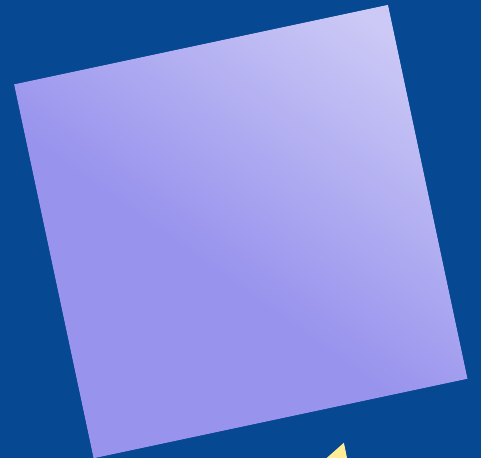


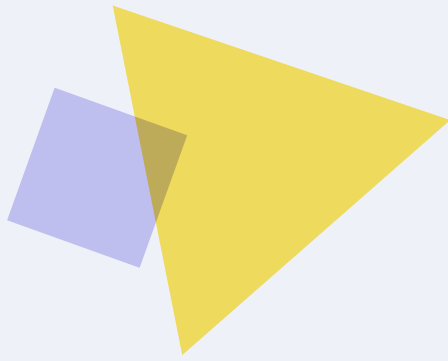


 **A Fair
Start?**

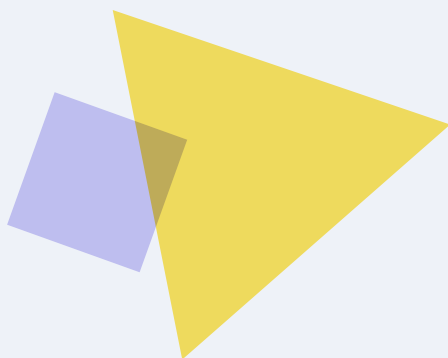
World Class

Country Profiles





Country Profile: AUSTRALIA	
Types of Provision:	Early Years Funding:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Long day care: most commonly used, taking children from 0 – 6 years. ■ Preschool: from age 4 in most states. ■ Family day care. ■ In 2019, over 85% of children were enrolled in private institutions. 	<p>As part of the universal access to preschool, the Commonwealth government has committed to providing \$1340 (approximately £714) per child to attend quality, affordable preschool. This money is provided to states and territories, who are then responsible for setting out costs of preschool to parents. In 2018, expenditure on ECEC was 0.57% of GDP.</p>
Ages Covered:	Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years:
1 - 5 years	1 ^a
State Provision:	State Subsidy:
<p>The Universal Access National Partnership (2018) ensures all children have access to 15 hours of preschool each week (600 hours per year), regardless of location or personal circumstances. It is subsidised by the government but is generally not free.</p>	<p>The government subsidises private childcare directly, up to 90% of costs dependent on income. The Child Care Subsidy, introduced in 2018, subsidises the cost of approved childcare for children aged under 13, with the amount each family receives depending on income and activity level. Recognised activities, for the purposes of receiving a subsidy, include: paid work, paid or unpaid leave, volunteering, training/education and active job-seeking. Subsidies are provided directly to the ECEC provider, rather than to parents.</p>
Low-income Parents:	Provision of Support within the Community:
<p>Low-income parents receive a higher childcare subsidy. From July 2023, the subsidy received by families starts at 90% of costs for those earning less than AUD80,000 (approximately £42,582) and falls progressively with income, until it reaches zero for those earning more than AUD530,000 (approximately £282,105). In 2021, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 7% of the average wage.^b</p>	<p>Communities for Children initiative is similar to Sure Start, in offering integrated child and family services in one site to support early childhood development and wellbeing, but smaller in scope, currently operating in only 52 communities.</p>
Staff Requirements – Qualifications:	Staff-to-child Ratio:
<p>For family day care: 1:7 ratio, but only four of those can be preschool age or under</p>	<p>Within a centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Under two years old: 1:4 ■ Two – three years old: 1:5 (except VIC which is 1:4) ■ Three years old plus: 1:10 and 1:11
<p>SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Department of Social Services, Department of Education, Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, and Ville et al (2022). ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available here. ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found here.</p>	



