



EUROPE

European Network
of National Observatories
on Childhood

Child0NEurope Series 3

Early Childhood Education and Care Services in the European Union Countries

Proceedings of the Child0NEurope Seminar and integrated review

ChildONEurope Series 3

Early Childhood Education and Care Services in the European Union Countries

Proceedings

of the ChildONEurope Seminar
and integrated review



ChildONEurope Secretariat

c/o Italian Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre
Istituto degli Innocenti
P.zza SS. Annunziata 12 I-50122 Firenze
tel. +39 055 2037342/305/357 - fax +39 055 2037344
e-mail childoneurope@minori.it - website www.childoneurope.org

Early Childhood Education and Care Services in the European Union Countries

Proceedings of the ChildONEurope Seminar
and integrated review

The first part of this publication contains the proceedings of the ChildONEurope Seminar on early childhood education and care services and promotion of social inclusion held in Florence on 28th January 2010.

The second part has been drafted by Erika Bernacchi, Roberta Ruggiero and Perrine Humblet with the scientific revision of Aldo Fortunati. A final scientific revision was provided by John Bennet.

Special thanks to Benoît Parmentier who, acting as President of the ChildONEurope Assembly and representative of the Belgian Presidency, guaranteed scientific support to the organization of the Seminar and promoted the carrying out of the study presented in the second part of the publication.



Istituto degli Innocenti

P.zza SS. Annunziata 12, I-50122 Firenze

Area Documentation, Research, Training

Aldo Fortunati

ChildONEurope Secretariat

Erika Bernacchi, Roberta Ruggiero

Editorial coordination

Anna Buia

Documentation

Alessandra Gerbo, Martina Frondini, Silvia Toniato

Cover

Cristina Caccavale

Table of contents

Introduction	7
PART 1	
PROCEEDINGS OF THE CHIDONEUROPE SEMINAR ON ECEC SERVICES	9
1.1 The ongoing transition of child care in the economically advanced countries	
<i>Leonardo Menchini</i>	11
1.2 Quality aspects of early childhood care services, families and policy development	
<i>Sylvie Rayna</i>	21
1.3 The role of ECEC services and professionals in addressing poverty and promoting social inclusion	
<i>Jan Peeters</i>	27
1.4 Children’s identity and the quality of ECEC services	
<i>Aldo Fortunati</i>	33
1.5 Outcomes of the Working Groups	
<i>Mercedes Benito, Florence Pirard, Ellen Meijer</i>	39
PART 2	
INTEGRATED ANALYSIS OF EU STUDIES ON ECEC SERVICES	49
2.0 Some initial observations on the CRC approach	
<i>Roberta Ruggiero</i>	51
2.1 Data and typologies of ECEC services	
<i>Erika Bernacchi</i>	53
2.2 An evaluation of different models of ECEC systems developed at the national level	
<i>Roberta Ruggiero</i>	57
2.3 Forms of financial support to ECEC services	
<i>Erika Bernacchi</i>	65
2.4 Access guarantees to ECEC services	
<i>Perrine Humblet</i>	69

2.5 Barcelona targets: difficulties found by States and national expectations over the identification of qualitative standards by the EU	
<i>Erika Bernacchi</i>	73
2.6 Final remarks	
<i>Erika Bernacchi, Roberta Ruggiero</i>	77
Annex. Quality targets in services for young children	81
Bibliography.....	85
Authors	94

Introduction

The issue of ECEC services is recently receiving greater attention in the EU framework. This subject has long been an important part of the EU's social and economic policy and of the gender equality policy. At the Barcelona Council of 2002 it was agreed to establish a common target to be reached by EU States, which was specifically the coverage of 33% of places in ECEC services for children from birth to 3 years as well as 90% for 3 to 6 year olds.

Such a decision shows an important commitment that EU States agreed to undertake, however this quantitative goal was not accompanied by any qualitative specifications.

Also for this reason the European Network of National Observatories on Childhood (ChildONEurope) decided to promote a discussion focusing on the provision of the ECEC services in the EU countries, in particular by organizing a Seminar on the subject and by requesting information on its partners' policies.

The present publication is composed of two parts: the first is made up of the proceedings of the ChildONEurope Seminar on ECEC services held on 28th January 2010 at the Istituto degli Innocenti in Florence. The second is an integrated review of the most important findings emerging from some key reports by international organizations on ECEC services and was commissioned to the Istituto degli Innocenti – as body performing the functions of ChildONEurope Secretariat – by the Belgian Presidency of the EU (July – December 2010) that made the ECEC services one of its priorities.

The ChildONEurope Seminar on early childhood education and care services and promotion of social inclusion aimed at providing a forum for knowledge exchange among the ChildONEurope partners and other key international governmental and non governmental bodies involved in this field, in particular concerning a comparative analysis of the EU situation focusing both on qualitative and quantitative aspects.

More specifically, the Seminar is aimed at promoting reflection on the impact that such services can have in nurturing social inclusion and fighting the risk of social exclusion of socially disadvantaged children as well as migrant children in a framework of a universal access to services.

The proceedings reproduced in this publication gather the speakers' interventions as well as the working groups reports, focusing on children's identity and the quality of ECEC services, access to ECEC services, costs and fees for families with special attention to migrant and socially disadvantaged children and promotion of children's rights, development of services and prevention of social exclusion.

The second part is made up of a review of the most important European reports on the subjects drafted by the international organizations. This review has the aim of facilitating the discussion on ECEC services policies during the meeting of the Intergovernmental Group *L'Europe de l'Enfance*, to be held in Antwerp on 8-10 September 2010 and the Meeting of Ministers responsible for childhood, to be held in Brussels on 15-16 November 2010. Fulfilling this objective, the second part of this publication was elaborated with the intention to provide policy makers and governmental representatives with concise indications regarding, from a qualitative point of view, the main challenges that European governments face today when setting up effective ECEC services and integrated policies.

Part 1
Proceedings of the ChidONEurope Seminar
on ECEC Services

1.1 The ongoing transition of child care in the economically advanced countries

Leonardo Menchini*

1.1.1 Introduction¹

In economically advanced countries, more than three quarters of children from three-to-six year-old are in some form of early childhood education and care services. For the under three, the proportion of children attending early childhood education and care services is around 25%, rising to more than 50% in some countries. Furthermore, in the last decade some countries have also seen a rapid increase in the numbers of children under 1 being cared for outside the home.

These figures indicate a veritable “childcare transition”; for the first time in OECD countries a majority of children under 6 is spending a significant part of their time in some form of out-of-home childcare.

1.1.2 The transition drivers

The change in child care reflects rapidly occurring major social transformations in rich countries, including demographic and economic changes.

On the whole, the “childcare transition” reflects progress and new opportunities for women. In 2007 more than half of all mothers in economically advanced countries were employed outside the home, with employment rates growing with the age of the youngest child in the family (see figure 1).

But in part, it also reflects new necessities and economic insecurity in growingly unequal societies. Social-economic research in rich countries not only shows that in most countries, families with younger children are at greater risk of poverty than the rest of the families but also that two sources of income for the household are sometimes barely sufficient for a family to avoid poverty: in this context, the poorer the family, the greater the pressure on mothers to return to work as soon as possible after birth, often to unskilled, low-paid jobs.

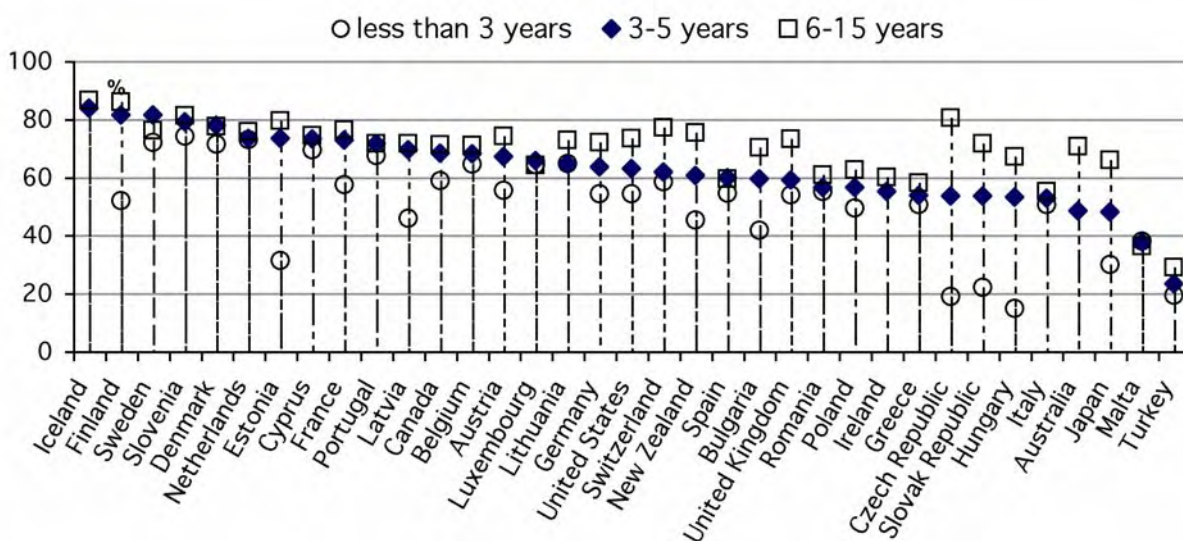
Moreover the policy promotion and support of childcare services in the industrialized world seems to mainly reflect wider economic concerns more than the actual promotion of well-being of mothers and children. In fact, more women in the workforce means higher GDP, higher tax revenues, and reduced welfare bills. Pure and simple quantitative goals for childcare services, like the EU “Barcelona targets”² established in 2002, seem to respond to the needs of the economy more than reflecting a real concern for the rights of children and their families.

* Programme Specialist, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

¹ This note reports some of the key findings of the UNICEF *Innocenti Report Card 8* (2008) and its background research. For the complete references, see the list at the end of the article. The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policy or views of UNICEF.

² The Barcelona targets affirm that, by 2010, the EU member states should provide childcare for 90% of children between 3 years old and the age of mandatory education, and for 33% of children under 3 years of age.

Figure 1. Maternal employment rate by age of the youngest child, 2007



Source: adapted from the OECD Family Database, accessed July 2010

Note: data labeled “3-5 years” for Iceland and Australia refer to “less than 5 years”. Year 2006 for Switzerland, 2005 for Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the United States, 2002 for Iceland, 2001 for Canada and 1999 for Denmark. Countries are ordered according to decreasing value of the employment rate of mothers with the youngest child aged between 3 and 5 years.

1.1.3 The neuroscience revolution

While the “child care transition” occurs, neuro-science research results increase the understanding of the importance of cognitive, physical and relational development in early childhood. Scientific awareness on the sequence of ‘sensitive periods’ in the brain development during early childhood as well as the developmental importance of ‘serve and return’ relationships with carers, are key contributions of neuro-science to the debate on early childhood services in economically advanced countries. Care and education are co-essential and should be conceived as a continuum process. Scientific research also highlights the importance of the quality of care, the interaction with adults and of the role of love as a foundation for intellectual and emotional development. The quality and quantity of early interaction with family members and carers have a critical role in shaping the stress management mechanism. All that converges in supporting that loving, stable and stimulating relationships with parents and caregivers in early childhood is crucially important for the development of the child.

1.1.4 The potential for good and the potential for harm

The occurring transition, supported by a growing base of scientific knowledge, has an important positive potential for children and the societies where they live. The interaction with childcare professionals and with other children can enhance children’s cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. Potential benefits are even more important for children with poorer economic backgrounds, contributing to reduce the intergenerational transmission of social disparities. Moreover childcare services can help immigrant children or children from ethnic minorities with integration and language skills.

But the potential for harm in the child care transition is equally evident. Research highlights that poor quality care has a clear potential for immediate and long term harm for children. In particular, a low quality, out-of-home childcare that is ‘too early and for too long’ can be damaging for child development, in particular during the key stages of formation of the stress managing mechanisms.

In extreme cases, there is a danger that the positive potential will mainly benefit children from more affluent families, while the potential harm would be at the expense of children from disadvantaged families, which face higher pressures for mothers to go back to work soon after the birth of the child and have less economic resources to access higher quality services. In such a scenario, the positive potential would be reversed, and childcare would risk becoming a source of increasing inequality instead of an equalizing factor.

1.1.5 Understanding and monitoring the child care transition in economically advanced countries

Early childhood services have increased relevance in economically advanced countries. The policy approaches, however, vary from country to country, and also within each country.

The *Innocenti Report Card 8* investigates the reality of child care services in OECD countries by looking at key aspects, including the overall policy framework, the participation in/inclusion of the out-of-home services, their quality and the investment made by the government on early childhood policies as well as other key indicators of wellbeing and access to services for very young children.

A comparison was made between 25 economically advanced countries, by proposing 10 benchmarks covering the above mentioned aspects. The benchmarks were formulated in terms of a minimum target value for each of the relevant indicators. Minimum standards for each benchmark were fixed to reflect what is achievable in rich countries (because it is actually achieved in several countries included in the comparison) in terms of quality, quantity and inclusiveness of early childhood services.

The 10 benchmarks of the *Innocenti Report Card 8*³

The 10 benchmarks proposed by the Report Card are organized into 4 main groups: a group reflecting the policy framework (benchmarks 1 and 2), a group on access (3 and 4), one on quality (5, 6, 7 and 8), and a final group on the supporting context (9 and 10).

A - Policy Framework

Benchmark 1. A minimum entitlement to paid parental leave

The minimum proposed standard is that, on the birth of a child, one parent be entitled to at least a year's leave (to include prenatal leave) at 50% of their salary (subject to upper and lower limits). For parents who are unemployed or self-employed, the income entitlement should not be less than the minimum wage or the level of social assistance. At least two weeks parental leave should be specifically reserved for fathers.

Benchmark 2. A national plan with priority for disadvantaged children

All countries taking part in the childcare transition should have undertaken extensive research and evolved a coherent national strategy to ensure that the benefits of early childhood education and care are fully available, especially for disadvantaged children⁴.

B - (Quantitative) access to early childhood education and care services

Benchmark 3. A minimum level of childcare provision for under-threes

The minimum proposed is that subsidized and regulated childcare services should currently be available for at least 25% of children under the age of three.

³ For a detailed description of the benchmarks and for a critical reflection on the challenges in standard-setting in the early childhood field, see also Bennett (2008b).

⁴ This aspect of early childhood services cannot currently be assessed and compared in a satisfactory way. Rather than omit such a critical factor, benchmark 2 of the *Innocenti Report Card 8* records, as a proxy measure, whether governments have at least drawn up a national plan for the organization and financing of early childhood services

Benchmark 4. A minimum level of access for four-year-olds

The minimum proposed is that at least 80% of four-year-olds participate in publicly subsidized and qualified early education services for a minimum of 15 hours per week.

C - Quality of early childhood education and care services**Benchmark 5. A minimum level of training for all staff**

The minimum proposed is that at least 80% of staff having significant contact with young children, including neighbourhood and home-based child caregivers, should have relevant training. As a minimum, all staff should complete an induction course. A move towards pay and working conditions in line with the wider teaching or social care professions should also be envisaged.

Benchmark 6. A minimum proportion of staff with higher level education and training

The minimum proposed is that at least 50% of staff in early education centres supported and accredited by governmental agencies should have a minimum of three years tertiary education with a recognized qualification in early childhood studies or related fields.

Benchmark 7. A minimum staff-to-child ratio

The minimum proposed is that the ratio of preschool children age four to five to trained staff (educators and assistants) should not be greater than 15 to 1, and that group size should not exceed 24 children.

Benchmark 8. A minimum level of public funding

The suggested minimum for the level of public spending on early childhood education and care (for children aged 0 to 6 years) should not be less than 1% of the Gross Domestic Product.

This first set of eight benchmarks is supplemented by two further indicators designed to acknowledge and reflect wider social and economic factors critical for the efficiency of early childhood services.

D - Low child poverty and universal outreach of social services**Benchmark 9. A low level of child poverty**

Child poverty rate of less than 10%⁵.

Benchmark 10. Universal outreach of social services⁶

The benchmark of 'universal outreach' is considered to have been met if a country has fulfilled at least two of the following three requirements: a) the rate of infant mortality is less than 4 per 1000 live births b) the proportion of babies born with low birth weight (below 2500 grams) is less than 6% and c) the immunisation rate for 12 to 23 month-olds (averaged over measles, polio and DPT3 vaccination) is more than 95%.

The review of data and policy frameworks for 25 economically advanced countries is summarized in figure 2, which provides a modified version of the League Table of the *Innocenti Report Card* 8. For each country, comparable data for the relevant indicators was collected (with information mainly referring to the years around 2005) and evaluated against the proposed benchmarks. The sky-blue cells in the figure indicate that the individual benchmark has been achieved by the concerned country. Countries are then ranked according to the number of achieved benchmarks.

⁵ The definition of child poverty is that used by the OECD – i.e. the percentage of children growing up in families in which income, adjusted for family size, is less than 50% of median income.

⁶ To reinforce one of the central tenets of this report – that early childhood services should also be available for children from disadvantaged or marginalized families – this last benchmark attempts to measure and compare demonstrated national commitment to that ideal. As no direct measure is currently possible, the suggested proxy measure is the extent to which basic health services have been made available to the most marginalized, disadvantaged and difficult-to-reach families.

The data review shows that, around 2005, only Sweden met all 10 of the benchmarks, while the other Nordic countries (Iceland, Denmark, Finland and Norway) as well as France were in the second group of top performers in early childhood education and care services, with 8-9 benchmarks achieved.

Figure 2. *The Innocenti Report Card 8's* League Table

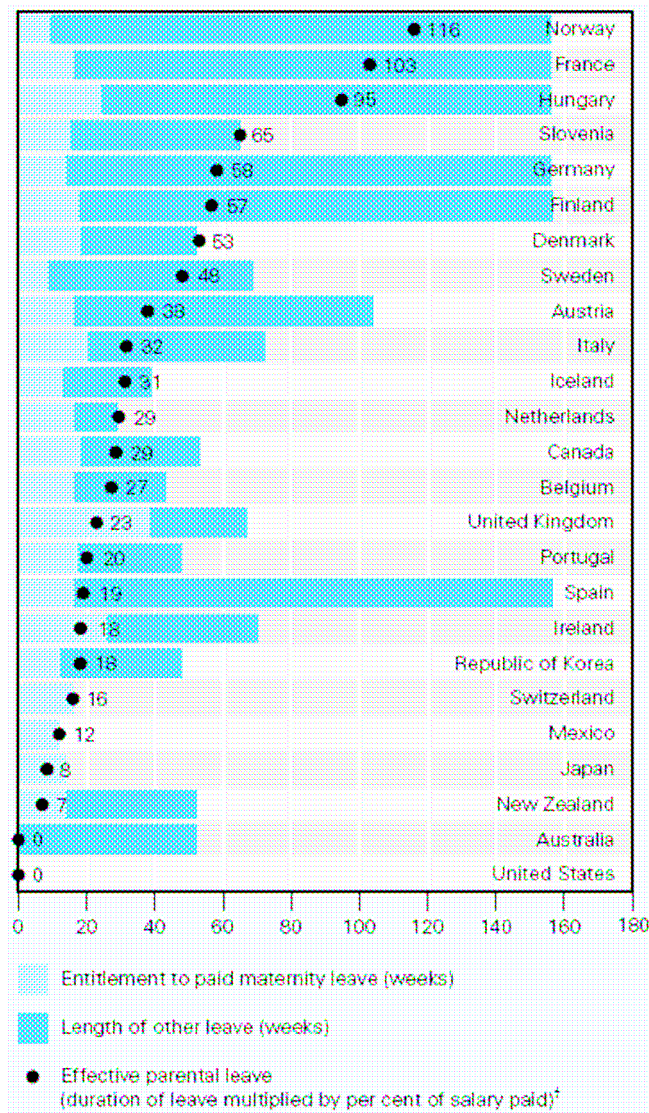
Benchmark		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Number of benchmarks achieve	A minimum entitlement to paid parental leave	A national plan with priorities for the disadvantaged	A minimum level of child care provision for under 3s	A minimum level of subsidised access for all 4 year-olds	A minimum level of training for all staff	A minimum proportion of staff with higher level training	A minimum staff-to-children ratio of 1:15 for 4-5 year olds in early education	A minimum level of public funding	A limit to child poverty	Near-universal outreach of essential child services
Sweden	10	yes		39.5	88.9	yes	yes	yes	1.3	under	3/3
Iceland	9	no		58.7	95.3	yes	yes	yes	1.8	under	2/3
Denmark	8	yes		61.7	93.5	no	yes	yes	1.6	under	1/3
Finland	8	yes		35.0	46.7	yes	no	yes	1.4	under	3/3
France	8	yes		28.0	100	yes	yes	no	1.2	under	1/3
Norway	8	yes		43.7	88.9	no	no	yes	1.0	under	2/3
Belgium (Flanders)	6	no		33.6	100	no	yes	no	0.8	under	2/3
Hungary	6	no		6.9	90.7	yes	yes	yes	0.9	under	1/3
New Zealand	6	no		32.1	95.1	yes	yes	yes	0.3	above	0/3
Slovenia	6	yes		25.8	75.9	yes	yes	no	m	above	2/3
Austria	5	no		6.6	82.5	yes	no	yes	0.6	under	0/3
Netherlands	5	no		29.5	73.4	yes	yes	yes	0.5	above	1/3
United Kingdom*	5	no		25.8	91.8	yes	yes	no	0.6	above	0/3
Germany	4	no		9.0	84.6	no	yes	yes	0.4	above	1/3
Italy	4	no		6.3	100	yes	yes	no	0.6	above	0/3
Japan	4	no		15.2	94.7	yes	no	no	0.3	above	2/3
Portugal	4	no		23.5	84	yes	yes	no	0.8	above	1/3
Korea, Republic of	4	no		19.5	66.4	yes	yes	no	0.1	above	2/3
Mexico	3	no		3.0	66.4	yes	yes	no	0.7	above	1/3
Spain	3	no		20.7	99.3	yes	yes	no	0.5	above	1/3
Switzerland	3	no		m	38.6	yes	no	yes	0.3	under	0/3
United States	3	no		35.5	65.3	no	yes	yes	0.6	above	0/3
Australia	2	no		29.0	64.6	no	yes	no	0.4	above	0/3
Canada	1	no		19.0	m	no	yes	no	m	above	1/3
Ireland	1	no		15.0	45.4	no	yes	no	0.2	above	1/3
Total benchmarks met	126	6	19	13	15	17	20	12	6	10	8

Source: adapted from UNICEF (2008)

Note: data for the United Kingdom refer to England only, m. = missing.

The fact that this first group of six countries is the only one to meet the 8th benchmark on the minimum level of public investment in services for children aged 0-6, is most significant: France and all the Nordic countries were the only ones, in the early 2000s, to have a level of public expenditure on early childhood services of at least 1% of the Gross Domestic Product. The other benchmark which is met almost exclusively by the top performance group is “minimum entitlement to paid parental leave” for one year at least 50% of the salary (this result is in part reflected in the data on the effective parental leave showed in figure 3).

Figure 3. Effective parental leave



Source: UNICEF (2008)

Note: the effective parental leave is calculated by multiplying the duration of leave by the share of the salary paid. The calculations are approximate as parental leave in some countries can run concurrently with maternity leave. For additional notes see UNICEF (2008).

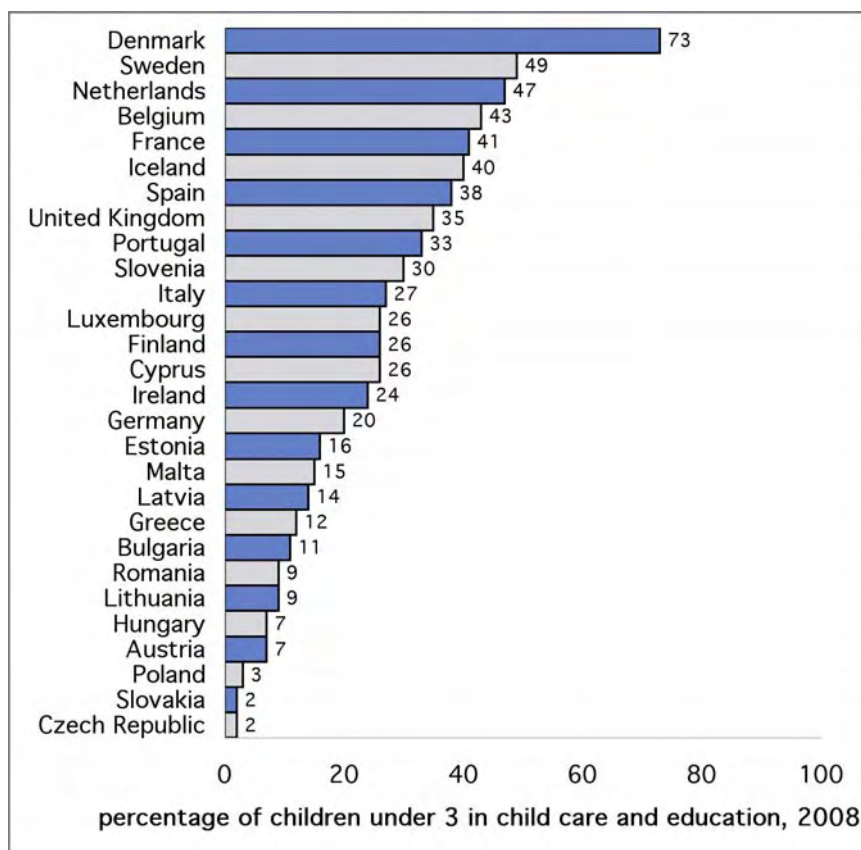
In the overall League Table, almost half of the countries are in the intermediate category satisfying between 4 to 6 benchmarks: these group includes some of the most populous European countries, such as Germany, the United Kingdom and Italy, as well as Japan.

The group at the bottom, with 3 or less benchmarks met, includes Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, the United States, Australia, Canada and Ireland. Most of the countries in the bottom part of the ranking also have child poverty rates exceeding the 10% level, and a participation to preschool for 4-year-olds lower than 70%.

1.1.6 Recent trends in early childhood services participation, 2008

Most of the statistical evidence presented in the *Innocenti Report Card 8* refers to the years around 2005. In the meantime new data has been made available, in particular by Eurostat. This section provides more recent statistics on formal early childhood services participation and on public expenditure.

Figure 4. Children under-3 in formal child care, percentage (2008)

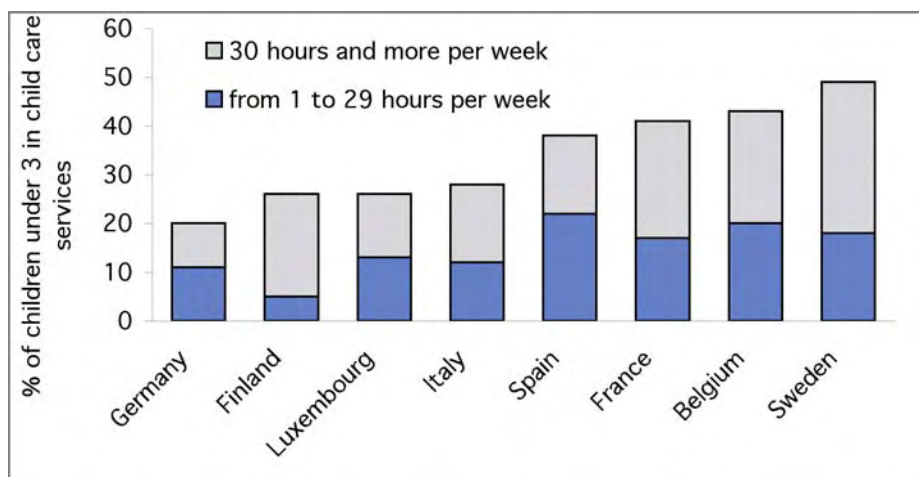


Source: elaboration of data from the Eurostat database, accessed 3 August 2010

Figure 4 reports statistics on participation of children under-3 in early childhood education and care services, irrespective of duration of weekly attendance. The highest rates of attendance are found in some of the Nordic Countries as well as in the Netherlands, Belgium and France, with levels higher than 40%. Levels lower than 10% are, on the other hand, found in most of the Central European EU member states and also in Austria.

