

Development of a methodology for the collection of harmonised statistics on childcare



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**DEVELOPMENT OF A METHODOLOGY FOR THE
COLLECTION OF HARMONISED STATISTICS ON CHILDCARE**

Final report – July 2003

The views expressed in this document are the author's and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Commission.

Report produced by Ms Loredana Sementini, Mr Tery Ward, Ms Nirina Rabemifara and with contributions from Professor Janneke Plantenga.

Preface

This project *Development of a methodology for the collection of harmonised statistics on childcare* has been conducted by Eurostat with the financial support of DG EMPL.

The importance of ensuring suitable childcare provision as an essential step towards achieving equal opportunities in employment between women and men is recognised explicitly in the European Employment Strategy. The Employment Guidelines for 2003¹, therefore, states that :

Member States should remove disincentives to female labour force participation and strive, taking into account the demand for childcare facilities and in line with the national patterns of childcare provision, to provide childcare by 2010 to at least 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under 3 years of age.

These targets correspond to the targets agreed by the 2002 Barcelona European Council. A major aim of a future data collection on childcare is to ensure that the pursuit of these targets across the Union is satisfactorily monitored on a consistent and comparable basis. Data for the follow-up of these targets will mainly be collected in the new EU-SILC. Moreover, the Joint report on "Increasing labour market participation and active ageing"² recommends developing childcare services in terms of accessibility, affordability and quality.

A feasibility study of statistics in the area of childcare³, conducted by Eurostat and finalised in September 2001, indicated that on the basis of existing data sources, it is difficult to obtain comparable statistics covering childcare services. Therefore, the purpose of this present project was to define a methodology for the collection of harmonised data relating to demand and supply of childcare within the European union, and to compile and to analyse available data from national sources in EU Member States. A special interest was put on collecting data for the targets on childcare agreed by the 2002 Barcelona European Council.

We have a great pleasure to present the results of this project which aims to improve the comparability of statistics in the area of childcare in the European Union.



Antonio Baigorní
Head of Unit, Eurostat
Labour Market

¹ OJ L 197, 5.8.2003

² COM (2002) 9 final

³ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/eurostat/Public/datashop/print-catalogue/EN?catalogue=Eurostat&collection=12-Working%20papers%20and%20studies&product=KS-CC-02-001--N-EN>

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* http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/tus/library?l=/development_methodology&vm=detailed&sb=Title

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The primary concern of this project is to indicate the data which need to be collected on the demand and provision of childcare in the EU in order to assess the support available to those with children in different Member States and the use they make of this. A parallel aim is to develop a methodology for data collection which ensures some degree of coherence and as much comparability as possible across countries.

This paper was prepared on the basis of a review of the childcare arrangements in EU Member States and of the statistics available. National and international sources of information were used in the process of compiling it, including the Feasibility study on the availability of comparable child care statistics in the European Union carried out by Eurostat in 2000, the UOE education data, the thematic reviews on early education and childcare undertaken by OECD and the material compiled and published in the past by the European Childcare Network. The first draft of this document was sent to statisticians and researchers working on childcare issues in all Member States. The present document is the result of discussions and exchange of views with many of these and attempts to take into account so far as possible the comments and suggestions received.

1. PREAMBLE

The main purpose of collecting data on childcare in this particular case is twofold: to identify the extent and quality of services and facilities available to parents which enable them to pursue a working career of their choice during the years when their children need to be looked after and to identify the extent to which such services are used and, if they are not, the reasons for this. The link to employment – or more precisely to the possibility of being in paid employment – is of key importance since it helps to define both the scope of the data collection and its focus. It implies, in particular, that childcare should be interpreted in a broad rather than a narrow sense, ideally to encompass the private as well as the public sector, to include, for children below compulsory school age, care provided (whether explicitly or implicitly) by the education system as well as by the social welfare system as such and to cover both formal and informal arrangements if the information is to be comprehensive.

The link to employment and the focus on access to jobs also implies that the concern is not only with the number and types of childcare places and the number of children enrolled, but equally with the time when care is available (the hours during the days and days during the year), the location of facilities relative to those who want to use them and, not least importantly, the cost involved. All of these factors affect both the possibility of working and the kind of job it is possible to do (whether, in particular, it is possible to work part-time or full-time, which in turn affects the range of jobs which are on offer) as well as the financial viability of doing so. Moreover, the quality of care provision is of importance in this regard since it might increase the willingness of parents to use the facilities available.

At the same time, it is equally important to take account of the extent to which the facilities available cater explicitly for children with special needs, such as those with physical or mental disabilities or those from ethnic minorities who might have difficulties of language or of mixing with other children.

The importance of ensuring suitable childcare provision as an essential step towards achieving equality of opportunity in employment between women and men is recognised explicitly in the European Employment Strategy. The Employment Guidelines for 2002, therefore, draw attention to the need *'to design, implement and promote family-friendly policies, including affordable, accessible and high-quality care services for children and other dependants, as well as parental and other leave schemes'*. Two targets have been set in this regard: to ensure that at least 33% of children aged 0 to 3 and 90% of those aged 3 to compulsory education age have access to childcare places. The concern is, therefore, with the availability of care for both children under pre-school age (typically 3) and those of pre-school age (typically up to 6). A major aim of a future data collection is to try to ensure that the pursuit of these targets across the Union is satisfactorily monitored on a consistent and comparable basis. A wider perspective, however, needs to be adopted if the figures in question are to be properly interpreted and if a fuller picture is to be obtained of the effective availability of childcare facilities, taking due account of the various dimensions noted above.

2. DEFINITION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

Early childhood education and care (ECEC) is defined as any arrangement for children aged 0 to 12 outside compulsory school involving elements of physical care, socialisation and/or education.

These arrangements include day care centres, pre-school, before- and after-school facilities, family-type day care (both regulated and unregulated), in both the private and public sector, regardless of the administrative auspices (education, health, social welfare or a combination of these), of the age group served (infants and toddlers; pre-school children; compulsory school-aged children), of where care and/or education takes place (pre-primary school; centre; home; in-own-home) or of the intensity of care and/or education (full-time, part-time). (See Annexes 1 and 2). Informal arrangements with relatives, friends, neighbours and other adults are also included.¹

In practice, this means that all forms of care and early education are considered here, except those provided by parents.

¹ While the intention here is to use a definition of childcare and early education which is as close as possible to that adopted by the OECD, it is important to remember that the objective of the two data collections is somewhat different. The primary aim of the OECD work is to consider *'how policies, services, families and communities can support young children's early development and learning'*. Within this, the work concentrates more on organised centre-based provisions and less on care provided at the child's home and other informal arrangements. The objective of the present project, as mentioned above, is to look at the arrangements available to and used by parents who wish to work. The focus therefore is as much on the parent as on the child. This means that the definition of childcare and early education needs to be broader so as to include, for example, informal arrangements, and more limited so as to exclude all arrangements that, while they may be important for the early development and social integration of the child, do not necessarily help parents to pursue a working career since they require the presence of a parent (such as for example open facilities for children and families).

3. COVERAGE

3.1. Care provided within the education system and outside

Care can be provided within the education system or outside. Which of the two applies does not necessarily depend on the age of the child or on the extent of education provided, since in some countries childcare even for very young children falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, while in others it is part of the social welfare system. What is called a day-care centre in one country might not be any different in practice from a nursery school in another. For example, the *écoles maternelles* in France, run under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, are primarily for children aged 3 to 5, but also have many 2-year-olds. On the other hand, in the Netherlands, there is no pre-primary school system at all as such.

In other words, whether children are cared for within the education system or outside might have little to do with the type of care provided and simply reflect the administrative arrangements in force in the country concerned. In consequence, although there might be an interest in collecting information on the extent of education provided as part of the care service, which is one aspect of quality, this cannot be achieved simply by distinguishing between the types of institution providing care and whether or not they are defined as being educational in nature according to national conventions. Indeed, there might be as much if not more education provided as part of care in countries where this is mainly provided as part of the social welfare system than in those in which it tends to take place within the education system.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to distinguish between care provided within the education system and outside for data collection purposes, if only to ensure, on the one hand, that there is a complete coverage of childcare places and, on the other, that any overlap between the two, which is a feature of most countries, is properly allowed for. In most Member States, there is no neat dividing line between care which is considered as part of the education system and that which is considered as part of social welfare. Moreover, a child of a particular age might well be cared for both within the education system during school or pre-school hours, whatever these happen to be, and within the social welfare system outside of these hours.

The data collection has explicitly to take account of these complications and to overcome the difficulties they create. This means that it is important to distinguish not only between the types of institution providing care and care and early education but also between the times during the day, week and year when this care is available.

This implies some degree of overlap with the data Eurostat already compiles on pre-primary education as part of the joint UOE (UNESCO-OECD-EUROSTAT) data collection. In order to ensure the maximum degree of consistency and comparability with the existing statistics on education, the definitions for distinguishing between education and childcare programmes is borrowed from the UOE data collection. This defines education according to the latest (1997) International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) as “*organised and sustained communication designed to bring about learning*”. Pre-primary education (ISCED0) is defined as the initial stage of organised instruction, designed primarily to introduce very young children to a school-type environment. For a programme to be classified under ISCED 0, it must:

- have an educational content
- be school-based or centre-based (services provided in family settings are excluded)
- be designed for children at least 3 years old and or younger than 6, although in some countries, children under 3 are included. (Educational programmes designed primarily for children under 2, however, are not included.)
- involve staff with formal teaching qualifications.

(The list of early childhood programmes classified to ISCED0 is available from the ISCED-97 mapping of educational programmes – see Annex 3. The mapping is not limited to programmes reported in the UOE data collection but includes other programmes considered as part of the national education system. The inclusion of these borderline cases can potentially help to increase transparency and comparability of coverage between countries.)

3.1.1. Open facilities

Since the concern is with policy in Member States for ensuring adequate childcare provision for parents who want to work, facilities which might be included in some countries under the general category of childcare but which require the presence of parents or childminders need to be excluded from the data collection – or , at least, suitably adjusted to take account of this. (For example, in Sweden, open pre-schools provide opportunities for parents to meet and share their experiences while the children play together; in the UK, parents are often involved in playgroups on a voluntary basis and the main purposes of these is not really to provide childcare for parents who wish to work.)