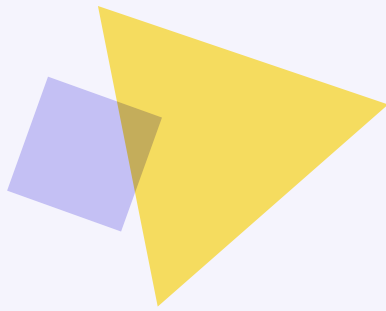
Country Profile:



CANADA

<p>Types of Provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Centre-based childcare. ■ Family/home-based childcare. ■ Wrap-around care. 	<p>Early Years Funding:</p> <p>In most provinces, childcare is primarily funded by private fees, with subsidies available to parents with lower incomes. Quebec is the exception, with most childcare providers funded by the government based on number of available and occupied childcare spaces in the setting.</p>
<p>Ages Covered:</p> <p>0 – 5 years.</p>	<p>Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years:</p> <p>1^a</p>
<p>State Provision:</p> <p>Provision is largely private in Canada. The exception is Quebec, as noted below.</p>	<p>State Subsidy:</p> <p>Subsidies are available to working parents, but the amount available and eligibility criteria vary by province or territory, with these provided directly to the ECEC providers, rather than parents. The exception is Quebec, which does not use fee subsidies: parents instead pay a flat fee which does not depend on employment status or income. In 2021, this fee was \$8.50 (approximately £4.90) per day.</p>
<p>Low-income Parents:</p> <p>Subsidies are available to support low-income parents, with the amount and eligibility criteria varying. In 2021, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was -3% of the average wage,^b representing a more than 100% subsidy and acting as an incentive to enrol children in ECEC.^b</p>	<p>Provision of Support within the Community:</p> <p>There is no nationwide provision of support within the community. Isolated offers include Ontario’s EarlyOn Centres, which offer childcare alongside combined family and child activities, parenting advice and information on child development, or Alberta’s Provincial Family Resource Networks, which coordinate community services and provide early intervention to prevent use of social services.</p>
<p>Staff Requirements – Qualifications:</p> <p>Staff working in regulated settings are required to have a two-year post-secondary ECEC diploma in the majority of jurisdictions.</p>	<p>Staff-to-child Ratio:</p> <p>Varies by jurisdiction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ One year: 1:3 – 1:5 ■ Three years old: 1:5 to 1:10 <p>Example for Quebec:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Less than 18 months: 1:5 ■ 18 months – four years old: 1:8 ■ Four – five years old: 1:10

SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Quebec Ministry of Families and Ville et al (2022). ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available [here](#). ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found [here](#).



Country Profile:




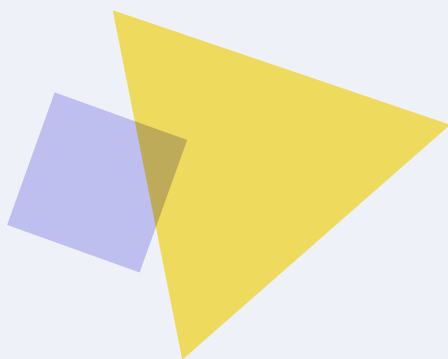
DENMARK

<p>Types of Provision:</p>	<p>Early Years Funding:</p>
<p>Operates an integrated system with both age-integrated and age-separated ECEC centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Age-integrated day-care centres (aldersintegrerede institutioner) for children 6 months – 6 years. This is the most common type of provision. ■ Day nurseries (vuggestuer – ‘cradle room’) for children up to age 3. ■ Kindergartens (børnehaver – ‘children’s garden’) for 3 – 6 years. ■ Family day-care (dagpleje) – generally for children up to age 3. ■ In 2019, 20% of children were enrolled in private settings. 	<p>ECEC provision is generally publicly provided and heavily subsidised. Public funding generally makes up at least 75% of the running costs. In 2018, expenditure on ECEC was 1.33% of GDP.</p>
<p>Ages Covered:</p>	<p>Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years:</p>
<p>6 months – 6 years.</p>	<p>N/A^a</p>
<p>State Provision:</p>	<p>State Subsidy:</p>
<p>There is universal entitlement to a fee-paying, full-time place for ECEC from 6 months of age. These provisions are generally publicly-subsidised. If a municipality is not able to provide the ECEC provision it must either cover the cost of private day care, cover the cost of an ECEC setting in another municipality, or provide parents a subsidy to take care of the child themselves.</p>	<p>Fees are charged at ECEC settings, but these are heavily subsidised by the municipality. As stipulated in the Day Care Act 2022, parent fees cannot exceed 25% of the operating costs, including provision of lunch. Public funding thus covers at least 75% of the running costs. In 2023, fees in municipal day-care for children aged nought-two years old was on average 34393 DKK (approximately £3,941) and for children aged three-five years old was on average 34104 DKK (approximately £3,908). Nurseries (ages nought-two years old) were more expensive, at 41582 DKK (approximately £4,765), and kindergartens (three-five years old) cheaper, at 23214 DKK (approximately £2,660). Denmark also gives parents with siblings already in early years provision reduced fees, with the less expensive place of the two half price.</p>
<p>Low-income Parents:</p>	<p>Provision of Support within the Community:</p>
<p>ECEC provision can be accessed free of charge if the household income is no larger than 15475 DKK (approximately £1,773) a month. In 2022, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 2% of the average wage.^b</p>	<p>None mentioned.</p>
<p>Staff Requirements – Qualifications:</p>	<p>Staff-to-child Ratio:</p>
<p>There are no regulatory minimum qualifications for practitioners or assistants under the Day Care Act. However, in 2018, 58% of all ECEC staff held a BA in pedagogy. Generally a teacher or pedagogue holds a BA and assistants hold a 2-year post-secondary vocational qualification.</p>	<p>There are no regulatory limits on staff-child ratios. In 2021, the average staff-child ratio for children aged nought – two years old in day care settings was 1:2.9 and for children aged three-five years old was 1:5.7. This may mask substantial regional differences, however.</p>

SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Eurydice, Statistics Denmark, Jensen (2017), Schreyer and Oberheumer (2017) and Cost of Childcare, City of Copenhagen. ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available [here](#). ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found [here](#).



 ESTONIA		
Country Profile:	Types of Provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Integrated ECEC centres ('kindergartens') – the majority of settings fall in this category. ■ Kindergartens within schools ('kindergarten schools'). ■ Day nurseries. ■ Family day care (perepäevahoid). ■ In 2019, 4.1% of children were enrolled in private institutions. 	Early Years Funding: <p>Provision of ECEC is largely state funded and composed of state-run (public) ECEC centres. Privately-run settings are subsidised to some extent, particularly with regards to staff salaries and professional development. In 2018, expenditure on ECEC was 1.24% of GDP.</p>
	Ages Covered: <p>18 months – 7 years.</p>	Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years: <p>0^a</p>
	State Provision: <p>All children aged 18 months to seven years old are legally entitled to a place in an ECEC setting. Municipalities are obliged to provide a place to any child within the catchment area if the parents ask for one, but attendance in ECEC is not compulsory.</p>	State Subsidy: <p>Settings can charge a maximum fee of 20% of the minimum wage, as well as charging parents for meals and enrolment fees. There are some municipalities where parents do not pay a fee, with the running costs then subsidised entirely by the municipality.</p>
	Low-income Parents: <p>Settings cannot charge more than 20% of the minimum wage. Workers earning at the minimum wage earn 725 euros per month (approximately £619), and so pay no more than 145 euros per month (approximately £124). In practice, however, childcare costs for low-income families are lower. In 2022, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 0% of the average wage.^b</p>	Provision of Support within the Community: <p>Communities for Children initiative is similar to Sure Start, in offering integrated child and family services in one site to support early childhood development and well-being, but smaller in scope, currently operating in only 52 communities.</p>
	Staff Requirements – Qualifications: <p>Teachers require a BA. Childcare assistants need to complete compulsory high school and a further 1 year of tertiary study, equivalent to International Standard Classification of Education Level 4 (post-secondary non-tertiary education).</p>	Staff-to-child Ratio: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 18 months – three years old: 1:7 ■ Three years old plus (mixed age group): 1:9 ■ Six-seven years old only: 1:10
	SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Eurydice, Veisson (2017), and Schreyer and Oberhuemer (2017). ^a As defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available here . ^b Single person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found here .	



ICELAND

Country Profile:

Types of Provision:

- Home-based provision (Dagforeldri) for infants (from 0 – 2 years).
- Preschool (Leiksskóli) for children aged 1 - 6 years.
- In 2019, 17% of children were enrolled in private institutions.

Ages Covered:

1 – 6 years (or from birth in home-based provision).