A more detailed study of the available data shows that quite an important number of children under 3 years old, in child care services, attend the service for less than 30 hours per week (see figure 5).

Figure 5. Children under-3 in formal child care by duration, percentage (2008)



Source: elaboration of data from the Eurostat database, accessed 3 August 2010

Overall the participation in early childhood services for children under-3, ranges between 20 and 50% for most of the countries for which recent data is available.

Participation rates grow substantially with the age of the child. Table 1 reports data on the participation rate in education oriented pre-primary education services for children aged 4. In some countries the coverage of such services is almost universal. In 2008, more than 95% of 4 year olds in Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherland, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom were in formal child care and education services. On the opposite side, Ireland, Poland and Switzerland are the only three countries with a coverage of the 4 year olds lower than 50%. Moreover, in some countries, between 1998 and 2008, enrollment rates showed a clear growing trend.

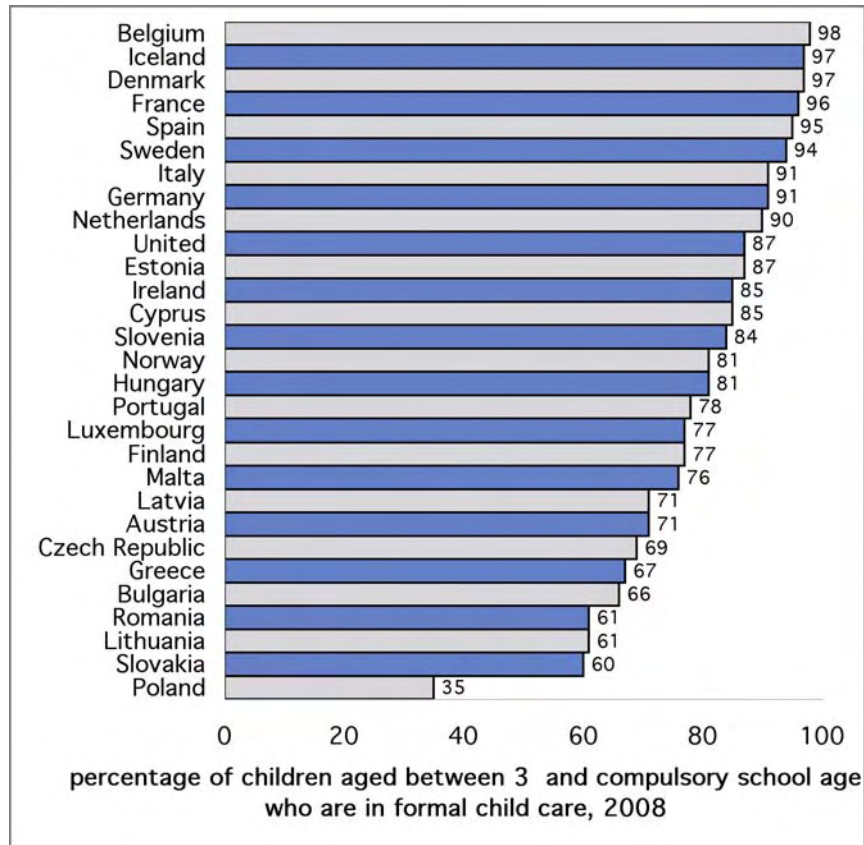
Figure 6 completes the picture of participation in early childhood education and care services, by reporting information on enrollment for children aged between 3 and the compulsory school age. Again, here, there is an important group of countries with rates over 90%. Only seven countries included in the table reported rates lower than 70%, with new EU members states from Central and Eastern Europe at the bottom of the figure.

Table 1. Participation of 4-year-olds in preprimary education, percentage

	1998	2008
Austria	73.2	85.6
Belgium	:	99.6
Bulgaria	61.2	71.7
Cyprus	:	75.3
Czech Republic	76.9	86.8
Denmark	89.1	95.3
Estonia	77.9	91.2
Finland	37.8	52.5
France	100	100
Germany	83.7	95.4
Greece	50.0	52.4
Hungary	88.3	92.5
Iceland	89.2	95.6
Italy	98.2	98.6
Japan	92.0	95.7
Latvia	52.9	78.6
Liechtenstein	:	51
Lithuania	44.3	65.0
Luxembourg	:	95.2
Malta	:	97.8
Netherlands	98.4	99.5
Norway	74.5	95.3
Poland	29.7	48.1
Portugal	65.8	81.3
Romania	56.1	79.0
Slovakia	:	74.8
Slovenia	:	83.2
Spain	99.8	98.7
Sweden	66.8	91.8
Switzerland	:	39.5
United Kingdom	95.3	97.3
United States	57.9	57.5

Source: elaboration of data from the Eurostat database, accessed 3 August 2010

Figure 6. Children aged between 3 and compulsory school age who are in formal child care, percentage (2008)

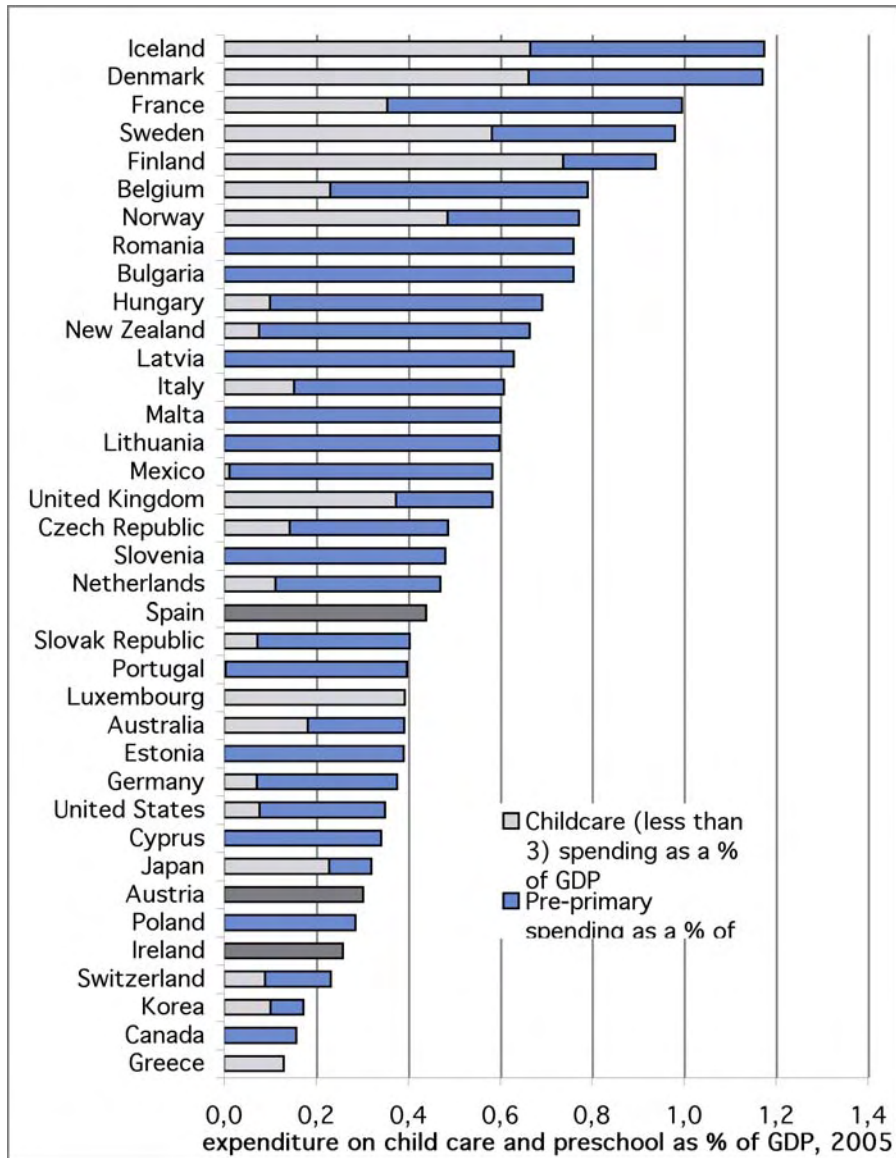


Source: elaboration of data from the Eurostat database, accessed 3 August 2010

Finally, figure 7 reports data on public expenditure in early childhood services in 2005, disaggregated by child care (for children aged less than 3) and for pre-primary education services. This new data confirms that in several countries the investment in services is low; in most of the countries included in the figure, it is at less than half a percentage of the GDP. These are very low levels of investment if the growing importance of these services in economically advanced countries is considered. Only five countries (Iceland, Denmark, France, Sweden and Finland) confirm expenditure levels higher than or close to 1% of the GDP target.

The *Report Card 8* shows that the public investment on the services plays a key role both for access and quality indicators. In a period of economic crisis, with lower public resources and higher completion for them, it may happen that governments are tempted to reduce their expenditure on this crucial area. It is a real risk at this moment in time. Less economic resources for early childhood education and care are likely to mean less access and less quality of the services, in particular for children from the most disadvantaged social and economic backgrounds. The actual risk is that the positive potential of the ongoing child care transition is transformed into the potential for harm and in growing social and economic inequalities.

Figure 7. Public expenditure on child care and preprimary education, % of GDP, 2005



Source: OECD Family Database, access 3 August 2010

1.2 Quality aspects of early childhood care services, families and policy development

Sylvie Rayna*

1.2.1 Quality aspects: sources and influences

It is impossible to talk about quality today without making reference to a major source that has nurtured and continues to nurture many projects, which encompass the major aspects of what we can call quality.

Work of the E.C. Network on Childcare (1986-1996)

This refers to the work conducted for ten years at Community level by the European Commission Network on Childcare, which is coordinated by Peter Moss and comprises recognised experts from different countries. The discussions of this group resulted in the intermediary publication on quality, such as *Quality in childcare services* (E. C. Childcare Network, 1990) and *Quality in services for young children: A discussion paper* (Balageur, Mestres, Penn, 1991). By developing its definition, this work culminated in the famous forty targets or objectives, proposed to Member States for the following ten years: *Quality targets in services for young children: Proposals for a ten year action programme* (E. C. Childcare Network, 1996)¹.

Documents founding a collective approach in Europe and beyond

These publications stimulated ample research on quality in the field of early childhood. They guided international comparisons and, in particular, the thematic examination of early childcare and education policies in twenty countries, *Starting Strong* (OECD, 2001, 2006), and followup (Bennett, 2010) which led to the recent proposal – with the choice of a certain image of children, parents and services, and ten major principles – of a European policy for early childhood, presented by *Children of Europe* in 2009². These publications refer to J. Peteers and others. These works followed each other and were closely linked to the development of new paradigms for rethinking the education of young children in the English-speaking world (Dahlberg, Moss, Pence, 1999; Dahlberg, Moss, 2005), but also the French-speaking world (Brougère, Vandembroeck, 2008).

The reception of these documents varied according to the cultural and political contexts

These founding documents, which are based on relevant local experiences (such as the experience of Reggio Emilia which have been transposed to many countries, from Sweden to Brazil, but have not yet been disseminated in France...), have re-oriented policies and practices in certain countries, boosted by the other works that have been mentioned, whereas in other cases, the effects have been, and continue to be, minimal to this day, partly due to cultural and political traditions.

In Italy there have therefore been many projects and experiences in the development of the quality of services in the field of early childhood in some townships in the north and centre of the country (Musatti, 2004; Picchio, Musatti, 2010) and their evaluation (Bertin *et al.*, 1998), where anglo-saxon measuring instruments have left some leeway for participatory approaches, supported by instruments that have been tried out in many regions or townships (Musatti, 2008).

In Belgium, the forty objectives inspired the Flemish policy (Peteers, 2004), and the reference work *Oser la qualité* (Manni, Sommer, 2000) in the French Community were carefully studied and a participatory evaluation of the quality of services is in place (Pirard, 2009 a; 2009 b; 2010).

In France, on the other hand, little reference is made to these documents and they are rarely

* Professor at the National Institute of Pedagogical Research – Paris University 13.

¹ These texts are compiled by the Childcare Resource and Research Unit (2004).

² This proposal is available in English and French at the following website: www.lefuret.org

echoed on the field. And yet... after a 6 month think-tank of a Parisian group of experts on early childhood, which was set up after a visit to their services by coordinators from the province of Bologna and to whom we not only presented the forty recommendations, but also the proposal of the *Children of Europe*, here is the spontaneous testimony of one of its members: *I remember my reaction after my first reading of the ten principles: «Wow, that's powerful!!! But impossible to apply this in France: too many barriers to be removed! It's utopian!...» Now, after reading more material and the debates on our practices in the group, I say to myself: «Why not? Why shouldn't we give ourselves the means to enable professionals working with young children between the ages of 0-6 to advance and evolve towards those values? And then, what can we, at our little early childhood structure level, we, as a small team, set up in line with those values?»* (January 2010).

Developments that fluctuate with changes in political stance

The progress that has been observed in certain countries with regard to quality, nevertheless, remains vulnerable to political change and economic crises. This can be observed in countries that have attracted particular attention in Europe and elsewhere, for their achievements in the field of integration, in care services as a whole and the education of young children, and the value they attach to the period of early childhood that precedes the age of compulsory education. This is true of Sweden (Karlsson-Lohmander, 2010) or New Zealand (Dalli, 2010), where alternating policies following progressive advances and austerity measures also affect the youngest in these countries.

1.2.2 Quality and fairness

To talk about quality without talking about equity is pointless. Thus quality is inseparable from quantity, if we claim to defend the principle of quality for all (Rayna, 2010).

Inseparable dimensions

Let us remember that the European Commission Childcare Network was established in 1986, within the framework of the second equal opportunities programme and that the research into the criteria for defining quality was stipulated in the third Community action programme on equal opportunities for men and women in 1991.

Let us also remember that the forty 1996 objectives were established in response to a Recommendation of the Council of Ministers in 1992 for childcare services: affordable prices; access (everywhere and for everyone); combination of safe childcare and education; relations with parents; parental choices; diversity and flexibility; coherence.

Giving everyone access to quality care

Ensuring everyone has access to quality care calls for reflection and efforts on the where and when: Many geographic areas are still insufficiently provided for, in rural districts for example... and too many new time slots have been opened as a result of flexibilisation, deregulation and the casualisation of labour, in some countries more than others.

It naturally requires sufficient resources (financial investments, intellectual resources, etc.) and appropriate measures (on the basis of comparisons and international exchanges). And this needs to take into account the objectives in terms of development, socialisation, identity construction, social inclusion, etc., both for children and parents. Children are well cared for if their parents are well cared for is something we often hear (yes, but how...?).

The impact of childcare services

Arguments in favour of quality childcare rest on a body of evidence gleaned from research into the effects of availing of childcare services, in which it is important to draw distinctions according to the contexts in which the research is conducted and the complexity of the web of parameters involved.

If one body of work has shown the negative effects of services of insufficient quality, other works reveal the positive effects of childcare outside the family and therefore the interest in universal

accessibility (Florin, 2000, 2007). We would like to emphasise a recent study conducted in France on the effects of day nurseries (Maurin, Roy, 2009) which not only highlights an increase in female employment, but also the confidence of parents as their children enter nursery school. And another study on nursery schools (Brougère *et al.*, 2008; Brougère, 2010) which leads one to believe that they mark the beginning of what C. Baudelot and R. Establet (2009) refer to as 'republican elitism'.

1.2.3 Quality and diversity

If quality is inseparable from equity, a third term also needs to be invoked: diversity... with regard to the singularity of each individual and different pre-school, family and professional cultures.

Participatory definitions of quality and social inclusion

During the course of the reflection conducted by the European Commission Childcare Network, quality was qualified as a relative and subjective notion, founded on values, the relevant definition of which must stem from an open and democratic process, which calls for the participation of the various parties concerned (Moss, 1996).

As part of an ethical and quality policy approach (Dahlberg, Moss, 2005), this deliberate crisscrossing of multiple voices – the voices of children, parents, professionals, decision-makers, experts, etc. – with the former still being heard too little and overpowered by the discourses of the latter, therefore appears to be a factor for inclusion and social cohesion.

Diversity, diversities

According to M. Vandebroek (2004, 2005), it is important to speak of diversities in the plural, in the face of the vast range of diversity characteristics that are to be found, at a social, cultural, ethnic and gender level etc., entailing other forms of care for diverse families by and in places that are rich in this diversity.

The many experiences that bring parents and professionals together, thanks to «social management» measures (Musatti, Rayna, 2010) and daily or festive encounters, marked by a multitude of apparent «small non-events»: such as the holiday chest which the children of Pistoia or Reggio Emilia fill with treasures.

Strength and originality of 40 objectives for... 2006

The strength and originality of the *Quality targets in services for young children* (1996) stem from the developed multi-dimensionality of quality, and the inter-dependence of the objectives concerned, as well as the inseparable link between quality and equity, constructing and promoting diversity, within the nine items covered in this document: Political framework (targets 1-6), financing (7-10), level and types of services (11-15), education (16-20), ratios (21-24), training (25-29), environment and health (30-33), parents and community (34-36), performance (37-40).

Let's take target 14, for example: «All childcare services should affirm the positive value of diversity and offer children and parents recognition and support in their diversity in terms of language, ethnicity, religion, gender or possible disabilities. They should also avoid stereotyping».

1.2.4 Quality aspects: progressive and ongoing definition

Different quality aspects have been defined and are being defined with past and current innovative experiences here and there. And other works, such as *Starting Strong*, on which the ten principles of the *Children of Europe* proposals are founded, have inspired a certain number of current experiences, despite difficult circumstances linked to the process of merchandising early childhood (Moss, 2008; Bennett, 2010; Ben Soussan, 2010).

Of these aspects, we focus more specifically on integration-coordination, education, the curriculum, parental participation and training.

Integrated or coordinated policies and services

The first striking feature which proved to be instrumental for achieving quality is a holistic vision of childhood which is not compartmentalised into different successive departments, a quality of education, as in the case of the Swedish policy of the *forskola* (Karlson-Lohmander, 2010), which enables them to overcome divisions and contradictions between the childcare sector and education. In the United Kingdom, the *Children Centre* (Pascal, Bertram, 2010) provides an example of integrated services that have proved their value.

In other places, where there are separate systems, there can be strong coordination between the childcare and education sectors, as has been demonstrated by certain Italian townships, where the pedagogical coordinators of nurseries play a major role in the so-called *scuole dell' infanzia* and care centres for parents-children (Musatti, 2000).

Global pedagogical approaches and documentation practices

Although pedagogy is a subject that is still a hindrance to some – in places where medical and hygienist traditions still remain strong – it would appear that a specific pedagogy for young children is a vital element in the quality offered to young children in childcare services.

A global pedagogy that is sensitive to the different dimensions of the development of children and family bonds. A pedagogy that involves multiple references, but that also grants a central role to playfulness in its multiple expressions, both within and without, as Nordic traditions (Broström, 2000; Chartrin, 2010; Greve, 2010) or Japanese traditions (Hoshi-Watanabe, 2010) have demonstrated.

A pedagogy, which favours rich and significant encounters. A «pedagogy that involves listening» and is supported by documented practices, such as those developed in Italy (Rinaldi, 2006; Galardini, 2009) and repeated elsewhere, by enriching, sharing and analysing practices. A «pedagogy of good taste» as well (Becchi, 2010)... A pedagogy founded on stable, warm and playful relationships and on the «curriculum of the child» (Trevarthen, 2010).

Open curricula

The existence of a framework facilitates the development of quality educational projects in services for young children, without which professionals are often deprived in the face of divergent models and/or dominant discourses that are far removed from their day-to-day experiences. Yes, but not just any framework... If the formal curricula, such as school curricula are to be excluded, certain open and participatory curricula come to mind (Bennett, 2005).

Of the latter, the Swedish pre-school curriculum focuses on democratic values from the very first line: «Democracy forms the foundation of the pre-school. For this reason all pre-school activity should be carried out in accordance with the fundamental democratic values. [...] the equal value of all people, equality between the genders as well as solidarity with the weak and vulnerable are all values that the pre-school shall actively promote in its work with children» (Lpfö, 98).

Or the Berlin curriculum, *Bridging diversity* (Preissing, 2007) or New Zealand's *Te Whāriki* (which in Māori means a «a mat for all to stand on») (Mitchell, 2009) which offers an alternative image of young children (Moisset, 2009) and their parents and offers professionals «another» role.

Parental participation

The involvement of parents and the bridges and meshes established between the diversities, thanks to the multitude of meeting opportunities, both at a formal and informal level (Jaume, Ribot, 2008) are another vital aspect of quality: for a representative participation in the *laboratorio* or workshop with families.

Policies and practices that are increasingly geared towards parental participation therefore reveal the paradigmatic shift from «for» to «with» the parents. By following J. Tobin, coordinator of the international research *Children Crossing Borders*³ project on care services for the children of migrants in the pre-school period, one can advance the idea of the 100 languages of parents, such as the 100 languages of the children of pedagogy in the region of Reggio Emilia where the documents, which are developed and shared with them, are a particularly fruitful tool.

³ www.childrencrossingborders.org

Appropriate training

Initial and continuous training is another major element, which is linked to the previous ones, with refined and permanently updated resources to move towards a new professionalism (Peteers, 2008). Beyond the transmission of professional techniques, this is about preparing practitioners that are reflective, affectionate, *responsive* and capable of tackling uncertainty.

We can insist on the diversity of training forms, by highlighting those that favour the participation of learners, during, for example, the participatory evaluations of quality (Musatti, Picchio, 2005), which stem from appropriate pedagogical practices in the field (Fortunati, 2007; Pirard, 2009a, 2009b) and which are supported by close reciprocal links between research and practice, as has been demonstrated in Italy, for example.

1.2.5 By way of conclusion

We will insist on the need to further develop research into the care and education of children under three years of age, which has been found to be lacking by researches in several countries⁴. This must be done with the participation of professionals, parents and children. In a world in which poverty, social exclusion, and the manifestations of migration primarily effect this section of the population, it is imperative to weave a web of social inclusion, through general links that bring together quality for ALL, children and adults.

A particular emphasis has to be placed on those that are often excluded from early childcare services, for reasons of poverty, migration, disabilities, and there is a need for exemplary policies and practices to be developed in this area, here and there (Mastio, 2010; Jacquemin, 2007; Gallagher, Norton, 2010). The work of local, national, and international networks that evolve together, by learning from each other, set the path.

⁴ Cf. next issue of *International Journal of Early Childhood*, coordinated by J.E. Johansson, focusing on Researching 0-3 in Europe.

1.3 The role of ECEC services and professionals in addressing poverty and promoting social inclusion

Jan Peeters*

1.3.1 Introduction:

The experience of VBJK with European projects addressing poverty and promoting social inclusion

The Research and Resource Centre for ECEC (VBJK) has been working for 15 years inside a European network (DECET) with the role of the social services for young children (0 to 3 years) to promote social inclusion in Flanders, the Dutch speaking community of Belgium. In 1995 the Resource and Research Centre was promoter of a large European Social Fund project with partners in the UK, France, Ireland and Belgium. This project on respect for diversity and promoting social inclusion in the childcare sector was set up in five cities of Flanders in collaboration with one of our partners, the Governmental organization Kind en Gezin. In 1998 VBJK was co-founder of European Network for trainers and researchers DECET (Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training). At the moment, partners from ten European countries are active in this Network, that is funded by the Bernard van Leer Foundation. Since the beginning of the new millennium VBJK works together with the sector in the Brussels Region with the social function of childcare. Accessibility to the centres for disadvantaged groups is one of the key topics of this work in Brussels.

Jan Peeters is also involved as a consultant in the East-European ISSA network that focusses on children's rights issues and social inclusion (especially Roma children). He is responsible for the Dutch version of "Children in Europe", a network of magazines that publishes a magazine twice a year, in 15 languages in 17 EU countries. This magazine has also given a lot of attention to the topic of social inclusion and respect for diversity and has published a policy paper that gives a framework to promote social inclusion and combat poverty via quality services for young children. We will talk further ahead in this article about these ten important principles of Children in Europe.

1.3.2 Childcare in Flanders: combating the exclusion of the poor

First I will talk about the policy towards promoting social inclusion in my own region, the Flemish Community of Belgium. A study from 2004 by the governmental organisation Kind en Gezin showed that poor and disadvantaged families make less use of childcare than the average Flemish family: 63% of parents make use of childcare but only 23% of ethnic minorities and 22% of poor families use childcare (Van Keer, Bettens, Buysse, 2004).

A research on the Flemish day care centres in Brussels carried out by our research centre in 2006, demonstrated that there are more subsidized places in affluent neighbourhoods than in poor ones and that priority criteria management excludes disadvantaged groups (Vandenbroeck *et al.*, 2008).

The policy makers were worried by these results. The Flemish Government took concrete actions: in the social economy sector, small and flexible community-based child care centres (*Buurtcrèches*) for poor and ethnic minority families were set up. These community-based centres succeeded in influencing the access of targeted population, but the creation of these new centres had no impact on the priority criteria management of the mainstream services. Therefore the governmental organisation Kind en Gezin ordered a research on a larger scale on the topic of the exclusion of disadvantaged groups in the centres for children from 0 to 3 years. This research (MAS, 2007) showed that 10% of parents do not find a childcare place; and that single parents, ethnic minorities and poor parents are largely overrepresented in this group.

* Co-ordinator of Research and Resource Centre for ECE - Ghent University.

Another study from the Centre for Social Policy (Ghysels, van Lancker, 2009) concluded that most subsidies in child care go to the more affluent parents.

In 2009 as an answer to these research results the Flemish government took structural measures: 20% of the capacity of all subsidized centres should be reserved for single mothers, and families living in poverty and in crisis situations. The city of Ghent has gone even further. In this city 40% of the children are at risk of poverty, or live in a one parent family, or are from an ethnic minority background. The education counsellor of Ghent has centralised the accessibility policy and now the same percentage of children (40%) that are part of these social criteria have found a place in the municipal day care centres.

But Flanders is not the only region in Europe that has taken structural measures to make child care accessible for children living in poverty. In the working group at the seminar, examples of interesting practice were given by France (Lyon) and Italy (Bologna, Rome).

1.3.3 Child poverty in Europe and what childcare can do about it

This brings us to the EU and the data for the percentage of children living at risk of poverty inside the EU 27. Although Europe is one of the richest parts of the world, child poverty is a serious problem inside the EU.

In the whole of the EU 27 there are about 19 million children or 20% of all children living in the EU (Eurostat/EU-SILC), living at risk of poverty.

Bulgaria	30%
Rumania	33%
Italy	25%
UK	23%
Sweden	12%
Slovenia	11%
Denmark	10%

It is surprising how big the differences are between the EU member states. Bulgaria and Rumania have high rates of child poverty, but Slovenia, another former communist country and new member state is doing very well with 11% (better than Sweden!). Some rich countries like Italy and the UK have high numbers of children living in poverty.

This worrying data brings us to the questions that Leonardo Menchini asked at the seminar in Florence in the conclusions of his presentation:

- Is the wider social and economic context supportive? Or are early childhood services being asked to row upstream against powerful currents of child poverty, and family-unfriendly policies in economy and the workplace?
- What systems can make high quality services available to all and ensure that disadvantaged and at-risk children are included?