3.1.2. Special care and residential care

Because of the somewhat different considerations involved, arrangements which are exclusively for children who are ill, are seriously disabled or who have similarly demanding special needs, such as hospital schools, are excluded from the data collection. For similar reasons, all forms of residential care are also excluded.

3.2. Formal and informal arrangements

Childcare includes a wide range of formal and informal providers, such as crèches, kindergartens, pre-school, out-of-school clubs, childminders, nannies, relatives, friends, neighbours and so on. While the main concern is with “formal” arrangements in Member States for ensuring adequate provision for parents who want to work, “informal” arrangements should arguably be included as well in order to ensure comprehensive coverage, even though their status is somewhat different and the stability or reliability of the care provided differs from that of more formal arrangements.

3.3. Private and public provision

With the same objective of ensuring a comprehensive coverage, formal arrangements need to cover both the private and the public sector.

4. COLLECTING DATA FROM PROVIDERS AND USERS

While the emphasis of policy tends to be on the provision of childcare, or the supply side, a full assessment of the extent of childcare in the Union requires that equal consideration is given to the use of the services provided, i.e. to the demand side. It is evident that some information can only be collected from one side or the other. Data on the number of places available and the kind of facilities that are offered can only satisfactorily come from providers, while any satisfactory assessment of the accessibility and the affordability of childcare as well as the actual number of children who are regularly cared for other than by their parents, can only be made by collecting information from users.

Indeed, information on informal care arrangements, on the care provided by relatives, friends or neighbours, can really only be collected from surveys of users. These are also likely to be the most effective means of collecting data on care provided in the private sector, by employers, commercial organisations or individuals (although details of registered or approved services in the private sector might be available from the public authorities responsible for care, i.e. from the provider side).

4.1. Data from providers

Collection of data from providers should include the number of childcare places available for children, the different types of service involved, the number of children being looked after during a given period, week or month (which may well differ from the places available), their age (or age group), the number of hours during the day and the times when care is available, provided, the number of children with special needs cared for and various aspects relating to those involved in caring.

An important question here concerns the extent to which administrative data of this kind can be collected from a central point in each country – i.e. how far the relevant data are consolidated. Given the involvement in most countries of the ministries responsible for both education and social welfare in the provision of childcare, as well as perhaps other ministries such as those for employment, information will need to be collected from each of these (though this might be organised by the national statistical office) on the various types of care facility available – i.e. day centres, nurseries, playgroups, family day carers and so on. (In addition, there might well be regional and local variations in the availability of care in many countries, especially where regions or local authorities have some responsibility for education or social welfare or both. Such variations need ideally also to be taken into account in the data collected, but they are not considered here in order not to over-complicate the data collection.)

4.2. Data from users

As intimated above, collecting data from users is likely to be the only means of gaining a satisfactory insight into the effective use of childcare arrangements (both formal and informal) and the amount of time that children are cared for.

It is, moreover, the only means of obtaining information on the accessibility and affordability of the childcare facilities available as well as information from parents who do not use any care arrangement on the reasons why they do not do so, which is important for giving a fuller

perspective on the extent and adequacy of provision in terms of the aspects discussed above – the times when care is available and its affordability, accessibility and quality.

Data collection from users, therefore, should include the number of children who are looked after, their age, all the types of arrangements used (including informal arrangements), the number of hours, the cost of care, the accessibility, the degree of satisfaction with the services available and the reasons, if childcare services are not used, for not doing so.

5. AGE

Data on childcare need to be divided by age group if they are to be useful. The need for care varies with age, not least as a result of the (implicit) care provided within the education system for children attending school or pre-school (See Annexes 4 and 5).

The difficulty is that the age at which children access both pre-primary and compulsory education differs between countries (as well as, in a number of cases, between regions within countries).

Admission age to pre-primary education

Country	BE	DK	DE	EL	ES	FR	IE	IT	LU	NL	AT	PT	FI	SE	UK
Admission age	2.5	3	2.5	4	2	2	2.5	2.5	3	4	3	3	3	3	3

Notes: DE, FR – most children start at age 3.

LU – attendance at pre-school is compulsory at age 4.

NL – the *Basisonderwijs* normally corresponds to a period of eight years. Children can start at age 4 but education becomes compulsory from age 5.

UK – in Northern Ireland, children can be enrolled at age 2.

Admission age to compulsory education

Country	BE	DK	DE	EL	ES	FR	IE	IT	LU	NL	AT	PT	FI	SE	UK
Admission age	6	7	6	6	6	6	6	5.5	6	5	6	6	7	7	5

Note: IE – the *School Attendance Act* requires that children attend school between age 6 and 15.

However children may be enrolled in primary school at age 4, and most do from age 5.

NL – the *Basisonderwijs* normally corresponds to a period of eight years. Children can start at age 4 but education becomes compulsory from age 5.

UK – In Northern Ireland, primary school starts at 4.

Simply dividing children into standard age groups, therefore, does not represent a sufficient means of comparing childcare provision and use between countries. The education arrangements have also to be taken into account. If, for example, compulsory schooling begins at 5 in one country and 6, or even 7, in another, then the need for childcare outside the education system is clearly likely to be greater in the latter than the former. The data, therefore, need to distinguish both the actual age of the children for which care is available and whether they are of school age, pre-school age or younger than this.

However, even leaving aside education arrangements, it is open to question whether splitting children into broad age groups is sufficient to give a meaningful indication of the extent of

childcare facilities available. If, for example, childcare places are available for one third of children aged under 3 in a particular country, this might mean that a third of children in each of the three years have places or that none of those aged under 2 have places but places exist for 100% of those aged between 2 and 3. This implies that the data collection should aim to compile data for children of each year of age, at least up to the age of 6 when in most countries compulsory schooling begins, so enabling them to be aggregated in different ways and giving a better understanding of what underlies the aggregated figures.

6. AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Any assessment of the availability of childcare facilities needs to take account of a number of other factors in addition to the total number of places available, in particular, the times when care is available, the availability of places for children with special needs and the accessibility of the care places available.

6.1. Places available

The number of places available is intended to reflect the capacity of each provider to take care of children and not occupancy or participation rates. Places available are therefore defined as the maximum number of children that each provider can accommodate at any given time. Places that are typically used by one group of children in the morning and another groups in the afternoon are, in consequence, counted only once rather than twice.

6.2. The times of operation

The times of operation during the day and year needs to be explicitly taken into account in order to be able to assess the extent of care and how far it enables parents to pursue normal working careers of their choice. The number of childcare places available, as the number of children being cared for outside the family, is liable to give only a partial as well as potentially misleading indication of the effective scale of childcare.

There are two aspects of the time dimension which need to be considered:

1. the number of hours during the day, the number of days during the week and the number of weeks during the years when care is available;
2. the times during the day, week and year when care is available.

Both are important pieces of information, the former indicating the total number of children of a particular age who can be cared for – and who are cared for - at least for some of the time, the latter the overall scale of care. Ideally, any assessment of childcare provision should take explicit account of the number of hours and time that care is available - perhaps by calculating places on an hours-adjusted basis – so as to avoid care provided for only a few hours a week, or a few weeks a year, being counted in the same way as care provided for the whole of the working day throughout the year. This does not mean that the provision of relatively few hours of care is not valuable, only that failing to distinguish this from full-time care is liable to distort comparisons between countries and to give a misleading impression of the extent of childcare provision. Childcare places which are available on a part-time basis – only in the morning or only in the afternoon, for example – should, therefore, be counted as such.

6.3. Provision for children with special needs

The provision of care for children with special needs, whatever form these take (i.e. not only the needs of children with a disability but also of those from ethnic minorities or minority groups, in terms of religion, culture and so on), should also be taken into account. There is a growing awareness of the importance of enabling children with special needs to attend normal schools, pre-schools or care centres (while devoting additional resources to them within these mainstream services). As noted above, partly for this reason but mainly because of the somewhat different considerations involved, facilities, such as hospital schools, provided exclusively to children who are ill, have serious disabilities and so on, as well as establishments for residential care, are excluded from the data collection.

6.4. Physical accessibility

The effective availability of childcare places depends equally on their accessibility for parents. Places need to be within reasonable reach of those requiring to use them if they are to serve their intended function. Physical accessibility can be defined, for data collection purposes, in terms of the time taken to travel to and from the location where care is provided which is additional to the normal time spent travelling to and from work. In practice, since this will tend to depend not only on the distance which needs to be travelled but also on the transport facilities available and the individual circumstances of the person concerned – in particular, whether or not they have a car and where they live in relation to where they work – the only way of collecting such information would seem to be through personal (or household) surveys.

7. AFFORDABILITY

The effective availability of childcare places cannot be divorced from the cost to parents of using the service provided. If the cost is high in relation to the income from employment which parents can potentially earn, then the fact that places are available may have only a limited effect on their ability to pursue a working career. Equally, if free or low-cost places, whether inside the education system or outside, are available only for relatively few hours a day, or days during the week, this may restrict their ability to work in full-time jobs.

Information about the actual payments on childcare that households make, therefore, is an essential part of the data to be collected.

Nevertheless, measuring the cost of care on a comparable basis is likely to give rise to serious difficulties. In most countries, care is subsidised by one means or another, but this may be through direct payments either to parents or providers or through issuing a voucher for the purchase of services, or indirectly, through tax concessions or reductions in social contributions, again either to parents or providers. Taking account of these different methods of subsidy and producing an estimate of the effective cost of care which can be compared across countries is a problem to which there is no easy solution, particularly since those who effectively receive the subsidy in question may not be aware of doing so while care providers may have little idea of allowances received by individual parents.

The only feasible approach in the framework of the data collection proposed here seems to be to collect information on the gross cost of childcare to parents (i.e. without attempting to measure any tax concessions or allowances they might receive at the same time) and to supplement this with information at the system level about the tax concessions, allowances, subsidies and so on which are available to parents using childcare facilities. Information can also be collected on the perception of users of the cost of care, its affordability and the extent of the burden it imposes on household budgets. Even though such subjective information is notoriously difficult to compare across countries, it might at least give an indication of changes in affordability in a given country over time. Such information on costs needs also to be linked explicitly to the time dimension discussed above. In particular, the cost of care outside school, or pre-school, hours might well be significantly higher than within these hours and ideally this should be taken into account in the data collection.

