

## POLICY LEVEL 3

### IMPROVING QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING AND WORKING CONDITIONS

*Staff qualifications, initial education and professional development contribute to enhancing pedagogical quality, which is – ultimately – highly associated with better child outcomes. It is not the qualification per se that has an impact on child outcomes but the ability of better qualified staff members to create a high-quality pedagogic environment. Key elements of high staff quality are the ways in which staff involve children, stimulate interaction with and between children, and use diverse scaffolding strategies.*

*Research has shown that working conditions can also improve the quality of ECEC services: better conditions will improve staff job satisfaction and retention. This will influence staff behaviour, encouraging more stable, sensitive and stimulating interactions with children, and thus, lead to better child development. Research has pointed to certain conditions that can impact the quality of ECEC services: i) high staff-child ratio and low group size; ii) competitive wages and other benefits; iii) reasonable schedule/workload; iv) low staff turnover; v) a good physical environment; and vi) a competent and supportive centre manager.*

## **ACTION AREA 1 – USING RESEARCH TO INFORM POLICY AND THE PUBLIC**

This section contains the following research briefs:

- Qualifications, Education and Training Matter
- Working Conditions Matter

### **QUALIFICATIONS, EDUCATION AND TRAINING MATTER**

#### **What are “qualifications, education and professional development” in ECEC?**

ECEC qualifications indicate the recognised level and types of knowledge, skills and competencies that ECEC staff have received.<sup>1</sup> Formal education in ECEC refers to the level and type of education that ECEC staff pursue to acquire such knowledge, skills and competencies to work in the sector. Professional development provides opportunities for staff who are already working in the sector to update or enhance their practices; it is often referred to as “in-service training”, “continuous education” or “professional training”.

#### **What is at stake?**

Recent social changes have challenged traditional views of childhood and child rearing: 1) the changing socio-economic role of women, 2) growing ethnic diversity of developed countries, and 3) changing views on (early) education and the purpose of (early) education. The last two changes have important consequences for what is expected of those who work with young children.

As pointed out by the OECD teachers’ review (OECD, 2005), education systems need to invest in intensive teacher education and training if teachers are to deliver high-quality outcomes. This also refers to the ECEC sector (OECD, 2006). Specific knowledge, skills and competencies are expected of ECEC practitioners. There is a general consensus, supported by research, that well-educated, well-trained professionals are the key factor in providing high-quality ECEC with the most favourable cognitive and social outcomes for children. Research shows that the behaviour of those who work in ECEC matters and that this is related to their education and training. The qualifications, education and training of ECEC staff are, therefore, an important policy issue (OECD, 2006).

In spite of the consensus on the importance of well-trained staff, governments often fear the funding consequences of raising staff qualifications. Higher qualifications can be followed by increased wage demands, which, in turn, contribute significantly to the costs of services. Although the evidence is strong that improved training and qualification levels raise the quality of interaction and pedagogy in ECEC services – and similar evidence exists in favour of staff qualifications – governments often choose not to invest in raising qualifications or funding staff training (OECD, 2006). This might seriously affect ECEC quality, and with this, child development outcomes, since staff are not being optimally trained or educated to stimulate early learning and development.

Although research emphasises the high relevance of adequate staff initial education and continuous professional development opportunities, large differences occur between countries in terms of which qualifications are being asked of ECEC practitioners. Opportunities to participate in professional development and in-service training also vary greatly across countries and between education and child care in split systems. The qualification requirements vary from no formal education at all to a specialised bachelor's or even master's degree, and professional development and training ranges from being compulsory to being based on voluntary will in combination with no additional funding for training (OECD, 2006).

Often there is a difference between the qualifications required to work with very young children (up to three or four years of age) and the qualifications needed to be a teacher for children age four to primary school age. This is especially the case in countries with a so-called split system: children ages zero to three or four attend different ECEC institutions (often day care services) than those ages three or four to primary schooling age, who more regularly attend pre-primary services. In countries with an integrated system where all young children (age zero to primary school age) attend the same centres, all practitioners usually have to meet the same requirements in terms of education and training (Eurydice, 2009; OECD, 2006). The latter encourages continuous child development throughout the ECEC years and ensures greater professionalism of staff working with both younger and older children (Shonkoff and Philips, 2000).

### **Why do qualifications, education and professional development matter?**

Staff qualifications/education/professional development → pedagogical quality → child outcomes

The main importance of staff lies in their effect on the process and content quality of ECEC<sup>2</sup> (Sheridan, 2009; Pramling and Pramling Samuelsson, in press 2011). The training and education of ECEC staff affects the quality of services and outcomes primarily through the knowledge, skills and competencies that are transmitted and encouraged by practitioners. It is also considered important that staff believe in their ability to organise and execute the courses of action necessary to bring about desired results (Fives, 2003). Qualifications can matter in terms of which skill sets and what knowledge are recognised as important for working with young children. The skills and staff traits that research identifies as important in facilitating high-quality services and outcomes are:

- Good understanding of child development and learning;
- Ability to develop children’s perspectives;
- Ability to praise, comfort, question and be responsive to children;
- Leadership skills, problem solving and development of targeted lesson plans; and
- Good vocabulary and ability to elicit children’s ideas.

However, it is not the qualification *per se* that has an impact on child outcomes but the ability of better qualified staff members to create a high-quality pedagogic environment that makes the difference (Elliott, 2006; Sheridan *et al.*, 2009). There is strong evidence that enriched stimulating environments and high-quality pedagogy are fostered by better qualified staff; and better quality pedagogy leads to better learning outcomes (Litjens and Taguma, 2010). Key elements of high staff quality are the way staff involve children and stimulate interaction with and between children as well as staff’s scaffolding strategies, such as guiding, modelling and questioning.

More specialised staff education and training on ECEC are strongly associated with stable, sensitive and stimulating interactions (Shonkoff and Philips, 2000). Other elements of high staff quality include staff’s content (curriculum) knowledge and their ability to create a multi-disciplinary learning environment (Pramling and Pramling Samuelsson, in press 2011).

### What matters most?

#### *Level of education and/or pedagogical practices*

Studies that have addressed the question of whether higher staff qualifications lead to better pedagogical practice have yielded mixed results. There are various studies showing that, generally, a higher level of education is associated with higher pedagogic quality in ECEC settings. One study found that preschool teachers with bachelor’s degrees were the most effective practitioners. Their effectiveness was measured within the classroom and based on stimulation, responsiveness and engagement of the children in learning activities (Howes *et al.*, 2003). The results of the Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) study from England (United Kingdom) have also shown that key explanatory factors for high-quality ECEC were related to “staff with higher qualifications, staff with leadership skills and long-serving staff; trained staff working alongside and supporting less qualified staff; staff with a good understanding of child development and learning” (Siraj-Blatchford, 2010). Higher proportions of staff with low-level qualifications were related with less favourable child outcomes in the socio-emotional domain (social relationships with their peers and co-operation).

However, the general conclusion that higher education of ECEC staff leads to higher pedagogical quality and, therefore, to better child outcomes is not supported by all studies. Early *et al.* (2007) emphasise that teacher quality is a very complex issue. There is no simple relationship between the level of education of staff and classroom quality or learning outcomes. They studied the relationship between child outcomes and staff qualifications and found no, or contradictory, associations between the two.

They argue that increasing staff education will not suffice for improving classroom quality or maximising children’s academic gains. Instead, raising the effectiveness of early childhood education will likely require a broad range of professional development activities and support for staff’s interactions with children. An area to improve pedagogical practices of ECEC staff includes supporting staff’s competence to communicate and interact with children in a shared and sustainable manner (Sheridan *et al.*, 2009).

Research also points out that it is not necessary that all staff have high general levels of education. Highly qualified staff can have a positive influence on those who work with them and who do not have the same high qualifications. The EPPE study finds that the observed behaviour of lower-qualified staff turned out to be positively influenced by working alongside highly trained staff (Sammons, 2010).

### **Specialised education and training**

Not only the level of education but also the content of the staff’s educational or training curriculum is important for the level of quality in ECEC. Specialised education is associated with better child outcomes and improved staff competences to provide suitable pedagogical learning opportunities. Specialisation can refer to “any education or training focusing on early childhood education, child development or similar, above and beyond general educational attainments” (Litjens and Taguma, 2010).

Initial education and training in areas such as early child development and early education increase the likelihood that practitioners are effective in promoting the educational, socio-emotional and healthy development of children.

The practitioners’ ability to create rich, stimulating environments in ECEC is jeopardised when staff have inadequate, insufficient or incorrect content and pedagogical knowledge. When trained on matters related to early development and care, staff can better develop a child’s perspective (Sommer *et al.*, 2010); are better able to integrate playing and learning into practice (Pramling Samuelsson and Asplund Carlsson, 2008; Johansson and Pramling Samuelsson, 2009); have increased ability to solve problems and develop targeted lesson plans; and have an improved vocabulary, which stimulates early literacy development (NIEER, 2004). Additionally, staff with higher education *and* specialised training engage in more positive teacher-child interactions including praising, comforting, questioning and being responsive to children (Howes *et al.*, 2003).

However, specialised education and training does not *guarantee* greater effectiveness (Hyson *et al.*, 2009). The quality of the education or training programme may be a more critical factor in staff’s ability to stimulate children’s development and learning. There is a strong need for good initial staff preparation; and there is a call for greater consistency across initial professional preparation programmes to enhance quality (Elliot, 2006).

Ongoing education and training are also important. Research shows that in order for staff to maintain their professional quality, they need to engage in ongoing professional development<sup>3</sup>. A well-trained practitioner does not only have a good initial level of education but makes sure that the effects of initial education do not

fade out (Fukkink and Lont, 2007; Mitchell and Cubey, 2003). Ongoing professional development has the potential to fill in the knowledge and skills that staff may be lacking or require updating due to changes in particular knowledge fields. This is especially crucial in ECEC where new programmes are being developed continuously. The body of research on what works is growing, the discussions on quality in ECEC are ongoing, and the focus has changed to a developmental perspective.

In-service (ongoing) education and training can be conducted “on the job” or can be provided by an external source, such as training institutes or colleges. It can be provided through, for instance, staff meetings, workshops, conferences, subject training, field-based consultation training, supervised practices and mentoring. The key to effective professional development is identifying the right training strategies to help ECEC practitioners stay updated on scientifically based methods and curriculum subject knowledge so as to be able to apply this knowledge in their work (Litjens and Taguma, 2010). It also pointed out that it should continue over a longer period of time: staff should have long-term or regular opportunities for training (Sheridan, 2001). Only when learning experiences are targeted to the needs of staff and are true learning experiences with development opportunities can professional development have favourable outcomes (Mitchell and Cubey, 2003).

An effective way of improving knowledge and skills is found to be subject training. Field-based consultation can also be very effective, as it provides ECEC staff with the possibility to receive feedback on their practices. Furthermore, practitioners who do not have a degree, but who attend ECEC-relevant professional workshops are found to provide higher quality care than colleagues who do not attend (Burchinal *et al.*, 2002). However, in general, there is little clarity about what forms of professional development are *most* effective. One of the reasons is that staff have different needs: practitioners have very different backgrounds, and effective training methods should suit these differences (Elliott, 2006).

### ***Leadership of managerial staff***

Managers play an important role in supporting professional development. Managers matter for the extent to which the centre supports, stimulates and subsidises professional development (Ackerman, 2006). Staff quality is maintained by leadership that motivates and encourages working as a team, information sharing and professional staff development (OECD, 2006). The quality of leaders and managers of ECEC services is also strongly related to their level of education and professional development, as found in the EPPE study (Silva *et al.*, 2010).

### ***Differences between education and training for educating different age groups***

The United States National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD) points out that, although staff education and training has an impact on infants and toddlers, staff’s formal education is a stronger predictor for children of preschool age than for younger children (NICHD, 2000). For younger children (toddlers and infants), specialised and practical training seems to be more strongly associated with pedagogic quality and cognitive and social outcomes.

## ***Social equality and professional development***

ECEC is often seen as a vehicle to give children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds a “head start” when commencing compulsory education. Early childhood educators come across increasingly complex social environments and encounter a multiplicity of family backgrounds and experiences. These factors create imperatives to adopt new pedagogies and organisational practices to accommodate this pluralism (Elliott, 2006). In various countries, this has led to knowledge and skills requirements for staff.

In line with the issues of integration and prevention of social inequality highlighted by politicians and professionals, current and emerging content for continuing professional development include: intercultural approaches, approaches to second languages, working with children with special needs, working with children at risk and special focus on language acquisition (Eurydice, 2009). However, little is known yet about the effectiveness of these approaches.

### **What are the policy implications?**

#### ***Raising qualifications of ECEC practitioners***

Highly qualified practitioners often provide better quality ECEC. This can yield better child outcomes, both socially and academically, not only in the short term but also in the long term. It is not necessary that all staff working in ECEC have high levels of education, which may also be impossible to realise and not desirable. However, those with lower levels of general education should work alongside those who are highly qualified.

#### ***Providing ongoing professional development to ECEC staff***

Ongoing professional development can lead to higher quality ECEC services and outcomes. Attending a workshop may be an easy way to realise means of professional development; however, high-quality subject training, field-based consultation training or supervised practices may be more effective. Ongoing professional development should not only be available, but it should be a requirement to stay and grow in the profession. Furthermore, professional development should be tailored to staff's needs.

#### ***Providing specialised training courses for those working with young children***

In-service training that provides possibilities for ECEC specialisation is considered beneficial: educating young children requires specialised skills and content knowledge, including a variety of subject and development areas.

### **What is still unknown?**

#### ***Concept of quality in ECEC***

Researchers are still debating the concept of “quality” in ECEC. Judgement of quality involves values. The effect of the education and training of teachers on the quality of

ECEC depends on the definition of quality and the instrument that is used to measure this quality. Children’s developmental outcomes are often used as the most important dependent variable in assessing high-quality ECEC, but this leaves the debate open on *which* developmental outcomes should be studied.

### ***Content of training and education of ECEC staff***

The debate around the concept of “quality” in ECEC also means that the content of the training and education of ECEC staff remains a point of discussion. Some early childhood specialists voice concerns about the suitability for young children of the emphasis on 1) standards and testing (performance rather than meaning making), 2) the teaching of predefined knowledge rather than play, discovery, personal choice and the responsibility of the child – the traditional tools of early childhood learning, and 3) the neglect in ECEC curricula of developmental readiness (see “Research Brief: Curriculum Matters”).

### ***Effectiveness of the level of education and different in-service training strategies***

Even though correlations have been found between the level of education and pedagogical quality, the exact relationship between the two is still unclear. Also, little is known about the effectiveness of different training strategies to help ECEC practitioners stay updated. More research is needed on how to engage staff in learning about and implementing evidence-based practices (Diamond and Powell, 2011).

### ***Knowledge, leadership and competences of managerial staff***

Focus has been on the individual qualifications of staff. Knowledge, leadership and competences of the manager have also been found to be important. Research is needed that shows how important this is and why; what kind of qualifications and training would be most relevant for managers; what would be the most effective delivery of such training; etc.

### ***Ethnic diversity in training and education***

The effectiveness of teacher training (both initial and in-service) in which special attention is devoted to social and ethnic diversity has hardly been evaluated. This is a growing issue of importance because of the greater ethnic diversity of the population many countries are facing.

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## WORKING CONDITIONS MATTER

### What are “working conditions”?

Working conditions in ECEC settings are often referred to as structural quality indicators (e.g., wages, staff-child ratio, maximum group size, working hours, etc.) and other characteristics (e.g., non-financial benefits, team-work, manager’s leadership, workload, etc.) that can influence the ability of professionals to do their work well and their satisfaction with the workplace, work tasks and nature of the job.

### What is at stake?

Attracting, training and retaining suitably qualified ECEC staff is a challenge. Good working conditions are strong incentives for qualified staff to enter the profession. Structural quality indicators have received ample attention because they can usually be regulated or guided at the national level. For staff quality, it is also crucial that practitioners are motivated and supported in applying what they have learned.

The European Commission’s Early Matters symposium (European Commission, 2009) concluded that many research findings indicate that, in addition to training and education of staff, staff working conditions are important in providing safe, healthy and good learning environments for children. In spite of these findings, the ECEC sector is usually associated with relatively poor working conditions and poor compensation leading to high turnover rates. ECEC centres often experience turnover rates exceeding 40% annually, undermining the quality of care (Moon and Burbank, 2004).

### Why do working conditions in ECEC matter?

Research points out that the ability of staff to attend to the needs of children is influenced not only by their level of education and training but also by external factors, such as their work environment, salary and work benefits (Shonkoff and Philips, 2000). Working conditions can have an impact on staff job satisfaction and their ability to carry out their tasks; and their possibilities to positively interact with children, give them enough attention and stimulate their development.

Strongly associated with stable, sensitive and stimulating interactions with children are the context and conditions in which staff member works. One study found that low wages: i) effect the ways in which staff interact with children, and ii) are related to high turnover rates (Huntsman, 2008). High turnover rates can have a negative effect on ECEC quality since staff provision is less stable, which, in turn, can impact child development. When staff members regularly change within a group of children, staff and children are less able to develop stable relationships; and nurturing, stimulating interactions take place less often (CCI, 2006).

The body of research on the effects of working conditions on child development is not very extensive, and findings do not always point in the same direction. This is mainly because there is a complex inter-relationship between staff-child ratios, staff qualifications, quality and type of provision that makes it difficult to single out the effect of a particular characteristic of working conditions (Sammons, 2010).