The OECD report of 2006 on ECEC is warns us about too much optimism about the opportunities of child care services to address poverty and promote social inclusion. ECE alone cannot change structural poverty and institutional discrimination. Poverty is an unequal distribution of wealth and this cannot be solved by ECE institutions alone (OECD, 2006). But yet ECEC institutions for the very young can play an important role as part of a coherent policy to combat poverty. The UNICEF report (2008) quotes important studies that are focussing on the impact of poverty on the lives of the youngest children: 'Disadvantage becomes established in the earliest years of life... and it's here, if at all, that the self-perpetuating cycle of disadvantage could be broken'.

Longitudinal studies are showing that there is a strong evidence that high quality ECE and more specific centres, with staff that have a high level of training, can make the difference for children from disadvantaged groups (Sylva *et al.*, 2004; Fukkink, Lont, 2007).

Different authors and international organizations (OECD, 2006) have argued that it is important to develop an integrated approach to combat poverty and to promote social inclusion. In her presentation Sylvie Rayna has focused on the important role that the former Childcare Network from the European Commission has played in formulating 40 quality targets in 1996. These targets are still relevant as a European attempt to develop an integrated approach to quality that also takes into account the promotion of social inclusion of minority groups in the childcare services. In this perspective, the Policy Paper that the European Network Children in Europe developed recently (2008) is very inspiring. This Policy Paper has built further on the work of the European Childcare network (1986-1996). Under the leadership of Prof. Peter Moss, Children in Europe (CiE), a network of magazines in 17 European countries disclosed 10 principles for an integrated approach towards ECE services that promotes respect for diversity and social inclusion. We comment the most important aspects of these ten principles when it comes to addressing poverty.

***Towards an integrated social inclusion approach:
The ten principles of “Children in Europe”: Goals to strive for (2020)***

1. Access: an entitlement for all children

In the working group 2 of this seminar all participants agreed that access to services for the youngest children coming from poor families is an important factor to improve their living conditions. Also international organisations and declarations support this statement. For instance, General Comment no. 7 of the Convention for the Rights of the Child focusses on the importance of access to ECE services for the most vulnerable children.

Therefore childcare must become a right for all children. All children should be entitled to a place in ECEC, irrespective of any disability or other special needs; where they live; family income, whether or not their parents are employed.

Two Belgian researchers have made an interesting comparison between a country that has a universal approach to childcare services for 0 to 3 (Denmark) and two countries that have a targeted approach (The Netherlands and Belgium). In Denmark, a country with a right to a childcare place for all children, the attendance is similar for children from all social backgrounds. In Belgium and the Netherlands, countries with a targeted approach there is a higher attendance in socially advantaged groups in the child care centres (Humblet, Amerijcks, 2010; EU-SILC, 2006). The three studies on Flanders that we have described above also highlight the lack of representation of disadvantaged groups in the childcare centres of the Flemish community of Belgium. With a targeted approach towards the poor there is a risk of stereotyping and to quote John Bennett: ‘Services for the poor are often poor services’. Therefore we have to aim for a mixed social range in services for 0 to 3. In the workshops, several examples were given of cities (Rome, Gent, Bologna) that have developed a central registration that tries to realise this mixed social background in the population of the centres for the very young.

2. Affordability: a free service

For Children in Europe services for young children are an entitlement and a public responsibility, and the network is discussing that these services should be provided free of charge (also for 0-3) going towards 2020. For some countries this is a difficult target to reach in such a short period of time. In the workshops, examples were given of France and Belgium where parents pay according to their income. These measures were seen as an effective approach to increase the participation of poor families. In this perspective there is a debate going on between funding the services or funding the parents. The OECD is very clear on this topic in the report *Starting Strong II (2006)*: for disadvantaged families, direct funding of services brings more benefits than indirect funding via subsidies to parents (see also Moss, 2009).

3. Pedagogical approach: holistic and multi-purpose

“Children in Europe” is advocating for centres with a holistic and multi-purpose pedagogical approach. They are warning about a deficit approach in which centres focus on the hindering of poor children. The network is also not in favour of describing predicted results for children from poor families. Predicted results are often not adapted for vulnerable families. CiE is advocating for ‘education

in its broadest sense': where learning through social relationships and emotional and physical well-being play a central role.

These broad centres must offer a multitude of possibilities for the diversity of children and families. It is also important that they make the most vulnerable children visible in the local community and in the wider society. In this perspective the French 'Projet Social' and the project 'Social Function of Childcare in Brussels' are examples of interesting practice.

Traditionally for the 0 to 3 year olds, the focus is on care and for the

3 to 6 years of age the focus is on the preparation of the young child for primary school. This is not the emphasis we need if we want to promote social inclusion. Europe needs services that work in close relationship with parents, the community and the children. A deficit model, starting from what children from poor families are lacking is not an effective way to work with poor children and their parents. Like Aldo Fortunati has put forward in his presentation at the seminar, a centre that works with children from vulnerable families, has to focus on the strength of these children, has to look for the competent child in each of these babies and toddlers and has to strengthen the belonging and well being of children and parents. Fortunati talks in his presentation about the child as a protagonist to fight poverty.

In recent years, various types of these integrated young children centres have been set up in Europe: the 'Familien zenters' in Germany (Nordrhein-Westfalia), the Maisons relais (Luxemburg), the Children centres (UK) and Buurterèches (neighbourhood crèches) (Flanders). In the workshops, examples are also given of those kind of centres in France: Baby-loup in Paris and Mamy in Toulon.

4. Participation as a dialogue: an essential value

Participation of parents and children is an expression of democracy and is an important tool to combat social exclusion. But participation of poor parents may not be seen as a obligation towards parents. Organisations of the poor (Quart Monde) and also scientific scholars (Roose *et al.*, 2010) argue that participation must be seen as a dialogue. The right of participation of parents is not a reinforcement of the power of the educator but must be seen as a dialogue: educators and parents must look together for solutions to questions and concrete problems that they are facing and together must construct new pedagogical knowledge (Roose *et al.*, 2010, Vandebroek, 2001). In another seminar on this topic in Brussels in May 2010 organised by the Princess Mathilde Foundation the participants mentioned that we have to give more attention to the important survival capabilities of parents and children living in poverty.

5. Coherence: a framework to support a common approach

To combat poverty we need a single and coherent policy framework on a national or regional level that ensures a common approach and shared conditions throughout all services for young children. The Eurydice study *Tackling Social and Cultural Inequalities through Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe* is arguing that an unitary system in which child care is integrated in education is more able to breaking the cycle of disadvantage (Eurydice Report, 2009).

6. Diversity and choice: conditions for democracy

A pitfall in the discussion on fighting poverty, is that we see poor children as a separate category. An approach towards children living in poverty is part of a wider democratic condition that is based on recognition, respect and valuing of the diversity of language, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation and disability, and challenge stereotypes and discrimination.

From this perspective a childcare centre has to reflect on the diversity of the local community and has to explore and experiment with varying approaches in dialogue with disadvantaged groups.

7. Evaluation: participatory, democratic and transparent

The evaluation or the quality control of the organisation has to be open to all children and adults, providing the opportunity for everyone to discuss real, concrete things – rather than the assumed scientific objectivity offered by expert and managerial evaluations, who often don't take into account the needs of disadvantaged groups. Fortunati also warns in his presentation about prescribed results in the curriculum for the youngest children.

8. *Services for young children and compulsory school: a strong and equal partnership*

Childcare services must make the link with kindergarten or primary school and they must work together to better help the poor families. In many European countries childcare and school are integrated in new centres and those centres have flexible opening hours. This is important for vulnerable families because they have often jobs outside normal working hours.

In the workshops an interesting example was given of Flanders where the vulnerable families were visited by social workers or social nurses of services for health care, to motivate the parents to send their children to the kindergarten (kleuterschool).

9. *Cross-national partnership: learning with other countries*

Europe has a rich heritage of innovative and democratic theory and practice in services for young children. Therefore more European meeting places have to be set up (ChildONEurope, DECET, ISSA, EUROCHILD, Children in Europe...) where there can be dialogue, reflection and opportunities for border crossing to explore new perspectives, where practice can be made visible and discussed critically, and where we can learn with each other and co-construct new pedagogical knowledge.

10. *Valuing the work: a 0-6 profession*

In all the workshops and in studies on professionalism (Peeters, 2008) it was discussed that we should rethink the professional's role. There is a need for a professional worker who is qualified to work in a pedagogical way with children from birth to 6 years, and to work not only with children, but also with their families and the wider community. There is overwhelming scientific evidence that the level of schooling of the educators is especially important for children coming from poor families: high quality ECE (high training of staff) can make the difference for children from disadvantaged groups (Sylva, 2004; Fukkink, Lont, 2007).

International organizations (UNICEF, 2008) and scholars agree that there is a need for a professional with a bachelor degree to work with the youngest children and their parents. Across European countries (Oberhuemer, Schreyer, 2010; Peeters, 2008) we can see some interesting profiles that exist for working with the youngest children:

- The *Early childhood professional*, who works for the 0 to 6 years old in childcare and kindergarten or school: Latvia, Slovenia, Sweden.
- The following initial bachelor degree courses prepare to work with vulnerable children very well because they focus more on the social aspects of the job.
 - Social professional pedagogy: a general initial training for working with children and adults from 0 till 99 year (Denmark, Luxemburg en Finland)
 - Social pedagogy for the youngest children (educateur jeunes enfants): a specialised initial training (France).

A study on the kind of professionalism we need to work in the context of diversity and promote social inclusion (Peeters, 2008), has stipulated that we need:

- a broad integrated professionalism, linked with other social professions
- a reflective practitioner with a high degree of autonomy who is able to construct new pedagogical knowledge together with parents
- a professionalism based on competencies and qualities to meet complex demands in particular contexts
- In the seminar on professionalism and combating poverty in Brussels some people advocated for a 'humble' professionalism, away from the expert model.

Different authors have mentioned the importance of the guidance of pedagogical counsellors for practitioners. In the daily work with vulnerable children these counsellors can have a positive effect on the expansion of the interpretation of professionalism. Counsellors can help practitioners to become enactors of change and enable professionals to develop the high valued reflexive professionalism, needed to work in the context of social inclusion. Counsellors or Pedagogistas can play a role as a facilitator to allow a team to ask difficult questions, rethink conceptions of what good practice may be towards parents and children living in poverty.

Two European Networks DECET&ISSA did some participative research on competencies in the context of diversity and social inclusion in Morocco, Mexico, Serbia, Scotland, Belgium, The Netherlands, Ireland, Spain and France (2006-2010).

The goal of this research is to create a broad competence profile for an ECE professional based on the ideas and experiences of practitioners that work successfully in a context of diversity and social inclusion.

The DECET-ISSA research project created a virtual community of practice where trainers, and practitioners, educators, policymakers and researchers could discuss the broad competence profile, share experiences about the profile, collect examples and co-construct the competence profile. A hundred and fifty practitioner's from 9 different countries were selected.

The selection was made on the basis that these professionals successfully worked in a diverse context and that their centre had developed a diversity policy. We will list the broad competences that came out of this study.

Competences profile to work in the context of diversity and social inclusion

1) *Being willing and able to work towards change.*

- The possibility to dialogue, not as an exchange of experience but as a process of transformation.

Including activism to fight inequalities on a micro, meso and macro level

2) *Openness for dialogue:*

- Being willing and open to active listening

- Openness to 'Others'

3) *Dare to go from opposite meanings to joined solutions*

- Give place to emotions and feelings from professional and parents.

4) *Be able to take on a research attitude*

- Being able to look at a problem from different perspectives and with a high level of curiosity.

5) *Being able to construct pedagogical knowledge with colleagues, parents and children.*

- The professional is aware that to construct new pedagogical knowledge all perspectives (from children, parents, colleagues and management) are needed in order to understand the complex pedagogical reality in early childhood centres.

1.3.4 Policy conclusions for addressing poverty in ECE (0-3) services

To conclude this article we draft some key success factors for the inclusion of disadvantaged children and families:

- Need for a unitary system for 0 to 6 years of age
- Need for a comprehensive policy towards children from vulnerable families.
- Addressing poverty by means of a broad diversity approach, not a targeted approach.
- Always try to keep mixed social backgrounds in the services.
- Childcare as a right for all children and families: universal approach.
- Parental fee: short term income related in all services-in 2020 free of charge?
- Need for integrated centres, with multiple functions.
- Need for a bachelor degree with focus on dialogue with parents and respect for diversity: broad competencies and qualities.
- Need for a mixed workforce: 1/3 bachelor, 1/3 secondary, 1/3 people from disadvantaged groups in training (Cameron, Moss, 2007).
- Stimulating the exchange of interesting experiences within EU countries
- The effects of accessibility must be monitored on a local level.

1.4 Children's identity and the quality of ECEC services

*Aldo Fortunati**

1.4.1 The new image of the child as protagonist and the quality of ECEC services

There is a fundamental issue about which it is important to share some considerations and awareness before being able to speak about the identity of services and their quality. This issue is that of children's identity.

The image that we are thinking of is the image of a child who is a person from the beginning, who is a rights holder and who has abilities. In this perspective, children are the "the protagonists of their own processes of growth". They possess "formidable natural aptitude to be the protagonists of their own growth and development, an aptitude that children translate into curiosity towards the world of things and relationships and into the extraordinary ability to be present constructively within the contexts of experience in which they are involved".

As a matter of fact, a predictable child, far from having the opportunity to express him/herself actively and constructively and, as a consequence, doomed to never amaze anyone – adults included – with what he/she does, frees the educator from many burdens and, most of all, from the responsibility to listen beyond what has already been established, supported by a supposed awareness of what to do and for what purpose.

The result is that not only all the declarations regarding the potentials of young children and the treasures of early childhood become exclusively rhetorical, and the job of educating is made mundane and mechanical, but also that all the old images of young children re-emerge and become strikingly contemporary, with their lack of attributions for children and their dispensaries of instructions on how to elevate the innate incompleteness of childhood to the attainment of adult wisdom.

As if nature had given the human species the innate potentials of immaturity only so that it could be freed of them as quickly as possible.

Such an image is very far from the idea of a child who is weak, passive and in need of care and protection. We believe that pedagogy, education and the project of education services as well as those elements that define its quality must be built around such an image.

Taking into account children's potentials does not only mean to trust children but also to assume a concrete responsibility to guarantee adequate opportunities for their expression. This entails some organizational considerations and some planning orientations. The main organizational considerations deal with:

- the stability of physical and relational contexts;
- the regularity of experiences over the years;
- the development of a meaningful relationship with families.

The main planning orientations deal with:

- the revaluation of the context;
- the re-thinking of the role of the teacher;
- the emphasizing of the collegial work and the care about the documentation of the experiences.

Rather than a place for the standard application of human technologies to achieve standardised results, the education services for early childhood are thought to be an environment or context where children and teachers as protagonists, share daily life, create relationships and experiences and generate new understanding and, therefore, new knowledge.

* Director Documentation, Research and Training Area, Istituto degli Innocenti, Florence (Italy).

Designing educational activity starting from the organization of opportunities leads to a number of important positive consequences:

- it tends to favour attention to the overall examination of the events in which the children are involved during the course of their experience, giving this, as a whole, significant value;
- it makes it possible to highlight the processes and strategies employed by each individual child, giving value to their diversities;
- it depends on considering the context in which the experiences take place as an element in ongoing relationship with those experiences, in the sense that the context generates the field of possibilities within its own organizational limits and collects the traces of the experience, modifying and making it history as it unfolds.

Alongside the constructive child and a teacher who is more attentive to creating possibilities than pursuing predefined goals, the context is a key player, it is the indispensable placenta that generates, nourishes, contains, and reflects (undergoing modifications over the years) the unfolding of the educational action, supporting the children and teachers who are its protagonists and offering the necessary support for the onset and development of their constructive process of reciprocal relationships and evolution.

Furthermore, family participation consists in parental involvement in the social management of services, but as part of the need for parents to share in the educational project, the benefits which enable women and men to construct their identities as fathers and mothers, in the growing awareness of their contribution to early childhood education.

The value placed on parental participation reveals the vacuity of the home/nursery dualism.

The problem is how to offer children and their parents different but complementary environments, not removing responsibilities from parents but rather strengthening them in their role and deepening their understanding of their own and their child's identity and educational potential.

It is also evident that the value of having the management of these services devolved to the local authorities creates the conditions that ensure that interventions are pertinent to the local needs and provides a natural endowment of flexibility and openness to social participation.

At this point it seems worth looking more in depth at two specific aspects:

- the child as protagonist and the very notion of "curriculum";
- the child as protagonist and inclusion policies.

1.4.2 The child as protagonist and the very notion of "curriculum"

Concerning the workforce recruitment and training it is crucial to consider that the assumption of an image of young children as strong, rich, and full of potential requires a corresponding transformation of the role of teachers toward a direction in which their action is based:

- much more on the organization of structuring contexts than on providing direct stimuli for children's actions;
- much more on the capacity to recognise and expand the diversities of children's behavioural styles than on the anxiousness to conduct them toward precise and predefined skills;
- much more on attention to the process of action as the expression of an evolutionary strategy than on the need to certify the level of development reached within a sphere of supposed general parameters.

The dimension that opens up, then, is one of dialogue, sharing, exchange and comparing of ideas.

This approach not only leaves no place for predetermined outcomes, but it rather introduces the issue of the very notion of "curriculum", intended as "a pre-established sequence of actions" to be increasingly implemented to early childhood services throughout the world.

Rather than teachers delivering curricula, we should talk of "strategic action, as the driving force for planning".

While the term 'curriculum' involves a series of predetermined operations implemented to obtain predetermined outcomes, the word 'strategy' requires the ability to take advantage of and to work with the opportunities and connections that emerge in the educational context. A 'strategy' "is constructed as the action takes place" and is "the art of using the information produced in the action to integrate it, to formulate certain schemes of action 'on the spot', and to enable oneself to gather the maximum certainty for confronting that which is uncertain".

The role of documentation by which teachers (or any other observer) submit their observations (to "collegial reflection and critical discussion that can enhance their meaning and shared value", is essential for open and collegial educational work. These observations are "not a mirroring of reality but an interpretation of reality". This creates a very specific image of the teacher, whose main role is to organise contexts (and the physical environment is thought as essential for children's experience, not just as a backdrop) and opportunities, rather than merely leading children towards predetermined results.

The teacher permits connections between people, ideas, and experiences. In so doing, the teacher is "removed from the ambiguity of certainties", and must instead take on a "responsibility to choose, experiment, discuss, reflect and change, focusing on the organisation of opportunities rather than the anxiety of pursuing results, and maintaining in her/his work the pleasure of amazement and wonder".

Here, we are a long way from the teacher-as-technician, an image increasingly dominant in advanced liberal societies and much closer to the image of the teacher as a reflective practitioner and researcher.

This teacher is, like the child with whom she/he works, strong, competent, curious and active – a complete teacher, a protagonist, as much as the child.

The relationship between teacher and child is worked out by bringing into relationship their respective strategic contributions within the interaction, not with the view of making different points of view homogeneous and consistent, but in order to understand how different points of view are constructed reciprocally.

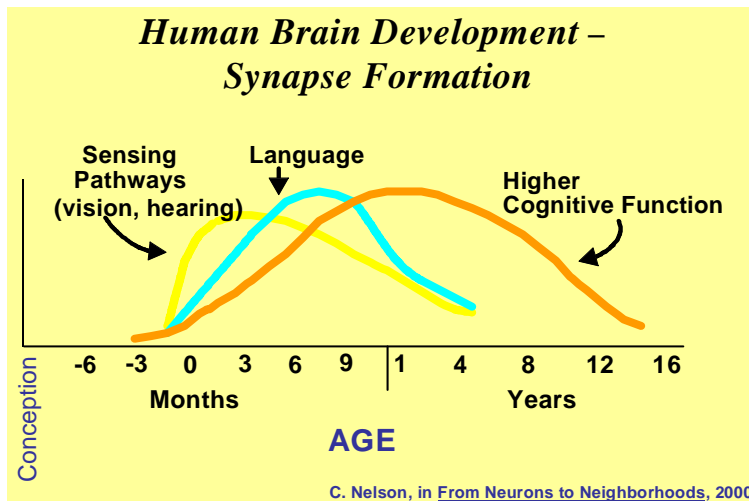
The teacher's role is identified as the main "connector" of elements, points of view, and relationships within an educational context that, while not accommodating randomness of thoughts and actions, is nonetheless capable of being open to the unpredictable and to chance.

This kind of professionalism considered from this new point of view, definitely needs a high level of training before starting working in services and also a high level of ongoing training and supervision within them.

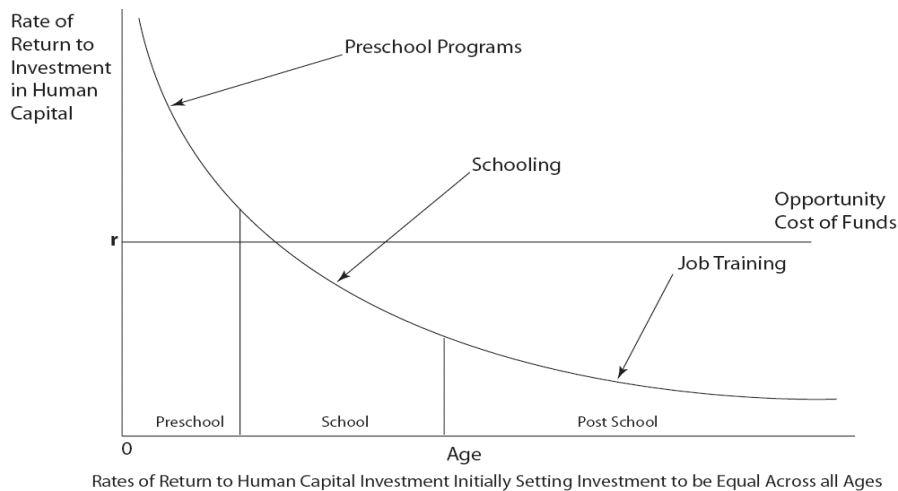
1.4.3 The child as protagonist and inclusion policies

It is crucial to notice how such an approach relies on the enhancing of human potential instead of on setting up resources when exclusion or problematic situations are already present.

This view deals with the issue of inclusion not as a fight against exclusion, but instead as the promotion of the development and the support of human potential in positive terms.



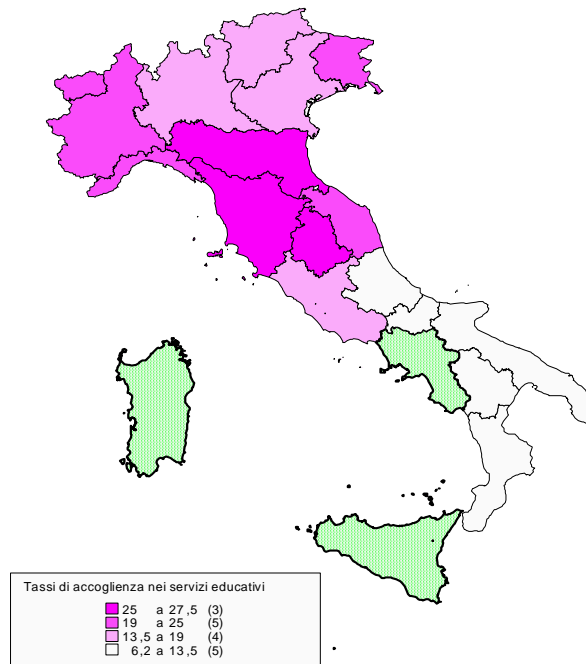
On the other hand, as shown in the graph above, researches agree in identifying the very first years of life as the period in which evolutionary processes, that are fundamental for the personal identity construction, are most concentrated.



At the same time, some very authoritative reflections from economical sciences point out the very high economical profitability of investments that are orientated toward the preschool period. These beliefs represent an orientation that should make policies realise that this kind of investment is more important and profitable than searching for solutions when problems are already there.

In order to say that we have general good results, we also need to have quantitative, good and measurable results. The current network of facilities available for very young children in Italy, for example, offers educational services only to about 23% of the 0 to 2 year-old children, but, as shown in the chart, the distribution of the “nidi” in Italy is very diversified.

Places in nidi and integrative services per 100 children 0-2 years old
per Region and Autonomous Province – At 31/12/2008¹



These quantitative differences are accompanied by differences in the social representation of needs, as well as in the quality of projects and experiences. In particular, the quantity and quality of educational services for children seem to be directly proportional to:

- the diffusion of the social representation of children’s potential and competence;
- the development of expectations regarding the availability of services capable of offering – (within the context of a public political effort) opportunities of expression for the children’s potential and support to the families in the expression of their educational potential.

We can look at ECEC services as important elements for a kind of “ecological experiment” that enables us to read and interpret certain interesting phenomena.

- In immediate terms, this experience shows that the significant and qualified presence of educational services for young children encounters a level of interest and appreciation on behalf of the families, that goes beyond a simple correlation between the expression of the demand and the need for assistance, to embrace the educational value that the infant-toddler centres and other integrative services hold for both the children and the families.
- In the medium and long term, these kind of experiences will also be able to help in understanding the forms of relationship that can exist between the significant and qualified presence of educational services for young children and (just to offer few of the possible examples) the presence of women on the job market, the tendency towards motherhood and fatherhood, the sharing of the responsibilities of child care among parents, and furthermore, attention to individual diversities, intercultural relations, and the prevention of phenomena of school dispersion and abandonment.

That is the reason why, in conclusion, we want an universally available service that is conceptualised as a public responsibility and one that confirms the virtuous relationship that can be established between the recognition of children’s protagonism, community participation and public

¹ Data updated every 6 months in the framework of the monitoring activities of the extra-ordinary Plan show the present phase of progressive development of policies on ECEC services (see www.minori.it).

policy, at a time when policies persist in taking directions that are predominantly different from those of the children.

Maybe the most important thing is not measuring results on children, but instead starting to measure the availability and controlling the quality level of these kinds of services and opportunities for our children and our families.

1.5 Outcomes of the Working Groups

Working group 1

Children's identity and the quality of ECEC services*

Coordinator: Aldo Fortunati

Participants from: Denmark, France, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, Italy

Discussion points:

- Children's identity
- The child as protagonist of his/her own processes of growth and development
- ECEC services must be built around such a perspective
- Organizational considerations and planning schemes/orientations

Coordinator's presentation

Crucial issue: the importance of uniting ECEC policies and their quality.

In order to reflect on the quality of ECEC. It's necessary to establish a common concept on the identity of the children. Fortunati shows a series of images from the Istituto degli Innocenti's artistic heritage, explaining that the artistic representation reflects the historical development of the child's identity, from the idea of a child who is weak and passive, to the idea of the child as:

- A person
- Rightholder
- Endowed with creative potential
- (A person) under development
- A protagonist of his/her own processes of growth and development

Education allows the expression of potential development. Society accepts the responsibility to provide a context to develop children's potential capacities.

The specific responsibility is to make quality services available in order to reach this objective.

Necessary elements to ensure the quality of ECEC

1. Stability of the contexts of both physical relationships and those outside the family, which enable the child to establish its benchmarks.
2. Regularity: children need time references with the daily routine, but also flexibility, depending on their needs
3. Continued and meaningful dialogue with families.

Other necessary conditions

- Context of relationship depending on the child's identity, importance of physical space (which encourages the exploration of the child).
- Rethinking the role of the educator: educator and infant are two subjects in a horizontal and cooperative relationship.
- Collective reflection among educators: the need to discuss, to share experiences, documentation, etc.