State Provision:

There is a legal entitlement to ECEC, but no age limit is specified. Municipalities are responsible for the financing and operation of preschools. Most pre-schools are public, and whilst fees vary by municipality and may depend on parents' circumstances, the municipality generally contributes, depending on the source, somewhere between two-thirds to 75% of the total operating cost.

Low-income Parents:

Municipalities each have their own schemes for low-income families. For example, in Hafnarfjörður, lower income families earning 459603 kr or less a month (approximately £2,645) can receive 75% off of pre-school fees, while those earning less than 551523 kr per month (approximately £3,174) receive 50% off. In 2022, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 4% of the average wage.^b

Staff Requirements – Qualifications:

One in three staff members in ECEC centres are required to have a tertiary qualification. Preschool teachers require as a minimum a Masters degree.

Early Years Funding:

Most preschools are publicly run and funded, although private settings exist, with the municipality generally contributing the bulk of the total operating cost. Parents pay a co-contribution or fee. In 2018, expenditure on ECEC was 1.78% of GDP.

Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years:

N/A^a

State Subsidy:

Parental fees for kindergartens and family day care are capped, decided annually by parliament. The Kindergarten Act prohibits families paying more than 6% of their income. Municipalities are also required to offer reduced fees for siblings.

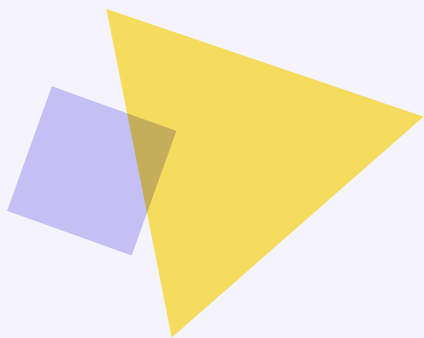
Provision of Support within the Community:

None mentioned.

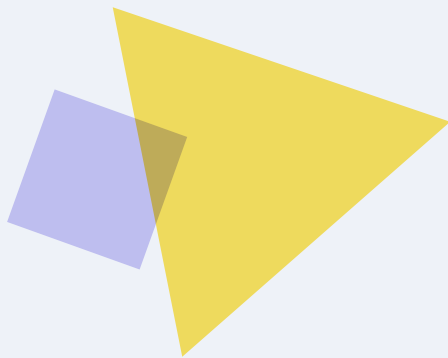
Staff-to-child Ratio:

- Child-staff ratios are not regulated by law, but set by the ECEC setting head teacher and the local municipality. This allows for flexibility of group size depending on need.

SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Eurydice and Hafnarfjörður fee tables. ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available [here](#). ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found [here](#).



Country Profile:	IRELAND
Types of Provision:	Early Years Funding:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Nurseries and daycare. ■ Preschools (including naíonraí, or Irish medium pre-schools). ■ Playgroups and childminding. ■ In Ireland, 99% of children are enrolled in private institutions. 	<p>The government funds free entitlement to preschool for all children from age three to five and a half, and all children in infant classes in primary schools (for children aged 4 – 5). In 2018, expenditure on ECEC was 0.19% of GDP.</p>
Ages Covered:	Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years:
0 - 5 years	1 ^a
State Provision:	State Subsidy:
<p>There is free state provision from the age of three to five and a half years within the ECEC sectors, or from age four – five years old in infant classes within schools. The ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) programme, introduced in 2010 and expanded in 2016 and 2018, ensures universal access to ECEC to children in the two years before starting primary school for 15 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year, starting from age two years and eight months or above.</p>	<p>In addition to the 15 hours free childcare for children aged two years and eight months or above, the National Childcare Scheme (NCS), introduced in 2019, provides universal and targeted subsidies for families depending on parents' income and other circumstances. The universal subsidy provides €1.40 (roughly £1.20) per hour for a maximum of 45 hours per week.</p>
Low-income Parents:	Provision of Support within the Community:
<p>Low-income parents receive ECEC subsidies under the NCS, introduced in 2019. In 2023, those with a family income of €26,000 (approximately £22,250) or less (net of some benefits) are eligible for the maximum hourly subsidy rate of between €5.10 and €3.95 (about £4.40 – £3.40) depending on the age of the child. In 2022, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 2% of the average wage.^b</p>	None mentioned.
Staff Requirements – Qualifications:	Staff-to-child Ratio:
<p>As a condition of receiving state funding under the ECCE programme, centres must commit to employing only qualified staff. All leaders/teachers and assistants need post-secondary vocational qualification (equivalent to ISCED level 4).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Under one-year: 1:3 ■ One to two and a half years old: 1:5 ■ Two and a half to 6 years old: 1:11 ■ Children in home-based childminding/ family day care: 1:5 <p>Services participating in ECCE must additionally meet the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Up to 11 children: 1 room leader + 1 early years assistant ■ 12 - 22 children: 1 room leader + 1 early years assistant ■ 23 - 33 children: 2 room leaders + 1 early years assistant ■ 34 - 44 children: 2 room leaders + 2 early years assistants
<p>SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Early Childhood Ireland (2023), Schreyer and Oberhuemer (2017) and Duignan (2017). ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available here. ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found here.</p>	