It should be noted that the difficulty of collecting information on the effective cost of childcare would be reduced if questions on childcare were accompanied by detailed questions on household income and allowances received in one form or another which are not really appropriate in a survey devoted to childcare as such. The main source of data on household income in the EU and its constituent parts is at present the European Community Household Panel. This is in the process of being replaced by the new Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC) which from 2005 will be conducted in all Member States. The most obvious way – and indeed perhaps the only way – of collecting comparable data for EU Member States on the effective cost of childcare is, therefore, through including relevant questions in the SILC on the fees paid by parents and the allowances relating to childcare which they receive. The cost of care could then be considered in conjunction with details of household income and the issue of affordability addressed directly.

8. QUALITY

The quality of care provided, in addition to perhaps affecting the decision of parents to use one or other type of provider, is a significant factor in its own right. Indeed, the 2002 Employment Guidelines refer explicitly to the need for Member States to provide ‘high quality’ care services for children as well as ones which are affordable and accessible. A point to emphasise in this regard is that the quality of care does not relate only to education which happens to be provided as part of the service but equally importantly to the care itself. Childcare qualifications among staff are, therefore, just as important as an ability to teach.

Two commonly used indicators of quality are the group size and the ratio of children to carers (including pre-school teachers). While, however, information is obtainable relatively easily on the maximum group size or child-staff ratio, since these are often established by law or regulation, it is more difficult to obtain reliable information on the actual figures, especially where they happen in practice to be above the maximum level set. A number of additional indicators might therefore also be used as a guide to the quality of care services. These include, for example, carer qualifications, carer turnover as well as an indication of their average earnings, which might reflect the value attached to those taking care of children.

9. STATISTICAL ISSUES

9.1. *Statistical unit*

There are two statistical units in the data collection.

9.1.1. The child, defined as any individual aged 0 to 12.

9.1.2. The place, defined as the total number of children that each provider can accommodate at any time.

9.2. *Age of children*

Children should be classified, so far as possible, according to their actual age, as given by the difference between the date of the period of observation and their date of birth. Ideally, therefore, details should be collected of the year and month of a child's birth so that age can be calculated in this way.

9.3. *Full-time and part-time*

Data collected from providers on the number of children needs to allow for the time for which care is provided, as indicated above. This means collecting information on the hours of care, though if this is not available in any detail, a distinction needs at least to be made between full-time and part-time attendance. There is also a case for setting a minimum participation threshold in order not to count the most casual attendance. (This issue is considered in the section below on the definition of the indicator.)

The dividing line between full-time and part-time is inevitably arbitrary and tends to vary between Member States. The proposal here is to define as part-time those children who attend a care facility for less than 30 hours a week (which is in line with the conventional dividing line between full-time and part-time employment). Those who attend for longer than this are accordingly defined as full-time.

Together with information on the opening hours of the different care facilities, this division enables an estimate to be made of the children receiving care in full-time equivalent terms, where full-time is defined in terms of the working day.

9.4. *Double counting*

Care for children can involve more than one type of arrangement. This gives rise to a potential problem of double-counting in the sense that children attending more than one type of facility are liable to be counted more than once in the data collected from providers.

This is a difficult, if not impossible, problem to resolve if data come only from providers and if the aim is to develop an indicator of the proportion children receiving care, simply because individual providers are unlikely to have information about whether or not the children attending their facility are also being cared for elsewhere. The problem is more easily resolved by collecting data from users.

However, because in some countries no survey is carried out of users, any indicator has to be estimated from information collected from surveys of providers. Some means, therefore, has to

be found of adjusting these data to minimise the problem of double counting. The method adopted here is to exclude from the aggregated total of number of children under compulsory school age who are cared for, those who attend facilities which are designed to be mainly supplementary to the main form of care, such as before and after school clubs or special holiday arrangements.

9.5. Reference period

Since the ultimate objective of the data collection exercise is to obtain information about the availability of care facilities which enable parents to pursue working careers, the main interest is the situation over the course of a year. For ease of data collection, however, it may be useful to specify a reference period which is typical of the care arrangements in place or availed of during the year. This, in practice, may vary between types of provider. School holidays represent a complicating factor in this respect and specific account needs to be taken of this in the data collection so that the care arrangements during term time and holidays can be separately distinguished.

9.5.1. Providers

The date of entry of children to a care or early education centre tends to vary between countries and, within countries, between types of facility and even between areas. Some centres have a single annual admission and others multiple intakes over the year, which means a gradual inflow of children during the year. For this reason, it would be preferable if statistics collected from providers were averages of the situation at several different points of time. If, however, data are available only for a single point in time, this should be representative of the average situation during the year. (It should also be in line with the reference period used for the collection of education statistics, which should be similarly representative of the year as a whole.) If reference periods differ across different arrangements, this should be documented and explained in terms of the potential implications for the data. (In all cases, metadata should be provided on the reference period and the observation method – start -year, end-year, other one-off observation, average.)

9.5.2. Users

The aim is to obtain details of childcare arrangements for every child in the household, including about the type of providers, the times for which care is available over the year, both during term, or non holiday, time and holidays. The reference period, therefore, needs to be a week which is representative of the situation during term time, insofar as this covers most of the year, and which is not affected by illness or other exceptional occurrences. Information on a limited number of variables needs also to be collected in respect of childcare arrangements during holiday periods.

As above, details of the reference period and reporting method need to be documented.

10. PROPOSED CLASSIFICATION FOR CHILDCARE

1. Centre-based care and early education arrangements (excluding compulsory education), regardless of institutional setting (school or care centre), funding (public or private), administrative auspices (Social Affairs, Education or other)
 - 1.1. During typical adult working hours or school hours (e.g. crèches, kindergartens, day care centres, pre-school)
 - 1.1.1. Of which, pre-primary education (i.e. included in the UOE education statistics at pre-primary level, ISCED 0)
 - 1.2. Only outside school hours (i.e. before and after school hours, during school holidays, etc)
2. Home-based arrangements (i.e. at the home of the carer or of the child or in a similar environment)
 - 2.1. Childminders
 - 2.1.1. Childminder affiliated to a child minding service (i.e. the fee or contribution, if any, is paid to the service, not to the child minder; if the child minder is provided by a public authority, the child minder is paid by that authority)
 - 2.1.2. Independent childminder, (i.e. the fee or contribution is paid to the child minder)
 - 2.2. Other (usually) paid adults, such as nannies, domestic staff, baby-sitters, au pairs
 - 2.3. Other (usually) non-paid adults
 - 2.3.1. Grand-parents
 - 2.3.2. Other adults, such as relatives, friends, neighbours

11. LIST OF VARIABLES ON PROVISION OF CHILDCARE

Part A – Information at system level

1. National name of the system
2. Description name of the system in English
3. Number in each category
4. Typical starting age
5. Typical ending age
6. Minimum qualification of person primarily responsible for children
7. Typical or maximum (if established by law/regulation) child-staff ratio
8. Typical or maximum (if established by law/regulation) group size
9. Typical opening hours, days of the week and weeks of the year for which open
10. Funding arrangements (i.e. the extent to which financed by government/employers/parents/other in broad percentage terms)
11. Allowances available to parents to cover part or all of the cost of childcare (i.e. a brief description of the grants, benefits, tax allowances available and the way these are claimed)

Part B – Information at provider level

12. First year of operation
[...] (alternatively brackets: <1 year, 1-5 years, > 5 years)
13. Whether regulated or certified
[Yes/No]

Availability

14. Total number of places available (14.1+14.2) [...]
14.1. Number of full-time places (defined as 30 and more open weekly hours)
14.2. Number of part-time places (defined as below 30 open weekly hours)
15. Average number of hours open per day
[...]
16. Average number of days open per week
[...]
17. Average number of weeks open per year
[...]
18. Time when available
[During typical care centre or school hours only]
[Outside typical care centre or school hours school hours² only]
[Full-day]
[Mon-Fri only]
[Weekends only – or at least part of the weekend]
[Mon-Fri plus the weekend or part of weekend]

² Lunchtime is considered as inside school hours.

[During normal term time only – i.e. non-holiday time]

[During holidays only]

[All-year-round]

Additional services

19. Provision of canteen and/or supervision during lunch

[Yes/No]

20. Provision of night care

[Yes/No]

21. Provision of transport facility or supervision during journey to care centre or school³

[Yes/No]

Children enrolled (during the reference week), by age (or by smallest age division possible if data on individual ages are not available)

22. Total number of children (22.1+22.2)

[...]

22.1. Full-time children (defined as 30 and more hours per week)

22.2. Part-time children (defined as below 30 hours per week)

22.3. Children enrolled with special needs

22.3.1. Children with disabilities (such as blind or deaf children, children with a mental disability and multiple disabilities)

22.3.2. Children with difficulties arising from socio-economic factors, including culture and language

22.3.3. Children with learning difficulties which cannot be classified in one of the above categories

Characteristics of centre-based and organised family carers

23. Total number of staff with care responsibilities (i.e. managers, supervisors, childcare workers and teachers)

[...]

24. Number of staff with care responsibilities (i.e. managers, supervisors, childcare workers and teachers) with higher education or equivalent educational qualification (i.e. ISCED level 5 or 6)

[...]

25. Staff turnover (defined as the number employed for less than a year relative to the total number employed)

[...]

26. Typical (approximate) gross hourly earnings of staff primarily responsible for children

[EUR]

³ Including walking to school; in the UK, for example, the Walking Train picks up children on the way and walk them to school supervised by an adult.

12. LIST OF VARIABLES ON USE OF CHILDCARE

Information to be collected from the parent who has main responsibility for the child (parent is defined to include parents living inside the household as well as foster parents, guardians of the child or partners living in the household).