Two aspects to deepen

1. The child protagonist of the curriculum
2. The child protagonist of inclusion policies

* The present report has been drafted by Mercedes Benito, rapporteur of the group.

1. The curriculum

Compared with an interpretation of the curriculum as uniformity and application of homogeneous models and default, this is a curriculum based on understanding and expanding individual skills, focusing on diversity.

The curriculum of early childhood education is very complex, it needs:

- patience for children to express themselves
- a distinct organizational context for each child, to facilitate creative expression.
- it should not impose, but offer opportunities
- reflection, collegial documentation, exchange of experiences, also with parents (with attention to mental representations and stereotypes instead of looking at their own children's abilities).

Myths to be avoided by educators

- Certainty: linking education to change rather than certainty.
- The results: increasing emphasis on organizing opportunities rather than on results.

2. Social inclusion. From the real to the possible

Importance of promoting the child's potential before being affected by problems. The first two years of life are key stages of individual development, there is no other time in life when there is such a concentration of significant learning.

The investment is profitable at this stage, it takes fewer resources for higher achievements. The universality and quality of ECEC services appears to be proportional to the representation of children as power and competence.

Conclusions

- Approach on quality, universality, natural expectation of parents, means a recognition of the community as a right for all children, no longer linked to special needs.
 - There is a very strong link between greater quantity and quality of services and:
 - employment rate
 - equity
 - balance of fathers / mothers responsibilities.
 - preventing failure at school.
 - quality of life
- opting for
- Universal services, affordable for everyone.
 - Increase responsibility of all people.
 - Quantity and quality, including
 - state of quality monitoring
 - financial support.

QUALITY AND EQUITY. Debate

Participants' interventions: main questions emerged

1. At which age universal access to ECEC services must be offered?
2. How early incorporation undermines the right to identity? All activities are organized by adults, there is little space to be with other children, to be alone, to do nothing... If you are not guaranteed one-to-one relation with each baby, it is better not to go
3. A representative of a municipal service in Italy says they have very organized services, all activity is regulated, planned like in real schools (in Nordic countries they are more free, flexible, with a more individual approach). In Italy we would have to change the pattern, finding a balance between an individual approach and another more diversified.

4. Responsible policies for children in Emilia Romagna, with the link between quality and free access for all. The difficulty is getting politicians to agree on gratuity. Key point: quality with affordable costs promotes inclusion.

Coordinator's intervention

Is there a "good" age to go to an ECEC service? This is impossible to determine as there is not a better age, but an appropriate age for each child and each mother. It is a choice for parents, especially mothers, according to reality, in an environment in which mother and father enjoy their relationship with the child. This certainly also depends on their employment situation and perspectives.

When we speak of universal obligation it's not in the "compulsory" sense but rather in the "warranty" sense, to indicate the possibility to have access to services or even the parents' freedom to choose between different options, or also to choose the age of access.

We share a concern about the rigid system in which services are often organised. This would be an opportunity to offer structured moments balanced with more individualized ones, moments of rest and moments to be alone.

Participant (Responsible for Social Policies, Piedmont): male parents are still scarcely involved because of work permits etc. this partially depends as well on the fact that employers are reluctant to give parental permissions.

Coordinator: men are less involved in educational activities. In Norway there is a tendency to include more males in ECEC services.

A change in that sense would be great, but how could this happen? From one point of view, now parents share more tasks, although the father is more orientated towards play activities.

Participant (from Southern Italy): ECEC services are lacking in southern Italy (Bari). How can we influence policies? This cannot be measured in strictly economic terms, because it is not the same as raising animals. How can we lay the grounds for a different system and how can we fight against the unpredictable aspect of politics? This is a country with resources.

Coordinator: The public system does not work in many cases, but developing good policies is a different issue.

Our standards of conscience and convergence are high, the quality indicators are clear. The problem is that politicians still have not taken interest in the subject to deploy resources. He is not very optimistic.

The key is to share experiences, raise awareness and promote networking to influence politics. It is not only to understand but to effect and to provoke change in policies.

Participant: in Spain the issue of early childhood care is included in the political agenda and, in recent years, there has been an increase in the state budget for ECEC services.

Final Comment (Coordinator)

He highlights the strategic role of the network to help influence European policy.

Our key phrase should be "**sharing experiences to transform**".

Working group 2

Access to ECEC services, costs and fees for families with special attention to migrant and socially disadvantaged children*

Coordinator: Sylvie Rayna

Participants from: France, Italy and Belgium (Flemish Community).

Discussion points:

- Presentation of partly local experiences and innovative initiatives being conducted in the different countries, with a view to answering some key questions:
- Towards free services: how?
- Universal fees, according to the families' incomes and characteristics (common services and family services)
- The roles of national and local government in the economic provision / funding
- The relation between public and private sector
- Which innovations do link children care and inclusion/insertion of parents?

The debates reveal:

- ECEC services are already free in the three countries mentioned above for children > 2 ½ years, with the exception of childcare outside schools (unlike other countries, such as the Nordic countries and UK).
- The issue of free services crops up in ECEC services for children < 2 ½ years. This is due, among other things, to financial obstacles as a result of shortages (cf. Barcelona target) and recessions. Free services can be more difficult to defend when the relative services only concern a certain section of the parents of children in this age group.
- The problem of accessibility to services is multi-fold:
 - financial,
 - geographic (cf. differences in the supply of care services between rural and urban areas and within urban areas)
 - cultural.
- Moreover, existing initiatives for making services more accessible, provide families with greater choices. Too often they are little known and local, and bear no real relation to the larger scale. The workshop is an opportunity to adopt an approach for identifying and sharing analyses of interesting initiatives.

Ex1: In Flanders, due to shortages, single-parent families and families contending with unemployment, have less of a chance of finding a place in a childcare centre. Two structural measures have therefore been taken at Community level.

Firstly, a parental fee programme (PFP), based on income, for (non) subsidised collective and family care services (is being implemented). This system already exists in the subsidized sector, and is now also available for ECEC services in the non-subsidised sectors. One third of the non-subsidised sector has already opted for this PFP system. The care centres that choose to avail of this system declare it to the relative authorities and implement it for all the children covered by the services. They first need to be authorized and to meet a series of functional conditions, which are inspected¹. In exchange for this, they will receive a public subsidy (a maximum of €25/day/child in the collective childcare centre, and a maximum of €17/day/child in the family care centre) as a supplement to the fee paid by the parents. To avoid any stigmatisation of families, a code system is in place: The ECEC centres do not know the amounts parents pay in the PFP.

* The present report has been drafted by Florence Pirard, rapporteur of the group.

¹ Since 2007, inspections are conducted by an external public agency (a joint agency for all welfare services; most of the agents still benefit from their experience as agents of Kind&Gezin).

Secondly, an official priority system is in place in the subsidized and non-subsidised ECEC centres that have opted to use the parental fee programme, which is calculated on the basis of the parents' income (20% of places are reserved for single parent families, unemployed families, and the children of parents seeking vocational integration, etc.).

- Challenges of this initiative: To make all services (subsidized and non-subsidised, collective and family-oriented) financially more accessible, while ensuring that conditions are right for quality care services.
- Impact: Has been running for 1 year; it is too early to evaluate the effects of these measures, in terms of, among other things, their impact on the number of disadvantaged families currently being catered for. To be followed:

Ex2: In Italy, ECEC services are almost entirely collective and vary in their organisation, according to the regions. With regard to ECEC services for children between the ages of 0 and 3, in centres managed by municipalities, families cover 24% of the real average cost at national level, although this percentage varies a great deal from one township to the next, and in all cases varies according to the family's income. Priorities are established (for children with psycho-physical problems, in need of urgent care). In most cities (Bologna, Rome, etc.), the same system is applied to ECEC centres that are accredited and subsidized by the municipalities: A scale is established on the basis of the parents' income, with the municipality paying the balance.

In Rome, for example, families submit their childcare requests to the municipality, which then proposes different options. For public eligible ECEC services, the more attentive municipalities also offer continuous joint training for professionals working in both subsidized and public ECEC services and organize other forms of networking. Systems for evaluating subsidized nurseries (Rome) or subsidized and public nurseries (Emilia region) have been set up and are currently being tested.

In certain regions, according to the testimony of professionals in a cooperative in Bologna, the state grants aid to the accredited private sector through a coupon system. If, for example, the family requests home services that amount to €950/month, it will pay a maximum of €450, and the remaining €500 will be covered by the municipality. Nevertheless, €450/month may still be too high an amount for certain families to pay. In Bologna, a coupon system has been tried out for families that have applied for them and are employed. If one of the parents loses their job, the family automatically loses its entitlement to coupons!

In Rome, there is no coupon system (at the moment).

- The experiences of Bologna and Rome reveal different forms of subsidizing with contradictory effects. They highlight the importance of public investment, not only at a financial level, but also in terms of a more global evaluation and monitoring of ECEC services to provide quality care for all.
- What are the effects on ECEC services for disadvantaged families? Studies conducted in Italy yielded the following results:
 - Since the children of working mothers are given priority access to public and subsidized childcare, both parents are in employment in an average of +/- 85% of the families that avail of the ECEC services.
 - Single parent families with children under the age of 3 are poorly represented, but benefit from priority access to ECEC services.
 - Requests from legal immigrant families are accepted by the municipalities. A study conducted in 2002 in Rome, Milan and Pérouse revealed that in the same city, the percentage of children from immigrant families that are in municipal (or subsidised) childcare or on waiting lists is the same as indigenous families. It highlights differences between cultural groups: Families of Asian origin do not avail of public childcare services as much as families originating from Eastern Europe or South America.

Ex3: In France, a specific investment has been allocated to childcare (1% of GDP), with 70% of the

costs being covered by the Family branch of social security, while the remaining 30% is covered by the townships and families. There is no question of free childcare for children of less than 3 years old, considering the economic climate and the cost that a measure of this kind would represent, but a «sem-free» service. The PFP contributions parents pay under critical circumstances can be as low as 29 cents/h...

In practice, municipalities give priority to families with low incomes or a precarious status, but an equilibrium always has to be found to, among other things, ensure there is a healthy management of public funds. The principle is to reserve a quota of places for minimum social security beneficiaries with guaranteed access (irrespective of the development of the family situation). Urgent childcare is also a priority.

At the same time, institutions are not only expected to run pedagogical programmes, but also social projects that link the service to its local environment and meet the needs of families (including the most disadvantaged families). The accessibility targets raise questions about enrolment practices and the management of places in establishments:

- In France, there is a relatively low level of participation compared to other countries. This fact is, among other things, linked to the 35 hour structure which generates an increase in families' demand for childcare on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, more than other days. As a result services are under-used. Current requirement: 65% occupancy rate.
- There is also interest in a centralized system for enrolment requests at township level or a group of townships in order to make the most possible use of available places, irrespective of the parents' place of residence. A place allocation committee ensures that there is a social mix in the various services².

- Challenge: Accessibility involves different levels of responsibility (state, municipality, establishments) and calls for the development of the social functions of all care services beyond their educational and economic functions, without creating a ghetto effect.

An analysis of the various initiatives reveals that:

- In order to make services accessible to all, a proactive approach is essential and must be accompanied by a meeting of the requirements expressed by the families. For example, a parent who is seeking a job, that requires training will probably not only need to have vocational guidance but also some help in finding a place in childcare. This is why it is important to make vocational integration agents aware of the issues of childcare. The challenges of ensuring accessibility highlight the importance of establishing partnerships between people working in education, integration and employment (cf. experiences in Flanders).
- The issue of ensuring disadvantaged families' access to services is exacerbated by the fact that they are often forced to accept precarious jobs with atypical or unpredictable working hours, which compels them to resort to «D systems» to solve their childcare problems. Local initiatives tend to offer contextualized solutions. In the Parisian region, there is a 24/24h nursery association called «Babyloup» which caters for children in a disadvantaged neighbourhood to allow women in this neighbourhood to enter or return to the labour market; this crèche is run with the women of the neighbourhood. Other experiments have been conducted, such as those of municipalities that organize and finance the cost of providing the assistance of a child-minder, who collects the child from the nursery to ensure their care outside opening hours. Reference is also made to the inter-generational experiences of the «Mamy» association in Toulon, which offers, among other things, a fixed childcare service, but also itineraries that cover isolated rural areas, by giving priority to children whose parents are on minimum social benefit and by favouring the training of parents in, among other things, the field of personal services. Mention should also be made of the travelling structures in the more vulnerable neighbourhoods of big cities like Marseille.

² Experiences in Flanders in the joint management of enrolment requests for family and collective ECEC services at local level also show the positive effect of these measures on the attendance rate of these services.

- These different experiences have highlighted the importance of taking into account a social phenomenon (such as the flexibility in working hours for example), while at the same time calling into question the role of public bodies. How far should one go in responding to the need for flexibility on the labour market (protecting the interests of children and parents beyond those of employers) ? What limits should be defined ? How to ensure accompanying measures when the service is really necessary (ex: Fire brigades, police, health care, etc.). These supplementary measures do not only raise financial issues, as in the case of the Flemish experience where funds are available to extend the opening hours of services but where subsidy requests do not follow. These measures raise political debates, the problems of reconciling professional and private lives for the professionals concerned and security issues in cases of extended opening hours. It is apparent that many of the parents concerned prefer to seek family or informal solutions. We notice, however, that single-parent families have less opportunities to find family solutions and that immigrant families often prefer to avoid them.
- For a broader perspective, there is the example of the coordination initiative in the Flanders between the education (teaching) sector and Kind en Gezin (the preventive health care sector). Because it has both been established that there are fewer children from disadvantaged families enrolled in nursery schools and that this experience is of vital importance for the development of the children concerned, a collaboration has been established between two departments, so that medical-social workers from Kind en Gezin can visit the homes of families concerned to promote an awareness of the benefits of attending a school.

To conclude, various local initiatives are being conducted in different countries to make care centres more accessible to all, but they too often remain unknown, and are not always analysed in depth to identify the areas of strength that could be applied on a larger scale. Monographic research (not only at a national scale and reduced to measurable indicators) could contribute to not only a better understanding of the issues, but also an improvement of the current situation, by taking the complexity of the phenomena studied into account.

Working group 3

Promotion of children's rights, development of services and prevention of social exclusion *

Coordinator: Jan Peeters

Participants from: French Community of Belgium, Estonia, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal.

Discussion points:

- Children's rights are a powerful tool to combat poverty, especially the right for access to ECEC provisions.
- Some countries have made efforts to motivate families living in poverty to send their children to ECEC. Are the services ready for those families?
- Children's rights can be used against parents, to make them feel guilty that they cannot give the necessary opportunities to their children. What are the risks and what can we do about it?

The first part of the discussion focused on children's rights: can they be used against parents when they are not able to give the best opportunities to their children?

Using children's rights against parents is very dangerous, especially in case of parents living in poverty. Children rights must be seen in relation with the living conditions of the parents. An approach based on children rights can be misused in order to take children away from their parents or for focusing on the deficit side of the parental role, instead of supporting parents who live in very difficult circumstances.

Respecting children rights as well as the provisions established in the CRC is not only the responsibility of the parents but also of the wider society.

An example of this is the lack of accessibility to childcare for the children living in poverty. Each member state has the duty to give the same opportunities of access to ECEC to all children. In this perspective it is important that the member states have better, reliable data on the access of poor children to education and care services.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child helps to change perspective on the traditional power of the parents. In fact, it gives "power" to the children, legitimizing a sort of change in the balance of power in families.

It is therefore important to hear the children's opinion, considering it in the implementation of quality profiles and standards concerning ECEC.

The role of professionals is then very important and they also have a responsibility in making children's rights a reality.

In particular, the professionals' role must consist of supporting parents in raising their children. Professionals must try to foster dialogue between parents and ECEC services. They should help parents by giving them instruments to empower them in the relationships with their children.

Unfortunately, not all people working in ECEC services have the competences to do so. The challenge is therefore to provide adequate training for staff. The active involvement of parents should be one of the focus for ECEC professionals. In most of the cases, today's methods are likely to particularly involve mothers. Furthermore, this kind of involvement tends to be restricted to middle and high class families. ECEC services should pay more attention to the involvement of fathers and the effort should be directed towards the involvement of disadvantaged and/or migrant families.

It should also be said, when relating to children's rights, that while some countries have bodies in charge of controlling that ECEC are in line with the CRC's provisions (Ombudsman, for example), others do not.

* The present report has been drafted by Ellen Meijer, rapporteur of the group.

In particular, there is a big problem with the lack of data. How do we know if children coming from poor/migrant households attend ECEC facilities? In some countries, for example, it is difficult to collect this kind of data, because it is forbidden to collect sensitive information (like those on ethnicity etc...).

On the other hand, what can be done to motivate disadvantaged families (poor, immigrants) to send their children to ECEC facilities? In this respect, countries have used different strategies: France Portugal and Belgium have a percentage of reserved places for low-income families. On the contrary, In Luxembourg and Denmark ECEC are completely free for low-income families and a universal right to attend ECEC has been established.

Another part of the discussion was about the need to set quality targets in addition to the quantitative ones, even if one should also be aware of the danger that this operation implies.

Services for young children have good results, only if the quality of the care is high. So we need more qualitative criteria to guarantee quality care and this is particularly important in view of including disadvantaged children in ECEC services.

On the other hand the fear is that quality targets will be set at a minimum level and will therefore not be useful at all.

Coordination at a European level would probably be the best way to avoid this risk and collect realistic data.

Finally, having to answer the question if ECEC services are now ready to welcome disadvantaged children and families, probably it should be said that they are not completely equipped to do this yet, but there is a more urgent need for inclusion on behalf of the society and for disadvantaged families as well. This occasion should not be wasted because participation is the priority: attitudes towards poor families and poor children should begin to change.

Part 2
Integrated analysis of EU studies
on ECEC services

2.0 Some initial observations on the CRC approach

Roberta Ruggiero*

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recognises in its article 28 the right to education as an individual right, which does not miraculously appear when children first reach the age to start school. That was explicitly stated in the General Comment no. 7 (*Implementing child rights in early childhood*, CRC/C/GC/7/Rev. 120 September 2006) is that young children are fully-fledge rights holders, outlining that starting from this previous assumption these children are entitled to special protection measures. Moreover, in accordance with their evolving capacities, adults are required to guide and provide them with the needed information towards the progressive exercise of their rights. Thus, to fulfil their tasks parents should be encouraged to offer “direction and guidance” centred on the child through dialogue and examples, in ways that enhance young children’s capacities to exercise their rights (Landsdown, 2005).

The CRC gives great attention to the role of parents and other primary caregivers, for instance, the requirement that they act in children’s best interests is linked to parental responsibility. Article 5 states that parents’ role is to offer appropriate direction and guidance in “the exercise by the child of the rights in the... Convention”. This applies equally to younger as to older children. Babies and infants are entirely dependent on others, but they are not passive recipients of care, direction and guidance. They are active social agents, who seek protection, nurturance and understanding from parents or other caregivers, which they require for their survival, growth and well-being. These relationships offer children physical and emotional security, as well as consistent care and attention. Through these relationships children construct a personal identity and acquire culturally valued skills, knowledge and behaviours. For this reason, parents (and other caregivers) are normally the major channels through which young children are able to realize and progressively more autonomously exercise their rights. The recent General Comment no. 12 of the Committee states:

*consequently, the child has a right to direction and guidance, which have to compensate for the lack of knowledge, experience and understanding of the child and are restricted by his or her evolving capacities, as stated in this article. The more the child himself or herself knows, has experienced and understands, the more the parent, legal guardian or other persons legally responsible for the child have to transform direction and guidance into reminders and advice and later to an exchange on an equal footing. This transformation will not take place at a fixed point in a child’s development, but will steadily increase as the child is encouraged to contribute her or his views (General Comment no. 12, *The right of the child to be heard*, CRC/C/GC/12, 20 July 2009).*

In order to carry out their role positively, parents need to receive adequate respect and support from the State. The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

1. Parents have the primary responsibility for promoting children’s development and well-being, with the child’s best interests as their basic concern (arts. 18.1 and 27.2). In relation to this, States parties should not intervene and should respect the primacy of parents, mothers and fathers;
2. States parties are required to render appropriate assistance to parents, legal guardians and extended families in the performance of their child rearing responsibilities (arts. 18.2 and 18.3), including assisting parents in providing living conditions necessary for the child’s development (art. 27.2) and ensuring that children receive necessary protection and care (art. 3.2)¹.

* ChildONEurope Secretariat coordinator and researcher at the Istituto degli Innocenti.

¹ On the interpretation of the ratio of the CRC please see also Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2009.

The States' responsibility in supporting parents in their child rearing responsibilities regarding ECEC services, represents the focal point of the analysis of this second part of the publication.

More specifically, the aim of this second part is to identify the key findings of the most relevant reports drafted by international organizations on ECEC services at European level, with the aim of facilitating the discussion on ECEC service policies during the meeting of the Intergovernmental Group *L'Europe de l'Enfance* to be held in Antwerp on 8-10 September 2010 and the Meeting of Ministers responsible for childhood to be held in Brussels on 15-16 December 2010.

This review focuses in particular on the subjects of the analysis of the review that the ChildONEurope Secretariat addressed to the ChildONEurope partners, namely: data and typologies of ECEC services, different models of ECEC systems developed at a national level, forms of financial support for ECEC services, access guarantees to ECEC services, Barcelona targets (difficulties found by States and national expectations over the identification of qualitative standards by the EU).

2.1 Data and typologies of ECEC services

*Erika Bernacchi**

2.1.1 Limited availability of data at national and international level

All international and comparative reports on ECEC services agree in saying that data collection on ECEC services in particular for children aged 0-3 years – for example, concerning the number of services and places available, enrolment rates, public expenditure, etc. – remains limited.

The ChildONEurope review also showed the difficulty in obtaining data that distinguished the number of available places in full time services and the number of children welcomed into services. The collection of data concerning part-time services was even more difficult.

This lack in the availability of data has important consequences not only in terms of the difficulty of international comparability, but also at national level in terms of the identification of the needs of younger children and the consequent planning and monitoring of adequate policies.

The reasons for such inadequacy in data collection lie in different grounds. At national level one reason is that the national statistical bureaus that collect data on population, households, social policies or education were not initially set up to collect data on ECEC services. Furthermore the fact that the responsibility for the provision of ECEC services lies in various Ministries, does not facilitate the data collection.

At an international level, comparative statistical reports show various shortcomings. First of all the data reported is often not comparable as it is collected differently at national levels and because there exist typologies of ECEC services that differ greatly in terms of the number of hours of opening, and types of services offered (see figure 1 below).

For instance the UOE data collection¹ – whose aim is to provide internationally comparable data on education systems – only provides limited data on ECEC services. Furthermore the analysis procedures followed in the PISA Programme (Programme for International Student Assessment) that provides analysis linking socio-economic status, students characteristics and financing variables are not applied as regards ECEC services.

Another difficulty is due to the ISCED definition of early childhood education as ISCED Level 0 programmes are defined as “centre or school-based programmes that are designed to meet the educational and developmental needs of children of at least 3 years of age, and that have staff that are adequately trained (i.e. qualified) to provide an educational programme for the children. These programmes are further defined as the initial stage of organised instruction”. As the Starting Strong II report underlines “Such an understanding does not correspond to how early childhood programming is conceived in many countries or as described in Starting Strong (OECD, 2001). A basic confusion is found in the distinction drawn by ISCED between “education” and “care” and on that basis, its decision to begin data collection at the age of 3 years or to treat certain forms of kindergarten education as outside the ISCED definition”.

National efforts to establish data collection and monitoring of ECEC services vary greatly from country to country. The Nordic countries, which set up comprehensive ECEC services many decades ago, have also well established systems to collect and monitor data.

Also other countries have set up agencies dedicated to collect data in this field also considering the Barcelona targets. In many countries however there is no established procedure to collect data on ECEC services.

* ChildONEurope Secretariat coordinator and researcher at the Istituto degli Innocenti.

¹ The UOE collection, based at the OECD, is sponsored by the Institute for Statistics (UNESCO/UIS), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT).

2.1.2 Some available data

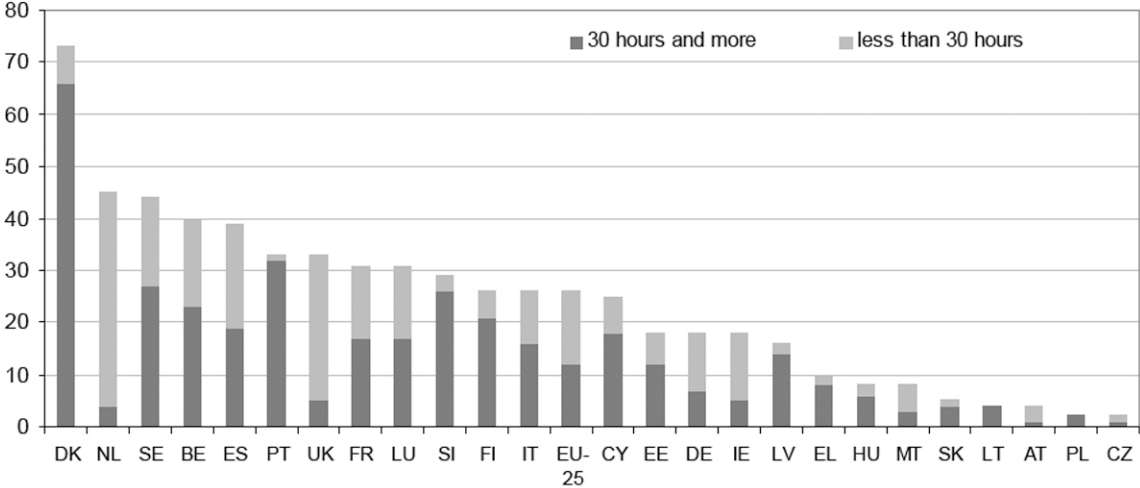
Despite the difficulties encountered by States and international agencies in collecting data – as explained above – some comparative tables can give us an idea of where we stand in EU countries in terms of children attending ECEC services.

Useful data is cited for instance by the EU Commission in its Report to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the implementation of the Barcelona objectives concerning childcare facilities for pre-school-age children. The data indicated has been collected by Eurostat (EU-SILC, 2006) and relate to the year 2006 providing a “mid-term snapshot of the progress made” by the States.

The data refers to the use of existing childcare facilities by parents, but not to the number of places existing in each Member States.

More specifically, it concerns the proportion of children up to 3 years old cared for by formal arrangements of up to 30 hours / 30 hours or more per usual week.