### What matters most?

Firstly, it is important to point out that more research is needed in this area. Available research findings focus on the effects on staff satisfaction rather than on child development. Many aspects of working conditions are found to be related to the quality of ECEC services, while a few aspects have been found to be related to child development. Table 3.1 presents an overview of research findings, pointing to characteristics of working conditions that matter.

**Table 3.1. Which staff working conditions improve ECEC quality?**

Optimal staff working conditions	Areas of improvement	
	ECEC services	Child outcomes
1. High staff-child ratio and low group size	X	X
2. Competitive wages and benefits	X	unclear
3. Reasonable schedule/workload	X	unclear
4. Low staff turnover	X	X
5. Stimulating and playful physical environment	X	unclear
6. Competent and supportive centre manager	X	unclear

Note: Areas of improvement that remain “unclear” present important opportunities for future ECEC research.

Source: Ackerman, 2006; Burchinal *et al.*, 2002; De Schipper *et al.*, 2004; De Schipper *et al.*, 2006; De Schipper *et al.*, 2007; Diamond and Powell, 2011; Huntsman, 2008; Litjens and Taguma, 2010; Loeb *et al.*, 2004; Moon and Burbank, 2004; Sheridan and Shuster, 2001; Sheridan *et al.*, 2009; Torquati *et al.*, 2007.

### Staff-child ratio

Higher staff-child ratios, referring to a smaller number of children per staff, are usually found to enhance ECEC quality and facilitate better developmental outcomes for children (Burchinal *et al.*, 2002; De Schipper *et al.*, 2006; Huntsman, 2008; Torquati *et al.*, 2007). While there have been some older studies with contradictory results, the weight of evidence favours the conclusion that staff-child ratio in an ECEC setting is significantly associated with quality (Huntsman, 2008). Findings on “quality” can be summarised as follows.

#### *Better staff-child interactions and less stress for staff*

Larger staff-child ratios are associated with better working conditions and less stress. Staff are found to be more supportive when they are responsible for a smaller group of children (De Schipper *et al.*, 2006). A higher staff-child ratio improves working conditions within ECEC settings, as staff can give sufficient attention to different developmental domains and create more caring and meaningful interactions with children. As the number of children per staff member increases, staff spend more

time in restrictive and routine communication with children and less in positive verbal interactions (Litjens and Taguma, 2010; Rao *et al.*, 2003).

### *Better child development*

Children become more co-operative in activities and interactions with larger staff-child ratios. They also tend to perform better in cognitive and linguistic assessments when staff-child ratios are higher. Furthermore, academic development seems to be enhanced by higher staff-child ratios, although there are not many (recent) studies that have investigated this topic (Huntsman, 2008; Sylva *et al.*, 2004). A limitation of the research mentioned above is that most findings are almost exclusively correlational, and there have been very few experimental studies (Huntsman, 2008). An experimental study carried out by Chetty *et al.* (2011) found that even though smaller staff-child ratios of three-to-four-year-olds improved outcomes, there were no long-lasting effects on adult earnings. However, the *overall* quality of the ECEC setting did have an effect on adult earnings.

High staff-child ratios are considered particularly important for younger children; there is evidence indicating that infants and toddlers especially benefit from high staff-child ratios (De Schipper, 2006). In many countries staff-child ratios have been regulated with higher staff-child ratios for the very young and lower ratios for older children (NICHD, 2002). Research is lacking, however, on exactly which ratio is most favourable to enhance teacher job satisfaction, ECEC quality and child outcomes. Nevertheless, many early childhood educators believe that anything less than a 1:3 or 1:4 ratio for children up to two years old is insufficient to allow staff to interact effectively with each child (Litjens and Taguma, 2010).

### *Group size*

#### *Increased process quality, although the direct effect remains unclear*

Group sizes are often regulated, prescribing the number of children to be arranged and supervised as a group. Not all studies find effects of group size on the quality of ECEC: effect sizes are usually small, and the “size” factor is often difficult to single out when staff-child ratios are included in the same analyses. Another research limitation on group size is that it rarely takes into account the age mixing of children, which may be an important factor (with homogeneous age groups being easier to handle). The overall research conclusion, however, is that group size has an effect on process quality (e.g., staff-child relationship, staff-parent communication). If staff experience their working conditions as more pleasant, this will result in more caring and stimulating behaviour (Huntsman, 2008; Burchinal *et al.*, 2002; Clarke-Stewart *et al.*, 2002).

#### *Classroom quality and staff job satisfaction*

Research suggests that it is not only the staff-child ratio but also the number of adults in a classroom that impacts quality and job satisfaction. The quality of the classroom environment is found to improve with every additional adult in the room. When practitioners work together in a classroom, this provides opportunities for supervision, consultation and discussing work challenges (Goelman *et al.*, 2006). Clear roles and expectations must be defined to optimise teamwork in ECEC settings. Under current practice, the hiring of assistants has generally failed to

compensate for larger groups and less contact with teachers (Chartier and Geneix, 2006; Finn and Pannozzo, 2004).

### *Remunerations: wages and other benefits*

Higher wages and better working conditions affect people's job satisfaction, work motivation and, indirectly, the quality of their teaching, caring and interactions with children (Huntsman, 2008; Moon and Burbank, 2004).

### *Low wages leading to less process quality for child development*

Research has indicated that where there are very low wages in ECEC, it "impacts quality primarily by preventing qualified and committed individuals from considering working in child care or early education in the first place" (Manlove and Guzell, 1997). Low wages are, as mentioned above, related to high staff turnover rates (Moon and Burbank, 2004), which influence children's language and socio-emotional development as well as the relationships they form with practitioners (Whitebook 2002; Torquati 2007). Low wages are also correlated with the perception that working in the ECEC sector is not a high-status profession (Ackerman, 2006).

Although pay in ECEC-related professions in most OECD countries is not very high (OECD, 2006), this is not the case in all OECD countries. In Scandinavian countries, for instance, where a bachelor's degree is needed to work as an ECEC teacher, staff receive better pay, and their job has a higher status than in countries with lower pay. Countries with split systems often have lower education requirements and lower wages for practitioners working with very young children (up to three or four years of age) and higher educational requirements and better pay (and better status) for those working with children ages three or four to primary school age.

### *Non-financial incentives leading to better job satisfaction and better process quality*

The number of vacation days and the compensation that ECEC practitioners receive for additional work hours are also found to have a positive effect on job satisfaction. This, in turn, is related to the quality of teacher-child interactions (Doherty *et al.*, 2000).

### *Social status and professional identity*

Even when preschool teachers experience higher status within the sector, they do not necessarily experience improved recognition from the outside world, something seen in Denmark and Sweden (Berntsson, 2006). In order to raise the value attributed to the profession and counter gender stereotypes, it is suggested that the "professional identity" of the ECEC workforce must change (OECD, 2006).

### *Turnover rate*

Stability in care has been found to be strongly and consistently positively related to child outcomes (Loeb *et al.*, 2004). High staff turnover is pronounced across studies of child care in various countries, somewhere between 30% and 50% annually (Huntsman, 2008; Moon and Burbank, 2004).

High staff turnover is associated with lower quality service and poorer child outcomes. Centres with low staff turnover rates have staff that engage in more appropriate and attentive interactions with children. High turnover rates disrupt the continuity of care. Moon and Burbank (2004) argue that when turnover rates are high, children spend less time being engaged in meaningful activities.

### **Workload**

Heavy workloads are associated with stressed staff. Workload refers to the number of working hours, indicating the extent to which staff's schedules are compatible with family life and the physical demands of the job. Large group sizes, low staff-child ratios and a heavy workload are potential stressors for ECEC practitioners. In general, stressed staff perform less well. Some research findings show the effects of workload on ECEC quality, indicating that practitioners with a heavy workload perform less well than colleagues with lighter schedules (De Schipper *et al.*, 2007).

### **Physical aspects of the setting**

A rich playing and learning environment is found to be of importance. More space is considered beneficial for child development, although the full impact or effects of physical aspects remain unclear. The United States National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD, 2002) found a significant link between positive care giving behaviour and the physical characteristics of their environment, *e.g.*, the space requirements in more general terms and the instruments and materials available within the setting. Children were found to be less easily distracted in settings where they had more space available to them. Also, in these circumstances, staff provided more age-appropriate practices and behaviour.

Cross-cultural studies of ECEC quality highlight the fact that differences in physical space and staff-child ratio create different opportunities for staff. With more space, staff are better able to organise children into smaller groups, which, in turn, creates better learning conditions and opportunities for children to play, relax and learn in a variety of ways (Sheridan and Shuster, 2001; Sheridan *et al.*, 2009). Research appears to provide little or no guidance regarding the appropriateness of space requirement regulations (Huntsman, 2008), and further research on the importance of space for child development is needed.

### **Role of the manager in supporting professional development**

Managers are important in facilitating conducive working conditions and supporting professional development. Although part of working conditions are subject to regulation, another part is centre-specific. ECEC providers who provide better working conditions are observed to provide better care and education (Litjens and Taguma, 2010; Diamond and Powell, 2011). The role of managers of ECEC centres is important in this, as they are the key factor in providing favourable working conditions for their staff.

Evidence shows that ECEC practitioners who experience little professional support from the centre's management have lower job satisfaction and perform their teaching and care-giving tasks less well than those that are professionally supported (Ackerman, 2006). Professional support usually means that the centre supports,

stimulates and subsidises professional development, there are regular staff meetings with the management of the centre, and there is encouragement and consultation by colleagues (Ackerman, 2006). The importance of ongoing professional development in making sure that practitioners stay up-to-date with evidence-based practices (staff meetings, conferences and workshops, supervised practices, etc.) has been found in various studies (Litjens and Taguma, 2010; see also “Research Brief: Qualifications, Education and Training Matter”).

### **What are the policy implications?**

#### ***Investing in ECEC to improve working conditions***

Research findings indicate that staff who are happy in their job provide better care and are better practitioners. Group size and staff-child ratios are important quality factors in facilitating good working conditions as well as staff having enough time and attention to spend on the children under their supervision. Smaller groups and higher staff-child ratios can facilitate this. Time for staff to plan, document, analyse and reflect – individually and collectively – on their work with children is seen to improve quality. However, increasing staff-child ratios and reducing group size is expensive. For example, reducing the average class size from 15 to 10 requires a 50% increase in the number of teachers and, thus, total teacher salaries paid. Plus there is little clarity on exactly which group sizes or staff-child ratios are most favourable or optimal (Chetty *et al.*, 2011).

In order to enhance the status and quality of early childhood work, governments may wish to consider introducing equal working conditions (salaries, benefits and professional development opportunities) for equivalent qualifications across the early childhood and primary education fields. Care should be taken that in-service training is linked to career progression and to obtaining further qualification (OECD, 2006).

#### ***Giving financial and non-financial incentives to keep well-trained staff***

Compensation is one important factor in facilitating good working conditions. Increased salaries will most likely reduce staff turnover rates and attract better qualified staff. Additionally, it increases job satisfaction. Providing non-financial support and incentives for practitioners is also likely to improve staff well-being and encourage ongoing professional development.

Turnover should only be welcomed if the lowest-quality ECEC staff are leaving the profession; this practice opens the door to more high-quality staff. New research suggests that the “forcing out” of low-quality ECEC staff may dramatically improve student outcomes (Hanushek, 2010).

#### ***Raising awareness of ECEC centre managers***

Going beyond the regulations, centre managers can be seen to play an important role in providing good working conditions for their staff, facilitating professional development and further training of staff. Raising awareness among managers on the importance of ensuring favourable working conditions and how they can actually facilitate these are important in raising ECEC quality (OECD, 2006).



## What is still unknown?

### *Relationship between working conditions and child development*

The research evidence for the impact of working conditions on child outcomes is not yet very strong. Working conditions have not often been at the heart of studies. Researchers have linked certain workplace characteristics (staff-child ratios and staff compensation) to differences in programme quality and/or to staff turnover and less often to measures of child development (Whitebook, 2009). Research on how working conditions affect ECEC quality and child outcomes could shed new light on the importance of working conditions.

### *More research on which aspects of working conditions matter most for which children*

Staff-child ratios are found to be important for all young children, but there is evidence that infants and toddlers especially benefit from high staff-child ratios (De Schipper, 2006). The exact role of space in facilitating better working environments and enhancing child development also remains largely unknown, and the role of multiple adults in ECEC settings is not sufficiently defined to maximise the impact on child outcomes. Additionally, no studies have specifically investigated whether working conditions (and which aspects of working conditions) have different effects on different groups of children, e.g., migrant children or children at risk.

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## **ACTION AREA 2 – BROADENING PERSPECTIVES THROUGH INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON**

This section contains international comparisons of:

- Job titles, qualifications and requirements
- Professional development
- Staff working conditions

### **JOB TITLES, QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Findings**

##### ***Job titles and qualifications***

- Five job types are commonly used for staff working in the ECEC sector across OECD countries (Table 3.2).
  - Child care worker
  - Pre-primary teacher; primary teacher; kindergarten teacher; preschool teacher
  - Family and day care worker
  - Pedagogue
  - Auxiliary staff
- A wide range of qualifications are given to staff working in ECEC (by ISCED levels)<sup>4</sup> (Figure 3.1).
  - In “split” system countries, different qualifications exist for kindergarten/preschool teachers and child care workers.
- Kindergarten and preschool teachers generally have higher initial education requirements than care centre staff; the majority of countries responded for the former with ISCED Level 5; and for the latter, with Level 3.

- Exceptions include Portugal and Japan where the same qualification level is required for child care workers/nursery teachers and kindergarten/pre-primary teachers (at ISCED level 5).
- Countries aiming to deliver “integrated” ECEC services tend to have higher qualification requirements for staff working with children ages zero to three.
- Some countries have a unified qualification for staff working with children from age zero up to compulsory schooling; in some cases, there are overlaps. Countries take different approaches to arranging this. For example, in New Zealand, both play centres and kindergartens can host children age zero to compulsory schooling age. However, the qualification requirements to work in these centres are different: a qualification for “kindergarten teacher” for ages zero to six is set at ISCED Level 5B, while a “play centre leader” for ages zero to six requires a qualification at Level 3.

### **Initial education arrangement**

- A majority of countries reported that they provide full-time, as well as part-time, provision of initial education for kindergarten or preschool staff; fewer countries reported such programmes for child care and family or domestic care staff (Table 3.3).
- Initial education is more commonly provided by public institutions than private institutions; this is especially the case for kindergarten or preschool staff (Table 3.4).
- Initial education programmes are typically aligned with qualification arrangements, *i.e.*, different education programmes are in place for child care staff and pre-primary/kindergarten teachers and for primary and pre-primary/kindergarten teachers when the education requirements are different.
- However, in some countries, initial education for staff in child care and early education is integrated or co-ordinated (Table 3.5). Students follow the same education programme, but they can select a specialisation in either child care or pre-primary education within the programme.
- In a few countries, initial education for pre-primary teachers is integrated with that for primary teachers (Table 3.6). For example, teachers in the Netherlands are trained to work with children from ages four to twelve, and they follow the same initial education. Some other countries, such as Australia, prepare the same foundation education for primary and pre-primary teachers, but a specialisation is to be selected for one of the two qualifications.

### **Workforce characteristics**

- A highly uneven gender balance is found in the ECEC workforce (Figure 3.2).
  - In most countries, the median proportions for female pre-primary staff, child care workers and pedagogues are 95% or higher.
  - For pre-primary staff, Mexico is an exception, with males making up 17% of staff, the largest among the observed countries.

- Across respondents, pre-primary staff are around 40 years old, while child care staff is slightly younger (around 38 years old) (Figure 3.3).
  - The average for pre-primary staff is age 40, ranging from 32 in Korea to 48 in Chile.
  - The average for child care workers is age 38.3, with a range from 29.4 in Saxony-Anhalt (Germany) to 45.6 in Hesse (Germany).
  - The average for auxiliary staff is age 34, with a range from 26.5 in Mexico to age 48 in Chile.
  - The average for pedagogues is age 41.8, with a range from 34 in the Netherlands to 48 in Chile.

### *Licensing*

- ECEC practitioners most often need a licence to work in the ECEC sector. Licensing can be obtained by demonstrating the abilities to practice the profession or duties in ECEC.
- Whether the licence requires renewal after a certain period of time differs greatly among respondents (Table 3.7).
  - More countries require licensing renewal for kindergarten/preschool teachers than for child care workers or family day care staff.
  - Manitoba’s (Canada) requirement for family day care services is found to be the strictest with a condition of “every year”; while, in Germany, it only needs to be renewed every five years. In, for example, Finland, no renewal is required.
  - Child care staff needs to renew their licence every three years in New Zealand; while, in Scotland (United Kingdom) this is every five years.
  - Preschool teachers need to renew their licence after over five years in the Flemish Community (Belgium) and Japan (every ten years); while, in New Zealand, this is done every three years.
  - Finland and Italy do not require licensing renewal for any staff working in ECEC.

For more detail, see the Survey Response Tables on “Provision of Initial Education and Licensing of Qualifications”, “Contents of Initial Education” and “Structure and Content of Initial Staff Education” (Excel™ files) in the online Quality Toolbox at [www.oecd.org/edu/earlychildhood/toolbox](http://www.oecd.org/edu/earlychildhood/toolbox).