Questions 1 to 10 are asked for each child aged 0 to 12

1. Date of birth of child

Use of childcare

2. Child receives childcare or pre-school education during the reference week
[Yes/No]
3. Child attends compulsory school
[Yes/No]
4. Average number of weekly hours at compulsory school
[...]
5. Child has lunch at school
[Yes/No]
6. Type of childcare and/or early education used
[Name/Category]

For each type of childcare or early education

7. Average number of hours per week
[...]
8. Whether child has lunch at childcare provider
[Yes/No]

Cost of childcare

9. Fee paid to provider for childcare
[Yes/No]
10. Amount per week paid to provider for:
 - 10.1. childcare [EUR]
 - 10.2. ancillary costs (meals, transport, heating, etc.) [EUR]

Questions 11 to 24 are asked at the household level for all children and all types of arrangements taken together)

11. Satisfaction with overall organisation of caring arrangements
[Very satisfied]
[Fairly satisfied]
[Fairly unsatisfied]
[Very unsatisfied]
12. If 'fairly unsatisfied' or 'very unsatisfied', reasons for not changing caring arrangements
[Most preferred arrangements are not available or too difficult to reach]
[Most preferred arrangements have unsuitable hours]
[Most preferred arrangements are too expensive]
[Most preferred arrangements are of insufficient quality]

13. Other times when you would like to be able to use childcare facilities
 - [Earlier in the mornings and/or later in the evenings]
 - [Lunchtime]
 - [Weekends]
 - [Open (or open longer) during holiday time]
 - [Other]

14. Parents take children to and/or from childcare and early education provider
 - [Yes, both ways]
 - [Yes, one way, other way arranged by care provider or local authority]
 - [Yes, one way, other way arranged by others]
 - [No, both ways arranged by care provider or local authority]
 - [No, both ways arranged by others]
 - [No, care provider lives in the household/comes to the household]

15. Typical time spent daily by parents to and from childcare and early education provider which is additional to the time normally spent travelling to and from work
 - [<30 minutes]
 - [30-60 minutes]
 - [>60 minutes]

16. Main means of transport used
 - [by foot]
 - [by private transport – e.g. bicycle, car, etc.]
 - [by public transport]
 - [combination of two or more]

17. Total monthly household cost of childcare
 - [EUR]

18. To what extent childcare (total cost, i.e. fees and ancillary costs) is a financial burden
 - [a very heavy burden]
 - [a fairly heavy burden]
 - [a reasonably affordable burden]
 - [not a burden at all]

19. Reasons for not using childcare
 - [Preference for having child cared for by parents]
 - [Maternity leave or parental leave of respondent/partner]
 - [No need to use because of short/flexible working hours of respondent/partner]
 - [No need to use because respondent/partner cannot find a job]
 - [No childcare places available or too difficult to reach]
 - [Cannot afford it]
 - [Hours when service is available are not suitable/flexible enough]
 - [Standard of care provided is not sufficient]
 - [Special needs of child not catered for]
 - [Other]

20. Primary arrangement when child is sick or when usual arrangement breaks down at short notice
 - [Usual arrangements]

- [Parents take care of child]
- [Have access to a special sickness or emergency scheme]
- [Use a child minder]
- [Domestic staff, nanny, baby sitter takes care of child]
- [Grandparents or other adults take care of child]

21. How easy or difficult is it to make alternative arrangements
 - [Very easy]
 - [Fairly easy]
 - [Fairly difficult]
 - [Very difficult]
22. Childcare arrangements during holidays. Most frequently used arrangement(s) (maximum of two)
 - [use the same or nearly the same arrangements as during term time]
 - [parents take holidays or time off to take care of child]
 - [use special centre-based childcare arrangements provided specifically for holidays]
 - [use childminder]
 - [use domestic staff, nanny, baby sitter]
 - [grandparents, other relatives, friends neighbours look after child]
23. Number of hours of childcare per week used during main holiday period
[...]
24. How easy or difficult to make holiday arrangements?
 - [Very easy]
 - [Fairly easy]
 - [Fairly difficult]
 - [Very difficult]

If it is decided to collect statistics on childcare as part of an existing survey, it is likely that information on the households characteristics will be available from other parts of the survey. If, however, a *ad hoc* survey is launched, it would be desirable to add at least a minimum set of questions on basic household and other characteristics, in particular:

1. Type of household (i.e. one person with one child or more, couple with one child or more, three or more adults plus one or more children)
2. Number of adults (15 and over), children aged 0-12 and children aged 13-14 in household
3. Education attainment of parents (by ISCED 97 level)
4. Employment status of parents (self-employed/employee/unemployed/inactive)
5. Average usual number of hours per week worked by parents if employed
6. Monthly net household income (approximate)

13. INDICATOR ON CHILDCARE AND DATA FOR THE INDICATOR

The indicator used to measure compliance of Member States with the Employment Guidelines in respect of the objective of ensuring adequate availability of childcare across the EU (the specific objectives agreed at the Barcelona Council were to provide childcare for at least 90% of children between 3 and mandatory school age and for at least 33% of children under 3 by 2010) is currently defined as follows:

Children cared for (other than by the family) as a proportion of all children of the same age group. Breakdown by: before entry into the non-compulsory pre-school system (during the day) in the non-compulsory or equivalent pre-school system (outside pre-school hours) and in compulsory primary education (outside school hours).

If the indicator is to provide a measure of the extent of care available to enable parents to work, it would seem more meaningful, in view of the considerations above, to include in the indicator all types of services for children of pre-school age, irrespective of whether these are “pre-school” in a narrow sense or are essentially equivalent to “pre-school”.

On the other hand, once children reach compulsory education age, the distinction between care and education becomes clearer and it can reasonably be assumed that all children of this age attend school during school hours and during term time. The main concern for this group is to have an indicator of the services available to look after children outside school hours.

It is proposed, therefore, that the indicator includes all services available, both under the education and social welfare system, for all children up to compulsory school age (typically those aged up to 6, though this differs in some countries) both within and outside “pre-school hours”, and services provided outside school hours only (whether in the social welfare or the education system) for children of compulsory school age (which is from 6 in most Member States, but 5 in one and 7 in three others) and up to the age where they no longer need looking after (here taken to be 12, which is the age conventionally used in most Member States).

As mentioned before, there is also a case for setting a minimum participation threshold in order not to count the most casual attendance. Parents use childcare in different ways. Some use it on an occasional basis (e.g. when they go shopping), others regularly; some full-time, others only part-time. Given the objective of this exercise, which is to assess the extent of care available to enable parents to pursue a working career, there is a strong case for excluding occasional use of childcare and to include only those using childcare on a regular basis and for a minimum number of hours per week, considered sufficient to have a job.

What this number of hours should be is opened to debate. Any decision, however, needs to take account of the typical working patterns of women and men in the Union – i.e. their usual hours of work. This gives an indication not only of the hours of childcare which women and men are likely to require in order to be able to work but also of the extent of employment opportunities open to them. (For example, if a very small proportion of people usually work for less than 20 hours a week in a particular country, this suggests not only that the great majority of parents need childcare provision for more than 20 hours a week but equally that there are probably very few jobs available which have working hours of under 20 hours a week.)

The table below shows the actual distribution of women and men aged 20 to 54 (which is likely to cover most parents who potentially need to use childcare) by the average hours usually worked per week in 2002 in EU Member States.

Distribution of women and men in employment by usual number of hours worked per week, 2002

	% total women/men employed															
	BE	DK	DE	EL	ES	FR	IE	IT	LU	NL	AT	PT	FI	SE	UK	EU
20-54 Women																
Under 10 hours	2.2	3.3	5.3	0.2	1.8	2.0	1.9	1.2	1.7	10.1	2.3	0.8	1.4	2.1	4.0	3.4
Under 15 hours	4.9	5.0	11.7	1.1	3.9	3.8	5.2	2.7	3.6	17.6	5.4	1.8	2.7	3.5	8.7	7.0
Under 20 hours	14.1	7.5	18.1	3.1	5.9	8.3	10.4	7.7	6.3	28.8	8.0	3.3	5.2	5.2	17.6	12.7
Under 30 hours	32.7	17.4	34.6	9.8	16.0	22.7	30.0	23.4	27.6	55.5	26.7	9.7	11.3	17.9	35.8	28.2
30 or more hours	67.3	82.6	65.4	90.2	84.0	77.3	70.0	76.6	72.4	44.5	73.3	90.3	88.7	82.1	64.2	71.8
20-54 Men																
Under 10 hours	0.3	1.7	0.8	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.1	2.6	0.3	0.3	0.7	1.1	0.5	0.6
Under 15 hours	0.6	2.8	1.6	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.9	0.1	3.8	1.0	0.5	1.4	1.9	1.2	1.2
Under 20 hours	1.8	3.4	2.4	0.7	0.8	1.7	1.6	2.1	0.2	4.9	1.1	0.9	2.1	2.4	2.3	2.0
Under 30 hours	5.2	5.6	4.2	2.6	2.3	4.5	4.9	4.3	1.8	8.7	2.5	2.4	4.6	5.4	4.7	4.3
30 or more hours	94.8	94.4	95.8	97.4	97.7	95.5	95.1	95.7	98.2	91.3	97.5	97.6	95.4	94.6	95.3	95.7

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey

See Annex 6 for activity and employment rates of men and women in 2001

Overall some 28% of women in the EU usually worked under 30 hours a week in 2002, only 13% worked under 20 hours a week and just 7% worked under 15 hours a week. The great majority of women in this age group in employment in the Union, therefore, had a job which can be regarded as full-time or virtually full-time. At the same time, almost all men in this age group had full-time jobs.

The relative importance of part-time working, however, varies between Member States. It is much more important than elsewhere in the Netherlands, where over half of women in this age group worked under 30 hours a week. But even here, a substantial proportion of women employed part-time worked 20 or more hours a week and under 20% of women in work had jobs of less than 15 hours a week. Part-time working among women is also relatively important in Germany and the UK, in each of which over a third of those aged 20 to 54 were employed under 30 hours a week. Again, however, the relative number working under 20 hours a week was comparatively small – only 18% in both cases.

In other countries, the proportion of women working part-time is smaller, in many cases significantly so. Only in Belgium and Ireland did more than 10% of women in this age group work under 20 hours a week and in Greece, Finland and Sweden, the figure was around 5% or less.