Figure 1. Proportion of children up to 3 years cared by formal arrangements, up to 30 hours / 30 hours or more per usual week

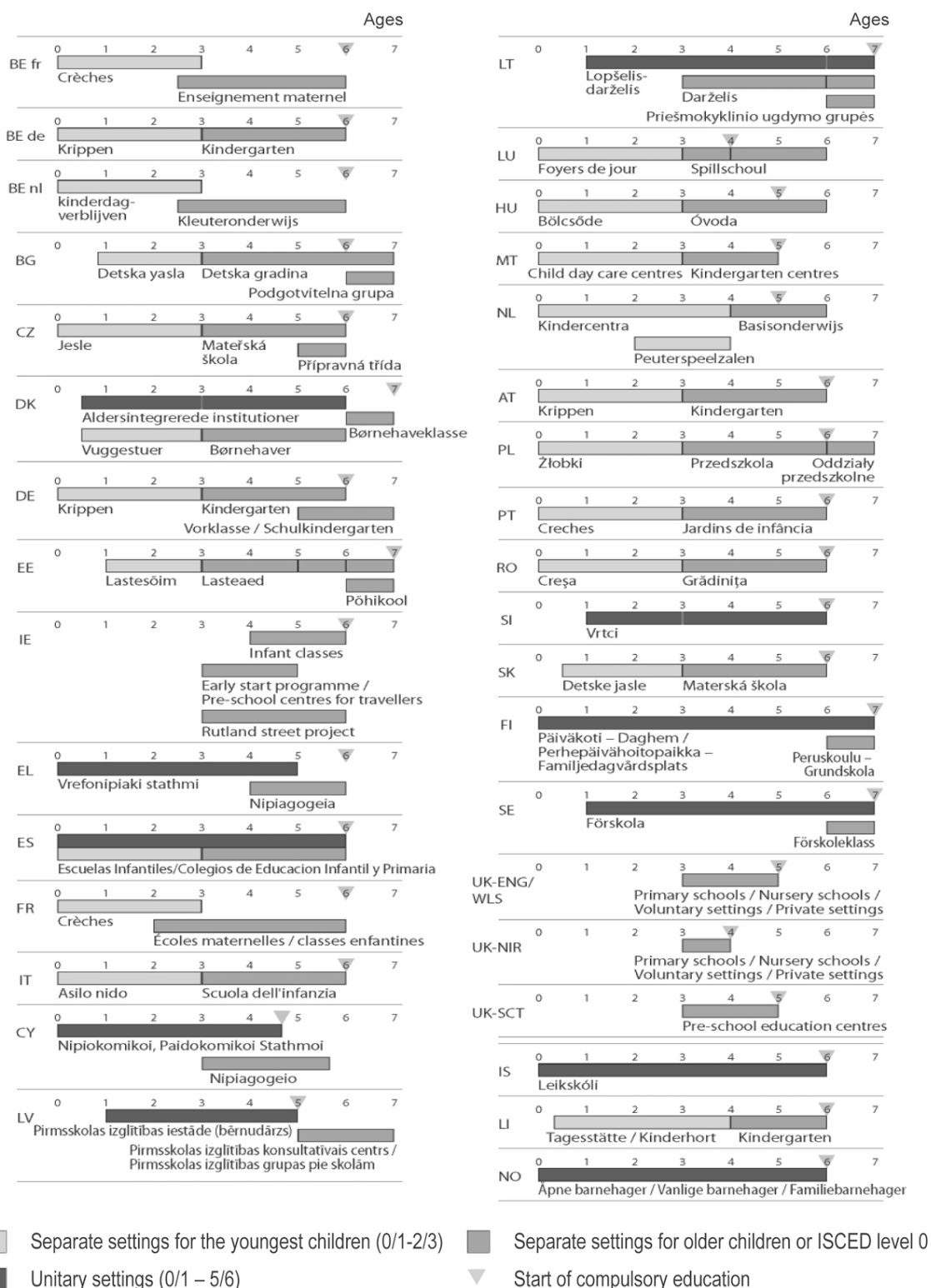


Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC 2006, Provisional data

The report indicates that regarding the target of 33% of ECEC services for children under the age of 3, only five Member States (Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium, Spain) have surpassed it, while five others (Portugal, United Kingdom, France, Luxembourg, Slovenia) are approaching this target. Seven Member States (Finland, Italy, Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Latvia) have reached an intermediate level of coverage (between 16 and 26%), eight Member States (Greece, Hungary, Malta, Slovakia, Lithuania, Austria, Czech Republic, Poland) show a coverage rate of 10% or less. Nevertheless, these coverage rates relate to all children, irrespective of how many hours per week they attend a childcare facility. Attendance hours vary widely from one country to another, and in numerous countries a particularly high proportion of childcare facilities operate on a part-time basis only.

As regards the **different typologies** of ECEC services present in EU countries, a useful summary is provided in the Eurydice Report.

Figure 2. Organisation of subsidised and accredited early childhood education and care provision for pre-school children of different ages, 2006-2007



Source: Eurydice

From the report it emerges that all European countries have some form of publicly subsidised and accredited ECEC services below the age of compulsory schooling. However there are many differences as regards the organisational forms, the competent authorities and the age at which children may access this type of provision.

Even if many countries provide subsidies services from an early age, often from the end of the compulsory maternity leave, this does not mean that the available places cover the demand.

The Eurydice Report also underlines that in Europe two main organisational models are present. “Under the first model, provision for young children is provided in unitary settings, organised in a single phase for all children of pre-school age. Each setting has only one management team for children of all age groups and staff responsible for children’s education has, generally, the same qualifications and salary scales regardless of the age of the children they look after. [...] Under the second model, ECEC services are structured according to the age of the children (normally for children aged 0 to 3 years and for children aged 3 to 6 years). Each type of provision may be dependent on different ministries” (Eurydice Report, 2009: 75). In a few countries there is almost no publicly funded provision at all for children under the age of 3 years. As a result, participation rates of under 3-year-olds are extremely low.

The second model is the most widespread in European countries, while only in few countries both models co-exist. Countries that have adopted a fully unitary model are also those that recognise the universal right to access from the youngest age, while in the countries that have chosen the second model children aged 0-3 years are not guaranteed subsidised places before they are old enough to enter pre-primary education, which is usually at around the age of 3.

As regards the issue of the **opening hours**, the Eurydice report has identified two broad approaches: countries that offer subsidised services with extensive hours that are useful for the conciliation of family and working life and those that provide only part time subsidised services. For instance full-day provision is the norm in the Nordic countries, three Baltic countries, Belgium, Spain, France, Hungary, the Netherlands (except in playgroups), Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia, while part time subsidised services operate in Germany, Greece and Cyprus (Eurydice Report, 2009: 82).

2.1.3 Recommendations

In order to improve data collection, the Starting Strong II report suggests:

1. Establishing a national database and support local capacity in data collection;
2. Establishing ECEC policy units to deal with policy guidance, data collection, quality and curriculum matters;
3. Organising data collection to respond to the needs of information related to the areas of demand, supply, access and quality in order to make the programming in this area possible;
4. Redefining and expanding data collection beyond the present ISCED “level zero” perspective, to include all early education and care services for young children;
5. Collecting data on aspects related to financial issues, such as child-staff expenditure on the various ECEC service types; expenditure on maternity and parental leave, on child allowances and other transfers towards families with young children;
6. Collecting data according to the goals that each country sets in relation with ECEC services;
7. Creating more dynamic methods of statistical analysis treating data as interactive variables (e.g. Pisa programme);
8. Involving local administrations, parents and teachers associations as well as independent researchers in data collection and monitoring (OECD, 2006: 179-185).

2.2 An evaluation of different models of ECEC systems developed at the national level

Roberta Ruggiero*

The Committee on the rights of the child is particularly concerned that States parties have not given sufficient attention to young children as rights holders and to the laws, policies and programmes required to realize their rights during this distinct phase of their childhood. Moreover, a sensible State ECEC system, as research evidence from longitudinal studies and from neuroscience shows, is one in which the child's earliest learning experiences are considered to be most significant in determining future progress in education and subsequent success in life (Siraj-Blatchford, 2009; see also: Sylva *et al.*, 2004; Schweinhart *et al.*, 2005). The fulfilment of this promise lies on the organization of national systems that pay particular attention to the needs of the youngest children, including to those children who are still in home care.

As far as the **systemic national level** is concerned, different international studies and reports agree that the organisation of ECEC services is a complex issue and crosses traditional administrative boundaries and competences. In relation to this, the NESSE Networks of Experts Report (2009), elaborated for the European Commission, suggests that a more effective result could be achieved through the development of a coordinated policy in which investments are across a broad range of policies that affect young children's lives. Moreover, the Report also advises, on the basis of the OECD report elaborated in 2006, that "a systemic and integrated approach to early education and care is necessary to develop and improve services at a systemic level – a co-ordinated policy framework, the appointment of a lead ministry, the coordination of central and decentralized levels, a collaborative and participatory approach to reform, links across services and so on" (NESSE Networks of Experts, 2009: 55, 62; see also OECD, 2006).

Other reports, such as the Eurydice one, strongly emphasise the necessity to have recourse to a unitary system as a possible future desired development. The concern over this issue is due the fact that all European countries, without exception, have implemented accredited and subsidised ECEC services and yet, in most of them, this division across traditional administrative boundaries persists. For instance, while the division of competencies between 0-3 and 3-6 year-olds is addressed, the Eurydice report stresses that this is essentially due to our cultural history and heritage and has nothing to do with any scientific justifications. Therefore there is no sound explanation as to why education and care systems remain divided into separate settings for those under, and those over, the age of 3 (Eurydice Report, 2009: 136).

Thus, while all European countries, without exception, have implemented accredited and financially supported ECEC services, the mentioned **fragmentation of the systems** persists. Exceptions to this reality are: Latvia, Slovenia, Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Norway where competence for early education and care settings are organised on a unitary basis. In fact, it emerges that in these countries, "a single structure for all preschool children exists which means that there is only one management team for children of all ages in each setting and, moreover, the adults responsible for educational activities have the same qualifications and salary scales whatever the age of the children they look after" (see Table 1 below from Eurydice Report, 2009: 136)¹.

* ChildONEurope Secretariat coordinator and researcher at the Istituto degli Innocenti.

¹ Moreover, to complete the picture, in Denmark, Greece, Spain, Cyprus and Lithuania unitary settings can be found alongside separate settings. Whereas a system like this is progressively being implemented in the United Kingdom (England).

Table 1. Public authorities with responsibility for ECEC 2006/2007

	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Designing ECEC Policies	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Implementing ECEC Policies
BE fr	<p>Parliament and Government of the French Community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet of the Minister of Childhood, Youth Aid and Health (for childhood, 0-12 year-olds) • Cabinet of the Minister in charge of Compulsory Schooling; (2 ½-6 year-olds) • Ministry of the French Community 	<p>Ministry of the French Community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directorate General for Compulsory Schooling • Directorate General for Youth Aid <p>Governmental agency: Office for Birth and Childhood</p>
BE de	<p>Parliament and government of the German-speaking Community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet of the Minister of Social Affairs in collaboration with the department of the Ministry; (0-3 year-olds and 3-6 year olds, but mainly the younger age-group) • Minister in charge of Schooling, in collaboration with the department of the Ministry; (3-6 year-olds) 	<p>Ministry of the German-speaking Community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dienst für Kind und Familie</i> with the Department of the Ministry <i>Abteilung Beschäftigung, Gesundheit und Soziales</i>. Private organisations or individuals offering ECEC structures. • Department of the Ministry <i>Unterricht und Ausbildung</i>. • Organising bodies of pre-primary schools or sections of grant-aided education (communes or private bodies)
BE nl	<p>Flemish Ministry of Welfare, Health and Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for childcare for children before the age at which they attend pre-school and out of school care for children who attend pre-school • (Children from 0 to 6) <p>Flemish Ministry of Education and Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for education; (2 ½-6 year-olds) 	<p>Kind en Gezin Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for childcare <p>School boards, with support from their networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for education
BG	<p>Ministry of Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (0-3 year-olds) <p>Ministry of Education and Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (3-7 year-olds) 	<p>Ministry of Education and Science</p> <p>Regional Inspectorates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for Education <p>Regional Inspectorates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for ensuring health, sanitary and hygiene requirements are observed <p>Municipalities</p>
CZ	<p>Ministry of Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (0-3 year-olds) <p>Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for pre-primary education, including education of socially disadvantaged children; (3-6 year-olds) <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for social services for at-risk children 	<p>Municipalities</p> <p>Municipalities and Regional Authority</p> <p>Regional Authority and Municipalities</p>

	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Designing ECEC Policies	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Implementing ECEC Policies
DK	Ministry of Social Welfare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (0-6 year-olds) 	Municipal authorities
DE	Federal Ministry for Families, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (0-3 year-olds) Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (0-3 year-olds) Länder and Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (3-6 year-olds) Ministries of Youth and Social Affairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (3-6 year-olds) Ministries of Education and Cultural Affairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (3-6 year-olds) 	Länder and communities
EE	Ministry of Social Affairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for social welfare; establishing health protection requirements for child care institutions; (0-7 year-olds) Ministry of Education and Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for the composition of the framework curriculum for pre-primary education; issuing education licences to child care institutions; participating in state supervision over the education and schooling provided in pre-school child care institutions; (0-7 year-olds) 	Local authorities
IE	Department of Social, Family and Community Affairs (DSFCA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for social welfare Department of Health and Children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of Health Care Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of childcare places • Child protection and welfare Department of Education and Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curricular Framework for Early Learning • Quality Framework for Early Years Education • Provides for Primary Education for children from the age of 4 upwards 	Department of Social, Family and Community Affairs (DSFCA) Health Service Executive City and County Childcare committees Health Service Executive National Council for Curriculum and Assessment Department of Education and Science Department of Education and Science
EL	Municipalities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (18 months-5 year-olds) Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (4-5 year-olds) 	Municipalities Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs
ES	Ministry of Education and Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for general guidelines on compensating inequalities Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for childcare and protection 	Autonomous Communities Municipalities

	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Designing ECEC Policies	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Implementing ECEC Policies
ES	<p>Autonomous Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for developing national legislation so as to adapt it to their own territory <p>Municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> also responsible for designing measures to protect children at risk; (All bodies responsible for 0-6 year-olds) 	
FR	<p>Ministry of Social Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (0-2 year-olds) <p>Ministry of National Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2-6 year-olds) 	<p>Regional and local authorities (<i>collectivités territoriales, communes, départements</i>)</p> <p>State services at regional level</p>
IT	<p>Ministry of Public Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (0-6 year-olds) 	<p>Municipalities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (0-3 year-olds) <p>Peripheral educational authorities and schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (3-6 year-olds)
CY	<p>Ministry of Labour Welfare Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (0-3 year-olds) <p>Ministry of Education and Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (3 to 5 years and 8 months) 	<p>Welfare Department</p> <p>Ministry of Education and Culture</p>
LV	<p>Ministry for Children and Family Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for the state programme for the improvement of status of children and families, and the coordination of the cooperation of state and local government institutions in the protection of the rights of the child and family; (0-6 year-olds) <p>Ministry for Education and Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for policy in the field of child education and ensuring the accessibility and quality of education; (1-6 year-olds) <p>Ministry of Welfare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for state policy in the field of child and family social security, social insurance and benefits, social assistance and care, and organises and coordinates social services and assistance; (0-6 year-olds) <p>Ministry of Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for policy in the field of child health care, and the organisation and coordination of child health care; (0-6 year-olds) 	<p>Local governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide assistance and support to families with children; organise primary health care for mothers and children; provide for pre-school institutions; ensure extra-familial care for those children, who permanently or for a time, are without their own family, or who for their own best interests may not be left with their own family. <p>Institutions subordinated to relevant ministries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for implementation and organisation of social services.
LT	<p>Ministry of Education and Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1-7 year-olds) 	<p>Municipalities/Local education authorities</p>
LU	<p>Ministry of the Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for nurseries (public or private); (0-3 year-olds) <p>Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (3-6 year-olds) 	<p>Ministry of the Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (0-3 year-olds) <p>Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (3-6 year-olds)

	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Designing ECEC Policies	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Implementing ECEC Policies
LU	Communal council, political body, supported by the School Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (3-6 year-olds) 	Communes (management and administration of pre-school education and organisation of out-of-school activities)
HU	Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (0-3 year-olds) Ministry of Education and Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (3-6 year-olds) 	Local authorities
MT	Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible both for the child care centres (0-3 year-olds) and the Kindergarten centres (3-4 year-olds) 	Kindergarten centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are run by the state and private sectors, The child day care centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> are run by the private sector.
NL	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for general guidelines Municipalities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for specific policies 	Mainly local authorities
AT	Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for the training of kindergarten pedagogues Federal Ministry of Health, Family and Youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for youth welfare laws, policies for childminders, family allowances and childcare benefits Provincial governments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for kindergarten and crèche laws; (1-6 year-olds) Municipalities, churches and other private providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for the establishment and maintenance of kindergartens and crèches; (1-6 year-olds) 	Ministry of Education and of Social Affairs Provinces (Länder): Kindergartenfachberater Municipalities Kindergarten head teachers
PL	Ministry of Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (0-3 year-olds) Ministry of National Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (3-7 year-olds) 	Health Care Institutions (Zakłady Opieki Zdrowotnej) Local education authorities (gminy = 'school running bodies') and Regional Education Superintendent Offices (kuratoria oświaty)
PT	Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (0-6 year-olds) Ministry of Justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (0-6 year-olds) Ministry of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (3-6 year-olds) 	Institute for Social Security Municipalities Regional Education Directorates School Coordinators
RO	Ministry of Labour, Family and Equal Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for social protection aspects Ministry of Education, Research and Youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for educational aspects 	Labour and Social Protection Departments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for social protection aspects County School Inspectorates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for education aspects

	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Designing ECEC Policies	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Implementing ECEC Policies
RO	Ministry of Public Health responsible for care and nutrition aspects; (All above for 0-3 year-olds)Ministry of Education, Research and Youth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (3-6 year-olds) 	County Public Health Departments responsible for care and nutrition aspects; (All above for 0-3 year-olds)County School Inspectorates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (3-6 year-olds)
SI	Ministry of Education and Sport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1-6 year-olds) 	Ministry of Education and Sport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for pre-school programmes, inspection, inclusive pre-school education, pre-school education of ethnic minorities, Roma children Municipalities, Headteachers and Councils of pre-school institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for the enrolment of children, working positions, staff, premises, equipment and self-evaluation
SK	Ministry of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (2/3-6 year olds) 	Municipalities
FI	Ministry of Social Affairs and Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for day care services; (0-6 year-olds) Ministry of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for pre-primary education; (6-7 year-olds) 	Municipalities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mainly responsible Finnish National Board of Education and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (Stakes) which is the National Institute for Health and Welfare since January 2009 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsible for developing national core curriculum and coordination of national development projects
SE	Ministry of Education and Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1-6 year-olds) 	Municipalities
UK-ENG	Department for Children, Schools and Families Department for Work and Pensions Local Authorities, Children's Trusts	Responsibility is shared between national and local government and external partners.
UK-WLS	Welsh Assembly Government Local Authorities, Local Authority Children's and Young People's Partnerships	Responsibility is shared between national and local government and external partners.
UK-NIR	Department of Education Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety Department for Employment and Learning Department for Social Development Education and Library Boards, Local Childcare Partnerships	Responsibility is shared between national and local government and external partners.
UK-SCT	The Scottish Executive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The age range is 0-5 for child care and 3-4 specifically for pre-school education. Primary school begins at age 5. 	Local authorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mainly responsible for implementing <i>Sure Start</i>, pre-school education and other early childhood policies Voluntary sector bodies

	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Designing ECEC Policies	Responsible Bodies and Levels of Responsibility for Implementing ECEC Policies
IS	Ministry of Education, Science and Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (0-5 year-olds) 	Municipalities
LI	Ministry of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (4-6 year-olds) Office of Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (4-6 year-olds) 	Office of Education (especially the Inspectorate)
NO	Ministry of Education and Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for <i>barnehage</i> (kindergartens) and special education Ministry of Children and Equality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for child welfare, the cash benefit scheme, family allowance, and parental and adoption benefits Ministry of Health and care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for health Ministry of Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for tax deductions; (All bodies responsible for 0-5 year-olds)	Municipalities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for <i>barnehage</i> (kindergartens), special education help, child welfare services, mother and child health services Local Work and Welfare Offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsible for parental and adoption benefits, family allowance and the cash benefit scheme

Source: Eurydice Report, 2009

A similar conclusion emerges from the NESSE Network of Experts Report which states, referring to the systemic level, that the range of national options can be divided into two categories: (1) “a universal or part universal system whereby at a national level one ministry oversees all provision including funding, levels of provision, curriculum, training etc e.g. Spain, Sweden, Finland and UK”; (2) “a split system, usually between over threes and under threes, where the responsibilities are distributed between ministries according to the age of the child”.

The same numbers of models emerge from the ChildONEurope review of thirteen country partners. In planning and implementing ECEC services, three ministries are generally involved: Education, Social Policy and Health. Competences are essentially distributed to the different ministries on the basis of the age of the child, for example, in Estonia, Hungary, Italy and Spain, competence is shared between the education and social sector, whereas in the Belgium French Community it is organised over all the three mentioned sectors. Moreover, as stressed by the CRC Committee through its Concluding Observations to national reports, States parties do not pay sufficient attention to ECEC services as tools dedicated to the fulfilment of the specific needs and rights of young children. In relation to this aspect little can be added.

The ChildONEurope review also looked for information relating to **laws that regulate the ECEC sector** at national and regional level. In the majority of countries, the organization of the ECEC system is regulated through national legal acts (e.g. Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Netherlands). Whereas, in other cases, as a consequence of the State organizational structure (federal or regional states), the organization of the system is regulated by framework legal provisions adopted at the national central level, such as Spain in where this role is played by the Ley Orgánica de Educación 2/2006. In this second case those national or central legal provisions are integrated at the regional, cantonal or community level with additional legal acts issues by any federated entities in accordance to the previous.

In relation to the date and timing of the reform of the legal framework dealing with the ECEC, it emerges that in the majority of the cases, reforms are essentially concentrated between 2003 up to 2009. So, it is possible to say, that attention at the national, regional and local level to this issue is a fairly recent phenomenon. It is possible that States have turned their attention to legal frameworks as a consequence of the increasing consideration given to this topic by the international community during the last decade.

In the same wake, in the UNICEF Report Cart no. 8 it is settled that in the majority of the OECD governments have responded to the international obligation by formulating policy and law, and investing public resources in the provision of early childhood education and care. Probably as a consequence of the international and European pressure “in almost every industrialized country, support for parents in the bringing up of children is now regarded as a duty of governments”. Notwithstanding, the approach to the task varies considerably from country to country. In some, cases early childhood services are as well established and well funded as primary schools. “In others, they are often muddled in purpose, uneven in access, patchy in quality, and lacking systematic monitoring of access, quality, staff-to-children ratios, or staff training and qualification”.

In sum, the division of competences does not facilitate the effective development of these services in the manner promoted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The planning and implementation of ECEC services is affected negatively by the combination of two factors: (1) the distribution of various competences horizontally between on the one hand, education, and on the other, social affairs and/or health ministries; and (2) the assignment of implementation to municipalities or local authorities with only residual support from the central State to cope with the financial implications of the implementation process. The Eurydice Report also states that in many European countries, the volume of the provision is insufficient and that significant financial investment to create more places is needed. In the opinion of Eurydice, “this could entail the creation of a unitary system of early childhood education and care with settings which accommodate the entire age group for 0/1 to 5/6 years (Eurydice Report, 2009: 15).

All the above-mentioned reports agree that there is, at present, a move towards the adoption of the unitary system in Europe. In fact, in the Eurydice Report it is stressed that “Countries which have adopted the unitary model have, in some form or another, recognised that all children have the right to a place in an educational setting. For instance, in Finland, this right begins at the end of maternity or parental leave; in Sweden municipalities are expected to provide a place for all children from their first birthday, whereas in Norway, the government aims to provide a guaranteed place in an ECEC setting to all children between 0 and 5 years since 2006. Likewise, Lithuania, Latvia and Slovenia guarantee provision for all children from the age of 1 (Eurydice Report, 2009: 136-137).

The Eurydice Report also states that the unitary model brings, in general, guaranteed access to education/care services. It must also be noted that in most of the countries that have adopted this model, the opening hours are generally extended to meet the flexible working hours of parents. The unitary system of education for young children also extends to the curriculum in these countries. Nordic countries have developed policies for the curriculum, its content and teaching methods, which cover the whole ECEC age group. Such an approach means that these countries accord the same importance to education, socialisation and care throughout the entire period of the unitary system. The United Kingdom (England) has also started the introduction of a single quality framework for early learning and childcare from birth to age five, thus lessening the distinction between education and care and between birth-to-three and three-to-five provision. However, the presence of a large private childcare sector prevents a full integration of services.

The NESSE Network of Experts Report seems to be less strict on the unification of care and education. It states that whichever model is in place, implementation may be carried out in an effective manner at central or local level. Yet, to have good ECEC systems, it is necessary, in both cases, to ensure the adoption of mechanisms adequate to guarantee “that ‘good quality’ provision is defined and recognized, monitored and extended, and conversely that ‘poor quality’ provision is identified and improved”. In other words, whichever system is in place, the essential need is that ECEC practice is continuously revised and updated. Thus, the most complicated challenge is the identification of those mechanisms that can promote change.

2.3 Forms of financial support to ECEC services*

Erika Bernacchi**

Different research and reports have demonstrated that in economic terms, investment in early childhood brings greater returns than investing in any other stage of education, although the size of the effect may vary considerably. The reports also show that ECEC services can contribute to long-term economic well-being. However, the arguments for long-term economic well-being as a result of ECEC interventions may be overemphasized and should not be regarded as an alternative to addressing inequality and poverty (NESSE Network of Experts, 2009: 61). The report elaborated by the NESSE Network of Experts, underlines that it is important to consider economic arguments for ECEC within specific country contexts since data taken out of context may be misleading.

As regards the GDP percentage dedicated to ECEC services, OECD data indicate that the average spent by OECD countries is of 0.7 per cent of GDP. The *Innocenti Report Card 8* underlines that the countries at the top of the overall benchmarks table¹ are spending approximately double the OECD average. Only six OECD countries meet eight or more of the benchmarks and they are the same six countries that top the table of government expenditure on early childhood services (Iceland, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, France, and Norway).

The conclusion drawn by the UNICEF *Report Card 8* is that “many OECD countries need to almost double current levels of expenditure on early childhood services if minimum acceptable standards are to be met”.

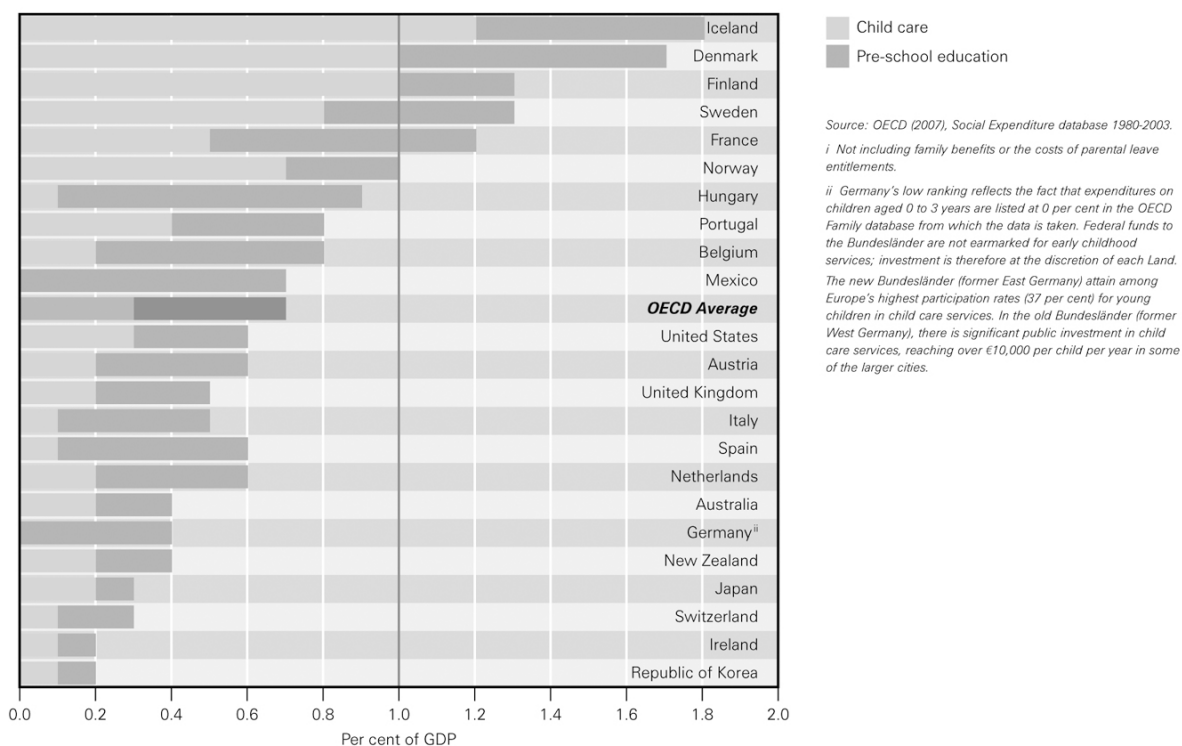
Furthermore, following the European Commission Childcare Network (1996), it refers to a benchmark encouraging governments to devote a minimum of 1 per cent of GDP to ECEC services. According to this benchmark only 6 of 25 OECD countries for which data are available reach or surpass this percentage (UNICEF, 2008: 27).