Types of Provision:

Italy moved to an integrated system of provision from 0 – 6 years in 2017:

- Nursery schools (nidi d'infanzia), largely serving children from ages 0 – 3 years.
- Preschool (scuola dell'infanzia, or 'childhood school') for ages 3 – 6 years, although some have a 'spring section' (sezione primavera) which take children from 2 years.
- Supplementary educational services (servizi integrative), which are considered alternative provisions to the above and include home-based provision for ages 0 – 3 years.
- In 2019, almost 28% of all children were enrolled in private institutions.

Ages Covered:

0 - 6 years

State Provision:

The ISCED 01 provision, for those aged 0 – 3, collectively known as educational services for childhood (servizi educativi per l'infanzia) includes public settings, but these neither compulsory nor free. Preschool (ISCED 02) is also not compulsory, but is often publicly provided and free. There is no legal entitlement to a place, however.

Low-income Parents:

Preschool is fully subsidised from the age of three, with low-income families not charged for meal and transport either. In 2022, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 0% of the average wage.^b

Staff Requirements – Qualifications:

In infant settings (0 – 3), educators must have either a BA in Education, with a focus on early childhood education, or a five-year degree (BA and Masters) in primary and pre-primary education. In preschools, staff must have completed the five-year degree (BA and Masters) in primary and pre-primary education.

Early Years Funding:

The provision of preschool, from ages 3 – 6 years, is publicly funded. Nursery schools, however, are generally not free to parents. In 2019, expenditure on ECEC was 0.57%.

Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years:

0^a

State Subsidy:

Preschool is fully subsidised from the age of three, with settings able to charge a small fee for meals and transport. The educational services for younger children however, are not subsidised.

Provision of Support within the Community:

–

Staff-to-child Ratio:

- For infant nursery schools, the municipality decides on the required group size and staff-child ratios.
- For preschools, the group size in state run provision varies between a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 26. In 2014, the ratio of qualified staff to children was, on average, 1:12.2.

SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Eurydice, Bove and Cescato (2017) and Schreyer and Oberheumer (2017). ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available [here](#). ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found [here](#).



JAPAN

Types of Provision:

- Day-care centres (0 – 5 years).
- Kindergartens (3 – 5 years).
- Integrated ECEC centres (0 – 5 years).
- In Japan, almost 77% of all children are enrolled in private institutions.

Early Years Funding:

Funding responsibilities are shared between national and local authorities, with different authorities in charge of different settings. In 2018, expenditure on ECEC was 0.19% of GDP.

Ages Covered:

0 - 5 years

Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years:

0^a

State Provision and Subsidy:

In 2019 legislation was enacted to make pre-school education free for three – five year-olds regardless of parents' income, and for nought – two year-olds from lower income families.

Low-income Parents:

Under the income-related fee scale, parents with the lowest earnings (average earnings up to €221.46 (approximately £190) per person per month) pay no fees at all. In 2022, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 8% of the average wage.^b

Provision of Support within the Community:

There are some children's centres in Japan comparable to Sure Start services. These tend to offer physical spaces where children and parents can play, health and child-rearing counselling and parent-led clubs. The aim is to address social deprivation and isolation and to offer early intervention to prevent child abuse.