The implication of these working patterns would seem to be that in most parts of the Union, the great majority of childcare places need to be available for 30 hours a week or more to enable parents to pursue working careers. At the same time, in a few countries, a small but significant proportion of women work under 30 hours a week but for 20 hours or more.

The proposed indicator

The indicator would consequently be defined as follows:

Children cared for other than by their parents as a proportion of all children of the same age group, broken down by:

- *children aged under 3 (care and early education during the working day)*
- *children aged 3 to compulsory school age (care and early education during the working day)*
- *children of school-age up to 12 (care outside school hours and during the working day).*

As regards children under 3 and between 3 and compulsory school age, there is a strong case for imposing a minimum number of hours a week which childcare facilities need regularly to provide over the year if they are to give parents a genuine opportunity to pursue a working career. This would make the indicator both more meaningful, given the purpose it is intended to serve, and more comparable between countries. What this minimum should be is open to debate but the two most obvious alternatives are 20 hours a week and 30 hours a week. The latter being perhaps the most valid given the distribution of weekly hours of employment in most EU Member States, but the former would cover part-time working which is both significant and of growing importance across the Union.

Data for the indicator

Hereafter are presented data for Indicators on Childcare – Summary table (version July 2003). Annex 7 gives information on statutory leave arrangements for parents.

Indicators on Childcare – Summary table

Age group	Source	BE (CFr)		BE (CFI)		DK		DE		EL		ES		FR		IE								
		Year		1	Year	1	Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year							
0 to 2	Providers	2001	33%	2	2002	81%	2	2002	58%	1998	7%	1	2000	55%	1	2001-02	10%	1	2000-01	43%	1	1997-98	40%	1
	Users	:	:	:	2002	51%	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	2002	36%	2	:	:	:
	<i>Of which centre-based+childminders</i>	:	:	:	:	32%	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	26%	:	:	:	:
	NAP 2002	2001	24%	3	2001	31%	3	2001	68%	1998	7%	1	2002	27%	2	2000-01	9%	:	:	:	:	:	:	2
3 to compulsory education	Providers	2001	98%	4	2002	100%	:	2002	93%	1	1998	89%	1, 2	:	2001-02	98%	2	2000-01	100%	4	1999-01	66%	3	
	Users	:	:	:	2002	100%	4	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	2002	85%	2	1997	38%	4
	<i>Of which centre-based+childminders</i>	:	:	:	:	100%	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	82%	:	:	35%	:
	NAP 2002	:	:	:	2001	:	3	2001	93%	2	1998	90%	1, 2, 4	:	2000-01	92%	:	3	:	:	:	:	:	2
Compulsory education age up to 12 (12 excluded)	Providers	2001	15%	5	2002	33%	:	2002	75%	3	1998	13%	1, 3	:	2001-02	35%	3	:	:	:	1997	8%	5	
	Users	:	:	:	2002	41%	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	1997	9%	6
	<i>Of which centre-based+childminders</i>	:	:	:	:	21%	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	8%	:	
	NAP 2002	:	:	:	2001	:	3	2001	79%	1, 3	1998	13%	1, 3	:	:	:	:	3	:	:	:	:	:	2

Data adjusted for statutory maternity leave

(assuming that all mothers take maximum leave entitled to them after the birth of child; in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, including parental leave because leave paid at more than 50% of earnings)

Age group 0-2	BE (CFr)	BE (CFI)	DK	DE	EL	ES	FR	IE
Maximum maternity leave after birth	14 weeks	14 weeks	46 weeks	8 weeks	11 weeks	16 weeks	12 weeks	10 weeks
Providers	36%	89%	82%	7%	59%	11%	46%	43%
Users	:	56%	:	:	:	:	39%	:

These figures on indicators should be treated with a great deal of caution, especially as regards their comparability between countries. A number of points should be born in mind when reading the table:

- 1) The percentages shown are estimates based on available data. They therefore may be underestimates if data are not available for some types of arrangement (e.g. in Luxembourg, data on providers are not available for 'Jardins d'enfants, Tagesmutter and garderies' for children aged 3).
- 2) Data are subject to double-counting since children may use more than one type of arrangement. While this problem mainly relates to the data for providers, it can also affect data for users if multiple answers are allowed in the surveys. Some attempt has been made wherever possible to allow for double counting by excluding from the calculation of the indicator arrangements which are clearly overlapping (e.g. in Sweden, where virtually all children aged 6 attend part-time pre-school, part-time care, which is likely to be additional, has been excluded from the indicator).
- 3) The observation method is also likely to affect the figures for providers (e.g. whereas in Italy, data on childcare facilities relate to children enrolled, in Belgium, in both the French and Flemish Communities, data relate to all children who attend the childcare arrangement for at least one day during the year. This means that in Belgium more children who attended facilities only occasionally during the year are likely to be counted than in Italy. It also means that if a child moves during the year from one area to another or from one facility to another, it will be counted more than once).
- 4) The extent of care provided and/or used is a further factor affecting the comparability of the figures. The data available, in fact, are not adjusted in any way to take account of the time-dimension or, in other words, the different amounts of time children may spend in different facilities. (For example, Sweden and the UK show similar figures for the use of "formal" care in the age group 3 to compulsory education. However, while most children in Sweden are cared for on a full-time basis, many children in the UK attend facilities on a part-time basis, perhaps in the mornings or afternoons and in some cases for only one or two days a week.) This point alone is sufficient to make it problematic to compare figures between countries.

All of these factors deserve careful attention before any conclusions can be drawn about the adequacy or otherwise of childcare provision in different Member States.

Indicators on Childcare – Summary table

Age group	Source	IT		LU		NL		AT		PT		FI		SE		UK						
		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year		Year						
0 to 2	Providers	2000-01	6%	:	:	2000	51%	1	2000-01	9%	1	2001	19%	1	2000	21%	1	2001	41%	:		
	Users	1998	61%	1	:	2001	71%	2	:	:	:	:	:	:	2002	42%	:	2002	78%	2		
	<i>Of which centre-based+childminders</i>		9%		:	:	:		:	:	:	:	:	:		41%			44%			
	NAP 2002	1998	58%	2	:	1	2001	25%	3	2000-01	9%	2	:	2	2000	43%	2	2001	77%	1	:	3
3 to compulsory education	Providers	2000-01	93%		2001	44%	2	:	2000-01	81%	3	2001	75%	3	2000	59%	3	2001	90%	2	2002	:
	Users	1998	92%	1	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	2002	84%	3		96%	2		
	<i>Of which centre-based+childminders</i>		83%		:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:		83%			89%			
	NAP 2002	1998	55%	2	:	1	:	:	2000-01	52%	2	:	2	2000	43%	2	2001	77%	1		:	3
Compulsory education age up to 12 (12 excluded)	Providers		:		:	2000	4%	4	2000-01	6%	3		:	2000	4%	4	2001	36%		2002	:	
	Users	1998	47%	1, 3	:	2001	50%	5	:	:	:	:	:		:		2002	42%		81%	2	
	<i>Of which centre-based+childminders</i>		:		:	:	:		:	:	:	:	:		39%			40%				
	NAP 2002	1998	46%	2	:	1	2001	8%	4	2000-01	3%	2	:	2	2000	10%	5	2001	42%	4		:

Data adjusted for statutory maternity leave

(assuming that all mothers take maximum leave entitled to them after the birth of child; in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, including parental leave because leave paid at more than 50% of earnings)

Age group 0-2	IT	LU	NL	AT	PT	FI	SE	UK
Maximum maternity leave after birth	5 months	8 weeks	12 weeks	8 weeks	2 months	38.5 weeks	1 year	6 weeks
Providers	7%	:	55%	9%	20%	28%	61%	:
Users	71%	:	77%	:	:	:	64%	81%

Indicators on Childcare - Notes

Indicators are calculated in relation to demographic statistics at 1st January, except where otherwise stated

Belgium (French Community)

- 1) Population for the French Community was estimated by including 85% of the population of the Brussels Region
- 2) This figure may be overestimated since the calculation is based on the number of children present at least one day during the year. On the other hand, children using facilities not subsidised by the ONE (such as independent childminders or *halte-garderies*) are not included here because data are not available. This figure therefore only refers to children in crèches, day nurseries, communal childcare centres, supervised childminders as well as those in pre-school
- 3) Only the rate for the age group 0-2 is provided
- 4) Data only include pre-school (full-time, academic year 2001-2002). Facilities open during holidays are not included here
- 5) Data only include out-of-school services. Data on holiday centres are excluded

Belgium (Flemish Community)

- 1) Population figures for the Flemish Community provided by Kind en Gezin
- 2) This figure may be overestimated since it refers to children who attend at least one day in a calendar year. Therefore, the same place may be used by different children, or a child can move between facilities in the course of the year
- 3) Only the rate for the age group 0-2 is provided
- 4) All children attend pre-school. Excluding pre-school, the figure is estimated at 51%

Denmark

- 1) The figure refers to the age group 3-6 and includes 6-year-olds in pre-school class; the figure for the 3-5 age group is 92%
- 2) The figure refers to children aged 3-5
- 3) This figure refers to out-of-school care only; however, 96.7% of 6-year-olds attend part-time pre-school class

Germany

- 1) Figures refer to places
- 2) Refers to age group 3-5½
- 3) Refers to age group 6-9
- 4) The rate for children (rather than places) for the year 2000 is 72%

Greece

- 1) Breakdown by age not available; includes all children in day care and early education; the figure excluding early education is 28%
- 2) No coverage indicator is given in the NAP; the figure shown here relates to the total number of children (under 6) covered, ie 162,008 and excludes kindergartens

Spain

- 1) Data refer to children in "Educación preescolar"
- 2) Data refer to children in "Educación infantil" (full-time)
- 3) Data refer to school-going children using ancillary services (transport, canteen, before school hours services). There is a possibility of double counting since a child can use more than one service