* On the general organization of the funding of the ECEC services see also the paragraph 1. Data and typologies of ECEC services.

** ChildONEurope Secretariat coordinator and researcher at the Istituto degli Innocenti.

¹ The UNICEF *Report Card 8* fixes 10 minimum standards to evaluate the level of ECEC services in the OECD countries: Parental leave of 1 year at 50% of salary; a national plan with priority for the disadvantaged; subsidized and regulated child care services for 25% of children under 3; subsidized and accredited early education services for 80% of 4 year-olds; 80% of all child care staff trained; 50% of staff in accredited early education services tertiary educated with relevant qualification; minimum staff-to-children ratio of 1:15 in pre-school education; 1.0% of GDP spent on early childhood services; child poverty rate less than 10%; near-universal outreach of essential child health services.

Figure 1. Public expenditure on child care and pre-school education services, per cent of GDPⁱ, 2003

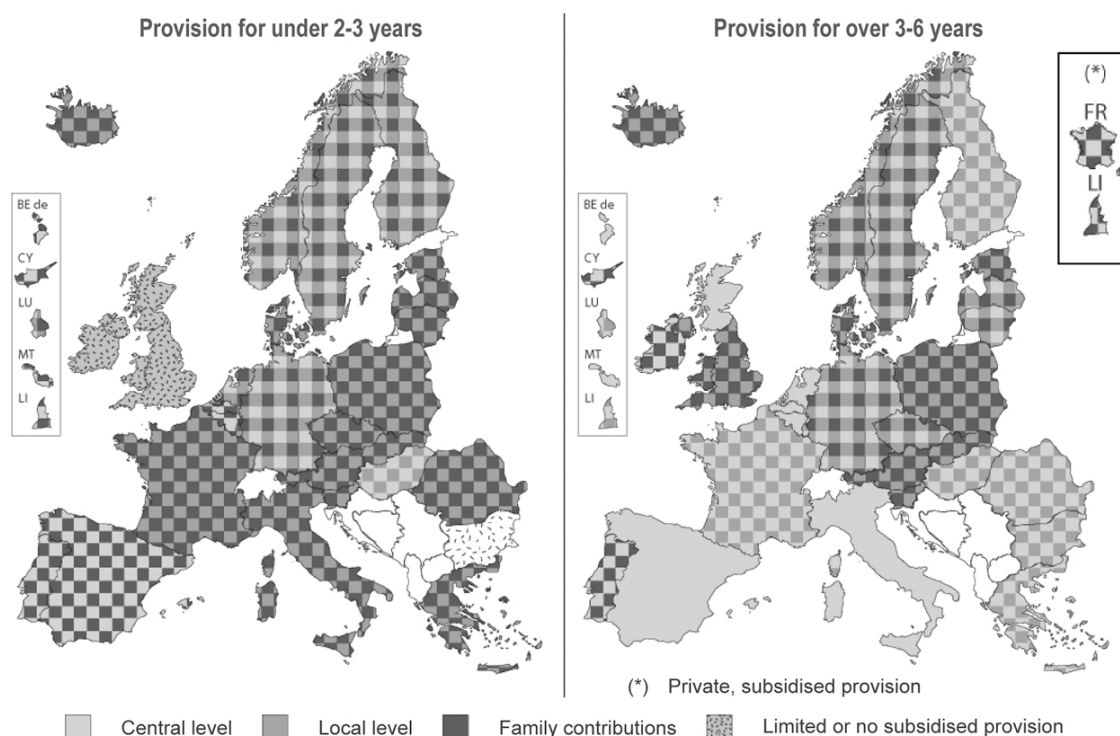


Regarding the **financing of ECEC services**, the ChildONEurope review shows that the ECEC system is financed mainly by public funds. To this it should be added that the other major source of financing is not primarily private funding but family fees. This is confirmed by the Eurydice report that states that all countries, except Hungary, ask families to contribute to the financing of ECEC services for children under the age of three even where they subsidize ECEC services.

Fees paid by parents may vary considerably from country to country (Eurydice Report, 2009: 123). At the level of administration, only in a minority of countries is the budget largely devolved from the central level to local authorities. Even in these cases, the budget furnished by the central level is supplemented with local authority funding and by family contributions, and in some instances (Germany, Italy, etc.) by contributions from non-governmental bodies, such as the churches and other non-profit providers (Eurydice Report, 2009: 123).

As for the private forms of economic support to ECEC services, the ChildONEurope review shows that the countries in which the private support is highest are those in which employers subsidise or co-finance company nurseries that may be open to the wider community for a certain percentage of places.

Figure 2. Finance of public sector and publicly-subsidised private ECEC settings: central level, local level and family contributions, 2006-2007



Source: Eurydice

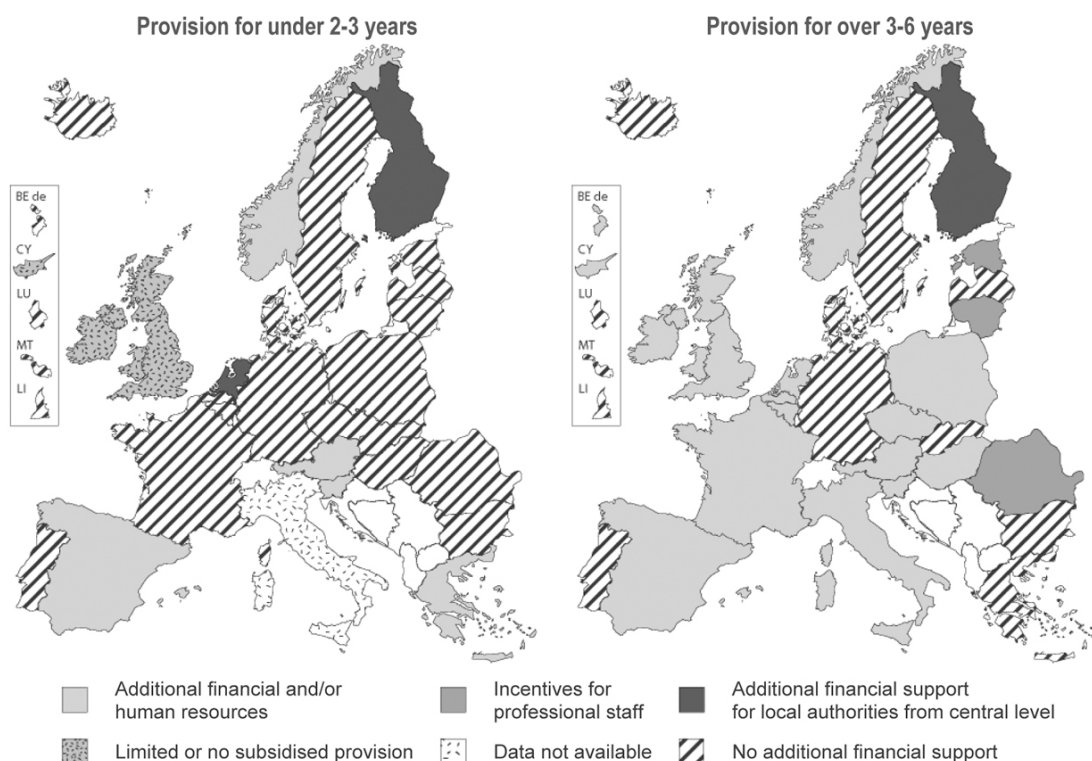
In some countries, initiatives taken by companies insert themselves into a wider framework when the State enacts specific policies and plans of action. For instance in Belgium (French Community), the government decided to create a specific plan called SEMA aimed at enabling employers to offer to their workers the guarantee to obtain a place in an ECEC service at a fee proportional to their wage. Employers can either reserve places in an existing service or contribute to the opening of a new service alone or in collaboration with other employers.

Concerning **access to public services for children whose parents have economic difficulties**, the ChildONEurope review shows that access to ECEC services is guaranteed or facilitated to families with economic or social needs in all public systems.

The Eurydice Report underlines that generally all countries take some measures to encourage the participation of children considered to be at risk. In the majority of countries these measures take the form of financial assistance made directly to families, such as tax reductions or exemptions, fees reductions or family allowances to cover this kind of expenses.

As regards additional financial support to ECEC settings for the provision of services to children at risk, there are three main models that are followed at European level. The most common one is based on additional financial assistance to settings and/or additional staffing. The second one provides financial incentives for staff working with children at risk, while a third option is the one present in those countries where the local authority budget is allocated by the central level (Eurydice Report, 2009: 125).

Figure 3. Strategies to provide additional financial support provision for “at risk” groups, 2006-2007



Source: Eurydice

Another important issue is the **typology of services providers**. Different reports show that the percentage of public and private provision may vary considerably from country to country. Normally, the countries with higher levels of provision of services for children under 3 years are also those with a higher percentage of public providers (for instance Denmark, Finland, Sweden, France). Some of the countries with a higher percentage of private service providers are UK, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Luxembourg, the Netherlands. Private provision includes a range of non profit providers as well as for-profit providers (the latter are frequent in the UK and Ireland).

2.4 Access guarantees to ECEC services*

Perrine Humblet**

The right for all children to attend ECEC services is advocated by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This means that all children and their families should enjoy all of the potential benefits of quality ECEC services, regardless of the child or his/her family characteristics, and that it should be guaranteed by the availability of quality services that are equally accessible regardless of economic, geographical, cultural or social factors. From a theoretical point of view, the universal model for access is more appropriate to implement this right than the targeted access model which seeks to concentrate public funding on specific social needs that are considered as having priority (UNICEF, 2008; NESSE Network of Expertes, 2009). A third model is being developing where the universal access model incorporates an equity criteria in the use of services by groups that are more specifically targeted. This last is coherent with the CRC comment 7 on its application to young children below the age of eight years 8, which warns about the “potential discrimination in access to quality services for young children [...] especially where health, education, welfare and other services are not universally available and are provided through a combination of State, private and charitable organizations” (p. 6, comment 12) (CRC/C/GC/7/Rev.1; 20 September 2006).

The issue of access to ECEC services was officially raised in 1992 by EU in its Recommendation on childcare (92/241/EEC). While all European countries have adopted some form of policy on pre-school education and care, accessibility is a factor that varies from one country to another. In 2002 quantitative objectives were specified at the European Council in Barcelona where the countries made a commitment to provide childcare facilities for 33% of children under 3 years of age and 90% of children between 3 and the mandatory school age, with a deadline of 2010.

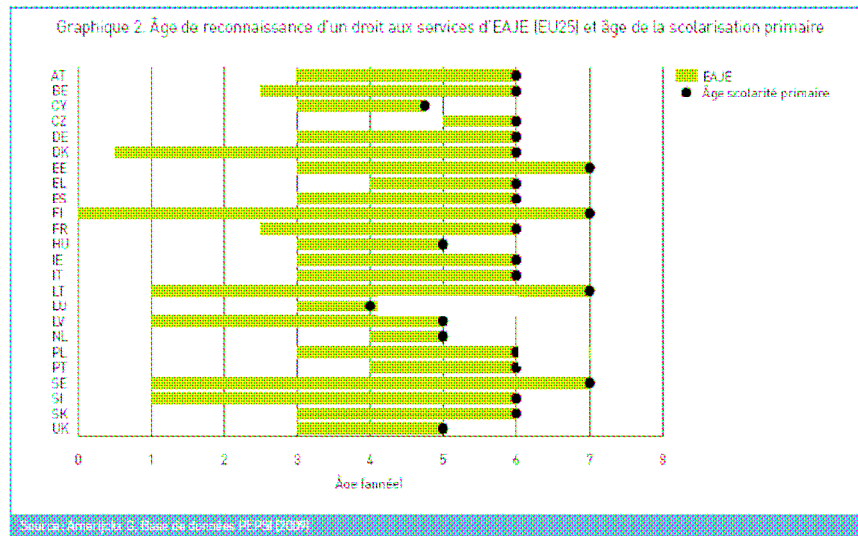
However, on the one hand, the most recent evaluations agree that the Barcelona objectives have not been achieved in 2010, and, on the other hand, it is clear that such criteria do not cover the vast and complex issue of accessibility (Eurydice, 2009). The required coverage rates are quantitative objectives, which give no indication of the nature of places to be made available, quality requirements, whether opening hours are convenient or how affordable the services are. In addition, the right of access for all children under school age is not sufficient to guarantee the actual use of services by families wishing to do so. Services must ensure that they are responsive and welcoming to all children, families and communities, that they are not only available but also equally accessible geographically, financially and culturally, that they are sufficiently flexible and diverse to meet parents' needs and preferences, particularly for the most vulnerable children, including the undocumented children.

The impact of factors hampering equity in use is greater when supply is limited. All European countries recognise an entitlement to early education for all children between birth and the mandatory school age but this varies depending on the age of the child and the country (Eurydice, 2009; Meulders *et al.*, 2009). In the countries where there is an integrated system under a single ministry, this entitlement is recognised for very young children: Finland, which has no limit, Denmark (6 months), Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden and Slovenia (1 year). In the majority of the other countries, responsibility is split according the child's age, with the youngest covered by welfare departments and older children by education. All these countries recognise the right for children over three years of age (except the Netherlands – 4 years – and the Czech Republic – 5 years) under a principle of universal access without any specific conditions and within the education sector.

* This is a short version of the document Children in Europe (2008) “Principle 1 – Access: an entitlement for all children”.

** Professor at the Université Libre de Bruxelles, Ecole de santé publique.

Figure 1. Recognised entitlement to ECEC before school - EU25 (green line: ECEC; black point: mandatory school)

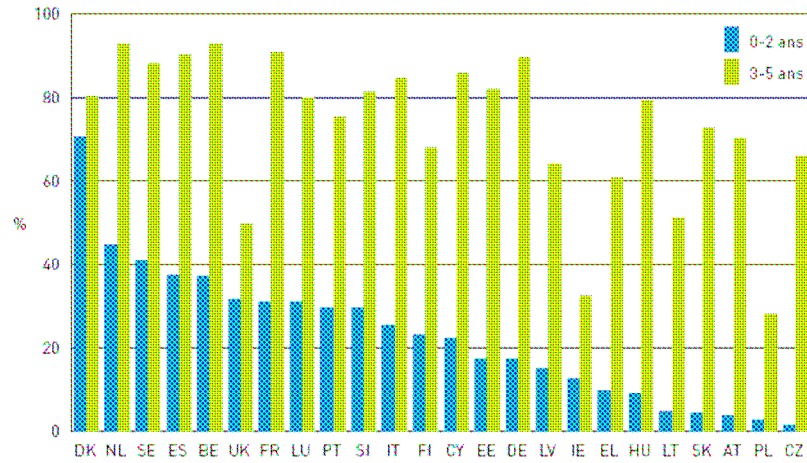


Source: Children in Europe (2009)

Nonetheless, accessibility determinants vary widely from one country to another, and, as a consequence, the percentage of children by age group who attend a formal early childhood service varies widely. There are great differences in attendance between the age groups 0-3 and 3-6, and between different country regions. The enrolment figures are higher for older children, while there is greater inequality among younger children (figure 2). Many countries implement national policy on a decentralised basis, which leads to intra-national geographical and territorial inequalities of access. Yet, the greatest cause of variation in access is linked to the age at which countries believe children should have a right to services. This recognition is not harmonised between the Member States and increases within the age groups.

In countries where demand exceeds supply, economic, cultural and social barriers may work to hinder disadvantaged children from using ECEC settings. Public policies for equity are therefore needed to sustain the universal access model. Equity policies promote access for disadvantaged children and ensure that services are sensitive to their specific needs. Support measures are created for parents with economic difficulties. In all countries covered by the ChildONEurope report, access to public ECEC services is guaranteed or facilitated to families with economic or social needs (ChildONEurope, 2010). Adapted admission policies, supplementary training for educators, additional resources to services are provided in some countries for this purpose. The evaluation of service accessibility is essential on a regular basis to guarantee equitable access (Eurydice, 2009).

Figure 2. Percentage of children attending ECEC services for at least one hour a week by age group and country (EU25)
(data: EU-SILC 2006)



Source: Meulders *et al.*, 2009

National or local experiences show that when accessible, affordable quality services are supplied, demand generally exceeds the needs derived from parental duties and work responsibilities. There is no need to make attendance compulsory for some target groups.

2.5 Barcelona targets: difficulties found by States and national expectations over the identification of qualitative standards by the EU

Erika Bernacchi*

During the European Council held in **Barcelona** in 2002, the EU fixed quantitative targets in the provision of ECEC services inviting Member States to “**provide childcare by 2010** to at least 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age **and at least 33% of children under 3 years of age**”. The Barcelona targets are part of the European Strategy for Growth and Employment and their main aim is to increase the rate of employment of young parents, especially women, and thus help achieve greater gender equality. The perspective adopted by the EU in fixing the targets is therefore one that stems from the aim of achieving an increase in employment, in particular female employment, and enhancing gender equality. Furthermore the focus of the targets is on the quantitative aspects rather than on the qualitative one.

As indicated in the paragraph on the data, **only a limited number of EU countries have reached the Barcelona targets** as regards the provision of ECEC services for children under the age of three. Therefore, the ChildONEurope review asked the country partners which were the most significant difficulties they found in the reaching of the Barcelona targets. The most frequent answer given by the 13 countries that answered the questionnaire, concerned financial difficulties, further worsened in those countries in which there was an increase in the child population. Other reasons accounted for the lack of qualified personnel or of adequate structures, the absence of specific normative provisions and of coordination among different levels of State responsibility. Another aspect that was underlined was a cultural one, related to the opinion that mothers with children under three years of age should not work. Furthermore some States reported a specific difficulty in the inclusion of disadvantaged children and infants in the organization of ECEC services.

Starting from the recognition that the Barcelona targets only set **quantitative targets**, the ChildONEurope survey asked also if the EU should set **qualitative targets** in relation with the provision of ECEC services and in which areas. The great majority of countries that answered the questionnaire reported that it would be very important for the EU to indicate also qualitative targets. The most frequent areas cited are: workforce and curriculum requirements and teacher/child ratios.

Other areas that were indicated are:

- Space conditions and design;
- Interactions between teachers and children;
- Play and learning activities;
- Stability and size of the group;
- Positive interactions among children in groups;
- Giving value to individual differences;
- Documentation and evaluation;
- Teams management rates;
- Professional training rates;
- The involvement of families;
- Spread and accessibility of the ECEC services;
- ECEC services in the network of territorial services;
- The link between ECEC services and social inclusion policies;
- The relation between costs and quality;
- Accessibility for disabled children;
- Coherence of the system.

* ChildONEurope Secretariat coordinator and researcher at the Istituto degli Innocenti.

A preoccupation quality emerges also from the report submitted to the European Commission by the NESSE Network of Experts in which it is recognised that “there is a need to adopt a broad social policy approach in developing ECEC services” (NESSE Network of Experts, 2009: 61). Notwithstanding the fact that “the EU is a world leader in providing ECEC services ... more work needs to be done, in particular revising the Barcelona targets which view ECEC as an aspect of women’s labour force participation rather than as a service in its own right combining both education and care” (NESSE Network of Experts, 2009: 60-61). The report also acknowledges that there is no common definition of the quality of ECEC services across the EU; more work is needed on defining, measuring and comparing quality in ECEC.

Countries also indicated that among the most important aspects that ensure quality in ECEC services are: good training, good pay and good working conditions of staff. Other elements that are also considered important are: “the content/curriculum, including issues of inclusiveness, respect for diversity and personalisation; the child/staff ratio, group size and premises; the involvement of parents and of the wider community; the governance structures necessary for regular programme monitoring and assessment, system accountability and quality assurance”.

Among its recommendations, the NESSE network indicates that “Any future EU-level measures to address the development of ECEC services should take a comprehensive approach which acknowledges that a range of inter-linked initiatives are needed” (NESSE Network of Experts, 2009: 63). Furthermore “the European Commission should revisit previous work on Quality Targets in ECEC services and consider how they may be updated and used” (NESSE Network of Experts, 2009: 63)¹.

Another network of experts “**Children in Europe**” has developed a document entitled “**Young children and their services: developing a European approach**” in which a series of principles related to quality are strongly underlined. The document explains that such principles are to be considered as goals to strive for and that the time for their implementation period will be a subject of debate. However Children in Europe believe that the principles can and should be implemented by 2020. Among the Children in Europe principles, many relate to the same areas indicated in the European Commission Childcare Targets, but the requests are formulated in a stronger way. For example, the issue of access is considered as an entitlement for all children free of costs. In relation to work conditions, the document proposes a 0-6 profession and pay parity with school teachers. Concerning the pedagogical requirements and the organization of the services, the pedagogical approach should be holistic, multi-purpose and coherent. Participation, diversity and choice are seen as essential values, with evaluation being conducted in a participatory, democratic and transparent way. There should be a strong and equal partnership between services for young children and compulsory school and cross-national partnership should be promoted.

The **Van Leer Foundation** also gives great importance to the issue of quality in its review “Early Childhood Matters”. In particular it shows that the trend over the last 20 years has been to address quality in early education in terms of a “supposedly objective modern view”, which puts quality into “rational and universal standards defined by the experts on the basis of unquestionable knowledge and measured in ways that reduce infant educational institutions to stable and rational criteria” using “methods that placed the emphasis on and gave priority to ‘how’ rather than ‘what’” (Dahlberg, 1999). As a consequence the central problem is how to re-conceptualise quality in education taking into account diversity, subjectivity, the different children involved and different spatial and temporal contexts. The table below indicates a number of criteria that emerge from a series of studies.

¹ The quality targets were elaborated in the report drafted within the framework of the council recommendation on childcare, to “establish criteria for the definition of quality in childcare services” (1991). They include 40 targets that should be considered as interdependent and to be applied to publicly funded services for attainment within a specified timeframe.

Table 1. Common quality criteria in early childhood education

Criteria/ studies	A ¹	B ²	C ³	D ⁴	E ⁵	F ⁶	G ⁷	H ⁸	Total mentions
Involvement of parents in educational projects	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	8
Adequate adult-child interaction	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	8
Suitable programme (clear and relevant intentions)		X	X		X	X	X	X	6
Evidence that children take on an active role in their own learning through play			X						1
Suitable and well-organised physical spaces			X	X		X	X	X	5
Stable routines				X					1
Monitoring and evaluation	X		X	X		X			4
Ongoing team training					X	X			2

1. Schweinhart 1981; 2. US Department of Education 1990; 3. Pugh 1996; 4. Salazar 1996; 5. National Childhood Accreditation Council 1994; 6. Myers 2001; 7. OECD 2001; 8. Tietze 2007

Finally the **Commission** itself in its **Report on the implementation of the Barcelona objectives concerning childcare facilities for pre-school-age children** {SEC(2008)2597} has acknowledged the importance of aspects related to quality in ECEC services. The document talks about the development of voluntary quality standards (COM(2007)725) in order to promote the quality of social services of general interest, including ECEC services.

The Commission also highlights that there are a number of factors that affect the quality of ECEC services. First of all, the terms of employment (for example part-time contracts or atypical contracts) do not attract workers to this sector, with the consequence of a shortage of qualified staff and very high staff turnover rates. Furthermore this sector has an overwhelming majority of female workers (males account for less than 5% of the workforce in most Member States) and this is seen as possible “impediment to the sector achieving a higher-status profile and combating gender stereotypes.” The Commission also underlines that the ratio of adults to children is an element affecting quality as this may vary greatly from country to country (ratios may vary between 1 to 3 and 1 to 7 for the younger children).

The Commission underlines that, on the one side, in order to improve the quality of ECEC services, respect for strict standards is required, but on the other. training requirements for staff as well as appropriate working conditions, including appropriate recognition and remuneration, are necessary.

2.6 Final remarks

*Erika Bernacchi**, *Roberta Ruggiero***

As already pointed out in different parts of this publication, the issue of ECEC services is a complex one, which requires coordinated interventions aimed at addressing the many different aspects that adequate child development implies, as defined in Comment 7 on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This requires policies jointly dedicated, on the one hand, to the provision of services on the basis of children's potentialities and needs – and, on the other hand, on providing support to families in performing their crucial educational role. Thus, it is necessary to consider not only interventions related to reaching quantitative targets, but also the implementation of structured and constant actions towards achieving qualitative standards which, in combination with quantitative targets, legitimate State intervention and ensure the fundamental human right of the child to high quality education and care. To achieve such a comprehensive approach to ECEC services, an effort over several policy aspects is necessary. These include:

- Data collection on ECEC services;
- The creation of national coordinated ECEC systems;
- A reorganization of the forms of financial support for ECEC services;
- The re-thinking of access guarantees to ECEC services in a way more suited to child and family needs;
- The identification of qualitative standards by the EU in order to integrate the Barcelona targets.

Referring to the improvement of data collection, the reports mentioned above recommend, the following:

- To establish a national database;
- To support local capacity in data collection;
- To establish ECEC policy units to deal with policy guidance, data collection, quality and curriculum matters;
- To organise data collection to respond to the needs of information related to the areas of demand, supply, access and quality in order to make the programming in this area possible;
- To redefine and expand data collection beyond the present ISCED “level zero” perspective, to include all early education and care services for young children;
- To collect data on aspects related to the financial issues, such as child-staff expenditure in the various ECEC service types; expenditure on maternity and parental leave, on child allowances and other transfers towards families with young children;
- To collect data according to the goals that each country sets in relation to its ECEC services;
- To create more dynamic methods of statistical analysis treating data as interactive variables (e.g. Pisa programme);
- To involve local administrations, parents and teachers associations as well as independent researchers in data collection and monitoring (OECD, 2006: 179-185).

In relation to the creation of national coordinated ECEC systems, the main challenge seems to be the persistent fragmentation of the national systems, characterised by the distribution of competences over three main administrative branches – Education, Social Policy and Health – which exercise competence essentially on the basis of the age of the child; either 0-3 or 3-6 year-olds. The most frequent recommendation made in the reports refers to the creation of a unitary national system, which could be accomplished through the development of a coordinated policy in which investments

* ChildONEurope Secretariat coordinator and researcher at the Istituto degli Innocenti.

** ChildONEurope Secretariat coordinator and researcher at the Istituto degli Innocenti.

should be made across a range of policies that affect young children's lives. A systemic and integrated approach to ECEC services could be developed through a co-ordinated policy framework focussed essentially on:

- The appointment of a lead ministry;
- The allocation of specific national funds;
- The adoption of holistic and unitary legal acts for ECEC services, setting national qualitative standards;
- Special national plans of action for the identification of goals, the allocation of resources and the determination of time limits to achieve these goals;
- The coordination of central and decentralized levels, with links and connections between services;
- The implementation of mechanisms that support, in a collaborative and participatory manner, the reform and updating of the system to match social, economic and cultural evolutions.

As regards the financing of ECEC services, many economic researchers have demonstrated that investment in early childhood brings greater returns than investing in any other stage of education, in particular regarding children coming from disadvantaged families, although the size of the effect may vary considerably. It is however important to consider the economic arguments about ECEC services within specific country contexts, since data taken out of context may be misleading. A recommendation emerging from international comparisons, in particular from UNICEF, is the invitation to States to devote a minimum of 1% of GDP to the development of ECEC services.