Staff Requirements – Qualifications:

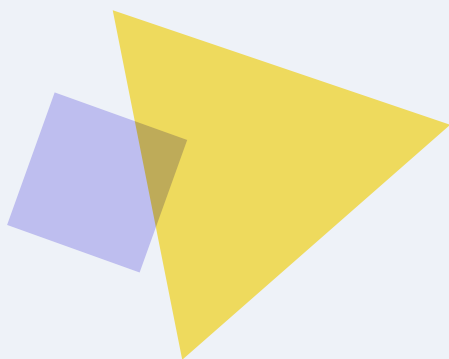
Teachers are required to have a tertiary qualification to work in regulated ECEC settings.


Staff-to-child Ratio:

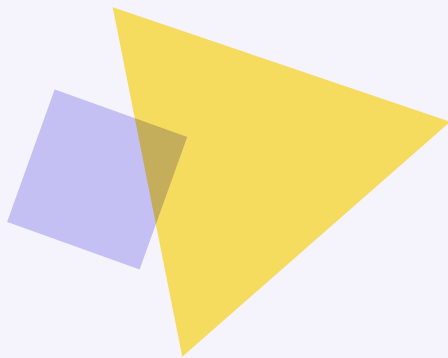
**Staff-to-child ratio:
Varies by age-group**

- Less than one year old: 1:3
- One-two years old: 1:6
- Three years old: 1:20
- Four years old: 1:30

SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Ville et al (2022) and OECD (2015). ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available [here](#). ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found [here](#).



 NORWAY	
Types of Provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kindergartens (Barnehager). ■ Family day care (Familienbarnehage). ■ In 2019, nearly 50% of children were enrolled in private institutions. 	Early Years Funding: <p>With the cap on parental fees at no more 6% of parents' income, kindergartens are predominantly funded by local authorities (municipalities). In 2018, expenditure on ECEC was 1.95% of GDP.</p>
Ages Covered: <p>0 – 5 years.</p>	Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years: <p>0^a</p>
State Provision: <p>Legal entitlement to ECEC: There is a legal entitlement to a place in kindergarten from one year old, but free provision only starts with primary school at age of six.</p>	State Subsidy: <p>Parental fees for kindergartens and family day care are capped, decided annually by parliament. The Kindergarten Act prohibits families paying more than 6% of their income. Municipalities are also required to offer reduced fees for siblings.</p>
Low-income Parents: <p>Low-income families are offered a place free of charge for 20 hours per week to children over the age of three. The cap on fees acts to keep fees low for low-income parents. For instance, a waiter in Norway, who earned on average 402,600 NOK (approximately £29,808) a year in 2022, the maximum fee would be just 24,156 SEK (approximately £1789) a year. In 2022, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 1% of the average wage.^b</p>	Provision of Support within the Community: <p>Norway provides Åpne barnehager (open kindergartens), which are drop-in centres for children and parents/ caregivers, with parents participating in programmes with the child.</p>
Staff Requirements – Qualifications: <p>Teachers and Leaders require a BA. Childcare assistants require upper secondary and vocational qualifications. Approximately 45% of staff in ECEC are teachers/leaders, and thus BA qualified.</p>	Staff-to-child Ratio: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Under three years old: 1:3 ■ Three years old plus: 1:6 <p>In addition, settings must have BA-qualified teachers, with the following teacher-to-child ratios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Under three years old: 1:7 ■ Three years old plus: 1:14
<p>SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Eurydice database, the Norwegian Kindergarten Act, Engel et al (2015) and OECD (2022). ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available here. ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found here.</p>	