**Table 3.2. Job types for ECEC workers**

<b>Child care workers</b>	The qualifications of child care workers differ greatly from country to country and from service to service. In most countries, child care workers have a vocational-level diploma, generally at a children's nurse level (upper secondary, vocational level); although many countries will also have specialist staff trained to secondary-level graduation, plus a one-to-two-year tertiary-level vocational diploma.
<b>Pre-primary teacher and/or primary teacher</b> (or kindergarten/preschool teachers)	Pre-primary teachers are generally trained at the same level and in the same training institutions as primary school teachers. This profile is found in Australia, Canada, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. In some of these countries, e.g., the Netherlands, the pre-primary teacher is trained both for the preschool and primary sectors. In federal countries, variation exists across different states or provinces, but the predominant type of training is in primary school-oriented pedagogy (readiness-for-school is a primary aim of early education).
<b>Family and domestic care workers</b>	Family and domestic care workers are caregivers working in a family day care provision or home-based care setting. These are traditionally provided in a home setting. This can be at the childminder's home or at the child's own home where a qualified or registered childminder looks after the child. This type of care is most common for children prior to preschool, <i>i.e.</i> , those up to three years old.
<b>Pedagogues</b>	In Nordic and central European countries, many pedagogues have been trained (upper-secondary or tertiary education) with a focus on early childhood services rather than primary teaching. Pedagogues may also have received training in other settings, e.g., youth work or elderly care. In some countries, pedagogues are the main staff members responsible for the care and education of children.
<b>Auxiliary staff</b>	There are many types of auxiliary staff working in centres that have been trained at different levels. On one end of the scale is auxiliary staff who do not need a formal qualification in the area, while auxiliaries in the preschool service sector in Nordic countries have often gone through a couple years of upper secondary vocational training.

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011; OECD Family Database, 2010.

**Figure 3.1. Required ISCED levels for different types of ECEC staff**

Staff titles with minimum required ISCED level in brackets

Country	Age							
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Staff working for the care sector							
	Teaching staff working for the education sector or in an integrated system for care and education							
	Compulsory schooling							
Australia	Child care Worker (4) / Child care Manager (5)							
	Preschool/Kindergarten Teacher (5A)							
Austria	Kindergarten Pedagogue (4A)							
Belgium (Flemish Community)	Child care Worker in the care sector (3)							
	2.5y		Child care Worker in the education sector (3)					
	2.5y		Kindergarten teacher / Pedagogue (5B)					
Belgium (French Community)	Child care Worker (3)							
	2.5y		Pre-Primary Teacher (5)					
Canada (British Columbia)	Early childhood educator (3)					Kindergarten teacher (5A)		
Canada (Manitoba)	Early Childhood Educator (5B)							
Canada (Prince Edward Island)	Family Day Carer (3) / Child carer in centre-based care (4)			Kindergarten teacher (4)				
Czech Republic	Child care Worker (3)			Pedagogue (3)				
Denmark	Pedagogue (5)							
Estonia	1.5y	Preschool pedagogue (5)						
Finland	Child care worker in kindergarten (2/3 of staff should have at least level 3)					Pre-primary Teacher (5B)		
	Kindergarten Teacher (5B)							
Germany	Child care worker (3)							
	Pedagogue (4A)							
	Pedagogue for childhood or social pedagogue (5)							
Hungary	Child care Worker (3)		Pedagogue (5)					
Ireland	Pre-primary Teacher (5)							
Israel	Child care Teacher (5)			Pre-Primary Teacher (5)				
Italy	Educator (child care centres) (5B)		Pre-primary teacher (6)					
Japan	Nursery Teacher (5B)							
	Kindergarten Teacher (5B)							
Korea	Child care Worker (3)							
	Pre-Primary Teacher (5)							
Luxembourg	Pre-Primary Teacher (Instituteur) / Educator (5B)							
Mexico	Indigenous ECEC Teacher (3)		Indigenous preschool Teacher (3)					
	ECEC/Preschool Teacher (5)							
Netherlands	Child carer (centred child care) / Official Childminder (3)							
	Playgroup Leader (3)		Kindergarten/ primary school teacher (4)			until 12 y		
New Zealand	Playcentre Leader (3)							
	Qualified Education and Care Teacher / Kindergarten Teacher (5B)							
	Teacher for pacific/indigenous children (Kaiako) (5B)							
Norway	Child/Youth Worker (3)							
	Pedagogical Leader (Kindergarten & Family Kindergarten) / Head Teacher (5A)							
Poland	Child care Worker (3)		Kindergarten teacher (5)					
Portugal	Preschool Teacher (5A)							
Slovak Republic	Nursery School Worker (3B)		Kindergarten Teacher (3)					
Slovenia	Family Day Carer (3)							
	Preschool teacher (5B)							
Spain	Early education teacher (5B)		Preschool teacher (5A)					
Sweden	Child minder (3)							
	Preschool teacher (5A)							
Turkey	Pre-Primary Teacher (5A)							
United Kingdom (Scotland)	Child care practitioners (5)							
	Preschool Teacher (5)							
United States (Georgia, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Oklahoma)	Preschool Teacher (5)							

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.



**Table 3.3. Provision of initial education across different types of staff**

	Kindergarten or preschool staff	Child care staff	Family day care staff
<b>Full time</b>	Australia, Austria, British Columbia (CAN), Czech republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), French Community (BEL), , Germany, Hungary, Italy Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Manitoba (CAN), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Slovenia, South Australia (AUS), Spain, Sweden, Turkey	Australia, British Columbia (CAN), Denmark, Flemish Community (BEL), Finland, French Community (BEL), Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Spain	Australia, Finland, Germany, Manitoba(CAN), Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Sweden
<b>Part time<sup>5</sup></b>	Australia, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.	Australia, British Columbia (CAN), Denmark, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), French Community (BEL), Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Spain	Australia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Manitoba (CAN), Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN)

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

**Table 3.4. Public and private provision of initial education**

	Kindergarten or preschool staff	Child care staff	Family day care staff
<b>Public</b>	Australia, Austria, British Columbia (CAN), Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), French Community (BEL), Georgia (USA), Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Manitoba (CAN), Massachusetts (USA), Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Carolina (USA), Norway, Oklahoma (USA), Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey	Australia, British Columbia (CAN), Denmark, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), French Community (BEL), Germany, Hungary, Japan, Italy, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Spain, Sweden	Australia, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Manitoba (CAN), Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN)
<b>Private</b>	Austria, British Columbia (CAN), Estonia, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), Georgia (USA), Germany, Italy, Korea, Massachusetts (USA), New Zealand*, North Carolina (USA), Norway, Oklahoma (USA), Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Slovak Republic, Spain	Australia, British Columbia (CAN), Finland, French Community (BEL), Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, New Zealand*, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Spain	Australia, Austria, Finland, Germany, Italy, Manitoba (CAN), Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN)

\* New Zealand: regarding kindergarten/preschool – private provision: data refers only to initial education provision for *kaiako* (teacher for indigenous/pacific children) and not for kindergarten teachers. Regarding child care – private provision: data refers only to the initial education provision for playgroup leaders.

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

**Table 3.5. Provision of initial education for child care and pre-primary staff<sup>6</sup>**

Integrated	Split
Czech Republic*, Denmark, Finland, Israel*, Italy*, New Zealand**, Slovak Republic*, Sweden**	Australia, Belgium, British Columbia (CAN), Germany, Hungary, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Netherlands, Norway**, Poland, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Slovenia, Scotland (UKM)

\* Students follow the same education programme, but a specialisation in either child care or pre-primary education is added to the initial education programme.

\*\* Data on New Zealand refers to Education and Care teachers only, excluding play centre leaders. Data on Norway refers to child/youth workers and pedagogical leaders who have a different initial education. Data on Sweden refers to preschool teachers only who work with one-to-seven-year-olds.

Note: Belgium refers to the Flemish Community and French Community of Belgium.

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care’s “Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal”, June 2011.

**Table 3.6. Provision of initial education for pre-primary and primary teaching staff<sup>7</sup>**

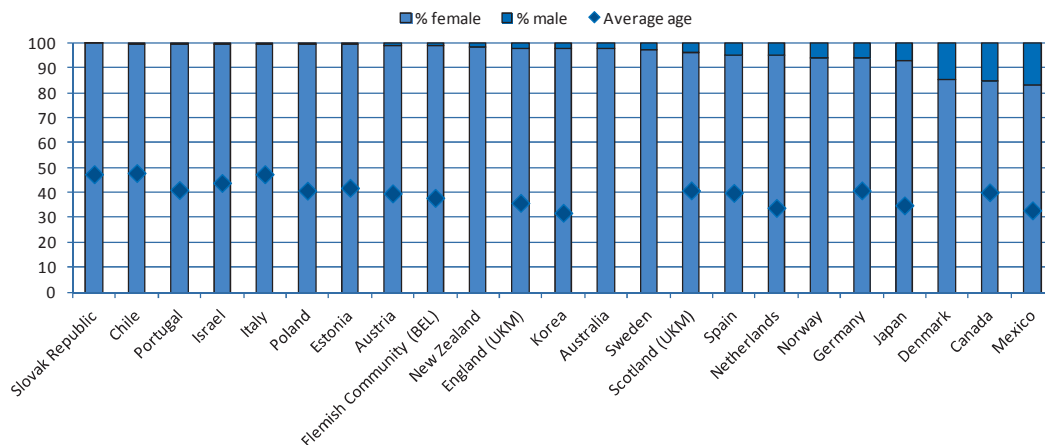
Integrated	Split
Australia*, Austria, British Columbia (CAN), Denmark, England (UKM), France, Ireland, Netherlands, Poland	Flemish Community (BEL), Japan, Korea, Norway, Sweden

\* Students follow the same education programme, but a specialisation in either pre-primary education or primary education is added to the initial education programme.

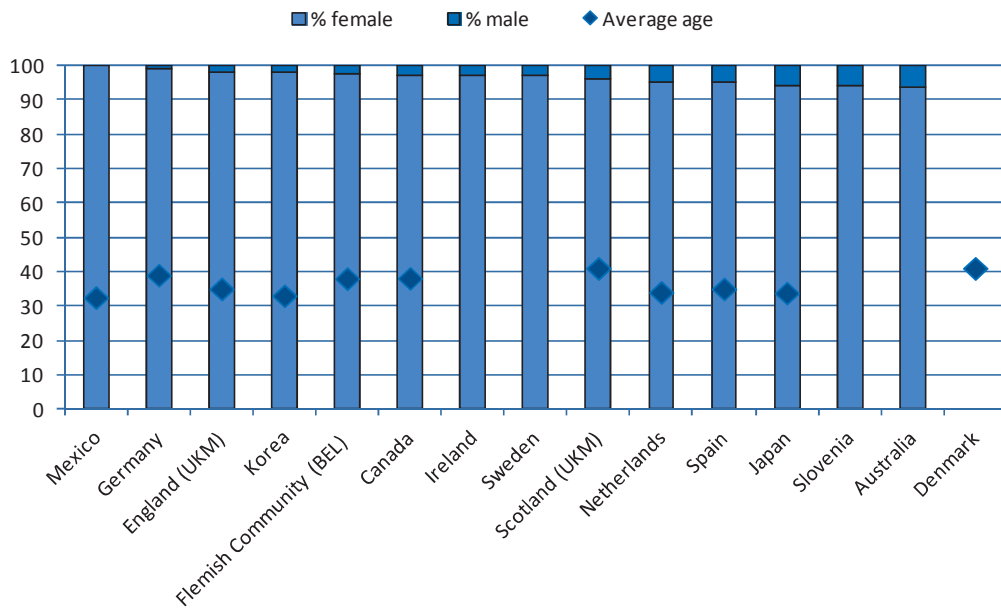
Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care’s “Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal”, June 2011 and www.inca.org.uk.

**Figure 3.2. Teacher (or pedagogue) staff profiles**

Panel A. Pre-primary education



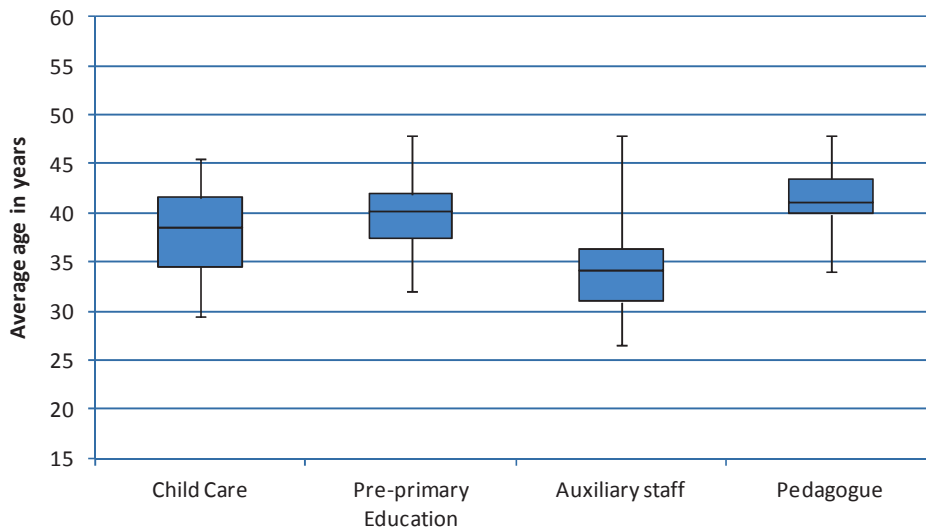
Panel B. Centre-based care



Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

Figure 3.3. Average age of staff per staff type

Black horizontal lines mark the median value; black vertical lines show the range



Note: Data series are responding countries and regions given averages for each type of staff. The blue boxes show the range between the first and third quartile with the median represented by the intersecting black line. The black bars show the minimum and maximum observations for each staff type. Based on data for the following countries and regions: Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, Denmark, England (UKM), Estonia, Flemish Community (BEL), Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Scotland (UKM), Slovak Republic and Spain.

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

Table 3.7. Renewal of licences of practitioners in ECEC by staff type

	Kindergarten or preschool teacher	Child care staff	Family or domestic child carer
<b>More than every 5 years</b>	Flemish Community (BEL), Japan		
<b>Every 5 years</b>	British Columbia (CAN), Georgia (USA), Massachusetts (USA), North Carolina (USA), Oklahoma (USA)	British Columbia (CAN), Scotland (UKM)	Germany
<b>Every 3 years</b>	New Zealand	New Zealand	Prince Edward Island (CAN)
<b>Every year</b>			Manitoba (CAN)
<b>No renewal required</b>	Finland, Germany, Italy, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Mexico, Norway, Poland, Slovenia	Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Mexico, Poland	Finland, Italy, Poland

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

The findings presented here are based on data from the OECD Network on ECEC's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal" (2011) and on the OECD's desk-based research. For each graph and table, the countries or regions for which data is used are listed.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Findings

#### *Opportunities and financing*

- Professional development is more frequently mandatory for kindergarten or preschool staff than for care centre staff (Figure 3.4, Panels A and B).
- Six financing models are observed for professional development for child care workers (Figure 3.4, Panel A).
  1. Co-funded by government, employer and individual (e.g., Australia and Sweden)
  2. Co-funded by government and employer (e.g., New Zealand and Norway)

3. Co-funded by employer and individual (e.g., Italy)
  4. Solely funded by government (e.g., Flemish and French Communities in Belgium)
  5. Solely funded by employer (e.g., Czech Republic)
  6. Solely funded by individuals (e.g., Israel)
- Five financing models are observed for professional development for preschool or kindergarten teachers (Figure 3.4, Panel B).
    1. Co-funded by government, employer and individual (e.g., Finland and Japan)
    2. Co-funded by government and employer (e.g., Norway and Georgia [United States])
    3. Co-funded by government and individual (e.g., Hungary and Turkey)
    4. Solely funded by government (e.g., Ireland)
    5. Solely funded by individual (e.g., Israel)
  - Very few countries reported professional development opportunities for family day care staff (Figure 3.4, Panel C). Finland and the Flemish Community of Belgium both reported that it is mandatory for family day care staff to complete in-service training. In Finland and Belgium, the government pays for the training costs; while, in Italy, the costs are co-shared by the employers and individuals.

### **Providers and incentives**

- Many countries (e.g., Austria, Japan, Portugal) have a wide range of providers of professional development, including government, employers, university/colleges and non-governmental institutions.
- For kindergarten/preschool staff, professional development is most often provided by universities or colleges; while, for child care staff, professional development is mostly offered by non-government-related providers (Figure 3.5).
- Various incentive types are found to encourage individuals to take up professional development (Table 3.8). Commonly found among countries include:
  - Financial support to cover the training costs
  - Financial support to cover the partial foregone salary
  - Opportunities leading to higher qualifications
  - Study leave
  - Linking it to higher salary
- Commonly used incentives for better take up of professional development in both preschools and child care centres (or ECEC centres) include financial support to cover their training costs, followed by pathways to obtain a higher

qualification, and study leave to workers participating in professional development. More incentive types are given to kindergarten or preschool teachers than to child care or family day care staff.

- Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is used by a number of countries as a tool to recognise professional development or any skills and knowledge acquired through informal and non-formal learning (Table 3.9). Countries using RPL see it as a tool to up-skill the workforce, recruit and qualify the unqualified. In child care, qualifying the unqualified is more common than in preschool/kindergarten. RPL is used in the family day care sector as well, although only in a few countries.

### ***Contents and format of professional development***

- In general, professional development opportunities are more commonly offered for kindergarten or preschool staff than for care centre staff (Figure 3.6).
- While the focus or content of professional development is on “new or revised curriculum” in preschools, it is on “methods and practice” in child care. Planning and management is a popular subject in training as well as monitoring, assessment and evaluation
- Special needs is the least frequently cited topic of professional development in both preschool and child care. Educational transitions are only offered to preschool staff often working with older children who are closer to the primary schooling age.
- Different forms are used for professional development for both preschool teachers and child care workers (Table 3.10):
  - Seminar or workshop
  - Onsite mentoring
  - Online training
  - Formal training course
- More countries use the face-to-face approach (*e.g.*, seminars, workshops, onsite mentoring, formal training options in an educational institution) than online training; however, they are not mutually exclusive but complementary.