As concerns the issues of economic accessibility to ECEC services, comparative research shows that in all EU countries the system of public services either guarantees or facilitates access of families with economic or social needs. In the future, it is important that the development of the number of ECEC services is carried out in a framework regulated by the State in order to favour an offer of services that may be accessible and affordable for everyone (universally available).

A re-thinking of access guarantees to ECEC services needs to be undertaken as the most recent assessments concur that the Barcelona objectives do not properly address the huge and complex issue of accessibility (Eurydice, 2009). The Targets overlook many other issues such as: the nature of places to be made available; the quality requirements for staff-training, child-staff ratios and the opening hours of services. At present, opening hours are determined on the basis of how affordable the services are for the State. ECEC services must ensure that they are responsive and welcoming to all children, families and communities, that they are not only available but also equally accessible geographically, financially and culturally, that they are sufficiently flexible and diverse to meet parents' needs and preferences, particularly for the most vulnerable children, including undocumented and migrant children. To fulfil this objective it emerges from the analysis that the most frequently recommended intervention approach is one characterised by:

- Integrated national and local systems responsible for preschool children under the authority of single ministry;
- Public policies for equity aimed to sustain the universal access model enshrined by the UN Committee on the Right of the Child, promoting access for disadvantaged children and ensuring that services are sensitive to their specific needs;
- Admission policies including supplementary and constant training for the educators supported by adequate financial resources;
- Evaluation and monitoring systems of services accessibility and equity with the mandate to operate regularly.

As regards the Barcelona targets, there is wide agreement on the necessity to integrate a qualitative dimension to the targets. To achieve this, there is a need to work towards some common definitions of the different dimensions related to quality in ECEC services across the EU. Among these dimensions, the following are considered as most important:

- A clear and explicit image of the child as competent active agent and protagonist of his/her growth and development;

- The staff/child ratio;
- The training and working conditions of staff, including the need for staff to work collegially to ensure the quality of services;
- A clear pedagogical framework;
- The involvement of parents and the community at large.

As regards the staff/children ratio, ratios proposed in the 40 Quality targets in services for young children (see Annex) are: 1 trained adult per 4 children under one year of age; 1 trained adult per 6 children aged from 12 to 23 months; 1 trained adult per 8 children aged from 24 to 35 months.

It is generally acknowledged that the training and working conditions of those working in the ECEC services are not on the same level as those of other professions in the education and social fields. The consequence of such a situation is that the sector becomes less attractive to workers, leading to a shortage of qualified staff and very high staff turnover rates. It is therefore recommended that the degree of training of the staff responsible for education and social development activities in ECEC services should be at tertiary education graduate level and should be specialised. Moreover, this is a sector with very high percentage of female workers with the possible consequence of perceiving this work as a female semi-voluntary one. It would be more appropriate – and not least for the development of young children – to work towards achieving a higher percentage of male workers.

Annex. Quality targets in services for young children

These quality targets are drawn from a paper developed by the European Commission Network on Childcare and Other Measures to Reconcile the Employment and Family Responsibilities of Men and Women (Childcare Network) (1996).

Policy framework targets

TARGET 1: Governments should draw on professional and public opinion to provide a published and coherent statement of intent for care and education services to young children 0-6, in the public and in the private sector, at national and at regional/local level.

This policy should set out principles, specify objectives and define priorities, and explain how such initiatives will be coordinated between relevant departments.

TARGET 2: At national level one department should be nominated to take responsibility for implementing the policy whether it does so directly or through an agency; at a regional/local level there should be a similar designation of responsibility, whether services are directly administered by the regional/local authority or whether contracted out to other providers.

TARGET 3: Governments should draw up a programme to implement the policy which outlines strategies for implementation, sets targets, and specifies resources. At a regional/local level, the department or agency responsible should similarly draw up a programme for implementing policy and developing practice.

TARGET 4: Legislative frameworks should be created to ensure that the targets are fully met within specified time limits and reviewed regularly, and which should outline the competencies of regional and/or local government in fulfilling the targets.

TARGET 5: The government department or agency responsible at national level should set up an infrastructure, with parallel structures at local level, for planning, monitoring, review, support, training, research and service development.

TARGET 6: The planning and monitoring system should include measures of supply, demand and need covering all services for young children at national, regional and/or local level.

Financial targets

TARGET 7: Public expenditure on services for young children (in this case defined as children aged 5 years and under) should be not less than 1% of GDP in order to meet targets set for services, both for children under three and over three.

TARGET 8: A proportion of this budget should be allocated to develop the infrastructure for services.

This should include at least 5% spent on support and advisory services including continuous or in-service training and at least 1% for research and monitoring.

TARGET 9: There should be a capital spending programme for building and renovations linked to the environmental and health targets.

TARGET 10: Where parents pay for publicly funded services, the charges should not exceed, and may well be less than, 15% of net monthly household income.

The charges should take into account per capita income, family size and other relevant circumstances.

Targets for levels and types of service

TARGET 11: Publicly funded services should offer full time equivalent places for:

- at least 90% of children aged 3-6 years; and
- at least 15% of children under three years.

TARGET 12: Services should offer flexibility of hours and attendance including coverage for working hours and a working year if parents require it.

TARGET 13: There should be a range of services offering parents choice.

TARGET 14: All services should positively assert the value of diversity and make provision both for children and adults which acknowledges and supports diversity of language, ethnicity, religion, gender and disability, and challenges stereotypes.

TARGET 15: All children with disabilities should have right of access to the same services as other children with appropriate staffing assistance and specialist help.

Education targets

TARGET 16: All collective services for young children 0-6 whether in the public or private sector should have coherent values and objectives including a stated and explicit educational philosophy.

TARGET 17: The educational philosophy should be drawn up and developed by parents, staff and other interested groups.

TARGET 18: The educational philosophy should be broad and include and promote inter alia:

- the child's autonomy and concept of self
- convivial social relationships between children, and children and adults
- a zest for learning
- linguistic and oral skills including linguistic diversity
- mathematical, biological, scientific, technical and environmental concepts
- musical expression and aesthetic skills
- drama, puppetry and mime
- muscular coordination and bodily control
- health, hygiene, food and nutrition
- awareness of the local community.

TARGET 19: The way in which the educational philosophy is put into practice should be stated and explicit. Services should have a programme of organisation covering all their activities including pedagogical approach, deployment of staff, grouping of children, training profiles for staff, use of space, and the way in which financial resources are used to implement the programme.

TARGET 20: The education and learning environment should reflect and value each child's family, home, language, cultural heritage, beliefs, religion and gender.

Targets for staff-child ratios

TARGET 21: Staff ratios for collective care should reflect the objectives of the service and their wider context and be directly related to group age and group size. They should usually be more than but should not be less than:

- 1 adult : 4 places for children under 12 months
- 1 adult : 6 places for children aged 12-23 months
- 1 adult : 8 places for children aged 24-35 months
- 1 adult : 15 places for children aged 36-71 months.

Ratios in family day care should not be less than 1 adult: 4 places for children under compulsory school age, and the ratio should include the family day carer's own children.

TARGET 22: At least one tenth of the working week should be non-contact time allocated to preparation and continuous training.

TARGET 23: Adequate supply cover should always be available to maintain the ratios.

TARGET 24: Administrative, domestic, janitorial work should be allocated staff time or hours in addition to those hours spent with children

Targets for staff employment and training

TARGET 25: All qualified staff employed in services should be paid at not less than a nationally or locally agreed wage rate, which for staff who are fully trained should be comparable to that of teachers.

TARGET 26: A minimum of 60% of staff working directly with children in collective services should have a grant eligible basic training of at least three years at a post-18 level, which incorporates both the theory and practice of pedagogy and child development. All training should be modular. All staff in services (both collective and family day care) who are not trained to this level should have right of access to such training including on an in-service basis.

TARGET 27: All staff in services working with children (in both collective and family day care) should have the right to continuous in-service training.

TARGET 28: All staff whether in the public or the private sector shall have the right to trade union affiliation.

TARGET 29: 20% of staff employed in collective services should be men.

Environment and health targets

TARGET 30: All services, whether in the private or the public sector, should meet national and local health and safety requirements.

TARGET 31: The planning of the environment and its spatial organisation, including the layout of the buildings, the furnishings and equipment should reflect the educational philosophy of the service and take account of the views of parents, staff and other interested parties.

TARGET 32: There should normally be sufficient space, inside and out, to enable children to play, sleep and use bathroom facilities, and to meet the needs of parents and staff. This should normally mean:

- internal space of at least 6 sq metres for each child under three years and of at least 4 sq metres for each child 3-6 years (excluding storage and corridor or through-way space)
- direct access to external space of at least 6 sq metres per child
- an additional 5% of internal space for adult use.

TARGET 33: Food preparation facilities should be available on the premises and nutritional and culturally appropriate food should be provided.

Targets for parents and the community

TARGET 34: Parents are collaborators and participants in early years services. As such they have a right to give and receive information and the right to express their views both formally and informally. The decision-making processes of the services should be fully participative, involving parents, all staff, and, where possible, children.

TARGET 35: Services should have formal and informal links with the local community or communities or district.

TARGET 36: Services should adopt employment procedures which emphasize the importance of recruiting employees who reflect the ethnic diversity of the local community.

Performance targets

TARGET 37: Services should demonstrate how they are fulfilling their aims and objectives and how they have spent their budget through an annual report or by other means.

TARGET 38: In all services children's progress should be regularly assessed.

TARGET 39: The views of parents and the wider community should be an integral part of the assessment process.

TARGET 40: Staff should regularly assess their performance using both objective methods and self-evaluation.

Bibliography

- Alderson, P. (2008), *Young children's rights: exploring beliefs, principles and practice*, London: Jessica Kingsley (2nd edition).
- Alexander, R. (2000), *Culture and Pedagogy*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Aos, S., et al. (2001), *The Comparative Costs and Benefits of Programs to Reduce Crime*, Washington, DC: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.
- Balageur, I., Mestres, J., Penn, H. (1991), *Quality in services for young children: A discussion paper*, EC Child care network.
- Barnett, W.S. (1996), *Lives in the Balance: Age-27 Benefit-Cost Analysis of the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program*, Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Foundation.
- Baudelot, C., Establet, R. (2009), *L'élitisme républicain. L'école française à l'épreuve des comparaisons internationales*, Paris: Seuil.
- Becchi, E. (2010), *La pedagogia del buon gusto*, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Becchi, E., Julia, D. (1998), *Histoire de l'enfance en Occident. De l'Antiquité au XVIIIe siècle*, Paris: Seuil.
- Becker, G. (2005), *Should Governments Subsidize Childcare and Work Leaves?*, Becker-Posner blog (www.becker-posner-blog.com/).
- Belsky, J. (2001), «Developmental Risks (Still) Associated with Early Child Care», Emanuel Miller Lecture, *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines*, 42, 1: 845-859.
- Ben Soussan, P. (ed.) (2010), *Le livre noir de l'accueil de la petite enfance*, Toulouse: Erès.
- Bennett, J. (2005), «Curriculum issues in national policy making», *EECER Journal*, 13, 2: 5-24.
- (2008a), *Early Childhood Services in OECD Countries: review of the literature and current policy in the early childhood field*, Innocenti Working Paper, 2008-01
- (2008b), *Benchmarks for Early Childhood Services in OECD Countries*, Innocenti Working Paper 2008-02, Florence: UNICEF-IRC.
- (2010), «Quelques développements en matière de petite enfance depuis Starting Strong II», *Revue Internationale d'Education de Sèvres*, 53: 31-42.
- Bennett, M., Hacker, P. (2003), *The Philosophical Foundations of Neuroscience*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bentley, G. (ed.) (2009), *Alloparenting in Human Societies*, Oxford: Berghahn Books.
- Berlinski, S., Galiani, S., Manacorda, M. (2007), «Giving children a better start: preschool attendance and school-age profiles», *Journal of Public Economics*, 92, 5-6: 1416-1440 (previously published as IFS working paper WO6/18).
- Bernard van Leer Foundation (2008), *Early childhood education: questions of quality* (Early Childhood Matters, 110), The Hague: Bernard van Leer Foundation.
- (2009), *An introduction to General Comment 7: A framework for young children's rights. Realising the rights of young children: progress and challenges*, The Hague: Bernard van Leer Foundation.
- Bertin, G., et al. (1998), *Manuale per la valutazione della qualità degli asilo nido nella Regione Toscana*, Bergamo: Junior.
- Bianchi, S., Casper, L., Berkowitz King, R., National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (U.S.) (eds.) (2003), *Work, Family, Health, and Well-being*, New York-London: Routledge.
- Biddulph, S. (2006), *Raising Babies: Should under 3s go to nursery?*, London: HarperThorsons.
- Blok, H., et al. (2005), «The Relevance of Delivery Mode and Other Program Characteristics for the Effectiveness of Early Childhood Interventions with Disadvantaged Children», *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, 29: 36-37.
- Bloomer, K., Cohen, B. (2008), *Young Children in Charge*, Edinburgh: Children in Scotland.
- Boltanski, L. (1999), *Distant Suffering: Morality, Media and Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bowen, J. (1975), *A History of Western Education. I. The Ancient World: Orient and Mediterranean 2000 B.C.-A.D. 1054*, London: University Paperbacks.
- Bradshaw, J., Bennett, F. (2007), UK: *Tackling Child Poverty and Promoting the Social Inclusion of Children: A study of national policies*, European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities) (webpublication only: http://www.peer-review-social-inclusion.net/policy-assessment-activities/reports/first-semester-2007/firstsemester-reports-2007/united-kingdom_1_07).

- Bradshaw, J., Hoelscher, P., Richardson, D. (2007), «An Index of Child Well-Being in the European Union 25», *Journal of Social Indicators Research*, 80: 133-177.
- Bredenkamp, S. (1987), *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age eight*, Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- Bredenkamp, S., Copple, C. (eds.) (1997), *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*. Revised edition, Washington, DC: NAEYC.
- Brewer, M., Shepherd, A. (2004), *Has Labour Made Work Pay?*, London: Joseph Rowntree Foundation-Institute of Fiscal Studies.
- Brisset, C., Gosle, B. (eds.), (2006), *L'école à 2 ans est-ce bon pour l'enfant?*, Paris: Odile Jacob.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1974), *Is Early Intervention Effective?*, Washington, DC: Office of Child Development.
- Brooker, S. (2001), *Parent's perceptions of and attitudes towards government work-life balance initiatives*, London: BMRB Social Research-Women and Equality Unit, DTI.
- Brooks-Gunn, J. (2003), «Do You Believe in Magic: What We Can Expect from Early Childhood Intervention Programs», *Social Policy Report*, XVII, 1: 3-7.
- Broström, S. (2000), *L'éducation préscolaire au Danemark et dans les pays nordiques*, in S. Rayna, G. Brougère (dir.), *Traditions et innovations dans l'éducation préscolaire*, Paris: Inrp.
- Brougère, G. (2010), «L'école maternelle française, une entrée dans quelle culture?», *Revue Internationale d'Education de Sèvres*, 53: 109-118.
- Brougère, G., Guénif, N., Rayna, S. (2008), «Ecole maternelle in France: a cross cultural perspective», *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 16, 3: 371-384.
- Brougère, G., Vandenbroeck, M. (dir.) (2008), *Repenser l'éducation des jeunes enfants*, Bruxelles: P. Lang.
- Bruer, J. (1999), *The Myth of the First Three Years*, New York: The Free Press.
- Caille, J., Rosenwald, F. (2006), *Les inégalités de réussite à l'école élémentaire: construction et évolution*, Paris: INSEE.
- Cameron, C., Moss, P. (2007), *Care Work in Europe. Current understandings and future directions*, London: Routledge.
- Chartrin, L. (2010), *Norvège: respect des droits de l'enfant et pratiques professionnelles*, in J.P. Feutry (dir.), *Respect des droits de l'enfant et pratiques éducatives européennes*, Paris: LHarmattan.
- Childcare Resource and Research Unit, *Quality in early learning and child care services*, Papers from the EC Childcare Network, Toronto: University of Toronto, 2004.
- Children in Europe (2008), *Young children and their services: developing a European approach. A discussion paper*. http://www.childrenineurope.org/docs/eng_discpaper.pdf.
- Clawson, D., Gerstel, N. (2002), «Caring for Our Young; Childcare in Europe and the USA», *Contexts* 1,4: 28-35.
- Cleghorn, A., Prochner, L. (2008), «Early Education and Care», *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 3,3: 222-223.
- Cleveland, G., Krashinsky, M. (2003), *Financing ECEC services in OECD countries*, OECD: Paris.
- Cleveland, G., et al. (2007), *An Economic Perspective on the Current and Future Role of Nonprofit Provision of Early Learning and Childcare Services in Canada*, Toronto: Toronto University/HRSD.
- Cole, M. (1998), *Cultural Psychology, a Once and Future Science*, New Haven: Belknap Press.
- Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy, National Research Council (2001), *Eager to Learn: Educating our preschoolers*, ed. by B.T. Bowman, M.S. Donovan and M.S. Burns, Washington, DC: Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Academy Press.
- Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, National Research Council, Institute of Medicine (2000), *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*, ed. by J.P. Shonkoff, D.A. Phillips, Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children (1998), *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, ed. by C. Snow, M.S. Burns, P. Griffin, Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Corsaro, W. (2005), *The Sociology of Childhood*, Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.
- Corsaro, W., Molinari, L. (2008), «Policy and Practice in Italian Children's Transition from Preschool to Elementary School», *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 3, 3: 250-265.
- Crahay, M. (2005), *Psychologie de l'éducation*, Paris: PUF.
- Crahay, M., Monseur, C. (2006), *Différences individuelles et effets d'agrégation en ce qui concerne les performances en lecture. Analyse secondaire des données PISA 2000*, in C. Houssemand, R. Martin, P. Dickès (eds.), *Perspectives de psychologie différentielle*, Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes.
- Craig, L. (2007), *Contemporary Motherhood: The Impact of Children on Adult Time*, Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing.

- Dahlberg, G., Moss, P. (2005), *Ethics and politics in early childhood education*, London: Routledge.
- Dahlberg, G., Moss, P., Pence, A. (1999), *Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care: Postmodern perspectives*, London: Falmer Press.
- Dalli, C. (2010), «Le professionnalisme dans le préscolaire de Nouvelle-Zélande», *Revue internationale de l'éducation de Sèvres*, 53: 89-100.
- Daycare Trust (2009), *Childcare Costs Survey 2009*, London.
- Dean, H. (2007), «Tipping the Balance: the problematic nature of work-life balance in a low income neighbourhood», *Journal of Social Policy*, 36,4: 519-537.
- DECET (2008), *Diversity in Early Childhood and Training European Network*, www.decet.org.
- DeLoache, J., Gottlieb, A. (eds.) (2000), *A World of Babies: Imagined Childcare Guides for Seven Societies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Educational International (2004-2008), *Worlds of Education Journal*, <http://www.eiie.org/en/index.php>.
- Edwards, C., Gandini, L., Forman, G. (eds.) (1998), *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach--advanced reflections*, New York: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Esping-Andersen, G. (2004), «Untying the Gordian Knot of Social Inheritance», *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 21: 115-139.
- EU-SILC (2006), *EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions*, Dublin.
- Eurochild (2008), *Improving the Wellbeing of Young Children in Europe: The Role of Early Years Services. Seminar report*, www.eurochild.org
- European Commission (2007a), *Opportunities, Access and Solidarity for 21st Century Europe*, Brussels, COM(2007)final.
- (2007b), *Towards more knowledge-based policy and practice in education and training*, Commission Staff Working Document, SEC(2007)1098.
- European Commission Childcare Network (1990), *Quality in childcare services*, Brussels.
- (1996), *Quality Targets in Services for Young Children*, Brussels.
- Eurydice Report (2009), *Tackling Social and Cultural Inequalities through Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe*, Brussels: Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency.
- Fass, P. (2007), *Children of a New World: Society, Culture and Globalization*, New York: New York University Press.
- (ed.) (2004), *Encyclopaedia of Children and Childhood in History and Society*, New York: Thompson/Gale.
- Feinstein, L. (2003), «Inequality in the Early Cognitive Development of British Children in the 1970 Cohort», *Economica*, 70, 277: 73-97.
- Feinstein, L., Duckworth, K., Sabato, R. (2008), *Education and the Family: Passing Success Across the Generations*, London: Routledge.
- Feinstein, L., et al. (2007), *Reducing Inequalities: Realising the Talent of All*, London: NCB.
- Finch, J. (1993), *The concept of caring: Feminist and other perspectives*, in J. Twigg (ed.), *Informal Care in Europe*, York: Social Policy Research Unit: 5-22.
- Florin, A. (2000), *La scolarisation à 2 ans et autres modes d'accueil*, Paris: Inrp.
- (2007), *Petite enfance et modes d'accueil: qu'en dit la recherche internationale?*, Toulouse: Erès.
- Fortunati, A. (2007), *The education of young children as a community project: the experience of San Miniato*, Bergamo Junior.
- Freeman, M. (2000), «The Future of Children's Rights», *Children and Society*, 4, 4: 277-293.
- (2007), *A Commentary on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: The Best Interests of the Child*, vol. 3, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
- (ed.) (2004), *Children's Rights*, vols. 1 and 2, Ashgate: Dartmouth.
- Freeman, M., Veerman, P. (1992), *The Ideologies of Children's Rights*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.
- Fukkink, R.G., Lont, A. (2007), «Does training matter? A meta-analysis and review of caregiver training studies», *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 22: 294-311.
- Galardini, A.L. (2009), *Réseau et documentation: l'expérience italienne pour la qualité éducative*, in Rayna, Bouve, Moisset (2009).
- Gallagher, N., Norton, F. (2010), *Précarité sociale et qualité d'accueil*, in J.P. Feutry (dir.), *Respect des droits de l'enfant et pratiques éducatives européennes*, Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Garcia, M. (2008), *Africa's Future, Africa's Challenge: Early Childhood Care and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Washington: World Bank.

- Gerhardt, S. (2004), *Why Love Matters: How affection shapes a baby's brain*, Scarborough (Canada) - New York: Brunner-Routledge.
- Ghysels, J., Van Lancker, W. (2009), «Het ongelijke gebruik van kinderopvang in Vlaanderen», *Tijdschrift voor Welzijnswerk*, 33, 304: 13-23.
- Ghysels, J., Van Lancker, W. (2010), «De terugkeer van het mattheuseffect? De casus van de kinderopvang in Vlaanderen», *Tijdschrift voor sociologie*, 31,2: 151-163.
- Gillborn, D. (2008), *Racism and Education: Coincidence or Conspiracy*, London: Routledge.
- Gottlieb, A. (2004), *The Afterlife is where we come from: The Culture of Infancy in West Africa*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Greve, A. (2010), *Jeu et approche phénoménologique dans le préscolaire nordique*, in S. Rayna, G. Brougère (dir.), *Jeu et cultures préscolaires*, Lyon: Inrp.
- Hakim, C. (2009), *Should social policy support parenthood and family work?*. Paper given at the conference Parental Childcare and the Employment Policy: Collision or Complementarity, Prague, February 6th 2009.
- Hart, B., Risley, T. (1995), *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experiences of Young American Children*, Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.
- Hatch, A., et al. (2002), «Developmentally Appropriate practice: Continuing the Dialogue», *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 3,3: 439-457.
- Heath, S.B. (1983), *Ways with Words: Language, Life and Work in Communities and Classrooms*, Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- (1990), *The Children of Trackton's Children: Spoken and Written Language in Social Change*, in J. Stigler, R. Shweder, G. Herdt (eds.), *Cultural Psychology: Essays on Comparative Human Development*, Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press, 496-519.
- Heckman, J.J. (2006), «Skill Formation and the Economics of Investing in Disadvantaged Children», *Science*, 312, 5782: 1900-1902.
- Heckman, J., Masterov, D. (2004), *The productivity argument for investing in young children*, <http://jenni.uchicago.edu/Invest/>
- Heran, F. (2009), *Family policy and forms of support of childcare in France*. Paper given at the conference Parental Childcare and the Employment Policy: Collision or Complementarity, Prague, February 6th 2009.
- Heymann, J. (2006), *Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hoshi Watanabe, M. (2010), *Jeu et éducation des tout-petits dans les crèches japonaises*, in S. Rayna, G. Brougère (dir.), *Jeu et cultures préscolaires*, Lyon: Inrp.
- Hoy, G. (2008), 'Fast Eddy' leaves ABC Learning Investors Reeling, Sydney. ABC News August 27th 2008. <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/08/27/2347609.htm>
- Hoyuelos, A. (2004), *La Etica en el pensamiento y obra pedagogica de Loris Malaguzzi*, Barcelona: Octaedro-Rosa Sensat.
- Humblet, P., Amerijcks, H. (2010), *Children in Europe Policy Document on Accessibility Children in Europe* (in press).
- Jacquemin, M. (2007), *Un projet de vie intergénérationnel*, in Rayna, Bouve, Moisset (2009).
- James, A., Prout A. (2005), *Constructing and Deconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood*, London: Routledge (2nd edition).
- Jenson, J. (2008), «Writing Women Out, Folding Gender in: the European Union “Modernises” social policy», *Social Politics*, 15, 2: 131-153.
- Jenson, J., Hansen, H. (2003), «The Danish Pedagogue-A Worker for All Ages», *Children in Europe*, 5: 9-14.
- Johnson, D., et al. (2003), «Studying the Effects of Early Child Care Experiences on the Development of Children of Color in the United States: Towards a More Inclusive Research Agenda», *Child Development*, 74, 5: 1227-1244.
- Kagan, J. (1998), *Three Seductive Ideas*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kammerman, S., et al. (2003), *Social Policies, Family Types and Child Outcomes in Selected OECD Countries*, OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers.
- Karlsson-Lohmander, M. (2010), «La démocratie, fondement de la qualité dans la petite enfance, en Suède», *Revue internationale de l'éducation de Sèvres*, 53: 43-54.
- Kelly, C. (2007), *Children's World: Growing up in Russia 1890-1991*, New Have: Yale University Press.