France

- 1) This figure corresponds to the number of children attending crèches and pre-school as well as those cared for by independent childminders ("assistantes maternelles") and "employés à domicile". Children in half-nurseries are not included here since this service is likely to be complementary to the other facilities
- 2) Data on users come from the first results of the INSEE-DREES-CNAF survey undertaken in May 2002. Data refer to the main facility used by children under 7 during the reference working week (Wednesday excluded)
- 3) No data provided in the NAP
- 4) Includes data on pre-school only (full-time)

Ireland

- 1) Data refer to the number of children cared for in nurseries (1998), by childminders (estimated data for children under 4 in 1997) and in infant classes (academic year 2000-2001)
- 2) No data provided in the NAP
- 3) Data refer to the number of children in pre-school playgroups, Naionraí and Traveller pre-school (1999) as well as Early Start Programme and Infant classes (academic year 2000-2001). These should all be considered as part-time data
- 4) Data come from the Survey of Childcare arrangements (1997) and relate to the number of mothers with youngest child under 5 using crèches, nurseries, kindergartens, other pre-school, childminders or paid relatives
- 5) Data refer to the number of school-going children cared for by childminders (estimated data for children between 5 and 9 in 1997)
- 6) Data come from the Survey of Childcare arrangements (1997) and relate to the number of mothers with youngest child between 5 and 9 using childminders or paid relatives

Italy

- 1) Population figures here come from the survey; the indicator may be underestimated because it excludes children over 2 who may still attend crèches and children over 5 who may still attend pre-school
- 2) The rates refer to children cared for at least some times per week. It excludes centre-based care; the figure for the last age group is a weighted average of the original figures given in the NAP, i.e. 49.7% for the age group 6-10 and 37.2% for the age group 11-13
- 3) The figure excludes all centre-based care

Luxembourg

- 1) No data provided in the NAP
- 2) Data refer to the number of children aged 3 attending preschool (3 full-days a week and 2 half-days a week). Pre-school is compulsory from age 4

Netherlands

- 1) Refers to children under 4; half-day care and host families are not included
- 2) Refers to children under 4
- 3) Organised provision for children under 3
- 4) Refers to children aged 4-12; includes outside school care only
- 5) Refers to children aged 4-12

Austria

- 1) Includes Kindergartens and day care centres only
- 2) Figures here are weighted averages of the original figures in the NAP. Original figures, which include all day-care facilities, are as follows: 0-1: 0.3%; 1-2: 6.1%; 2-3: 16.3%; 3-4: 57.9%; 4-5: 86.4%; 5-6: 90.1%; 6-7: 11.8%; 7-8: 8.7%; 8-9: 6.5%; 9-10: 2.6%; 10-11: 1.3%
- 3) Includes Kindergartens, day care centres and out-of-school care only

Portugal

- 1) Data refer to children cared for in crèches, family crèches and by nannies (amas)
- 2) No data provided in the NAP
- 3) Data refer to children cared for in part-time pre-school (Jardins de infância and Itinerant child education), crèches familiares as well as by nannies (amas)

Finland

- 1) Includes both full-time and part-time care (fulltime accounts for around 90% of total day care)
- 2) The figure is for the age group 0-5
- 3) Refers to children aged 3 to 6. Around 91% of 6-year-olds are enrolled in pre-school class; in order to reduce the extent of double counting, the numerator is made of full-time day care for children aged 3-5, and part-time pre-school class for children aged 6
- 4) The figure relates to part-time day care only; data on out-of-school care are not available
- 5) The figure relates to 7-year-olds only and it is not specified what is included

Sweden

- 1) The figure is for the age group 1-5
- 2) Refers to children aged 3 to 6. Around 93% of 6-year-olds are enrolled in pre-school class; in order to reduce the extent of double counting, the numerator is made of full-time day care for children aged 3-5, and part-time pre-school class for children aged 6
- 3) Pre-school class is not included in the Users' survey
- 4) This figure is a weighted average of the original figures shown in the NAP, i.e. 68% for the age group 6-9 and 8% for the age group 10-12

UK

- 1) Population data are demographic statistics at 1st January 2001 (latest data available); the breakdown by region (England and Wales) is estimated by Eurostat
- 2) To remove double counting all those who use both centre-based and grandparents have been exclusively entered as using centre-based care. 'Grandparents + other adults' is given as those reporting 'only use of this type of care'
- 3) No figures provided

For more detailed notes, see also country tables

Users' surveys

Belgium – French Community: No users' survey; one is planned for 2004, covering both regulated and non-regulated arrangements (to be conducted every 2 years)

Belgium – Flemish Community: Kind en Oezin carries out a survey every two years on the use of child care for children under the age of 3. In 1999, a large-scale survey was conducted on the use by parents of child-minding for children aged up to 12

Denmark: No users' survey

Germany: Data from users are collected through the German Social Economic Panel (SOEP), a wide-ranging representative longitudinal study of private households. Because of the very high standards for lawful data protection in Germany, SOEP data are provided to universities and research centers (shipping and handling fees are charged \$125) and the signature of a contract with DIW is required.

Data were not made available for this project

Greece: No users' survey

Spain: No users' survey

France: A pilot household survey on childcare services was jointly undertaken in May 2002 by the INSEE, DREES and CNAF ("Les Modes d'accueil et de garde des jeunes enfants"). This is a one-off survey, but a similar one will probably be undertaken in 2005.

Two other annual surveys cover the demand for childcare. One is undertaken since the beginning of the 90s by the CREDOC (Research Centre for the Observation of Living Conditions) for the CNAF survey on "Conditions de vie et aspiration des Français", the other was carried out by the INSEE between 1996 and 1999

Ireland: A one-off national household survey on childcare arrangements was carried out by the ESRI (Economic and Social Research Institute) in 1997 for the Commission on Family. This is the most comprehensive data source available to measure demand for childcare but it refers to mothers rather than children. Some counties have developed their local household surveys, e.g Waterford county (October 2001) or North and South Meath (December 2000)

Italy: Data on users of childcare services come from the Multipurpose household survey (Indagine multiscopo sulle famiglie) by ISTAT. The module on families and children is carried out every five years. The last survey was carried out in 1998 and will be carried out again in 2003

Luxembourg: No users' survey

Netherlands: Data on the demand side are available from Statistics Netherlands, though not on a regular basis. In 2001 a set of questions on child care was added once only in the Permanent Survey on Life Situation (POLS, Permanent Onderzoek Leefsituatie)

Austria: Variables on the use of childcare are included in the Mikrozensus, a longitudinal random check poll, held four times a year since 1967 by Statistisches Zentralamt (öSTAT). Data on childcare, however, are not published and were not made available for this project

Portugal: No users' survey

Finland: Data on childcare are collected through the LFS. However, since 1999, reporting of these data has no established or regular media or form.

Sweden: A regular survey, Child care investigation, is carried out every three years for children aged 1-5 and 6-12, separately

UK: Surveys on Parents' Demand for Childcare were carried out in England and Wales (in 1999 and an update in 2001) and, separately, in Scotland (in 1999). Childcare variables were also included in the LFS in the last quarter of 2002. Data from the two surveys are not publicly available

Country	Survey	Data made available
BE(Fr)	No	
BE(Fl)	Yes	Yes
DK	No	
DE	Yes	No
EL	No	
ES	No	
FR	Yes	Yes
IE	Yes	Published
IT	Yes	Yes
LU	No	
NL	Yes	Yes
AT	Yes	No
PT	No	
FI	Yes	Yes, but not included
SE	Yes	Yes
UK	Yes	Partially

First reference year of the new Survey on Income and Living Conditions – SILC

BE	2003
DK	2003
DE	2005
EL	2003
ES	2004
FR	2004
IE	2003
IT	2004
LU	2004
NL	2005
AT	2003
PT	2004
FI	2004
SE	2004
UK	2005

14. NATIONAL TABLES

National detailed tables by country are available (version July 2003) at the following address:

http://forum.europa.eu.int/Public/irc/dsis/tus/library?l=development_methodology&vm=detailed&sb=Title

Annex 1 – Inventory of main care and early education provision (prior to compulsory education)

Country	Name of provision	Setting	Ages served	Opening hours	National administrative auspices
<i>BE (Fl)</i>					
	Crèches	Centre	0-3	min 220 days a year; minimum 11 hours between 6.30 and 18.30	Welfare
	Peutertuinen (in french: prégardiennat; no English equivalent)	Centre	1.5-3	min 220 days a year; minimum 11 hours between 6.30 and 18.30	Welfare
	Minicrèches	Centre	0-12	all year; mostly full day	Welfare
	Zelfstandige kinderdagverblijven (independent crèches)	Centre	0-12	all year; full day	Welfare
	Opvanggezinnen aangesloten bij een dienst voor opvanggezinnen (child minders affiliated to a service)	Home	0-12	all year; full day	Welfare
	Zelfstandige opvanggezinnen (independent child minders)	Home	0-12	all year; full day	Welfare
	Initiatieven voor buitenschoolse opvang (Initiatives for outside school care)	Centre	2.5-12	outside school hours, on wednesday afternoon and on school holidays	Welfare
	Buitenschoolse opvanginitiatieven in kinderdagverblijven in aparte lokalen (Out of school care initiatives in crèches)	Centre	2.5 - 12	outside school hours, on wednesday afternoon and on school holidays	Welfare
	Kleuterschool (kindergarten)	Centre	2.5-6	school hours	Education
	Buitenschoolse opvang in en door de school (Out of school care in school organised by the school)	Centre	2.5-12	outside school hours and sometimes also on Wednesday afternoon and on school holidays	Education