For more detail, see the Survey Response Tables on “Provision of Professional Development” and “Structure and Content of Professional Development” (Excel™ files) in the online Quality Toolbox at [www.oecd.org/edu/earlychildhood/toolbox](http://www.oecd.org/edu/earlychildhood/toolbox).

Figure 3.4. Who funds professional development?

Panel A. For preschool/kindergarten staff				Panel B. For child care staff			
	Government	Employer	Individual		Government	Employer	Individual
Australia	X	X	X	Australia	X	X	X
Austria*	X	X	X	Austria*	X	X	X
Belgium (Flemish and French)	X			Belgium (Flemish and French)	X		
Czech Republic**	X	X	X	British Columbia* (CAN)	X	X	X
England (UKM)	X			Czech Republic		X	
Estonia*	X	X	X	England (UKM)	X		
Finland*	X	X	X	Finland*	X	X	X
Georgia* (USA)	X	X		Hungary*	X		
Hungary*	X		X	Ireland			X
Ireland	X			Israel			X
Israel			X	Italy		X	X
Italy	X	X	X	Japan	X	X	X
Japan*	X	X	X	Korea*	X	X	X
Korea	X	X	X	Manitoba (CAN)	X	X	X
Manitoba (CAN)*	X	X	X	Mexico*	X		
Massachusetts (USA)	X	X		Netherlands	X	X	X
Mexico*	X			New Zealand	X	X	
Netherlands	X	X	X	Norway**	X	X	
New Zealand	X	X		Poland	X	X	X
North Carolina* (USA)	X	X	X	Prince Edward Island (CAN)*	X	X	X
Norway	X	X		Scotland (UKM)	X	X	X
Oklahoma* (USA)	X			Spain*	X	X	X
Poland	X	X	X	Sweden**	X	X	X
Portugal	X	X	X				
Prince Edward Island (CAN)*	X	X	X				
Slovak Republic*	X	X	X				
Slovenia*	X	X	X				
Spain*	X	X	X				
Sweden	X	X	X				
Turkey	X		X				

Panel C. For domestic day care staff			
	Government	Employer	Individual
Finland*	X		
Flemish Community (BEL)*	X		
French Community (BEL)	X		
Italy		X	X

\* Staff uptake of professional education is compulsory at the individual level. In countries without \*, uptake of professional development by staff is voluntary.

\*\* For Czech Republic, training is only mandatory for directors of preschools/kindergartens. For Norway, data regarding child care refers to child/youth workers. For Sweden, data regarding child care refers to childminders.

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

Figure 3.5. Providers of professional development

## Panel A. For kindergarten or preschool staff

	Government	Employer	University / college	Non-government
Australia		X		X
Austria	X	X	X	X
British Columbia (CAN)	X	X	X	X
Czech Republic	X	X	X	X
Denmark			X	
England (UKM)	X		X	X
Estonia	X	X	X	X
Finland	X		X	X
Flemish Community (BEL)		X	X	X
French Community (BEL)		X		
Georgia (USA)	X	X		
Hungary	X		X	
Ireland	X			
Israel	X		X	
Italy	X	X	X	X
Japan	X	X	X	X
Korea	X	X	X	X
Manitoba (CAN)	X	X	X	X
Massachusetts	X	X	X	X
Mexico	X			
Netherlands		X	X	X
New Zealand			X	X
North Carolina (USA)	X	X		
Norway	X	X	X	X
Oklahoma (USA)	X	X		
Poland	X	X	X	X
Portugal	X	X	X	X
Prince Edward Island (CAN)	X	X	X	X
Scotland (UKM)		X	X	X
Slovak Republic	X	X	X	X
Slovenia	X	X	X	X
Spain	X	X	X	X
Sweden		X	X	X
Turkey	X		X	X

## Panel B. For child care staff

	Government	Employer	University / college	Non-government
Australia		X		X
Austria	X	X	X	X
British Columbia (CAN)	X	X	X	X
Czech Republic		X		
Denmark	X			
England (UKM)	X		X	X
Finland	X		X	X
Flemish Community (BEL)			X	X
French Community (BEL)				X
Georgia (USA)	X		X	X
Hungary	X		X	
Israel	X		X	X
Italy	X			X
Japan		X	X	X
Korea	X	X	X	X
Massachusetts (USA)		X	X	X
Manitoba (CAN)	X	X	X	X
Mexico	X	X		X
Netherlands		X	X	X
New Zealand			X	X
Norway*	X	X	X	X
Poland		X	X	X
Prince Edward Island (CAN)	X	X	X	X
Scotland (UKM)	X	X	X	X
Spain	X	X	X	X
Sweden*		X	X	X

\* For Norway, data regarding child care refers to child/youth workers. For Sweden, data regarding child care refers to childminders.

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.



Table 3.8. Incentives for ECEC workers to take up professional development

By type of provision

	Financial support for training costs		Financial support to cover partial salary		Path to higher qualification <sup>1</sup>		Study leave <sup>2</sup>		Higher salary/promotion	
	Child care	Pre-school	Child care	Pre-school	Child care	Pre-school	Child care	Pre-school	Child care	Pre-school
Australia	X	X								
Austria	X	X					X	X		
British Columbia (CAN)*	X	X	X				X	X	X	X
Czech Republic	X	X					X	X		
Denmark							X	X		X
England (UKM)	X	X			X	X				
Estonia		X						X		X
Finland	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Flemish Community (BEL)		X				X		X		
French Community (BEL)	X	X		X	X			X		
Georgia (USA)		X			X					
Germany							X	X	X	X
Hungary	X	X								
Italy							X	X		
Japan	X	X		X		X		X		
Korea	X	X								X
Manitoba (CAN)	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X
Massachusetts (USA)		X					X			
Mexico	X	X								X
Netherlands	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
New Zealand	X	X			X	X				
North Carolina (USA)		X								
Norway*	X	X			X	X				
Oklahoma (USA)										
Poland	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Portugal		X		X		X		X		X
Prince Edward Island (CAN)*		X				X				X
Scotland (UKM)					X					
Slovak Republic				X		X				X
Slovenia	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Spain	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Sweden*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Turkey							X			X

\* For British Columbia (CAN), incentives for take-up of professional development can differ per employer. For Norway, data regarding child care refers to child/youth workers. For Prince Edward Island (CAN), data refers to entry-level ECEC staff. For Sweden, data regarding child care refers to childminders.

Note 1: "Path to higher qualification" refers to the availability of higher qualification through professional development. In some countries, higher qualifications are not available for the ECEC workforce; whereas in other countries, higher qualification is available and may be obtained through professional development.

Note 2: "Study leave" includes permitted time off from work to pursue professional development and replacement of an employee with a substitute.

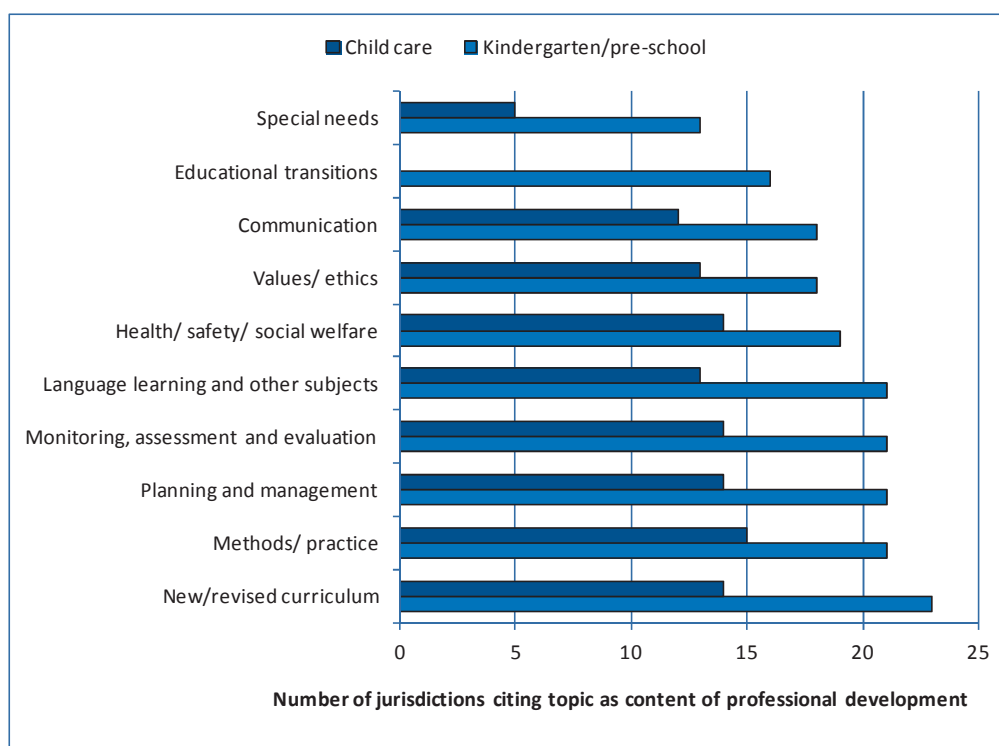
Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

Table 3.9. Incentives for RPL (Recognition of prior learning)

	Upskill			Recruitment			Qualify the unqualified		
	Child care	Pre-school	Family day care	Child care	Pre-school	Family day care	Child care	Pre-school	Family day care
<b>Australia</b>	X		X				X		X
<b>British Columbia (CAN)</b>				X	X				
<b>Denmark</b>								X	
<b>England (UKM)</b>							X		
<b>Finland</b>									X
<b>Flemish Community (BEL)</b>	X	X					X*		
<b>Germany</b>	X	X	X						
<b>Israel</b>				X	X				
<b>Italy</b>	X	X	X						
<b>Korea</b>	X	X							X
<b>Manitoba (CAN)</b>	X	X	X	X	X				
<b>Massachusetts (USA)</b>							X		
<b>Netherlands</b>							X		X
<b>New Zealand</b>				X	X				
<b>Scotland (UKM)</b>							X		
<b>Slovenia</b>							X		
<b>Spain</b>							X		
<b>Turkey</b>		X			X			X	

Note: For the Flemish Community (BEL), data refers only to subsidised child care provisions.

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

**Figure 3.6. Content of professional development<sup>8</sup>**

Note 1: Countries were given a range of topics to select from, including the possibility to list topics not mentioned in the selection. Answers indicating "other" without specifying which topic was referred to with "other" are not included in this figure.

Note 2: Countries with an integrated ECEC system who indicated that the subjects of professional development were similar for the whole ECEC sector/ECEC age range: responses have been included in both "child care" and "kindergarten/preschool" since the content of professional development refers to the whole ECEC age range, including ECEC workers with younger children (herein referred to as "child care").

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

**Table 3.10. Forms and structures of professional development opportunities**

		Staff type	
		Kindergarten or preschool staff	Child care staff
Training programme form and structure	Seminar or Workshop	Australia, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), French Community (BEL), Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Massachusetts (USA), Manitoba (CAN), Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Carolina (USA), Norway, Oklahoma (USA), Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey	Australia, Austria, British Columbia (CAN), Czech Republic, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), French Community (BEL), Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Massachusetts (USA), Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway*, Oklahoma (USA), Poland, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM) and Spain
	Onsite Mentoring	Australia, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), Georgia (USA), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Massachusetts (USA), Netherlands, New Zealand, North Carolina (USA), Norway, Oklahoma (USA), Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Spain	Australia, Austria, British Columbia (CAN), Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), Georgia (USA), Israel, Italy, Japan, Manitoba (CAN), Massachusetts (USA), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway*, Oklahoma (USA), Poland, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM) and Spain
	Online Training	Australia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Georgia (USA), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Massachusetts (USA), Netherlands, New Zealand, North Carolina (USA), Norway, Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Slovak Republic and Spain	Australia, British Columbia (CAN), Czech Republic, Georgia (USA), Israel, Italy, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Massachusetts (USA), Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway*, Oklahoma (USA), Poland, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM) and Spain
	Formal Training Course	Australia, Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, England (UKM), Estonia, Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), French Community (BEL), Georgia (USA), Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Manitoba (CAN), Massachusetts (USA), Mexico, Netherlands, North Carolina (USA), Norway, Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Slovenia and Sweden	Australia, Austria, British Columbia (CAN), Czech Republic, England (UKM), Finland, Flemish Community (BEL), Georgia (USA), Israel, Italy, Manitoba (CAN), Massachusetts (USA), Mexico, Netherlands, Norway*, Oklahoma (USA), Poland, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM) and Sweden*

\* For Norway, data regarding child care refers to child/youth workers. For Sweden, data regarding child care refers to childminders.

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

### Definitions and methodologies

- **Professional development** refers to knowledge, skills and competencies attained for professional advancement. **Professional development opportunities** are aimed at improving the performance of ECEC staff in already assigned positions. Professional development opportunities are often referred to as “in-service training” and “continuous education/training”. The contents indicate which subject areas and topics these training programmes seek to address and improve upon. Countries could choose from the following:

- *Language learning and other subjects*: includes language learning, languages, arts, math, sciences, information and communication technologies, etc.
- *New curriculum*: includes new and updated curriculum, reform in curriculum, etc.
- *Methods/practice*: includes teaching methodologies, teaching strategies and practices, such as Reggio Emilia or inclusive education.
- *Values/ethics*: includes ethics, anti-discrimination, equal opportunity, citizenship, etc.
- *Planning and management*: includes planning of activities and the curriculum, programming, management, leadership, etc.
- *Communication*: includes communication with parents, communication with other staff for team teaching/caring, use of information and communication technologies, etc.
- *Monitoring, assessment and evaluation*: includes monitoring, assessment (*i.e.*, of targets/goals/etc.) of child outcomes, evaluation of development, programme quality and staff performance, etc.
- *Health, safety and social welfare*: includes health, safety, well-being, social welfare, etc.
- *Special needs and educational transitions*: these two subjects were not included in the list to choose from as separate topics, but countries could indicate in a box named “other” whether they were addressing these subjects in professional development.
- **Recognition of prior learning** refers to a process used by governments, accreditation organisations, employers or universities or colleges to evaluate learning acquired outside the classroom and often formally recognised as academic credits, certificates, salary increase, etc.

The findings presented here are based on data from the OECD Network on ECEC’s “Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal” (2011), and on the OECD’s desk-based research. For each graph and table, the countries or regions for which data is used are listed (if not presented in the graph).

## STAFF WORKING CONDITIONS

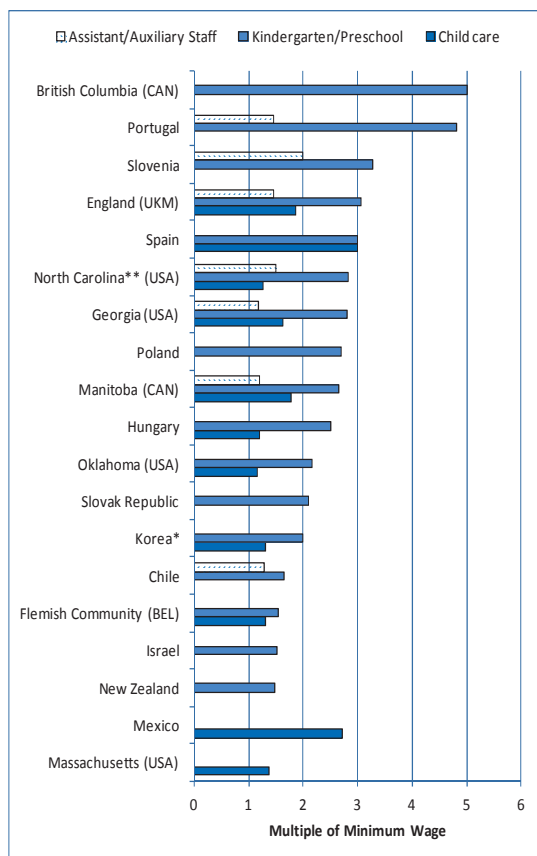
### Findings

- All ECEC staff earn above the minimum wage set for their countries. But there is a significant wage range across countries. While the salary for kindergarten/preschool teachers is less than double the minimum wage in countries such as New Zealand and Chile, it is more than four times in British Columbia (Canada) and Portugal (Figure 3.7, Panel A).
- In general, kindergarten or preschool staff receive higher salaries than other ECEC staff. The exception is Spain, where kindergarten/preschool staff and child care workers are equally paid.
- In many countries, pre-primary and primary teaching staff are paid at the same rate, such as in Portugal and Manitoba (Canada); but primary teachers are paid higher than pre-primary teachers in countries such as Chile England (United Kingdom), Mexico, Poland, and Slovenia (Figure 3.7, Panel B).
- Turn-over rates are high in both child care and preschool/kindergarten. On average, the turn-over rate in kindergarten is 17.7%; while it is slightly lower in child care with 15.4% (Figure 3.8).
- Large differences are observed among countries for the rate for kindergarten staff: it is more than 30% in Denmark and the United States; while it is less than 5% in the Flemish Community of Belgium, Estonia and England (United Kingdom).
- For child care staff, the ratio is 35% in the United States; and the lowest is the Netherlands with 8.9%.