SLOVENIA

Types of Provision:	Early Years Funding:
<p>Slovenia operates a unitary system of ECEC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kindergartens/early childhood centres (vrtec) take children from 11 months - 6 years, and can either be independent (samostojni vrtec) or affiliated with a school (vrtec pri osnovni šoli). Home-based settings (vzgojno-varstvena družina) are a much smaller part of Slovenia's provision. In 2019, 6% of children were enrolled in private settings. 	<p>All children have a legal entitlement to ECEC, from the age of 11 months. Parents pay means-tested parental fees, which vary from €0 for the poorest parents to up to €500 per month (approximately £430), but parents never pay more than 77% of costs. In 2018, expenditure on ECEC was 1.05% of GDP.</p>
Ages Covered:	Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years:
<p>11 months – 6 years.</p>	<p>0^a</p>
State Provision:	State Subsidy:
<p>All children have a legal entitlement to a full-time place in an ECEC setting from the age of 11 months. Most ECEC settings are publicly-provided and mainly funded by municipalities. From July 2017, children not already enrolled in ECEC have a right to 240 hours fully funded provision annually, in an attempt to improve ECEC participation rates. If a child cannot be offered a place at the public kindergarten, parents can enrol in private settings or home-based provision, and municipalities must co-fund the costs.</p>	<p>The funding of ECEC centres is largely covered by municipalities and state subsidies. Parents additionally pay income-related parental fees, up to but no more than 77% of costs for parents in the highest income bracket (average earnings of €1,218.09 (approximately £1,043) per person per month or more).</p>
Low-income Parents:	Provision of Support within the Community:
<p>Under the income-related fee scale, parents with the lowest earnings (average earnings up to €221.46 (approximately £190) per person per month) pay no fees at all. In 2022, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 8% of the average wage.^b</p>	<p>None mentioned.</p>
Staff Requirements – Qualifications:	Staff-to-child Ratio:
<p>Early childhood teachers usually require a BA. Early Childhood TAs generally require a 4-year upper secondary/vocational qualification.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under three years old: 1:7 Three – six years-olds: 1:11 or 1:12 Additionally in groups with under three-year olds, a teacher and TA must be simultaneously present for six hours per day. In groups of three – six year-olds, a teacher and TA must be simultaneously present for four hours per day, but this cannot include any nap time. The teacher usually accompanies the same group of children throughout their time in kindergarten.
<p>SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Eurydice, Vonta and Jager (2017), and Schreyer and Oberhuemer (2017). ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available here. ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found here.</p>	



SOUTH KOREA

Types of Provision:

- Care centre (0-2 years).
- Kindergartens (3-5 years).
- Child care centre (3-5 years).
- In 2019, 79% of children were enrolled in private institutions.

Ages Covered:

0 - 5 years

Early Years Funding:

All 3 – 5 year-olds are universally subsidised to attend ECEC

Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years:

3^a

State Provision and Subsidy:

There is free state provision from the age of three to five and a half years within the ECEC sectors, or from age four – five years old in infant classes within schools. The ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) programme, introduced in 2010 and expanded in 2016 and 2018, ensures universal access to ECEC to children in the two years before starting primary school for 15 hours per week over 38 weeks of the year, starting from age two years and eight months or above.

Low-income Parents:

Low-income parents benefit both from childcare support and universal provision from age three. In 2021, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 5% of the average wage.^b

Provision of Support within the Community:

None mentioned.

Staff Requirements – Qualifications:

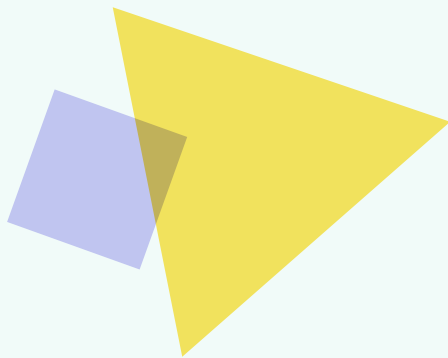
Teachers are required to have a tertiary qualification.

Staff-to-child Ratio:

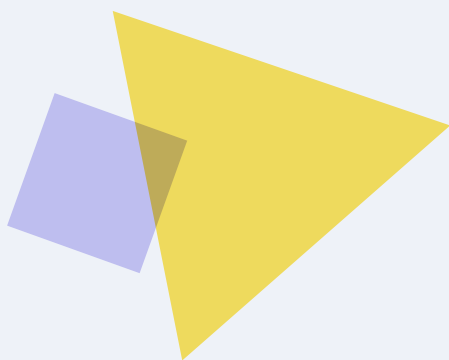
Not available.

NOTE: Limited information is available for South Korea.

SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022). ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available [here](#). ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found [here](#).



