evidence-based design and strong cross-sector collaboration, we can create more inclusive, empowering ecosystems for families at all stages, ensuring they have the tools, resources and knowledge to thrive now and for generations to come.

COLLABORATING WITH OPEN FUTURE LAB

At Open Future Lab, we believe that shared knowledge, real-world applications and creative expression are the keys to sparking meaningful change. Our vision with this project is to empower families and communities by turning research insights into practical, real-world solutions — and we're eager to work with you to make that happen. We are committed to opening access to our research and methodologies, freely sharing our insights to drive societal benefit. Whether you are a fellow researcher, industry leader, creative professional, civil society representative or policymaker, we invite you to join us on this journey of collaboration and innovation.

Here are some of the ways we can collaborate:

- **Knowledge sharing:** we're excited to share our research findings and concepts to support your projects and advance societal well-being.
- **Presentations and workshops:** we can offer tailored sessions designed to spark discussion and inspire practical solutions within your organisation, network or community.
- **Research collaborations:** let's explore joint research projects that push the boundaries of innovative solutions through shared expertise and resources.
- **Real-world applications:** we welcome partnerships where our ideas are implemented in practical settings, hoping that others will take the lead in piloting these concepts for measurable impact.
- **Idea exchange and thought leadership:** we are open to joining forums, roundtables and conferences to shape the future of long-term financial well-being together.

If you are interested in partnering with us — whether to co-create, support creative expressions or develop new research initiatives — we'd love to hear from you. Together, we can work towards building financial empowerment and a brighter future for generations to come.

Visit our website at www.openfuturelab.org for more information, or drop us a line at hello@openfuturelab.org.

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APPENDIX: SAMPLING

Exploratory individual interviews

Validation exercise	Participants	Countries covered	Geographical coverage
Individual interviews	13	5	Austria, Slovakia, Romania, The United States, Sweden
Round 1 (higher financial literacy)			
Round 2 (self-assessed lower financial literacy)	15	7	Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia
Total unique	28	9	

Bloom concept validation

Validation exercise	Participants	Countries covered	Geographical coverage
Quantitative survey	9	7	Austria, Hungary, Serbia, Czechia, Croatia, Romania, Slovakia
Focus group (in person)	4	4	All living in Austria, but are from Serbia, Austria, Hungary and Mexico
Focus group (online)	5	3	United Kingdom, Kosovo, Austria
Individual interviews	4	2	Austria, Romania
Total unique	112	10	

Blossom concept validation

Validation exercise	Participants	Countries covered	Geographical coverage
Couple/partner interviews	6	4	All living in Austria, but are from China, Portugal, Romania or Austria. 1 couple aged 45–54, 1 couple aged 25–34, and 1 mixed-age pair (45–54 and 35–44).
Total unique	6	4	
Total people engaged	146		

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"The research is full of fresh ideas on how expecting and new parents, no matter where they live, can benefit from user-friendly solutions like "Bloom" and "Blossom", which address financial challenges while inspiring them to think bigger about their children's futures. I love how it highlights the "Boost Fund", offering a no-loss approach to child-focused investments — truly democratising generational wealth and ensuring that families across cultures can build a more secure tomorrow."

- **Ara Abrahamyan**, *independent board director and advisor for digital leadership*

"Becoming parents brings many changes. The topic of finances is full of conflicts, uncertainties, and ambiguity for parents. This report not only enriches the discourse with practical insights but also offers ideas and concepts for real-world application."

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"The Open Future Lab provides bright tools to alleviate the stresses of one of life's biggest endeavours: starting and raising a family. Its proposal combines resource sharing with innovative technologies to build a community of more informed parents and caregivers."

- **Tanya Selvaratnam**, *author of Assume Nothing and The Big Lie*

"This report offers valuable insights into one of life's most significant questions: navigating the challenges of early parenthood. It not only provides a comprehensive overview of research on the topic but also presents practical and inspirational ideas ready for adoption by practitioners."

- **Zoltan Bakay**, *ERSTE Foundation*

"This research is a great starting point for understanding how financial stability and well-being intersect in early parenthood. I appreciate the thoughtful approach to diverse family structures and financial challenges. I'm curious to see how the Lab will evolve and continue contributing to the biggest challenge — encouraging long-term thinking when it comes to finance. And what better way to start than by focusing on new parents, supporting them in securing the future of their most important investment — their child?"

- **Christine Bachler**, *Erste Group*

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