Figure 3.7. Remuneration of ECEC staff

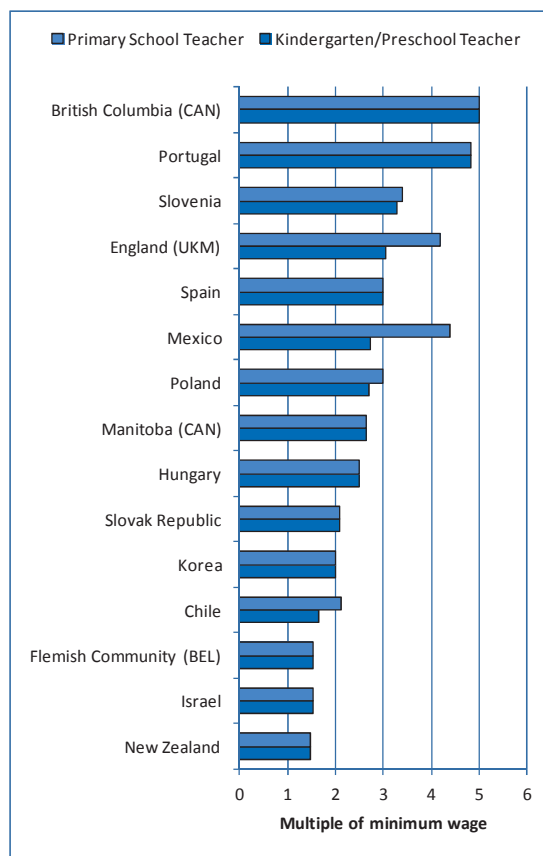
## Panel A: ECEC staff across different types of ECEC provision

Given as multiple of minimum wage



## Panel B: Kindergarten/ preschool and primary school teaching staff

Given as multiple of minimum wage

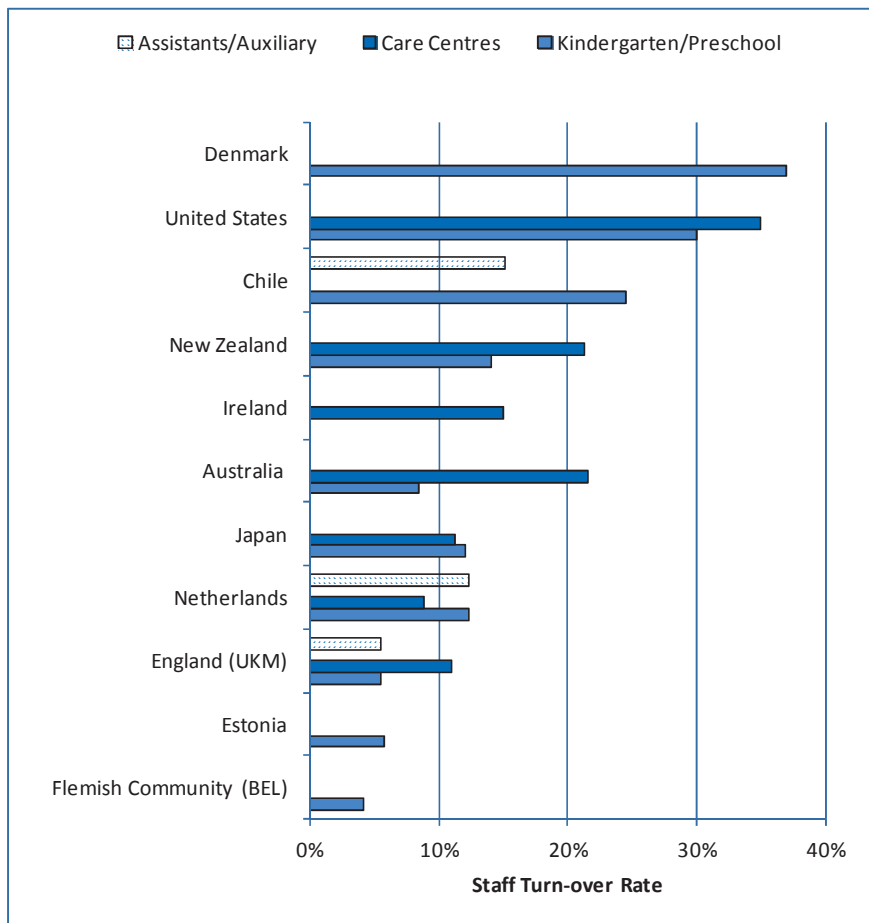


\* In Korea, remuneration for child care centre staff ranges between 1.3 and 1.5 times the minimum wage and refers to the average starting salary of child care staff in public institutions.

\*\* For North Carolina, assistance preschool teacher is used for the figure on assistant / auxiliary staff.

Note: "Assistant/Auxiliary Staff" typically require lower qualifications and work with primary staff in the specific ECEC setting.

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal", June 2011.

**Figure 3.8. Staff turnover rates per different types of ECEC staff**

Note: “Assistant/Auxiliary Staff” cut across different types of services and will typically require lower qualifications and work with primary staff in the specific ECEC setting.

Source: OECD Network on Early Childhood Education and Care’s “Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal”, June 2011.

For more detail, see the Survey Response Table on “Working Conditions” (Excel™ file) in the online Quality Toolbox at [www.oecd.org/edu/earlychildhood/toolbox](http://www.oecd.org/edu/earlychildhood/toolbox).

### Definitions and methodologies

- **Working conditions** in ECEC refer to the characteristics of work and the workplace that can influence the ability and motivation of professionals to do their work well. They also relate to ECEC staff satisfaction with the workplace, work tasks and the nature of the job. Indicators to describe working conditions often include salaries and staff turn-over rate but also non-financial benefits, such as the possibility to participate in training (see International Comparison on “Professional development”) and staff-child ratio (see International Comparison on “Minimum standards”).



- **Staff turnover rate** is based on the number of workers that had to be replaced over a given period of time, calculated as the number of employee departures divided by staff members and multiplied by a hundred<sup>9</sup>.
- Working conditions are compared among staff working in different settings (see the OECD Family Database):
  - **Centre-based day care**: encompasses all child care that is provided outside the home in licensed centres. The services provided can be full- or part-time and are most commonly referred to as nurseries, day care centres, *crèches*, playschools and parent-run groups.
  - **Preschool early education programmes (Kindergartens)**: includes centre- or school-based programmes designed to meet the needs of children preparing to enter primary education. In most countries, these programmes include at least 50% educational content and are supervised by qualified staff. Among respondents, it is common to enrol an older age bracket from circa age three in kindergartens or preschools.

The findings presented here are based on data from the OECD Network on ECEC's "Survey for the Quality Toolbox and ECEC Portal" (2011), and on the OECD's desk-based research. For each graph and table, the countries or regions for which data is used are listed (if not presented in the graph).

## ACTION AREA 3 – SELECTING A STRATEGY OPTION

This section contains a list of strategy options to tackle the following challenge:

- Improving workforce development and working conditions

### IMPROVING WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

#### Challenge 1: Improving staff qualifications

Qualifications for ECEC staff often overlap and are not transparent among child care workers and early education teachers. Different qualifications leading to different job titles/profiles do not always clearly communicate to staff or parents about what knowledge, skills and competencies staff have.

Different sectors – within ECEC – have different goals and visions for staff education and training. Revising or unifying ECEC staff qualifications poses a challenge especially in countries with a “split system” or fragmented services over child care and early education. Improving qualifications evenly across the country is also a challenge due to local control over the contents of the education programmes.

#### *Revising initial education programmes and requirements*

- **British Columbia (Canada)** revised the Child Care Licensing Regulation so that Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Assistants and other adults working in licensed facilities must fulfil specific course requirements. Prior to this change, ECE Assistants were only required to complete any ECE or related training. The requirements became more specific in an effort to increase the quality of the training. The change was made as a result of information received from the field consultations during the revision process. It responds to the implementation of two labour mobility agreements, which intend to facilitate the mobility of workers between provinces in Canada. Rather than creating an entirely new programme or course for ECE Assistants, the government used courses already designed and available through existing ECE programmes. The changes have not impacted content, duration, fees or modes of delivery.
- In **New Zealand**, in 1986, child care services were transferred from the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education. A year after integrating the child care and education sectors, the government established the Diploma of Education (Early Childhood Education) as the benchmark teaching qualification for the newly centralised system. In 1988, the first three-year teacher training programme with cultural training components began to

be phased in. In the early 1990s, the focus of the sector was on quality, training and funding.

- In 2009-10, **Korea** embarked on upgrading the initial education of the ECEC workforce. For kindergarten teachers, the government set the qualification level at a four-year bachelor's degree and intends to gradually reduce the number of students at teacher training colleges in order to strike a better balance between demand and supply of the kindergarten workforce. For child care teachers, the government set a higher level by increasing the required credits from 35 to 51 credits (*i.e.*, 12 to 17 courses) at a college level and, furthermore, strengthened the training programme with a third level qualification (*i.e.*, one year of training after high school graduation), requiring a total of 1 105 hours including four weeks of field practicum. From March 2013, child care practice will take place only at accredited facilities with a minimum of 15 children.
- In **Flanders (Belgium)**, the government agency, *Kind en Gezin* (Child and Family), worked with key stakeholders in the child care sector, as well as experts, to come up with a definition of a vocational qualification for a vocational bachelor's degree in child rearing and education of young children. It also consulted with the child care sector, educational organisations and the adult education sector to design the concept for a child-minding academy.
- In **Finland**, the education for practical nurses started in the 1990s. At that time, there was a call from the labour market for more flexible movement from one task to another. Formerly, there were several different examinations (childminder, day care nurse, rehabilitation nurse, nurse for the disabled, etc.), which are now merged into one broader examination with different sub lines to choose from.
- **Portugal** changed qualification requirements so that preschool teachers must obtain a four-year master's degree, which is the same qualification that must be obtained by primary and secondary school teachers. Up until 1998, the qualification required for this job profile was a three-year bachelor's degree. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education worked with universities and polytechnics to establish the preschool teacher degree programme.
- In **Germany**, more bachelor degree-level ECEC programmes are emerging at the university level. The development started with universities like the Alice-Salomon-Hochschule in Berlin and the Evangelische Hochschule Freiburg in 2004. In 2011, the Ministers of Youth from German *Länder* agreed on a resolution about a common title (approved pedagogue for early childhood) and common contents for these degree programmes.
- In, **Slovak Republic**, ECEC teachers currently enter the profession with varying levels of training. Although ISCED level 3B is acceptable, the government is considering making it mandatory that teachers pursue higher initial education at ISCED levels 5A or 5B.
- In the **Czech Republic**, new requirements concerning the education and qualification of pedagogical staff went into effect in 2005. In addition to ISCED level 3 training, universities now offer ECEC study programmes at ISCED

levels 4 and 5. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport is promoting university-level qualifications in an effort to improve the quality of ECEC services.

- **Slovenia** has made the following revisions to initial education:
  - In 1994, a new three-year higher professional study programme in preschool education was established. Prior to this, preschool education studies consisted of a two-year programme established in 1987 that was offered by teacher training colleges.
  - Students pursuing the new three-year programme have the possibility of continuing onto a master-level programme.
  - As of 1996, preschool teachers' assistants must hold an upper secondary technical qualification or an upper secondary general school with an additional qualification in preschool education.
- In **Sweden**, in 2010, the government proposed that current degrees in education be replaced by four new professional degrees: preschool education, primary school education, subject education and vocational education. The new degrees will lead to greater clarity regarding the components of teacher education; and the preschool education programme will have a more specific direction to secure the supply of well-educated teachers. The government introduced in 2011 a new initial training programme to increase the supply of well-educated preschool teachers. The following decisions have been made:
  - regulate preschool teachers as other teachers are regulated;
  - clarify teacher qualifications;
  - create a teacher certification process; and
  - design a state authorisation system (senior subject teachers) to strengthen incentives for preschool teachers to advance the quality of activities and to pursue continuous education.
- **Prince Edward Island's (Canada)** Preschool Excellence Initiative (2010) requires all staff working in Early Years Centres to be provincially certified at either an Entry Level, Program Staff or Supervisor Level certification. The Entry Level certification requires uncertified staff in the system to participate in a training consisting of three courses: growth and development, developmentally appropriate practice, and guidance. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development worked with staff at local colleges to design an appropriate entry level course. The Program Staff and Supervisor Level certifications require educators to have a two-year diploma in ECEC.
- **Scotland (United Kingdom)** is currently undertaking a review and discussion on what skills, knowledge and understanding ECEC staff should encompass. A Common Skills Working group has been established to identify what should be included in initial ECEC staff education programmes. Stakeholders are invited to comment on the identified skills and knowledge areas for ECEC staff. After receiving the comments, the plan will be revised. An

implementation plan for the revision of initial ECEC education programmes will be drafted at the end of 2011. The goal of this initiative is to strengthen the workforce knowledge and improve quality ECEC delivery.

- **England (United Kingdom)** has launched an independent review of existing early education and child care qualifications and training. The review will look at the ways in which qualifications can be strengthened and pathways to support career progression in the sector improved to the benefit of young children, their families and those who work in the early childhood sector.
- **Spain** set out a new bachelor's degree in Pre-Primary Education, which requires four academic years, that is, one year longer than the previous programme. The total workload is 240 credits, 50 of which are devoted to practicum; whereas the previous diploma only required 320 hours. Furthermore, foreign languages have gained relevance, and students must demonstrate a certain level of competence in a foreign language at the end of the degree programme. Students also now have the possibility to enrol in specialised courses to meet the specific needs of early education, for example, organisation and optimisation of school libraries, innovation through ICT, school organisation and management, promoting joint action between school and its environment, etc. The syllabi of the general training module include new course proposals such as "Society, family and school", "Childhood, health and nutrition" and "Systematic observation and context analysis".
- In **Germany**, the federal government started the Action Programme Family Day Care (*Aktionsprogramm Kindertagespflege*) to foster a minimum qualification of 160 hours for all day care mothers and fathers. Training institutions have to apply for a seal of quality. Additionally, subsidies are given to day care workers who take part in a part-time qualification to become a pedagogue or a child care worker.

#### *Aligning qualifications between pre-primary and primary teachers*

- **Flanders (Belgium)** aims to merge kindergarten teachers and primary teachers into a single career profile with the same set of required competences.
- The **French Community of Belgium** has revised the initial education level of preschool teachers so that it is equivalent to the level of primary school teachers.
- **Finland** raised the level of education for kindergarten teachers and connected it more closely to the level for primary school teachers. In 1995, kindergarten teacher education was moved to the university level, as classroom teacher training and other teacher training had already been established in universities. This change created greater synergy and interaction between training for ECEC professionals and training for primary school teachers to better support children's development and learning and foster co-operation between teachers during children's transition from kindergarten to primary school.

- In **Portugal**, preschool and primary teachers follow the same programme in the first three years then specialise in either preschool or primary for the fourth year. Teachers can study for a fifth year if they wish to obtain certification for both levels.

*Promoting mobility/collaboration among preschool teachers, child care workers and other workers*

- **Slovenia** allows teachers and other graduates in the fields of education, arts, humanities, social sciences and social work to work as preschool teachers once they have acquired an additional qualification in preschool education.
- In **Australia**, the government is creating additional early childhood education university places; and tertiary education providers offer preschool teaching degrees tailored to the needs of diploma-qualified child care workers as a response to the need to increase integration of early education and child care. Articulation pathways have been created between the Vocation and Education Training sector and the Higher Education sector to support students through new training opportunities.
- In **Flanders (Belgium)**, the education sector is considering extending certificates of competence to facilitate the mobility between primary teacher and nursery teacher. They are also considering whether other qualifications can be taken into account for the job of pre-primary teacher. This is still in a preparatory phase.
- In **Belgium's French Community**, children's nurses have had rights and obligations in the academic domain as well as the care domain since 2004. In 2006, the government established a law by which children's nurses may be appointed to work in *maternelle* in collaboration with preschool teachers; and from 2007-09, slightly more than 25% of children's nurses were appointed to do so.
- **Japan** encourages ECEC staff to obtain both kindergarten and day care qualifications to promote co-operation between these facilities. Most college credits for both qualifications are already aligned, and around 80% of staff in ECEC facilities hold both qualifications.
- In **Korea**, kindergarten teachers studying early childhood education can be also qualified as child care teachers if they complete the required credits for child care. Child care practitioners can now also work at full-day kindergarten programmes, although there are still some limitations and barriers in this due to the dual training system and salary differences. Three municipal territories in Korea have therefore implemented an ECEC collaboration project called the *Yeong Cha* Project. These projects are partially funded by the local authorities and stimulate interaction and co-operation among different ECEC practitioners (child care and kindergarten). Within these projects, kindergarten and child care professionals plan activities together, care for infants co-operatively, etc.