BE (Fr)	Crèches	Centre	0-3	10h/day, 5days/week, 220 days/year	Welfare
	Prégardiennat	Centre	18m to 3y	10h/day, 5days/week, 220 days/year	Welfare
	Accueil d'urgence	In existing services	0-3		Welfare
	Accueil flexible	In existing services	0-3; 2.5-12	outside (pre)school hours	Welfare
	Ecole maternelle	School	2.5-5	08.30 to 15.30 Half-day on Wednesday	Education
	Accueil extra-scolaire	Schools, associations	2.5-12	Before/After school, during school holiday	Welfare
	Maison communale d'accueil de l'enfance	Centre	0-6	10h/day, 5days/week, 220 days/year	Welfare
	Gardiennes encadrées	Home	0-6	10h/day, 5days/week, 220 days/year	Welfare
	Gardiennes indépendantes	Home	0-6	Variable	Welfare
	Maisons d'enfants	Centre	0-6	Variable	Welfare
	Centres de vacances	Centre	6-12	Full-day for "Plaines"	Welfare
DK	Crèches (<i>vuggestur</i>)	Centre	0.5-2	Full-time, all year	Welfare
	Kindergartens (<i>børnehaver</i>)	Non-school centre	3-5	Full-time, all year	Welfare
	Age integrated facilities (<i>alderintegrerede institutioner</i>)	Non-school centre	0.5-6 (9/10)	Full-time, all year	Welfare
	After school centres (<i>fritidshjem</i>)	Centre	School age	Outside school hours and during holidays	Welfare
	Childminders (<i>dagpleje</i>)	Home	0-2		Welfare
	Open education facilities/Play centres	Centre	0-6		Welfare
	Pre-school (<i>børnehaverklasse</i>)	School	5/6-7	Part-time	Education
	School leisure time facilities (<i>SFO</i>)	Centre	School age	Outside school hours and during holidays	Education

DE	Day-care centers (<i>Krippe</i>)	Centre	0-3	depend on the law of the 16 Länder (eastern Germany: mostly whole-day, western Germany mostly half-day)	Welfare
	Day-care centers for pre-school children (<i>Kindergarten</i>)	Centre	2.5-6	depend on the law of the 16 Länder (eastern Germany: mostly whole-day, western Germany mostly half-day)	Welfare
	Day-care centers for school-going children (<i>Hort</i>).	Centre	6-10		Welfare/Education
	Pre-school (<i>Vorklassen</i>)	Centre	5		Education
	School kindergarten (<i>Schulkindergärten</i>) – for children not ready to attend primary school	Centre	6		Education
EL	Centres for children 0-6 (<i>Vrefonipiaki stathmi</i>)	Centre	0-6	Full-time, all year	Welfare
	Pre-school (<i>Nipiagogeia</i>)	School	4-6	4 hrs/day, school-term	Education
	After-school centres (<i>Kentra imeras</i>) ⁴	Centre	School-age	Outside school hours	Education
ES	Educación preescolar	Centre/School	0-3	Full-time, all-year	Education
	Escuela infantil	School	3-6	9.00 to 12.00 and 15.00 to 17.00, term time	Education

⁴ Still very uncommon.

FR	Crèches traditionnelles	Centre/Home	0-36 months	Full-day, all-year	Welfare
	Crèches parentales	Centre	0-36 months	Full-day, all-year	Welfare
	Crèches familiales	Home	0-36 months		Welfare
	Assistantes maternelles indépendantes	Home	0-6	Variable	Welfare
	Employés à domicile	Home	0-6	Variable	Welfare
	Halte-garderie	Centre	0-6	Variable (according to local needs)	Welfare
	Jardin d'enfants	Centre	2-6	Full-day, all-year	Welfare
	Ecole maternelle	School	2-6	08.30 to 16.30, open on Saturday morning, closed on Wednesday, term time	Education
	Garderie périscolaire	Centre	2-6	Outside school hours (7.30 to 08.30 and 16.00 to 18.30), not during school holiday	Welfare/Education
	Centres de Loisirs sans Hébergement	Centre	Under/over 6 years	Outside school hours, on Wednesday and school holiday. From 8.00 to 18/19.00	Welfare/Education
IE	Nursery	Centre/ Workplace	3-60 months	Full-day, all-year	Welfare
	Social services nursery	Centre	3-60 months	Full-day, all-year	Welfare
	Childminders	Home	3 months and over		Welfare
	Private playgroups	Home	3-6	2 sessions (3-4 hours each) a day, between 2 and 5 days a week during term time	Welfare
	Community playgroups	Community hall, school	3-6	4-5 sessions a week	Welfare
	Naionrai	Centre	3-5	Sessional services	Welfare
	Pre-school centres	Centre	2-6	2½ hours in the morning or the afternoon during term time	Education
	Early primary education	Centre	4-5	09.00 to 13.00 during term time	Education
	School-age childcare	Nurseries, community playgroups	School-age children	Outside school hours	Welfare

IT	Crèches (<i>Asili nido</i>)	Centre	3m-3 yrs	Part- /Full-time, 10-11 months	Welfare
	Pre-school (<i>Scuola materna</i>)	School	3-6	Part/Full-time, 10 months	Education
	Play centres (<i>spazi giocoli</i>)	Centre	1.5-3	Part-time, 8-9 months (on average)	
	Childminders (<i>educatore familiare</i>)	Home	0-3	Part-time, 10 months	
	Summer centres/camps (<i>centri/ soggiorni estivi</i>)	centre	School-age	1-3 weeks/year	
LU	Crèches	Centre	0-3/4	Full-time, all year round	Welfare
	Family day care (<i>Tagesmutter</i>)	Centre/ Home	0-3 and school-age	Full-time for 0-3s; outside school hours for school-going children	Welfare
	<i>Jardins d'enfants</i>	Centre	2-4	At least four hours a day, all year round	Welfare
	<i>Garderies</i>	Centre	2-10	Occasional care	Welfare
	<i>Foyer de jour</i>	Centre	4-12	Outside school hours and holidays	Welfare
	<i>Foyer de jour porte ouverte</i>	Centre	6-12	Outside school hours and holidays	Welfare
	Pre-school ⁵ – <i>Enseignement pré-scolaire</i>	Centre	3-6	8h00 to 16h00, usually closed on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons	Education
NL	Day care centres	Centre	0-3		
	Pre-school playgroups	Centre	2 and 3		
	Outside school care, for children between 4 up until 12 years old;	Centre	4-12		
	Family day care	Home	0-12		
AT	<i>Kindergärten</i>	Centre	3 to school-age	Variable, part-time or full-time, all year round or seasonal	
	<i>Tagesmütter/väter</i>	Home	1-3 mainly, but also school age		
	<i>Kindergruppen</i>	Centre	1-6	Variable	
	<i>Kinderkrippe</i>	Centre	0-3, up to 6 if in need of special support	Variable	
	<i>Kinderhort</i>	Centre	School-age	Variable	

⁵ Compulsory for those aged 4.

AT (cont'd)	<i>Selbsthilfegruppen</i> (initiatives of fathers and mothers who have similar problems in finding child care)	Home			
	Schools (childcare)	Centre	School-age	Part-time, outside school hours	
PT	Nannies (AMA)	Home	0-3	<i>Full-time, all-year</i>	Welfare
	Crèches	Centre	0-3	Between 4 and 11 hours a day, 5 days a week, all-year	Welfare
	Mini-Crèches	Centre	0-3		Welfare
	Crèches familiar	Home	0-3	Full-time, all-year	Welfare
	Jardin de infância	School	3-5	5-6 hours a day, during term time	Education
	Socio-educational activities (ATL)	Centre	3-5 and school-aged	Outside pre-school hours	Education
	Community and cultural activities	Centre	3-5 (5 yrs in priority)	Part-time	Education
	Itinerant child education	Centre	3-5	Part-time	Education
FI	Day-care centres (<i>Päiväkoti</i>)	Centre	0-7 (7+)	Full-time, all year	Welfare
	Family day care centres (<i>Perhepäiväkoti</i>)	Centre/Home	0-7 (7+)	Full-time, all year	
	Open day-care centres (<i>daghem</i>)	Centre			
	Pre-school (<i>Peruskoulu</i>)	School	6-7	Part-time	Education
SE	Pre-schools (<i>förskola</i>)	Centre	1-6	Full-time, all year	Education
	Family day care (<i>familjedaghem</i>)	Centre	1-6	Full-time, all year	
	Open pre-schools (<i>öppen förskola</i>)	Centre		Part-time	
	Pre-school (<i>Förskoleklass</i>)	School	6	Part-time, term-time	
	Leisure-time centres (<i>fritidshem</i>)	Centre	6-12	Full-time, all year	
	Family day care (<i>familjedaghem</i>)	Centre		Full-time, all year	
	Open leisure-time activities (<i>öppen fritidsverksamhet</i>)	Centre		Full-time, all year	

UK	Nursery	Centre	Under 5	Open all-day (8.30 to 18.00), all-year except during holiday. Part time sessions available (either in the morning or the afternoon)	Welfare
	Nursery class	School	3-4	9.00 to 15.30, part-time places available (session of 2½ hours), closed during school holiday	Education
	Nursery school	School	Under 5	9.00 to 15.30, part-time places available (session of 2½ hours), closed during school holiday	Education
	Childminder	Home	Under 8	Generally from 8.00 to 18.00, flexible hours	Welfare
	Pre-school/Playgroups	Centre	2-5	Sessions of 3 hours, during term time. Sometimes, 2 sessions a day, 5 days a week and sometimes only once or twice a week	Education
	Breakfast clubs	Centre	Generally 5-11	In the morning, before school	Welfare
	After school clubs	Centre	Generally 5-11	In the afternoon, from 15.30 to 18.00	Welfare
	Family centres	Centre	Under 5	All-year except public holiday	Welfare
	Holiday playschemes	Centre	Generally 5-11	Open during school holiday, from 08.30 to 18.00	Welfare
	Special school	Centre	3-18	9.00 to 15.30, 39 weeks in the year	Education
	General hospital schools	Hospital	All year	Flexible	Education
	Non maintained schools	Centre			Education

Annex 2 – Brief overview of childcare and early education systems in Member States

Note: These brief country reports are not intended to provide detailed information on the system in place in each of the Member States, since this was not the objective of the study. Their aim is to present a brief overview of the different systems which can help the understanding and interpretation of the associated data. (A description of the systems was already included in the feasibility report which Eurostat produced in 2000 and a very detailed description of national systems is produced by the OECD in the framework of their *Thematic review of early childhood education and care policy*).

The information is based on national and international sources, including the OECD, Eurydice and The Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth and Family Policies.

Belgium (French Community)

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM AND MEETINGS HELD WITH:

Myriam SOMMER and Anne-Françoise BOUVY (ONE, National office for birth and childhood)

Dominique DELVAUX (Childhood Observatory, Ministry of French Community)

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

The French community authorities are responsible for educational matters.