- Kilburn, M., Karoly, C. (2008), *The Economics of Early Childhood Policy: What the dismal science has to say about investing in children*, Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation Labour and Population Series Occasional Paper.
- Kirschenbaum, L. (2001), *Small Comrades: Revolutionizing Childhood in Soviet Russia 1917-1932*, New York-London: Routledge.
- Laevers, F., Heylen, L. (eds.) (2004), *Involvement of Teacher and Children Style: Insights from an International Study on Experiential Education*, Leuven: University of Leuven Press.
- Lamb, M. (1999), *Parenting and Child Development in Non Traditional Families*, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Lane, J. (2008), *Young Children and Racial Justice: Taking Action for Racial Equality - Understanding the Past, Thinking About the Present, Planning for the Future*, London: National Children's Bureau.
- Lansdown, G. (2005), *The Evolving Capacities of the Child*, Florence: UNICEF-IRC.
- LeFebvre, P., Merrigan, P. (2005), *Low-Fee (\$5/day/child) Regulated Child Care Policy and the Labour Supply of Mothers with Young Children: A Natural Experiment from Canada*, Montreal: CIRPEE Working Paper 05-08.
- Léon, A. (1980), *Introduction à l'histoire des faits éducatifs*, Paris, PUF.
- Leseman, P. (2002), *Early Childhood Education and Care for Children from Low Income and Minority backgrounds*, OECD.
- Levin, B. (2004), «Making Research Matter More», *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 12, 56.
- LeVine, R., (2003), *Childhood Socialization: Comparative Studies of Parenting, Learning and Educational Change*, Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre.
- LeVine, R., New, R. (eds.) (2008), *Anthropology and Child Development: a cross-cultural reader*, Oxford: Blackwell.
- Lister, R. (2006), «Children (but not women) first: New Labour, child welfare and gender», *Critical Social Policy*, 26, 2: 315-335.
- London Development Agency (2008), *Listening to providers about childcare for children with disabilities and special educational needs*, London: LDA.
- Lpfö (1998), *Curriculum for the pre-school*, Stockholm, Ministry of Education and Science.
- Luc, J.N. (1997), *L'invention du jeune enfant au XIXe siècle. De la salle d'asile à l'école maternelle*, Paris: Belin.
- Maggi, S., et al. (2005), *Knowledge Network for Early Child Development; Analytic Strategic Review Paper*, Geneva: World Health Organization.
- Mahon, R. (2005), *The OECD and the Reconciliation Agenda. Paper presented at Challenges and Opportunities of European Welfare States: New Contexts for Child Welfare*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Manni, G., Sommer, M. (2000), *Accueillir les tout-petits: oser la qualité. Un défi pour les milieux d'accueil en Communauté française de Belgique*, in O. Baudelot, S. Rayna (coord.), *Coordinateurs et coordination de la petite enfance dans les communes*, Paris: Inrp.
- Mantovani, S. (2007), *Pedagogy in Early Childhood in Italy*, in R. New, M. Cochran (eds.), *Early Childhood Education: An International Encyclopaedia*, New York: Greenwood Press, 1115-1118.
- Marcon, R.A. (1999), «Differential impact of preschool models on development and early learning of inner-city children: A three cohort study», *Developmental Psychology*, 35, 2: 358-375.
- (2002), «Moving up the grades: Relationship between preschool model and later school success», *Early Childhood Research & Practice*, 4, 1: 1-24.
- MAS (2007), *Analyse van het zoekproces van ouders naar een voorschoolse kinderopvangplaats*, Brussel: Kind en Gezin.
- Mastio, A. (2010), *Diversité et accueil de l'enfant en situation de handicap*, in J.P. Feutry (dir.), *Respect des droits de l'enfant et pratiques éducatives européennes*, Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Mathers, S., Sylva, K. (2007), *National Evaluation of the Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative: The Relationship between Quality and Children's Behavioural Development*, London: DCSE SSU/2007/FR/022.
- Mathers, S., Sylva, K., Joshi, H. (2007), *Quality of Childcare Settings in the Millennium Cohort Study*, London: DCSE RR025.
- Maurin, E., Roy, D. (2008), *L'effet de l'obtention d'une place en crèche sur le retour à l'emploi des mères et leur perception du développement de leurs enfants*, Grenoble: Centre pour la Recherche Economique et les applications.
- (2009), *L'effet de l'obtention d'une place en crèche sur le retour à l'emploi des mères et leur perception du développement de leurs enfants*, Cepremap.
- Mayall, B. (2008), *Conversations with children: working with generational issues*, in P. Christensen, A. James (eds.), *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices* (2nd edition), London: Routledge, 109-122.

- Meda, D. (2001), *Le Temps des femmes; pour un nouveau partage des rôles*, Paris: Champs/Flammarion.
- Meulders, D., et al. (2009), *Politiques publiques pour promouvoir l'emploi des parents et l'inclusion sociale*. Bruxelles: Academia Press, Politique scientifique fédérale, Federaal wetenschapsbeleid.
- Mitchell, L. (2009), «Diversité des services de la petite enfance en Nouvelle Zélande», *Le Furet*, 59.
- Moisset, P. (2009), *Repenser l'enfant à travers les curricula*, in Rayna, Bouve, Moisset (2009).
- Monseur, C., Crahay, M. (2008), «Composition académique et sociale des établissements, efficacité et inégalités scolaires: une comparaison internationale», *Revue Française de Pédagogie*, 162 (Numéro spécial sur l'éducation comparée, dirigé par N. Mons de l'Université de Grenoble).
- Mooney, A., et al. (2003), *Early Years and Childcare International Evidence Project*, London: DfCFS.
- Moss, P. (1996), *Vers une définition des objectifs des services de la petite enfance*, in S. Rayna, F. Laevers, M. Deleau (dir.), *Quel objectifs pédagogiques pour l'éducation préscolaire?*, Paris: Nathan-Inrp.
- (2007), «Bringing politics into the nursery: early childhood education as a democratic practice», *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 15, 1: 5-20.
- (2008), *Early Childhood Education: Markets and Democratic Experimentalism*, http://www.bertelsmannstiftung.de/bst/de/media/xcms_bst_dms_24015__2.pdf.
- (2009), *There are alternatives! Markets and democratic experimentalism in early childhood education and care*, The Hague: Bernard van Leer Foundation.
- Mozere, L. (1999), *Travail au noir, informalité: liberté ou sujétion?*, Paris: L'Harmattan.
- Müller Kucera, K., Bauer, T. (2001), *Costs and Benefits of Care Services in Switzerland. Empirical results from Zurich*, Department of Social Services, Zurich.
- Murray Thomas, R., Michel, C. (1994), *Théories du développement de l'enfant. Étude comparative*, Bruxelles: De Boeck.
- Musatti, T. (2000), *Les coordinateurs des services de la petite enfance en Italie*, in O. Baudelot, S. Rayna (dir.), *Coordination et coordonnateurs de la petite enfance*, Paris: Inrp.
- (2004), «L'éducation de la petite enfance en Italie», *Perspectives. Scolariser la petite enfance*, 24, 4: 80-91.
- (2008), *L'évaluation participative des crèches de Rome*, in AIVE, *Quels indicateurs européens communs pour une politique de la petite enfance?*, Lyon: Esse (dvd).
- Musatti, T., Picchio, M. (2005), *Un luogo per bambini e genitori nella città*, Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Musatti, T., Rayna, S. (2010), *Parents-professionnelles: Rapports de pouvoir, savoirs sur la petite enfance et relations interpersonnelles en crèches*, in G. Brougère (dir.), *Parents, professionnelles et savoir au préscolaire*, Bruxelles: P. Lang.
- Mustard, J. (2006), *Early Childhood Development and Experience-based Brain development: The Scientific Underpinnings of the Importance of Early Child Development in a Globalized World*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute.
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health News Release (2003), *Child Care Linked To Assertive, Noncompliant, and Aggressive Behaviors Vast Majority of Children Within Normal Range*, 16 July.
- National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (2007), *The Science of Early Childhood Development, Closing the Gap Between What We Know and What We Do*, Cambridge, MA: Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University.
- NESSE networks of experts (2009), *Early Childhood Education and Care. Key lessons from research for policy makers*.
- New, R., Cochran, M. (eds.) (2007), *Early Childhood Education: An International Encyclopaedia*, New York: Greenwood Press.
- NICDH Early Child Care Research Network (2005), *Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development*, New York: Guildford Press.
- Nicholson, S. et al. (2008), *Childcare and Early Years Providers Survey 2007*, London: BMRB/DCSF RR047.
- Noailly, J., Visser, S., Grout, P. (2007), *The Impact of Market Forces on the Provision of Childcare: Insights from the 2005 Childcare Act in the Netherlands*. CPB Memorandum 176, The Hague: CPB Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis.
- Nussbaum, M. (2000), *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oberheuer, P. (2005), «Conceptualizing the Early Childhood Pedagogue. Policy Approaches and Issues of Professionalism», *European Early Childhood Research Journal*, 13, 1:5-16.
- OECD (2001), *Country Note; USA*, Paris: OECD.

- (2002), *Babies and Bosses: Australia, Denmark and the Netherlands*, vol. 1, Paris: OECD.
- (2003), *Babies and Bosses: Austria, Ireland and Japan*, vol. 2, Paris: OECD.
- (2004), *Babies and Bosses: New Zealand, Portugal and Switzerland*, vol. 3, Paris: OECD.
- (2006), *Starting Strong II: Early Childhood Education and Care*, Paris: OECD.
- (2008), *Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD countries*, Paris: OECD.
- Ofsted (2008), *Early years: Leading to Excellence*, London: Office for Standards in Education.
- Open EYE Early Years Campaign (2008), *Memorandum submitted to the Select Committee on Children, Schools and Families. Minutes of Evidence*, House of Commons, May 2008 <http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk>.
- Page, J., Whitting, J. (2008), *How Fathers Can Be Better Recognised and Supported Through DCSF policy*, London: DCSF Research Report RR040. <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR040.pdf>.
- Page, J., Whitting, J., Mclean, C. (2008), *A Review of How Fathers Can be Better Recognised and Supported through DCSF Policy*, London: Department for Children, Schools and Families, Research Report RR040.
- Pascal, C., Bertram, A. (2010), «Le développement des centres intégrés en Angleterre: des Children's Centres pour tous!», *Revue internationale de l'éducation du Ciep*, 53: 77-87.
- Paull, G. (2008), «Children and Women's Hours of Work», *The Economic Journal*, 118, 526.
- Peeters, J. (2008), *The construction of a new profession. A European perspective on professionalism in Early Childhood Education and Care*, Amsterdam: SWP Publishers.
- Penn, H. (2007), «Childcare Market Management: How the UK Government has reshaped its role in developing early education and care», *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 8, 3: 192-207.
- Penn, H., et al. (2006), *Systematic Review of the Impact of Integrated Out of Home Early Education and Care on Children aged 0-6*, in *Research Evidence in Education Library*, London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London.
- Penn, H., Lloyd, E. (2007), «Richness or rigour? A discussion of systematic reviews and evidence based policy in early childhood», *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood* 8, 1: 3-18.
- Peteers, J. (2004), «"Quarante objectifs" inspirent la politique flamande en matière de garde d'enfants», *Enfants d'Europe*, 7.
- (2008), *The construction of a new profession. A European perspective on professionalism in early childhood education and care*, Amsterdam: SWP.
- Petrie, P., et al. (2006), *Working with Children in Care: European Perspectives*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Phillips, D., Ochs, K. (eds.) (2004), *Educational Policy Borrowing: historical perspectives*, Oxford: Symposium Books.
- Phipps, S. (2001), *Values, policies and the well-being of young children in Canada, Norway and the USA*, in K. Vleminckx, T. Smeeding (eds.), *Child Well Being, Child Poverty and Child Policy in Modern Nations: what do we know*, Bristol: Policy Press, 79-98.
- Picchio, M., Musatti, T. (2010), «La culture de l'éducation de la petite enfance en Italie», *Revue Internationale d'Education de Sèvres*, 53: 101-108.
- Pirard, F. (2009a), «Oser la qualité», *un référentiel en Communauté française de Belgique et son accompagnement*, in Rayna, Bouve, Moisset (2009).
- (2009b), *De la production de référentiels à l'accompagnement des pratiques éducatives dans les milieux d'accueil de l'enfance*, 2èmes Assises de la petite enfance, Saint Denis, novembre.
- (2010), «Pour une évaluation participative de la qualité d'accueil», in M.P. Thollon-Behar (coord.), *La qualité de l'accueil, quel défi aujourd'hui?*, Toulouse: Erès.
- Plaisance, E., Rayna, S. (1997), «L'éducation préscolaire aujourd'hui: réalités, questions et perspectives», *Revue française de pédagogie*, 119: 107-139.
- Preissing, C. (2007), «Un aperçu du programme des services de la petite enfance de Berlin», *Le Furet*, 51.
- Pricewaterhouse Cooper (2004), *Universal Education and Care in 2020: Costs, Benefits and Funding Options*, London: Daycare Trust.
- Qvortrup, J. (1985), *Placing Children in the Division of Labour*, in P. Close, R. Collins (eds.), *Family and Economy in Modern Societies*, London: MacMillan, 129-145.
- Qvortrup, J., et al. (eds.) (1994), *Childhood Matters: Social Theory, Practice and Politics*, Avebury: Ashgate.
- Rabe-Kleberg, U. (2009), *Maternalism and Truncated Professionalism. Historical Perspectives on Kindergarten Teachers*, in K. Schweie, H. Willeken (eds.), *Child Care and Preschool Development in Europe: Institutional Perspectives*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, 210-221.

- Ramey, C.T., et al. (2000), «Persistent Effects of Early intervention on High-Risk Children and Their Mothers», *Applied Developmental Science*, 4: 2-14.
- Rayna, S. (2010), *La qualité, parlons-en!*, in Ben Soussan (ed.) (2010).
- Rayna, S., Bouve, C., Moisset, P. (2009), *Pour un accueil de qualité de la petite enfance. Quel curriculum?*, Toulouse: Erès.
- Reynolds, A.J. (2000), *Success in Early Intervention: The Chicago Child-Parent Centers*, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Rinaldi, C. (2006), *In dialogue with Reggio Emilia*, London: Routledge.
- Roose, R., et al. (2010), *In the name of child poverty, children's rights and participation: a perspective from social work*, in W. Vandenhoele, J. Vranken, K. De Boyser, *Children's Rights and Child Poverty*, Mortsel: Intersentia Publishing.
- Rosa Sensat (2008), *Perspectiva Escolar*, www.rosasensat.org
- Rousseau, J.J. (1966), *Émile*, Paris: Garnier Flammarion.
- Rutter, M (2006), «Is Sure Start an Effective Preventative Intervention?», *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 11: 135-141.
- Saraceno, C. (2007), *Patterns of Family Living in the Enlarged EU*, in J. Alber, T. Fahey, C. Saraceno (eds.), *Handbook of Quality of Life in the Enlarged European Union*, London: Routledge, 47-72.
- (2009), *Between Care Needs and Equal Opportunity Goals, for women but also children*. Paper given at the conference Parental Childcare and the Employment Policy: Collision or Complementarity, Prague, February 6th 2009.
- Schweie, K., Willeken, H. (eds.) (2009), *Child Care and Preschool Development in Europe: Institutional Perspectives*, London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Schweinhart, L.J., Weikart, D.P. (1985), «Evidence That Good Early Childhood Programs Work», *Phi Delta Kappan*, 66, 8: 545-551.
- (1993), *Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27*, Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press.
- (1997), «The High/Scope preschool curriculum study through age 23», *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 12, 2: 117-143.
- Schweinhart, L.J., et al. (2005), *Lifetime Effects: The HighScope Perry Preschool Study through age 40*, Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press.
- Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2009), «Social justice case in Effective Early Childhood Programmes», *Early Childhood in Focus*, 4.
- Siraj-Blatchford, I., Sylva, K. (2004), «Researching pedagogy in English pre-schools», *British Educational Research Journal*, 30, 5: 713-730.
- Siraj-Blatchford, I., Sylva, K., Gilden, R., Bell, D. (2002), *Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years*, London: Department for Education and Skills.
- Siraj-Blatchford, I., Taggart, B., Sylva, K., et al. (2008), «Towards the transformation of practice in early childhood education: the effective provision of pre-school education (EPPE) project», *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 38, 1: 23-36.
- Sosinsky, L., Lord, H., Zigler, E. (2007), «For-profit/non-profit differences in center-based child care quality: Results from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development», *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 28, 5: 390-410.
- Steiner-Khamsi, G. (2004), *The Global Politics of Educational Borrowing and Lending*, New York: Teachers College Press.
- Steiner-Khamsi, G., Stolpe, I. (2006), *Educational import*, London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Stipek, D.J., et al. (1998), «Good beginnings: What difference does the program make in preparing young children for school?», *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 19, 1: 41-66.
- Strand, S. (2008), *Minority Ethnic Pupils in the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England: Extension report on performance in public examinations at age 16. Research Report 029*, London: Department for Children, Schools and Families.
- Sumsion, J. (2006), «The corporatization of Australian Childcare: Towards an ethical audit and research agenda», *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 4, 2: 99-120.
- Sylva, K., et al. (2003), *The Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) Project. Findings from the Pre-school Period*, London: Institute of Education, March.
- Sylva, K., et al. (2004), *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education Project*, London: Institute of Education.

- Sylva, K., Siraj-Blatchford, I., Taggart, B. (2006), *Assessing Quality in the Early Years Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Extension (ECERS-E): Four Curricular Subscales*, London: Trentham Books.
- Thompson, R., Nelson, C. (2001), «Developmental Science and the Media», *American Psychologist*, 56: 5-15.
- Tizard, B., Hughes, M. (2003), *Young Children learning: Inside Children's Worlds*, Oxford: Blackwell (2nd edition).
- Trevarthen, C. (2010), «Le curriculum de l'enfant», *Le Furet*, 62.
- UNESCO (2007), *Strong Foundations: Global Monitoring Report on Education for All 2007*, Paris: UNESCO.
- UNICEF (2002), *Report Card 4: A league table of educational disadvantage in rich nations*, Florence: UNICEF-IRC.
- (2006), *Report Card 6: Child poverty in rich countries 2005*, Florence: UNICEF-IRC.
- (2007), *Report Card 7: Child Poverty in Perspective: An overview of child well-being in rich countries*, Florence: UNICEF-IRC.
- (2008), *Report Card 8: The Childcare Transition: A League Table of Early Education and Care in Economically Advanced Countries*, Florence: UNICEF-IRC.
- Van Haecht, A. (1992), *L'école à l'épreuve de la sociologie. Questions à la sociologie de l'éducation*, Bruxelles: De Boeck (2e édition).
- Van Keer, S., Bettens, C., Buysse, B. (2004), *Enquête naar het gebruik van opvang voor kinderen jonger dan 3 jaar*, Brussel: Kind en Gezin.
- Vandenbroeck, M. (2001), *The view of the Yeti. Bringing up children in the spirit of self-awareness and kindredship*, The Hague: Bernard van Leer Foundation.
- (2004), «Diverse aspects of diversity. A European perspective», *International Journal of Equity and Innovation in Early Childhood*, 1, 2: 27-44.
- (2005), *Eduquer nos enfants à la qualité*, Toulouse: Erès.
- (2007), *Deculturalising Social Inclusion and Reculturalizing Outcomes in Promoting Social Inclusion and Respect for Diversity in the Early Years*, The Hague: Bernard van Leer Foundation.
- Vandenbroeck, M., et. al. (2008), «Mothers' search for infant child care: the dynamic relationship between availability and desirability in a continental European welfare state», *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 23, 2: 245-258.
- Vandenbroeck, M., Pirard, F., Peeters, J. (2009), «New developments in Belgian childcare policy at practice», *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 17, 3: 408-416.
- Vincent, C., Braun, A., Ball, S. (2008), «Childcare, Choice and Social Class: Caring for Young Children in the UK», *Critical Social Policy*, 28, 1: 5-9.
- Vogler, P., Crivello, G., Woodhead, M. (2008), *Early Childhood Transitions Research: A Review of Concepts, theory and Practice* (Working paper no. 48), The Hague: Bernard van Leer Foundation.
- Walberg, H.J., Tsai, S.L. (1983), «Matthew effects in education», *Review of Educational Research*, 230: 359-373.
- Waldfoegel, J. (2004), *Social Mobility, Life Chances and the Early Years*, London: Centre for the Analysis of Social Inclusion, CASE paper 88.
- Weikart, D.P. (ed.) (1967), *Preschool Interventions: Preliminary Results of the Perry Preschool Project*, Ann Arbor, MI: Campus Publishers.
- Wilkinson, R., Pickett, K. (2009), *The Spirit Level: why more equal societies almost always do better*, London: Allen Lane.
- World Health Organization (2003), *Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding*, Geneva: WHO.
- Zigler, E. (2003), «Forty years of Believing in Magic is Enough», *Social Policy Report*, XVII, 1.
- Zigler, E., Gillam, W., Jones, S. (2006), *A Vision for Universal Pre-school Education*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Authors

Mercedes Benito Revillas, psychologist and family therapist, is Responsible for the Early Childhood and Reconciling work and family life at the General Direction of Social Policy, Families and Children of the Ministry of Health and Social Policy of Spain since 2007. From 2001 to 2003 she has been working in Bolivia at a Social and Educational Program for integration of children, teens and youth women, with or without their children, who have been abandoned and are living in the street.

John Bennett, Head of the Early Childhood and Family Unit at UNESCO from 1989-97, has worked in the early childhood policy field with the main international early childhood organisations, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the UN Committee for the International Year of the Family. In 1998, he joined the OECD as senior consultant to the Early Childhood Policy Review, where he co-authored with Dr. Michelle Neuman and Professor Collette Tayler two comparative works on early childhood policy in twenty of the OECD countries. The reports entitled *Starting Strong: early childhood education and care*, were published by the OECD in 2001 and 2006. Author of many articles, including contributions to the *International Encyclopaedia of Education* and the *Encyclopaedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences*, John is a member of several international juries and committees in the field of early education and children's rights and sit on the editorial board of several research publications, including the *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal* (Routledge), the *Journal of Early Childhood Research* (Sage) and the *Early Childhood Development Encyclopaedia* (Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development, Montreal). At the moment, a Visiting Fellow at the Thomas Coram Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London, he is engaged in researching early childhood policies for Roma children in the CEE countries for OSI, UNICEF and the Roma Education Fund. His main areas of expertise are in early childhood curriculum and pedagogy, policy analysis and country profiling.

Erika Bernacchi is a researcher at the Istituto degli Innocenti since the year 2000. She has coordinated the Secretariat of the European Network of National Observatories on Childhood and she has collaborated in the drafting of ChildONEurope researches on early childhood education and care services, intercountry adoption, state support to families, CRC Committee's concluding observations on EU Countries' reports. She is currently doing a Phd in women's studies at the University College of Dublin.

Aldo Fortunati, Director of the Documentation, Research and Training Area at Istituto degli Innocenti of Florence and Vice-president of the Italian Gruppo nazionale nidi e infanzia, is a developmental psychologist and early childhood education specialist. Interested in issues related to young children's social, communicative, and linguistic development, as well as in the strategies of observation and assessment of young children's behaviour, he has conducted or directed numerous training and research initiatives in various local contexts in Tuscany, in Italy, and internationally (Spain, Denmark, England, and the USA). He has also been a consultant for the development of numerous projects of experimental and innovative services for young children and families. Recently, his interest has extended to the issue of quality in educational services, with reference to possible approaches to quality assessment as to strategies for the regulation and control of territorial systems of services. Sensitive to the issue of designing the educational context, over the last several years he has worked on the design of a furnishing line for early childhood educational services. As expert on service planning, he has been involved in many experimental realities and has directed many training projects in several Tuscan and Italian realities.

Perrine Humblet, sociologist, PhD in Public Health Science, is the Director of the Health Policies and Systems Department of the Public Health School of the ULB (*Université Libre de Bruxelles*), and senior lecturer. She works mainly on health's social determiners and on childhood policies. She also works as an expert for the Childhood Observatory of the Brussels Region, and she is a member of the Editorial Board of *Children in Europe Review*. Her last publication is Meulders D., Humblet P., Maron L., Amerijckx G., *Politiques publiques pour promouvoir l'emploi des parents et l'inclusion sociale*, 2010, Bruxelles - Politique scientifique fédérale, Academia Press.

Ellen Meijer is currently Head of the International Department of the Netherlands Youth institute (Nji) since 2007, The International Department is concerned with international exchange of knowledge on the major programs and themes of the Institute (amongst others child abuse, youth care, early childhood services, positive youth policy, family policy, local youth policy, family centers), and is responsible also for the EC Program Youth in Action, Eurodesk and international bilateral programs and adviser on broad international youth issues for various Dutch ministries. Starting her working career in 1990 as a Public Information Officer with Amnesty International,

from 1991 to 2000 she has been working for the Holland World Youth Foundation, an organization for development education, involving young people in development cooperation, becoming Director in 1995. From 2000 to 2007 she has been manager of the Youth Department of the International Centre of the Netherlands Institute for Care and Welfare, of which in 2006 she has been Deputy Director.

Leonardo Menchini is a researcher for the Social and Economic Policy Unit at the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (Florence, Italy). He holds a PhD in Development Economics and conducts research on child poverty and well-being and social and economic policies in Eastern Europe and Central Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. He is also associated with the Innocenti Report Card series on the situation of children in economically advanced countries; in particular he is currently contributing to the Report Card 9 on inequality in child well-being in rich countries. A key area of his current work is on increasing the visibility of children in administrative and survey statistics and on child indicators.

Benoît Parmentier, training social psychologist, is since 2008 General Administrator of the Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance (Birth and Childhood Bureau, ONE), the Public Administration charged of policies for childhood for the French Community of Belgium. Since 2000, he represents the Minister of Childhood of the French Community of Belgium's Government to the Permanent Group of L'Europe de l'Enfance. He is the former President of the Assembly of the European Network of National Childhood Observatories, ChildONEurope, that he has chaired from 2007 to June 2010. From 1999 to 2008 he has filled the role of Coordinator of the Observatoire de l'Enfance, de la Jeunesse et de l'Aide à la Jeunesse (Childhood, Adolescence and Juvenile Assistance) of the French Community of Belgium.

Jan Peeters is co-ordinator of VBJK, Research and Resource centre for ECE (University Ghent). He has been promoting innovative European ECE projects since 1992 and has written numerous articles on ECE. Together with Prof. Michel Vandembroeck and other European colleagues, he founded the European DECET network on diversity in ECE. He is the author of a book on professionalism in ECE in New Zealand, France, England and Denmark: 'The Construction of a New Profession'. He is co-founder of the European magazine Children in Europe, a joint publication in 15 languages, that is distributed in 17 European countries. Together with Prof. Vandembroeck and dr. Mathias Urban he is the promoter of the EU study on Competencies in ECE, that will start early 2010.

Florence Pirard, Doctor of Educational Science, Professor in the department of Education and Formation at Liège University (French Community of Belgium) and adviser to the *Office de la Naissance et de l'enfance* (O.N.E.), is specialized in young children education and professional training and development. From 1991 until 1998, she worked as a researcher at Liège University and conducted action-researches to improve quality. Since 2001 and before becoming Professor, she has worked as an educational adviser to the ONE, a state-run institution with two basic missions: sustaining children in their families and in relationship with their family and environment; taking care of children out of their family (0 to 12 year-olds) in children services, out of school care and all kinds of other settings.

Sylvie Rayna is a psychologist of early childhood education. She is lecturer at the National Institute of Pedagogical Research. She is directing the 'Early Childhood' Research Programme with the Research Centre Experice at University Paris 13, where she is currently involved in comparative studies in care and education practices and policies. She is member of several international networks, and particularly involved in EECERA. She has been member of the team of experts for *Starting Strong*. From the late 70's so far, she has edited and published numerous articles and books about young children competencies within a participatory perspective, about interactive pedagogy, policies and practices supporting inclusion.

Roberta Ruggiero, Jurist with a PhD in promotion and protection of the rights of the child, is an independent researcher at the Istituto degli Innocenti in Florence, collaborating at the activities of the Italian National of Documentation and Analysis on Childhood and Adolescence and acting as scientific technical coordinator of the European Network of National Observatories on Childhood (ChildONEurope). Previously she worked as researcher at the UNICEF-Innocenti Research Centre on a survey project dedicated to the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings, especially women and children and collaborated with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on an analysis dedicated to outline the national legal framework for the protection of migrant unaccompanied children in five countries: Italy, Libya, Morocco, France and Spain. Moreover, she worked as external professor on children's rights at the University of Molise and at the moment is lecturer at the University of Padua in a course on social policies dedicated to childhood.

*Printed in Florence in October 2010
by ITCOMM Typography*

ISBN 978-88-6374-017-2

ChildONEurope Secretariat

c/o Italian Childhood and Adolescence Documentation and Analysis Centre



Istituto degli Innocenti
P.zza SS. Annunziata 12 I-50122 Firenze
tel. +39 055 2037342/305/357 - fax +39 055 2037344
e-mail childoneurope@minori.it - website www.childoneurope.org