### Setting or revising training outcome standards or curriculum for initial education

- **Australia** has introduced ECEC vocational educational standards (training packages), which are nationally consistent and coherent; responsive to individual, industry and community needs; and provide quality outcomes. Developed by Industry Skills Councils or enterprises, each package is a set of nationally-endorsed standards, qualifications and guidelines used to recognise and assess the skills and knowledge people need to perform effectively in the workplace. The packages prescribe outcomes required by the workplace, not training or education. They are generally reviewed and resubmitted for endorsement every three years; however, within the three years, changes may occur under a continuous improvement process. Additionally, in the ECEC sector, national training packages have been developed for Certificate III, Diploma and Advanced Diploma in Children’s Services through the Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council. The packages are regularly reviewed through consultation with the industry sector ensuring that the courses remain both relevant and effective.
- In **Korea**, initial training for kindergarten teachers requires specific academic credits and courses for the major (at least seven mandatory courses) as well as for the teaching profession (Article 19 of Teachers’ Qualification Decree, 2008). In 2009, the National Standardization Projects for Child Care Teacher Qualification and Training were implemented, resulting in the provision of Standard Teacher Training Subject List and Field Practicum Guidelines, and the Standard In-service Training Curriculum. The implementation of these, which will be enforced by law, is expected to occur in 2013.
- **Japan** revised its *National Curriculum of Day Care Center Works* in March 2008, clarifying the enhancement of staff quality and the expertise of all staff. Due to the changes in the living environments of children and in the ways of child rearing by parents, the expectations for the role and quality of nursery centres increased. The Action Program to Improve the Quality of Nursery Centres was designed to address the following needs: 1) improvement and enhancement of child care practices; 2) assurance of the health and safety of children; 3) enhancement of the quality and expertise of nursery teachers; and 4) reinforcement of the foundation to support child care.
- In **Finland**, the national curriculum for practical nurse training has been reformed. In this reform, the view points of ECEC have been taken into consideration more profoundly than in the former curriculum. Also, the national curriculum for family child minders has been reformed.
- **New Zealand** has Graduating Teaching Standards in place, which were set by the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC) in 2007 under the Education Act 139AE. Minimum standards of teacher education are ensured by the accreditation and approval of all teacher education programmes by the NZTC. All teacher education providers with programmes approved by the NZTC must demonstrate how they enable students to reach the Graduating Teacher Standards. Providers guarantee that students have met these standards and are “fit to be a teacher” when they graduate from the programme.

### *Mapping and assessing initial education programmes*

- **Australia** is undertaking a mapping exercise of all early childhood education courses to analyse the content of the subjects to ensure the quality of initial staff education at the tertiary level. This research will likely inform future policy development aimed at improving the quality and consistency of initial staff education across all institutions, including identifying gaps in the curriculum that may need to be addressed and steps that need to be taken to ensure consistency in the education delivered across all institutions. It is also expected that two national bodies – the new Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership – will have roles in assessing and accrediting initial early childhood education courses, providing an opportunity to ensure quality and relevance.
- **Norway** established the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (*NOKUT*) in 2002. In 2008, *NOKUT* was tasked to evaluate the education of preschool teachers. The purpose was to develop knowledge and information on the current status of the quality of pre-primary teacher education in relation to the framework and regulations on higher education. The report was delivered in 2010 and concluded that: the preschool education programme has low status within the universities and the society; the sector does not recruit the best students, and its students do not put enough time/effort into the study; the focus is too much on children over three years of age and does not meet the needs of those under three years; and the programme needs to strengthen the staff competences of multiculturalism. Additionally, the evaluation pointed to the fact that today’s preschool teacher training does not offer sufficient possibilities of in-depth studies of pedagogy for children with special needs. A new regulation for preschool teacher education is now being prepared. The government has appointed a commission to deliver a framework plan that will modernise preschool teacher education, which is relevant and of high quality.

### **Challenge 2: Workforce supply**

Securing a high-quality workforce supply is a major challenge in many OECD countries. Chronic shortages of ECEC staff are observed, especially in remote and disadvantaged areas. Furthermore, lower qualification levels of the workforce, especially in the child care sector, often raise concerns among parents and policy makers about the quality of services. Additionally, there are often insufficient incentives for people to work in the sector. The main reasons for the shortages are often cited as: low wages, low social status, heavy workload and lack of career progression paths, which make the profession unattractive and can cause or contribute to the challenge of recruiting staff.

The workforce is homogeneous, composed of mostly female, young workers and from the majority ethnic group.



### *Funding students and professionals*

- In **Australia**, the removal of Technical and Further Education fees for diplomas and advanced diplomas in child care helps lessen the financial burden on students. Additionally, the Higher Education Contribution Scheme-Higher Education Loan Program provides debt relief for early childhood education teachers working in areas of high disadvantage.
- In **New Zealand**, student grants and scholarships are provided for hard-to-staff professions, including ECEC, to help students and services meet the costs of pursuing an ECE qualification. A number of scholarships are available to students undertaking a programme of study to prepare them for teaching in Pasifika or Māori immersion services. Additionally, the government funded expert assistance for initial teacher education providers who started developing programmes for preparing teachers to work in Pasifika and Māori immersion services: the assistance went to developing and implementing these programmes.
- In **England**, government funding is provided to local authorities to increase and sustain the number of graduates employed and to provide other types of pedagogical training for staff. This also extends to the recruitment and deployment of graduate leaders and investment in qualifications.
- When **Prince Edward Island (Canada)** implemented the Preschool Excellence Initiative's Entry Level certification programme, the Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning funded the cost of the tuition and books for all previously uncertified staff that were required to participate in the training. If participants did not meet the qualifications upon completion of the training, they could work with Workplace Prince Edward Island to upgrade their academic skills. This education was provided at no cost to the participant and was intended to prepare them for participating a second time in the Entry Level programme.

### *Funding education and training programmes*

- In **Japan**, prefectures receive government funds to train nursery teachers, including people who do not have experience working in a centre. The government plans to increase the number of children accepted by day care centres from 20-38% during 2007-17 and, therefore, to increase the workforce supply in order to accommodate the demands.
- In **Norway**, the state budget was increased by NOK 25 in 2011, amounting to 130 million to:
  - recruit and educate enough preschool teachers to meet the demand;
  - provide education at the secondary level as well as further education for childminders; and
  - provide further education for preschool teachers (both pedagogical and head teachers).

This was a response to a need to provide a sufficient and quality workforce to accommodate a large increase in the number of kindergarten places over a short period of time. Norway has also provided eight university

colleges/universities with means to develop practices that support the follow-through and completion of teacher training for bilingual students. The implemented measures include providing help during the application process, providing support in Norwegian language, incorporating multicultural aspects into the curriculum and providing individual support to students throughout the duration of preschool teacher education in co-operation with ten university colleges/universities.

- In **Korea**, in-service kindergarten teacher training by local Offices of Education is subsidised with Financial Grants for Local Education. The budget for in-service child care teacher training was KRW 1 248 million for 2011; the National Office for Child Care Staff Qualification is administered by KRW 640 million; and Childcare Information Centers (a total of 18 centres in charge of in-service teacher training) by KRW 4 040 million. Diverse pathways to fund in-service teacher training and professional development exist in child care sector.
- **Spain's** Ministry of Education and regional governments are jointly financing an increase in the provision of higher vocational training leading to a “certificate of technician in pre-primary education”. The Ministry’s Action Plan 2010-11 stresses the need to increase the number of places in the first cycle of pre-primary education and to transform other types of early child care into pre-primary provision for children under three. To attain these goals, the Ministry collaborates with regional governments in designing the Territorial Cooperation Programme, *Educa3*. One of the programme objectives is to improve the qualification and training of teachers and specialised staff. To help ensure that schools have enough adequately trained staff, the national and regional governments are financing the increase in training for the “certificate of technician in pre-primary education”.

#### *Raising the status of ECEC professionals*

- In **Slovak Republic**, kindergartens had not been always been a part of the school system, as children’s attendance in kindergarten is not mandatory. The government took a systematic step to improve the status of kindergarten programmes and teachers by making kindergartens a part of the school system. As a result, kindergarten teachers are now able to pursue bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees at the university level; whereas they once only had the opportunity to obtain an education at the secondary vocational level.
- **Manitoba’s (Canada)** Healthy Child Advisory Committee facilitates collaboration between government departments working to support children and their families as well as with non-government organisations, businesses and the general public. The Committee’s efforts include public education on the importance of the early years. Additionally, the Educaring Subcommittee of the Advisory Council has made significant progress in advancing understanding and respect for and between the early years and the education sectors.
- **Spain** has been working towards raising the social status of the ECEC profession. Education authorities have launched public awareness campaigns to promote the advantages of schooling children under three, focusing on the

professional status of teaching staff and, by doing so, improving their social image.

### *Stimulating demand for a qualified workforce through employers and parents*

- **England (United Kingdom)** seeks to encourage employers to have qualified staff and stimulate demand by encouraging parents to seek centres with qualified staff to build trust among key stakeholders. Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) was introduced in response to evidence on graduate leadership from the Effective Provision of Pre-School Education project. EYPs are graduate-level staff who have demonstrated that they have met a set of national professional standards and have been awarded EYP status.

### *Diversifying the workforce*

- **British Columbia (Canada)** has programmes targeted at increasing the number of Aboriginal staff. A number of universities and colleges offer training with an Aboriginal perspective. One university ran a programme entirely for Aboriginal participants, and another college offers an Aboriginal specialty for post-basic training (for working with infants and toddlers or children with special needs).
- **Slovenia** recruits Roma assistants who serve as a bridge between the Roma community and the educational institution. They help children in preschool institutions and primary schools to understand the Slovenian language and to confront prejudice, and they help them with their learning and school work. They also co-operate with parents of Roma children. Roma assistants are trained in the Roma language, history and culture. The government's initiative has led to higher attendance of Roma children in educational institutions; co-operation between Roma parents and educational institutions; and increased awareness among parents of the importance of learning and education. The project also helps fight racism and xenophobia and promotes better intercultural understanding.
- **England (United Kingdom)** continues work to attract and support the use of graduates in early education and child care settings; to attract career changers to consider the profession as a career option; and to improve recruitment among under-represented groups, *i.e.*, men, black and other minority ethnic groups. They also continue to invest in and encourage the development of the early education and child care workforce by supporting graduate training, including through the Early Years Professional Status and New Leaders in Early Years programmes.
- **Australia** established the Indigenous Remote Service Delivery Traineeships programme to support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees in eligible schools and Indigenous child care services in remote areas. The traineeships were developed in recognition of the barriers to employment and training in remote communities.
- **Germany** is working to raise the number of male pedagogues in early childhood education through a programme funded by the European Social Fund called *Mehr Männer in Kitas* (Men in early childhood education). The programme encompasses 1 300 preschool institutions. At the same time,

Germany is looking to create new paths into the profession for – particularly male – career changers.

- In **Korea**, child care staff with immigrant backgrounds are trained and often employed at ECEC services where a large proportion of children have multi-cultural backgrounds.

#### *Validating existing competencies to allow easier entry into the profession*

- In establishing graduate-level status for the early years sector, **England (United Kingdom)** has developed a “validation pathway”, which allows graduates who have experience in the sector to demonstrate their competence against professional standards and be awarded the Early Years Professional Status.
- In **Australia**, the government has introduced a recognition of prior learning (RPL) initiative that will make it easier for experienced early childhood workers to obtain or upgrade their qualifications through a national assessment process. The initiative includes: development of a new national assessment tool for Certificate III, Diploma and Advanced Diploma’s in Children’s Services, funding for 600 existing RPL assessors to be trained in the use of this tool and grants of up to AUD 1 125 for rural and remote early childhood workers to contribute to the costs associated with accessing RPL.
- Since 2002, **Germany** has made efforts to stimulate and simplify transition between different ECEC education qualification levels. Colleges, technical schools and professional academies providing ECEC-related studies are obliged to recognise coursework completed by students at institutions other than their own, including studies carried out in other *Länder*. Institutions should, when suitable, give students exemption from passing certain courses when the required knowledge has already been obtained elsewhere. The aim of this is to stimulate students to obtain higher ECEC qualifications and make the transition from one level of education to another simpler and more attractive.
- **Chile** is undertaking a pilot project to certify school and work experience to validate existing competencies of ECEC staff. The project also includes the possibility of recognising secondary school courses in Technical Training. The continuity of the project will be determined upon its evaluation.
- The **Netherlands** uses validation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning on the basis of a collective agreement with the professional body, and there is an established validation procedure.
- **Poland** takes prior learning or work experiences into account when issuing teachers’ qualifications on the basis of the minimum requirements for promotion, *i.e.*, from beginning teacher to contracted teacher, nominated teacher or certified teacher.
- **New Zealand** recognises prior learning (RPL), and people can convert prior learning experiences into credits towards a recognised ECE qualification. The government has funded the use of RPL to help increase the supply of qualified and registered teachers.

- **Spain** aims to increase the number of qualified staff in pre-primary education and, thus, uses recognition of training through work experience and of non-formal knowledge for those pursuing higher vocational training to become certified as a technician in pre-primary education. They have also implemented an extension and increase of specific in-class and distance training initiatives.

#### *Promoting workforce mobility across different regions and different countries*

- **British Columbia (Canada)** allows Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) trained outside of Canada to work in British Columbia if they meet all requirements to work in the sector. They are eligible for employment provided they complete a credential evaluation along with necessary paperwork prepared by the hiring institution. Additionally, ECEs trained outside of British Columbia who meet all requirements to work in the sector are eligible for employment provided they submit an official transcript along with the necessary paperwork prepared by the hiring institution.
- **New Zealand** assesses foreign qualifications and offers a diploma in ECEC if it is comparable to New Zealand's benchmark qualification, the Diploma of Education, required for early childhood teachers. New Zealand also offers relocation grants and return to teaching allowances to assist qualified staff to move to areas where there is a shortage of staff, such as remote areas.

#### **Challenge 3: Workforce retention**

Many countries experience difficulties with retaining the workforce, with particularly high staff turnover rates in the child care sector. The factors that keep people from working in the ECEC sector are often the same factors that discourage people from pursuing a career in the ECEC sector: low wages; low social status; heavy workload; and lack of career progression paths.

#### *Improving salaries, minimum wage and benefits*

- **Manitoba (Canada)** introduced a wage adjustment grant, so that those with an Early Childhood Educator II classification would earn at least CAD 15.50 an hour, and Child Care Assistants in training would earn at least CAD 12.25 an hour. Furthermore, Manitoba increased operating grants to facilities by 3% in 2008 and by 3% again in 2009 to bolster staff wages. In 2010, the province launched funding for pensions and retirement supports for the child care workforce. When implementing the pension plans and retirement supports, consultations were required to ensure compliance with existing provincial and federal legislation. Additionally, those nearer to retirement were less able to take full advantage of the new pension plans, so Manitoba also introduced a lump-sum retirement benefit at the same time, in recognition of the contributions made by long-term child care workers.
- In **New Zealand, Portugal and Slovak Republic**, kindergarten teachers have been given pay parity with primary and secondary school teachers. New Zealand has a funding system for ECEC services in place that provides incentives for services to employ more qualified, registered teachers. This resulted in more services being able to afford paying better salaries and

significantly increased the number of registered teachers in the ECEC workforce.

- In the **Czech Republic**, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has approved an increase in the salaries of ECEC teachers with a university diploma in an effort to establish pay parity with primary school teachers; however, the government foresees a lack of financial resources, which would make it difficult to achieve pay parity.
- **Prince Edward Island (Canada)** set out to acknowledge and support the valued role played by early childhood educators by increasing wages for those who are certified. To do so, the government developed a policy framework, the Preschool Excellence Initiative, which addressed the need for a salary grid that would increase wages. Along with the Early Childhood Development Association, the government engaged stakeholders who would be effected by the wage grid changes and staffing requirement. Together, they reached a favourable agreement on the policy framework, which made it possible to implement this improvement of working conditions for ECEC staff.
- **Korea** will increase the wages for child care teachers working with the *Nuri Curriculum* by USD 300 per month in 2012 to close the wage gaps between child care and kindergarten teachers. Besides this, child care staff can receive additional allowances, such as extra remuneration for working in rural areas. Additionally, ECEC centres are obliged, from 2012 on, to pay for overtime working hours (staff working more than 40 hours per week), and evening shifts or weekend shifts will have additional pay.
- In **Japan**, public kindergarten teachers can receive adjusted allowances for overtime working hours.

#### *Inviting innovations from stakeholders through awards system*

- **Australia** has introduced the *Fair Work Act 2009*, which incorporated new National Employment Standards and required the introduction of modern industrial awards. The new early childhood awards were established by the Australian Industrial Relations Committee after hearing submissions from all parties; and the final awards establish consistent minimum rates of pay for early childhood settings with teachers in primary and secondary schools.
- In **Ireland**, the Early Years Education Policy Unit of the Department of Education and Skills led the creation of a Workforce Development Plan for the ECEC sector. An Interdepartmental Working Group was established comprising representatives from relevant government departments and state agencies. Additionally, a sectoral standards working group was set up to address the development of occupational role profiles and national award standards: this group was comprised of government representatives, education and training providers, national awarding bodies and workforce representatives. Occupational role profiles were agreed upon and associated with National Award Standards on the National Framework for Qualifications in Ireland. The Workforce Development Plan was published in December 2010; and Common Award Standards for staff was published in March 2011.

### *Assisting in bargaining or negotiating for working conditions in the ECEC sector*

- **Australia** has adopted a “multi-employer bargaining stream for low paid jobs” to assist both employers and low-paid employees in sectors like child care to reach agreements to improve wages and working conditions.
- In **New Zealand**, working conditions are negotiated between the teachers and their employers, except for kindergarten teachers where the Ministry of Education negotiates their terms and conditions on behalf of kindergarten associations.
- In **Slovenia**, preschool teachers and assistants are civil servants, so working conditions are generally determined by national regulations and are negotiated by the government and representative trade unions. Preschool staff have the possibility to use at least five days per year or 15 days every three years for professional training.

### *Targeting experienced workers or returning staff*

- In **Flanders (Belgium)**, the government has introduced additional holidays for qualified, experienced, older employees working in approved day care centres with the aim to retain them.
- **British Columbia (Canada)** had the Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Incentive Grant Program in 2008, which recruited ECEs who had left the licensed child care sector to return to work in a licensed facility. ECEs who had not worked at a licensed setting for at least two years were eligible to receive up to CAD 5 000 over a two-year period. Uptake for this programme was not very high, so it was discontinued after 15 months.
- **New Zealand** offers relocation grants and return to teaching allowances to assist qualified staff to get back into the profession and to move to areas where there is a high shortage of ECEC staff.