Country Profile: SWEDEN	Types of Provision:	Early Years Funding:
Types of Provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Early childhood centres or 'preschools' (förskola). ■ Preschool classes (förskoleklasser) – one-year transition class for 6 – 7 year olds within schools. ■ Family day care (familjedaghem) – no curricular regulations or required professional qualifications. ■ In 2019, almost 19% of children were enrolled in private institutions. 	Early Years Funding: <p>The bulk of funding is provided by state and local authorities, with fees for parents capped at 1572 SEK (roughly £116) a month. Provision of the preschool class is provided entirely by the government. In 2018, expenditure on ECEC was 1.83% of GDP.</p>	
Ages Covered: <p>1 – 6 years, with 6 – 7 in a pre-school year within the school.</p>	Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years: <p>1^a</p>	
State Provision: <p>Legal entitlement to ECEC: local authorities must provide preschool services for all children aged one or above whose parents are working or studying, and for all children with SENs. Children whose parents are unemployed or on parental leave must be provided a part-time place of at least 3 hours/day. All children are guaranteed a place in the preschool class in the year they turn six. All children are entitled to a free place for 525 hours per year (about 10 hours a week if equally split across the year).</p>	State Subsidy: <p>For provision above the free hours outlined, the maximum fee settings can charge is 3% of the parents' income, capped at a maximum of SEK 1572 per month in 2022 (approximately £116). Across municipalities, parents also pay less for subsequent children, for example in Stockholm fees for a second child are capped at 2% of income, a third child at 1%, and there are no charges for a fourth or any further children.</p>	
Low-income Parents: <p>There is no specific additional support for low-income parents, but they also fall under the capped fee of 3% of parents' incomes. For instance, a cleaner in Sweden, who earned on average 24800 SEK (£1,820) a month in 2021, the maximum fee would be just 744 SEK (approximately £55) a month or 8982 SEK (approximately £655) a year. In 2022, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 3% of the average wage.^b</p>	Provision of Support within the Community: <p>Alongside the preschools, local authorities provide 'open preschools' (öppna förskolor), which are community drop-in and advisor centres for parents and children not in other forms of early year provision.</p>	
Staff Requirements – Qualifications: <p>Teachers and Leaders require a BA. Childcare assistants require an upper secondary vocational qualification (requiring a minimum of three years).</p>	Staff-to-child Ratio: <p>No regulatory requirements for child-staff ratios. The national average staff-to-child ratio in preschools is 1:5.2</p>	
SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), Eurydice, Schreyer and Oberheumer (2017), Karlsson Lohmander (2017) and Avgifter för förskola (Fees for Preschool), Stockholm Municipality. ^a As defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available here . ^b Single person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found here .		



 USA	
Types of Provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Early Head Start and Head Start (public provision). ■ Childcare centres. ■ Family Childcare. ■ PreKindergarten Programs. 	Early Years Funding: <p>Public provision (in the form of Head Start) and subsidies are available but vary by state.</p>
Ages Covered: <p>0 - 5 years</p>	Number of Free and Compulsory Pre-primary Years: <p>1^a</p>
State Provision: <p>Public provisions vary by state, but there are federally funded programmes for families with low-incomes, known as Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Eligibility criteria for Head Start varies by state. For instance, in New York, you would qualify for Head Start or Early Head Start if one of the following holds: you live in temporary housing, you receive cash assistance with living costs, you receive disability support for you or your child, the enrolling child is in foster care, or the family income falls below certain limits (limits vary based on size of household).</p>	State Subsidy: <p>Subsidies available vary by state. Nationwide, childcare tax credits are available.</p>
Low-income Parents: <p>Families on the lowest incomes generally qualify for Early Head Start and Head Start. Nevertheless, in 2022, the OECD calculated that the net cost of childcare for two children to a lone-parent, low-income household was 32% of the average wage.^b</p>	Provision of Support within the Community: <p>Head Start takes on a community-based role, linking children and families to other services in the community such as free medical and dental care services.</p>
Staff Requirements – Qualifications: <p>Staff requirements vary by state. Consider New York as an example: preschool teachers and centre directors should have a BA, preschool TAs should have a high school diploma and some further tertiary training or experience; infant and toddler teachers need associate diplomas (tertiary qualification) and infant and toddler TAs need a high school diploma and further tertiary training or experience.</p>	Staff-to-child Ratio: <p>Varies by state. Example of New York state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Less than 18 months: 1:4 ■ Three years old: 1:7 ■ Four years old: 1:8
<p>SOURCES USED IN THIS COUNTRY PROFILE: OECD Education at a Glance (2021), OECD Education at a Glance (2022), New York City Government, New York Codes, Rules and Regulations, City of New York and the Office of Child Care. ^aAs defined by and measured by UNESCO, data available here. ^bSingle person with two children aged 2 and 3 earning 67% of the average wage; data can be found here.</p>	



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EUROPE

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