### *Offering status, benefits or social values equal to other professions in education*

- In **Flanders (Belgium)**, the government plans to regulate the child care sector and grant full employee status to family day carers affiliated with a service (*i.e.*, not independent providers). Currently, affiliated day carers have an ambiguous social status (in between volunteer and employee): they receive an allowance, a payment when children do not attend, a sickness payment and accrual of pension rights; but they do not receive holiday pay, a termination payment or unemployment benefits.
- In **Korea**, the government equalises the wages among ECEC teachers working with the new *Nuri Curriculum*. Additionally, the term “teacher” rather than “ECEC worker” will be used for both kindergarten and child care staff, indicating that staff in both sectors have equal status.
- In **Belgium’s French Community**, family day carers had no benefits and little incentive to remain in the profession until 2002 when the government created a minimum social protection for this job profile. They also changed the job title from *gardiennes encadrées* (trained guardian) to *accueillantes d’enfant conventionnées* (registered child carer).

- **Finland** issued the Day Care Act in 1973, regulating family day care and legitimising this form of service as equal to other forms of ECEC services. Family childminders became employees of the local authority, as was the case with centre-based ECEC staff, and now had their own working contract as part of the general working contract for employees at the municipality. Prior to the act, family childminders worked privately. The act established them as part of the municipal ECEC services and permitted them participate in service training and common events. Family childminders also follow the National Curriculum Guidelines for ECEC.

#### *Providing career opportunities for promotion and mobility*

- **Flanders (Belgium)** is planning a new Flemish qualification structure, calibrated to the European Qualification Framework, that promotes multi-directional mobility, such as from family day carer to kindergarten teacher (horizontal) and from staff to manager (vertical). This will be made possible by permitting the comparison of diplomas, certificates of training courses and recognition of prior learning certifications.
- In **Italy**, pre-primary teachers are eligible for an increase in basic compensation after fixed periods of time or competitive examinations. They also have the opportunity to be promoted to school manager or technical manager. Currently, they do not have opportunities for advancement within their job profile; but the Ministry of Education is considering proposals seeking to grant higher qualifications to pre-primary teachers based on the quality of their teaching.
- In **Korea**, experienced and high-quality kindergarten teachers are rewarded with a monthly grant of USD 400 within the Master Teacher System, and experienced teachers also have the opportunity to become a director of a kindergarten.
- **Norway** allows ECEC teachers to become school managers, municipal administrators and further education instructors for ECEC.
- In **Slovenia**, preschool teachers have an opportunity to be promoted, and participation in in-service training is taken into account when the promotion is being considered.
- In **Sweden**, preschool teachers have the opportunity to be promoted as senior subject teachers after pursuing research studies to have a licentiate or doctoral degree. Preschool teachers can also work as preschool heads, school managers and municipal administrators.

#### *Offering adequate support for new staff*

- **Italy** requires a one-year trial period for teachers with guidance and support from a tutor along with participation in an e-learning blended model training organised by the National Agency for the Development of School Autonomy.
- In **New Zealand**, following verification of the qualification of graduated ECEC students and a police vetting, beginning staff gain provisional teacher registration and then embark on a two-year teacher induction process with a mentor teacher to oversee their programme. They must demonstrate to their



mentor teacher through evidence of their teaching that they are able to meet the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions. At the end of the two years, the mentor may recommend the teacher to the professional leader of the early childhood service as meeting the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions. The professional leader then recommends the teacher to the New Zealand Teacher Council for full registration. There is Ministry of Education funding support for the first two years of the induction and mentoring programme. Once a teacher is fully registered, the registration needs to be renewed every three years.

- In **Flanders (Belgium)**, new kindergarten teachers are entitled to an induction programme with a mentor during their first year. In a large classroom, child care workers can assist kindergarten teachers to reduce workload and establish a better staff-child ratio.
- **Norway** implemented a preschool teacher recruitment strategy for 2007-11, which includes establishing guidance for educated preschool teachers in their first year of work. The government has also increased the capacity of preschool teacher education and established work-place-based preschool teacher education for assistants in kindergartens in co-operation with Oslo University College and the University of Stavanger.

#### *Monitoring working conditions*

- **Chile** has launched Work Environment Improvement Projects to monitor working conditions of staff working in the ECEC sector and aims to implement a Quality Care Assurance Model. The model involves a self-diagnosis to assess each preschool's educational plans, which are then validated by an external professional. The results are used to prepare improvement plans to tackle detected shortcomings.

#### **Challenge 4: Workforce development**

Many countries offer some form of professional development opportunities for ECEC staff. However, the take-up rates are often found to be low. First and foremost, information about training opportunities may not be well known, or the benefits of participating may not be clearly articulated, especially among low-qualified ECEC workers. Second, continuous training and professional development might be disconnected from what they wish to learn, and, therefore, may not be motivated.

Even when staff are informed of such opportunities and are motivated to take up training, their manager may be reluctant to send them to professional development courses. It is often argued that, when the training leads to the possibility of a higher level of qualification, staff may subsequently wish for a pay raise or leave for a higher paying job elsewhere.

Another challenge is observed in aligning the contents of professional development, those of initial education and the implementation of a curriculum.

#### *Focusing on professional development for quality enhancement*

- In **Norway**, continuous training is not mandatory. Employers are responsible for continuous training. As the government considers competent staff the most

important factor concerning quality, a strategic plan was designed for a competence development initiative spanning 2007-10. The strategy prescribed NOK 60 million per year and prioritised pedagogical leadership, children's participation, language/ language stimulation and transition from kindergarten to school. The strategy led to increased activity among municipalities, encompassing all kindergartens public and private.

- **Belgium's French Community** sees a need to improve initial education in order to improve the quality of ECEC services; however, a lack of funding currently prevents making modifications to improve initial education for staff. The government has focused on the importance of continuous education to ensure that staff are adequately trained to provide quality ECEC services.
- **Japan** commissioned a report in 2002 "Improvement in the Quality of Kindergarten Teachers – for the Purpose of Self-Study by Kindergarten Teachers", which was intended to encourage both current and potential teachers to strive to improve the quality of their services throughout employment.
- In the **Netherlands**, training is free for staff working in ECEC institutions. A source book was created to help training institutions include ECEC in their education programmes; and research is being done on whether institutions can offer a programme focusing solely on young children.
- In **Germany**, the federal government is investing EUR 400 million over four years towards professional development for specialist staff and systematic human resources development on the part of providers. There is emphasis on language and integration support in early childhood. Additionally, as part of the Qualification Initiative for Germany, the federal and *Länder* governments resolved, in 2008, to train more nurses and day care staff. These initiatives are in preparation for 2013, when every child from the age of one year will have a legal entitlement to child care in an institution or day care facility.

#### *Making continuous training a job requirement*

- All early years practitioners in **England (United Kingdom)** are required to continually update professionally. This includes undertaking first aid training every three years and attending training provided by the local authority on safe guarding children.
- In **Finland**, the annual amount of in-service training for employees in social welfare (including day care staff) should be three to ten days depending on the employee's basic education, the qualifications required for the job and the job description. This is laid down in the Act on amending the Social Welfare Act (50/2005). This Act also obligates local authorities to ensure and offer an adequate level of continuous training to ECEC staff. The goal of the obligation to continuous training is to maintain and renew the professional skills of the staff.

### *Raising awareness of the importance of continuous training among staff and their employers*

- **England (United Kingdom)** has been working on, through an awareness-raising campaign, convincing employers and practitioners of the need for and the value of high-level qualifications.
- In **Germany**, in 2009, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Robert Bosch Foundation and the German Youth Institute launched the project “*WiFF – Advancing Further Education of Early Childhood Professionals*”. The project sets out to analyse, initiate and promote professional development of early childhood professionals. The project provides careful empirical analyses of the various actors, decision makers and institutions involved in this field. In collaboration with the field, *WiFF* has developed standards of good practice for the professional training of early childhood staff and promotes consistent use of these standards. Four sets of background materials for training have been compiled, enabling trainers to prepare for the following topics: working with children under the age of three, collaborating with parents, fostering language development in children, and the role of early childhood professionals in supporting early learning processes. The materials, along with related publications, are available free of charge and can be ordered on the project’s website. *WiFF* actively supports lifelong learning and aims to ease the transition from vocational training or professional practice to academic studies. *WiFF* employs a team of fourteen social scientists from various disciplines and is sponsored by the European Social Fund.

### *Designing demands-driven training*

- **Norway** foresees a need for increasing the number of preschool teachers and raising the competence of staff through targeted measures. Efforts will have to be made by getting educated preschool teachers to choose to work in kindergartens and providing professional development for all staff. A national forum for kindergarten has been created to develop dialogue among stakeholders, which will, among other things, discuss the question of competence and quality in the sector. The government also uses the forum to discuss challenges and solutions with relevant stakeholders.
- In **Finland**, municipalities are responsible for determining the content of social welfare training; however, municipalities do not always maintain diversified know-how about the needs of the social welfare sector. Therefore, the government created centres of excellence on social welfare in 2002 to convey expertise to municipalities on this topic and ensure that training content is consistent and relevant. These centres of excellence work in close connection with universities and other education institutions. For example, at the University of Tampere (Finland), continuous training is carried out in co-operation with the city of Tampere and the kindergarten staff (especially the leaders of the kindergartens and the day care centres) as custom-made training. Identifying the demands and need for training derive from the staff and leaders.
- **Finland** and **Mexico** aim to cover a wide range of skills, such as communication with parents, orientation of activities’ contents and materials,

and teaching strategies and upbringing practices with a child-centred focus (e.g., how children move, play, experience art, explore, etc.).

- **Portugal** and **Sweden** focus on language development, mathematics, experimental sciences and child assessment of learning and well-being. Following a recent evaluation of continuous training programmes, Sweden mostly focuses on children’s linguistic and mathematical development as well as evaluation of preschool activities.
- **Korea** has diversified the training possibilities ECEC staff can participate in so as to meet the diverse needs of staff. Since time limits are often a barrier for staff to participate in training opportunities, on-line trainings are currently being offered as well.

### Offering diversity training

- **Flanders (Belgium)** recognised a need to diversify the workforce and adapt the pedagogy of child care centres to the multicultural society. In 1995, *Kind en Gezin* supported a large-scale action research project on respect for diversity in child care. Numerous narratives were collected from ethnic minority and majority trainees and showed how the project confronted practitioners with a paradigm shift. Trainees testified about the difficulties of addressing diversity issues and of constructing an inclusive professionalism.
- **Finland** recognised a need to develop inclusive education and multicultural working methods for ECEC staff. From 2007-11, they have participated in the European Commission’s project INCLUD-ED, which analyses educational strategies that contribute to overcoming inequalities and promoting social cohesion, as well as educational strategies, that generate social exclusion, particularly focusing on vulnerable and marginalised groups.
- **Australia** funds the Inclusion and Professional Support Program, which funds Professional Support Coordinators and Indigenous Professional Support Units in each state and territory. These co-ordinators/units provide professional development, advice and resources to assist child care services to provide quality care and to be inclusive of children from diverse backgrounds.
- **Korea** developed a 60-hour training programme and a teaching manual for teachers working with children from multicultural family backgrounds in 2010. Teachers can register voluntarily for the training course, and when they do so, they receive full financial support.

### Offering training for curriculum implementation

- **New Zealand** focuses on the implementation of *Te Whāriki*, the Early Childhood Curriculum, and provides training to improve learning outcomes for all young children, especially those at risk. Teachers are expected to strengthen their teaching practices. The government also provides training to support the implementations of *Kei Tua o te Pae*, Assessment for Learning. Teachers are expected to develop effective assessment practices that meet the aspirations of the curriculum.
- **Prince Edward Island (Canada)** provided developmental and implementation funding to allow for entry-level training of all uncertified staff working within

Early Years Centres so they could be educated as an Early Years educator and learn about the new Learning Framework. The province also provides in-service training to early childhood directors and educators already working in the centres on the newly established Early Learning Framework, a curriculum document for the early childhood sector focusing on children from birth to school entry.

- **Mexico** is providing training courses and workshops to support teachers as they implement new curriculum and adapt to revised pedagogical orientations. The government has also consulted educational promoters to inform the development of materials on how to improve their work through self-evaluation and reflection on practice. A web page has been established to help all educational figures find materials on this topic and exchange pedagogical practices and advice. Additionally, the government is working on providing safety strategies to all child care workers, focusing not only on care but also on education elements. New professional development plans are being proposed for child care workers, which introduce more pedagogical orientations to training that was focused on care.
- In **England (United Kingdom)**, local authorities are responsible for providing training and support on implementing the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.
- The National Agency for Education in **Sweden** has, in co-operation with Swedish Television, made short films to give inspiration on how to implement and stimulate different curriculum subjects, such as mathematics and natural science, in preschool. Additionally, training in the curriculum subject of language development is very common in Sweden.
- In **Korea**, 20 000 ECEC professionals were trained in 2011 to implement the new *Nuri Curriculum* in 2012. Training sessions focused on the differences between the *Nuri Curriculum* and the existing kindergarten and child care curricula, including basic principles, areas of learning and development, and teaching methods.
- The early years sector in **England (United Kingdom)** has recently introduced a new curriculum of learning for zero-to-five-year-olds: the *Early Years Foundation Stage* (EYFS). Training has been developed on delivering the new curriculum. Ordinarily, the key areas for training/updating are: anti-discriminatory practice; equality of opportunity; child protection; health and safety; curriculum planning and early learning goals.
- In **Finland**, regarding continuous training and development, municipalities (the providers of training) focus on the centre's child-specific ECEC plans, which are based on the national ECEC plan. They focus especially on the processes of drawing up the ECEC plans and the contents of the ECEC plans, such as parental engagement, interaction between the child and the adult, the environment, the child's ways of acting (how the child moves, plays, experiences art, explores, etc.), leadership and special needs of children.

#### *Supporting employers for staff replacement*

- **Manitoba (Canada)** has established a replacement grant to pay for staff members' salaries when they are attending workplace training.

- **Japan** remunerates staff pursuing training and substitutes staff with staff members who are hired to replace individuals away on training.

### *Financing training costs*

- To strengthen staff competence, **Sweden** has allocated SEK 600 million on continuing education for preschool teachers and childminders for a three-year period running from 2009-11 under the programme “The boost for preschool”. The training is primarily directed at advancing pedagogical competence for preschool staff. The programme gives some thousands of preschool teachers and childminders the chance to take further education courses – at the university level (for preschool teachers) and at the upper secondary/high school level (for childminders). Teachers and childminders keep 80% of their salary during the study period, co-funded by the government and the preschool principal organisers. The courses focus on children’s linguistic and mathematical development and evaluation of preschool activities. There is also an opportunity for preschool teachers to take research studies to have a licentiate degree. The purpose is to increase the number of post-graduated preschool teachers in preschool.
- Every year, **Slovenia** offers “Study help for school fees for further education of pedagogical workers”. The grant helps employed teachers and other pedagogical staff to reach a higher level of education or qualification. Candidates can apply if they meet the certain criteria (*e.g.*, they must be employed; they must enrol in programmes for further education with which they will meet the level of education required by law).
- **Finland** provides state-funded in-service training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for teachers and other education personnel. Since 2010, the Ministry of Education and Culture has nearly doubled its funding for the (CPD) and in-service training of teachers and education personnel, including ECEC staff. Currently, a total of EUR 21 million is spent annually for this purpose. Additionally, the in-service training for employees in social welfare (including day care staff) receives about 33% of its funding from the state. This training amounts to three to ten days per year depending on the employee’s basic education, the qualifications required for the job and the job description. The state funding helps ensure that local authorities offer an adequate level of continuous training that maintains and renews the professional skills of ECEC staff.
- In **England (United Kingdom)**, funding for training for ECEC staff is available through local authority training budgets and other sources. Pathways to support the attainment of qualifications up to Level 6 are available with funding support.
- **Manitoba (Canada)** introduced training grants to support the child care workforce and assist facilities in meeting trained staff requirements. The grants include funding for students to study full-time as well as a workplace grant for those who study part-time while remaining employed. The province also has a grant for facilities to cover the cost of replacing a staff member who is enrolled in a workplace training programme.

- **Spain's** Ministry of Education finances the Territorial Cooperation Programme “Teacher professional development”. The programme has been jointly developed by the Ministry and regional governments and aims at: agreeing on priority teacher professional development areas; increasing provision of teacher training programmes; guaranteeing attention to minorities; opening up new channels for collaboration and exchanges of experience among teachers; and fostering continuity of joint actions to share and spread good practices that may lead to successful educational projects. While the Ministry finances this programme, it is implemented by regional governments. Additionally, the Territorial Cooperation Programme, *Educa3*, includes among its measures the organisation of professional development provision for teachers of pre-primary education, especially of zero-to-three-year-olds. This is co-financed by the Ministry and regional governments.

#### *Funding institutions that provide continuous training*

- **British Columbia (Canada)** funded the following professional development initiatives:
  - Grant funding was provided over two years (2005-07) to a post-secondary institution that designed and offered professional development that built on reflective practice capacity to improve quality within child care facilities. The training focused on building capacity and bringing innovation to the field in direct work with children. The number of rural and remote communities coupled with the geographic and cultural diversity of the province make it difficult to ensure professional development opportunities are available and accessible to all. The post-secondary institution worked with a broad group of Early Childhood Education (ECE) staff from a variety of settings within the South Coast area of the province, including Aboriginal, multicultural, rural, urban, part-time preschool, full-time day care and family child care.
  - Grant funding of CAD 2 million was provided to a professional association in 2006-07 to develop leadership capacity in ECE across the province, looking beyond direct child care to increasing the understanding and stature of ECE within communities as a whole. The association focused on constructing a culture of ECE leadership, recognising the unique and significant leadership capacity within the sector and developing ways that work to take knowing and being to the broader community. The association worked with the South Coast area, as well as the North and Interior areas, with staff from the following groups: Aboriginal, multicultural, rural, urban, part-time preschool, full-time day care and family child care. Fiscal realities did not allow for ongoing funding of this nature.
  - Grant funding of CAD 20 million was given to a provincial agency in 2006-07 to provide training directly to child care providers to increase the quality within their programmes. A portion of the funding was for learning materials, supplies and equipment that contribute to quality child care and enhancing the development growth of children; some of the funding was intended for minor capital enhancements and/or facility repairs or renovations; and the remainder of the funding was to be

directed towards professional development and training opportunities. Fiscal realities did not allow for ongoing funding of this nature.

- In **Japan**, the government provides funding to prefectures for training beginner teachers as well as teachers with ten years of experience. Teacher training is mainly paid for by the training providers.
- In **New Zealand**, the Ministry of Education developed a new programme for centrally funded professional development. The change was in response to a reduction in available funding, which provided an impetus for targeting professional development to ECEC services catering to children from the government's priority groups: Māori, Pasifika and low-socio-economic communities. Centrally-funded professional development contracts are for a three-year period. Providers are required to go into targeted communities, carry out a needs analysis and plan a programme that best meets the needs of particular communities. This new approach to central funding for providers intends to decrease the competitive environment for providers and give way to a more collaborative approach to providing professional development.

### Challenge 5: Private provision

A challenge in many countries is the role of private provision, particularly how policy challenges are addressed where much of the delivery is private. In countries where provision is largely public, changes can be initiated through direct government action; whereas when the private market delivers a significant proportion of ECEC services, action may need to be taken through regulation or incentives.

Private, community or voluntary services are often under-funded and, therefore, may not be able to respect basic structural standards, such as providing regular in-service training or requiring a certain level of staff certification. As a result, the quality of the workforce in private provision may be considerably lower than in public services. Governments can face difficulties improving the quality when private provision is not substantially subsidised, as it is less malleable by regulations and policies.

#### *Regulating private provision as rigorously as the public sector*

- **England (United Kingdom)** aimed to develop a single qualification and pay structure for all services. Inspections were integrated under one office, the Office for Standards in Education, which was made responsible for standards across all types of services within the sector; and a statutory responsibility was placed on local authorities to secure adequate, affordable ECEC for all families who need it. These changes were intended to establish consistent standards affecting the quality across various providers. For example, a single qualification ensures that staff in private and public sectors alike enter the profession with the same level of training.
- Licensing of children's services in the **French Community of Belgium** is strict and closely supervised; and the ECEC system is made up of a mix of public and private provision. In the care sector, public services are licensed, supervised and continually evaluated; and private services are licensed and supervised. In the education sector, three main organisations provide free



education that is open to enrolment from all sections of the public, and they function in accordance with the laws governing public services.

- Legislation in **Finland**, though decentralised, sets out strong and clear requirements for staff qualification and staff-child ratios, which apply to both public and private service providers.
- To prevent family day carers from operating privately without any external supervision, **Flanders (Belgium)** denies tax breaks and child care subsidies to parents who do not use licensed day carers. This ensures that self-employed family day carers are licensed and operate under the regulation of public authorities.

## ACTION AREA 4 – MANAGING RISKS: LEARNING FROM OTHER COUNTRIES’ POLICY EXPERIENCES

This section summarises country experiences as lessons learned from:

- Improving qualifications, training and working conditions

It aims to be a quick read about challenges and risks to consider when implementing policy initiatives.

### IMPROVING QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING AND WORKING CONDITIONS

#### **Lesson 1: Consider cost implications and be cautious in setting numeric targets for the percentage of qualified workforce**

In **New Zealand**, the shift towards a qualified workforce occurred at the same time as a strong increase in demand for ECEC and a rapid expansion of the workforce. When the government established the Diploma of Education (Early Childhood Education) as the benchmark teaching qualification for the newly centralised system, targets were set for the percentage of the workforce that was qualified. The government found that the targets were difficult to achieve due to the increase in the total number of teachers employed. Furthermore, the increased demand for qualified teachers had a strong impact on their salaries. Pay parity for kindergarten teachers with primary and secondary teachers was introduced; and the government policy was to provide funding to meet the cost of quality improvements so that the cost to parents would not increase. New Zealand found that this policy led to a significant increase in the cost of ECEC funding for the government. As a result, the government reduced its target of 100% registered teachers in the sector to 80%, deciding that achieving a minimum level of 80% registered teachers by 2012 will maintain sufficiently high standards across the sector.

#### **Lesson 2: Plan sufficient time for the implementation of the revised qualifications**

When **British Columbia (Canada)** revised licensing regulations, the province found that immediate implementation of the revised requirements led to many people not being in compliance. Staff needed considerable time and exemptions to come into compliance with the new standards. British Columbia notes the importance of

ensuring that those most impacted by the revisions have time to make the necessary changes to meet new requirements.

### **Lesson 3: When changing qualification requirements, ensure that the changes are introduced in pre-service education as well as in-service training**

Upon changing qualification requirements so that preschool teachers must obtain a four-year masters' degree, **Portugal** has found that it is important to foster the career of preschool professionals from the start of their first degree programmes through to in-service training. While the qualification requirements have been raised, teachers will still require continuous support after obtaining their degree, as changes occur in educational practices.

An evaluation on the quality of pre-primary teacher education in **Norway** has led the government to acknowledge the need for improving initial training. Norway finds that the importance, complexity and size of the kindergarten sector combined with the demands for ECEC require the government to discuss the findings of the evaluation. Strengthening the education of educators, pedagogical leaders and administrative leaders in ECEC needs to be a priority if children are to have high-quality ECEC. This requires allocation of resources to preschool teacher education, and there must be a continuous effort to provide training combining theory and practice.

### **Lesson 4: When changing curriculum, prepare staff for the change, and ensure that staff training is embedded in the implementation plan**

As **Mexico** trains teachers to implement new curriculum and revised pedagogical orientations, the government has learnt that before establishing new policies, it is necessary to make educators sensitive to the need for change. It is equally important to follow up on the training by monitoring teachers' practice and observing whether they are implementing the changes.

A key lesson learned from **Sweden** is that staff competence is decisive for quality in preschool. The education and skills of preschool teachers are one of the most important factors ensuring a successful preschool system. To work in accordance with the curriculum, staff must have good knowledge of young children's development and learning.

Through long-endeavoured processes towards the integration of ECEC, **Korea** developed the *Nuri Curriculum for Age 5* in 2011 and set up nationwide in-service training for 20 000 kindergarten and child care teachers working with five-year-olds to prepare them for the new curriculum content and pedagogy. About 150 teacher trainers from education and care sectors will be trained together for the first time in December 2011, and local education and care authorities will collaborate in organising and arranging teacher training.

### Lesson 5: Consider whether training with a holistic approach or an individual needs-based approach would better suit your country's context

**Belgium's French Community** emphasises that ECEC services must be carried by a strong and pertinent care project, or the effects of continuous training will be reduced. Additionally, the training programme should be holistic and not determined on an individual basis, or it will lack direction, which could negatively impact the quality of ECEC provision.

**Portugal** stresses the importance of making sure that continuous training is provided in context so as to meet the needs of teachers, children and families. **Mexico** also stresses the need to ensure the effectiveness of professional development courses and the quality of course content. The government values asking teachers which training courses they would find useful.

While pre-service training in **Korea** tends to focus on universal contents required for prospective teachers, in-service training takes into account the needs and competence levels of individual teachers and is designed according to the developmental phases of their teaching profession (e.g., beginning, experienced and managerial status). Korea increasingly emphasises the provision of diversified in-service training contents and methods, which are tailored to individual teachers and their working circumstances (e.g., rural areas and class sizes).

### Lesson 6: Consider whether a universal or targeted approach would better suit your country's context

**New Zealand's** experience has been that allowing ECEC services to self-select for participation in professional development activities can mean that some services over participate in professional development while other services do not participate at all. Learning from this lesson, the government pursued a new approach to funding professional development, which requires providers to go into targeted communities and determine training programmes that best meet the needs of those communities.

### Lesson 7: Mainstream the ECEC workforce into the recognised teaching profession, while recognising cost implications

**Finland** raised the level of education for kindergarten teachers, connecting it more closely to education for primary school teachers. One of the main lessons learned is that when kindergarten and primary teachers are trained in connection to one another, they can better support children's development and learning by knowing how to co-operate during children's transition from pre-primary to primary school.

In **Slovak Republic**, importance is placed on improving the status of kindergarten programmes and teachers so as to secure a high quality workforce supply. The government supports the following improvements: kindergarten teachers should pursue the same level of education as primary and secondary teachers; remuneration should be equal across all levels of teaching; and kindergarten teachers should have the same obligation and right to pursue continuous training as other teachers.

## Lesson 8: Ensure stakeholder engagement through a regular consultation/review process

**Australia** has found that consultation with the ECEC sector is critical to the success of workforce reform. For instance, sector engagement has been critical in developing a national training package for ECEC vocational education which meets the needs of the industry, the community and delivers high quality outcomes. Australia has learnt that a regular consultation/review process involving the sector is critical to maintaining the relevance of the training to ensure that the training remains current to the industry. The government notes the importance of seeking broad agreement on the principles and aims of initiatives and then tailoring specific implementation requirements to accommodate existing systems and processes. To support the development of its National Quality Agenda, Australia undertook extensive consultation in the development phase and is currently undertaking consultations to support the introduction of reforms to the sector.

**British Columbia (Canada)** finds that it may be helpful to engage stakeholders to assist in planning opportunities that will meet the variety of needs in the sector, especially given the potential for great diversity in geographic, cultural and interest areas.

## Lesson 9: Mainstream diversity in the workforce

For **Norway**, training for minority-language assistants and recruitment of minority students to preschool teacher education has led to an increase in the proportion of staff with minority background, including the number of preschool teachers coming from an immigrant background.

In the context of diversifying the workforce, **Flanders (Belgium)** finds that diversity may be more about accepting that differences are difficult to understand than about trying to understand something based on an individual's frame of reference. This requires openness and flexibility and recognition of multiple perspectives and paradigms. Dealing with diversity presents practitioners with complex issues that cannot be solved with a technical body of knowledge. Practitioners in Flanders expressed a need for interpreting professionalism based on continuous reflection upon practice as well as a need to move beyond reflection and develop the ability to be reflexive.

## Lesson 10: Create centres of excellence to communicate the sector's needs and facilitate networks

In **Finland**, where social welfare training is mandatory for all staff, centres of excellence on social welfare were created to inform municipalities about the needs of the social welfare sector and ensure the relevance of training content. Finland has found that the creation of the centres has succeeded in networking regional social actors; and as the ECEC sector is closely linked to the social sector, the ECEC sector benefits from the centres as well.

### Lesson 11: Support the salaries of workers in private institutions

**Korea** has recognised that the enhancement of ECEC service quality should be accompanied by a balanced provision of work as well as an increase in salary. As the private sector of Korean ECEC outweighs the public sector, it has become important on Korea's policy agenda to make the rewards parallel/equivalent between teachers of the public and private sectors. Local authorities currently provide various types of teacher allowances and subsidies in addition to a basic salary as a way of encouraging monitoring and ensuring the quality of private ECEC services.

## ACTION AREA 5 – REFLECTING ON THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

This sheet has been prepared based on international trends and is designed to facilitate reflection on where your country stands regarding:

- Workforce

The aim is to raise awareness about new issues and identify areas where changes could be made; the aim is not to give marks on practices. Please reflect on the current state of play by circling a number on the scale from 1-5.

### WORKFORCE

Qualifications	Not at all					Very well				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. ECEC job profiles and qualifications reflect relevant skills for today's ECEC settings.	1	2	3	4	5					
2. ECEC job profiles and qualifications are transparent and easily understood by prospective candidates, staff and parents.	1	2	3	4	5					
3. ECEC staff qualifications are aligned appropriately with those of primary teachers, especially those teaching children in the early years of primary schooling.	1	2	3	4	5					
4. The contents of initial education are reviewed periodically to improve quality and increase relevance of the qualifications.	1	2	3	4	5					
5. The qualifications are of equal quality across different ECEC qualification programmes while allowing institution-specific approaches.	1	2	3	4	5					
6. Qualifications to work with infants and toddlers (0-3 years) and young children (3-6 years) can be obtained in a streamlined process without unnecessary repetition or duplication regardless of the qualification system (dual or integrated for child care and early education).	1	2	3	4	5					

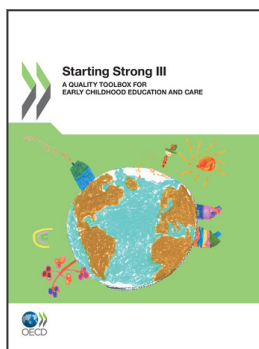
7. There is no stigma or parity in social status associated with different job titles and qualifications for preschool teachers, child care workers and other workers in ECEC.	1	2	3	4	5
8. ECEC qualifications are portable across different regions and different countries.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Workforce supply and retention</b>	Not at all		Very well		
9. There is a monitoring system for workforce supply and demand.	1	2	3	4	5
10. There is sufficient diversity in the workforce (e.g., male workers, immigrants, different ethnic groups).	1	2	3	4	5
11. There is a monitoring system on working conditions (e.g., raising the salary level, providing non-financial benefits, increasing the staff-child ratio).	1	2	3	4	5
12. There is a comprehensive recruitment strategy for ECEC staff (e.g., prospective students, new graduates, job changers, under-represented groups, staffing in remote or disadvantaged areas).	1	2	3	4	5
13. There are appropriate types of support and incentives given to students and graduates to work in the sector, especially in hard-to-staff settings and locations.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Validating existing competencies has been explored to determine whether there are possibilities for easier entry to the profession.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Specific initiatives have been taken to retain experienced workers in the sector and reduce turnover rates within centres to improve staff-child attachment and child development.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Sufficient opportunities for career development, progression and mobility are available to ECEC staff.	1	2	3	4	5
17. ECEC staff are supported on-site to develop the skills needed for working in a more integrated way across the broader early childhood development sector.	1	2	3	4	5



18. In-service support is provided to staff, especially new staff, such as through mentoring programmes by experienced staff.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Professional development</b>	Not at all		Very well		
19. The importance of continuous professional development is well understood by staff and their employers.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Professional development is driven by demands and provided with a variety of content and access options.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Information about professional development opportunities is easily accessible.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Professional development is available at a reasonable cost and at flexible times and locations for working professionals.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Evaluations have been carried out to assess the quality and relevance of the professional development courses being taken up by ECEC staff.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Take-up rates for professional development courses have been monitored, and the results have been used to examine how to improve the rates.	1	2	3	4	5

## NOTES

- 1 In the literature, “staff” is the term that is usually used to refer to those who work directly with children in the ECEC field. They are also referred to as “professionals”, “teachers”, “caregivers” or “practitioners”.
- 2 “Process quality” refers to what children actually experience in their programmes: that which happens within a setting. “Content quality” specifically refers to the substance of what is being learned (e.g., curriculum).
- 3 “Ongoing professional development” refers to in-service education and training. Litjens and Taguma (2010) give a clear definition of in-service education. This “includes all planned programmes of learning opportunities for staff members of ECEC providers for the purpose of improving the performance of individuals in already assigned positions”.
- 4 The international ISCED classification system is often used to facilitate international comparisons, four of which are relevant to the OECD survey responses: Level 2: Lower secondary school – normally considered the end of basic education; Level 3: Upper secondary school – normally the end of compulsory education; Level 4: Post-secondary non-tertiary education (e.g., short vocational programs; pre-university courses); Level 5: First stage tertiary education (e.g., first university degree); Level 6: Second stage of tertiary education (leading to an advanced research qualification).
- 5 Part time means that an education or training course takes up less time than a full-time job over a given period of time.
- 6 Integrated initial education: initial education for child care and pre-primary staff is integrated; students follow the same education, *i.e.*, students are being educated for working in child care and the early education sector (although a further specialisation for either child care or early education might exist within the programme). Split initial education: initial education for child care and pre-primary staff is split: they do not follow the same education and are trained separately. Data refers to centre-based ECEC workers only (excluding family day care workers).
- 7 Integrated initial teaching education: initial education for pre-primary and primary teaching staff is integrated; students follow the same education, *i.e.*, students are being educated for teaching in pre-primary and primary schooling (although a further specialisation for either pre-primary or primary might exist within the programme). Split initial teaching education: initial education for pre-primary and primary teaching staff is split: they do not follow the same education and are trained separately.
- 8 For kindergarten/preschool, based on data from: Australia, Austria, British Columbia (CAN), Czech Republic, England (UKM), Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Manitoba (CAN), Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey. For child care, based on data from: Australia, Austria, British Columbia (CAN), Czech Republic, Finland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Manitoba (CAN), Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Prince Edward Island (CAN), Scotland (UKM), Spain and Sweden.
- 9 Capko, J. (2001), “Identifying the Causes of Staff Turnover”, *Family Practice Management*, Vol. 8, No. 4.



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