Children are admitted to compulsory school after the summer holidays of the calendar year in which they reach the age of six. The school year (for both pre-school and compulsory school) generally begins on September 1 and ends on July 1 of the following year.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

Within the French Community, the different childcare provisions are usually classified according to whether they receive subventions from the ONE (National office for birth and childhood) or not. A similar approach is followed here to present the available provisions.

Childcare services subsidised by the ONE

There exist two types of services offered to parents with children under the age of three:

Crèches – They open at least 10 hours a day, 5 days a week, and are managed either by public authority or non-profit making association.

The regional public employment service of Brussels –ORBEM– created a partnership with classic childcare structures to offer a certain number of places (57 in 2001) to jobseekers and unemployed in order to facilitate the take-up of a job or the participation in a training programme. The service, usually combining halte-garderie and crèche, offers a limited number of places on a temporary basis (maximum 3 months).

Préguardiennats (day nursery) – are very much similar to the Crèches except that they only accept children from 18 months and that the ratio nurse:children is slightly less restrictive (1/9 compared to 1/7 in Crèches). Most of them are school-based and focus on disadvantaged families. These facilities were mainly developed in the Brussels region.

Two additional provisions are offered to children under age 6:

Maisons communales d'accueil de l'enfance, or MCAE (communal childcare centre) – These are centres of maximum 24 places (though the subsidy is limited to 12 places). Same opening hours as the crèches. This formula is usually predominant in rural or semi-rural areas.

Accueillantes d'enfants conventionnées (supervised childminders, previously called “Gardiennes encadrées”) – family day carer keeping children at her home, and who is supervised by an autonomous service, a crèche or a MCAE. They are usually open for at least 10 hours a day, 5 days per week.

A maximum of 3 FTE children per carer was allowed until March 2003. The decree of 27.02.03 of the French Community regulating childcare services increased this limit to 4 FTE children since 1 April 2003.

A similar system exists in France with the “crèches familiales”, regrouping around 40 family day carers (“assistantes maternelles”).

Crèches, préguardiennats, MCAE and Maisons d'enfants may sign a collaboration agreement with the ONE and the employers (either public or private), to book a certain number of places (maximum 25% of the overall capacity) for the children of their employees (art.116 of the new decree of the FC on childcare services).

Childcare services not subsidised by the ONE

Both collective and family care for children aged 0 to 6 are also covered by non-subsidised services:

Maisons d'enfants (centres for children) – similar to the subsidised MCAE but with variable opening hours. Most of them are private.

Accueillantes d'enfants (independent childminders, previously called “Gardiennes indépendantes”) – private family day carer keeping maximum 4 children at her home either during the day or the night (flexible opening times). As for the “accueillantes d'enfants conventionnées”, the decree of the French Community increased the limit from 3 to 4 children since 1 April 2003.

Haltes-garderies (nurseries) – services occasionally available for children aged between 0 and 6. Their opening hours vary. There exists no specific regulation. The distinction with “Maisons d'enfants” is sometimes very unclear. In some regions, haltes-garderies were progressively transformed into Maisons d'enfants.

Other services

Additional types of provisions were developed in the latest years, trying to match the increasing and heterogeneous demand:

Accueil flexible (flexible services) – childcare grafted on classic childcare structures for children aged between 0 and 3 or on out-of-school care for those aged between 2½ and 12 years. Care is usually available

before 7h00 in the morning and after 6h00 in the evening, every working day and during the weekends as well. No data available on children attending this service.

Accueil extra-scolaire (out-of-school services) – childcare arrangement for school-going children (2½-12) before and after school as well as during school holidays. The main facility in terms of the number of children is the nursery school (“garderie d’école”). But other types of facilities are also included here like out-of-school care managed either by communes or associations, as well as “écoles de devoirs” (where children are supervised to prepare their homework after school).

Plaines de vacances (holiday centres) – centres open all day during school holidays. Half of the children are under 7 years old.

Pre-school

Children can attend pre-school from 2½ up to the age of 5. Registration is possible throughout the academic year. As in primary school, classes are held from Monday to Friday (except Wednesday afternoon). Generally, school lasts from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 1.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. A supervision is usually proposed during lunch time.

FUNDING

Subsidies granted by the ONE to both collective and individual facilities generally deal with the costs (100% of the wages and social contributions) related to the minimum required staff, representing between 50 and 60% of the total costs.

All ONE-subsidised childcare arrangements ask income-related fees to parents using their services. These fees cover about 17% of the costs in the French community. Independent facilities can fix their own prices.

Childcare expenses for children under age 3 with working parents and in certified care may be deducted from taxable net income

(see http://minfin.fgov.be/portail1/fr/brochure/pdf/garde_enfants_fr_sec.pdf for further details).

The government is envisaging to extend these fiscal measures to childcare arrangements for children aged between 3 and 6, but no decision has been adopted yet.

When 2 children of the same household are simultaneously cared for in a certified childcare facility, parental contribution is reduced to 70% for each child (see art.153 of the new decree of the FC on childcare services). Parental participation is also reduced to 70% for each child belonging to a household with at least 3 children. Disabled children represent 2 units when calculating the number of children in the household.

Access to pre-school is free.

STAFFING

Nursery nurses working in crèches, day nurseries and communal childcare centres (MCAE) are paid much less than a pre-school teacher (around half).

Pre-school teachers’ salary was recently upgraded and is now equivalent to that of primary-school teachers. A further alignment, planned for September 2005, will increase their income to reach the level of the lower secondary-school teachers’ remuneration.

Training programmes are organised since 2000 (and even before for the crèches employees). They have been improved since then and are now available to all childcare services staff (both subsidised and not) taking care of children from 0 to 12:

<http://www.ministre-enfance.be/enfance/pr-formation.htm>

From now on, the ONE will be in charge of these continuing training programmes and will revise them every three years. The Institut des Classes Moyennes also organises training for childminders and personnel from the “maisons d’enfants” on Saturdays.

RECENT CHANGES / REFORMS

A recent Decree of the French Community Commission regulating childcare services was recently adopted (27 February 2003) and will enter into force in July 2003. This legal text first defines the different regulated childcare facilities, specifies the agreement conditions (minimum and maximum capacities, personnel (child-staff ratio, training), medical provisions...), the agreement proceedings, the conditions to receive ONE subsidies as well as parents’ financial participation.

The “Plan Cigogne” was simultaneously launched by the Minister for Childhood in order to increase childcare places for children under 3 (the objective being fixed at 10,000 additional places before 2010). This plan is based on three important pillars:

- to improve the status of the family day carer (“accueillantes d’enfants”), who can now care for 4 children at a time instead of 3 as required by the previous regulation

[3,800 additional places planned]

- to promote the partnership with enterprises, which need to be supported to invest in childcare structures (crèches, MCAE...)

[6,300 additional places planned]

- to implement parental crèches (like in France) managed by a group of parents (maximum capacity per unit: 14 places)

[140 additional places planned].

(see http://www.leligueur.be/ll/ll_article_view.asp?retour=acc&key=6581 for further details).

DATA SOURCES

Providers

Most of the data reported in the country-table is extracted from the ONE report. The data mainly refer to the number of places. Since the 2001 report, the ONE has introduced a provisional concept: the number of children that have attended subsidised services at least one day during the year. As for non-subsidised facilities, statistics on the number of children will be obtained from parents’ childcare tax declarations and should be available for 2002 data (4 sub-regions out of 6). Data should be available for the entire French Community for 2003. Though this method is not perfect (some parents do not declare their childcare expenses, others may introduce twice the same demand ...), it is the only way to measure the number of children in non-subsidised services.

Data published in the ONE report refer to global data (i.e. both public and private), the breakdown being only available between subsidised and non-subsidised services.

In the subsidised system, files with subvention requests from the providers are treated quarterly whereas for the non-subsidised system, data are provided by province once a year (situation at end-December). The data are usually available around May-June.

Part-time and full-time data: it would be possible to obtain data on the number of children attending subsidised childcare services on a FT or PT basis from the general data on parents' financial contribution. This however requires a great workload, and the data are not available for the time being.

Total number of children in the French Community: it is estimated that there are around 50,000 births every year in the FC (49,520 in 2000) : total births in Brussels are counted at 80%.

In order to determine childcare needs before entry to pre-school, the ONE multiplies this number by 2½ (legal pre-school age). A coverage rate is then calculated, on the basis of the number of places available. The calculation of this coverage rate is however actually discussed in order to make it more comparable with European norms.

A "commune-based" questionnaire was prepared in December 2001 by the Observatory of Childhood and Youth (Observatoire de l'enfance et de la jeunesse) to set up a database on out-of-school care for children between 2½ and 12 years old. The survey is limited to the French Community.

Several questions were asked: Is the service subsidised? What is its capacity? Are there special conditions of access? What are the opening hours? Is there a canteen? Number of children enrolled? Number of personnel? Training? Working status? What are the costs for the parents? Transport in hours/minutes? etc.

http://www.cfwb.be/oejaj/etat_des_lieux/page_etat_lieux.htm

→ The first results of this study were made public on beginning of April 2003:

http://www.cfwb.be/oejaj/actu/cont_actu_obs.htm

The French Community Commission (COCOF) has also developed a CD ROM in January 2001, presenting childcare provisions (for children under 12) in each of the 19 communes of Brussels. The first part presents demographic and socio-economic backgrounds per commune: number of Belgian and foreign children, household structure, parents' level of education, average income per inhabitant, unemployment rate, % active women etc.

The second part focuses on available childcare services: estimated childcare needs in each commune for different age groups (0-2, 3-5 and 6-11), number of children enrolled in pre-school and primary school, number of places offered by type of childcare arrangement (end of 1998), coverage of childcare needs, average fees paid by parents in services subsidised by ONE.

Users

A one-off survey was undertaken on informal childcare by grand-parents at the beginning of the 1990s.

A survey was also handled in 1999 by the Observatoire de l'Enfance (COCOF) and the ONE on the users of crèches, préguardiennats and maisons d'enfants in the region of Brussels (See results on: http://www.grandirabruelles.be/Publications/GAB/gab6/7_11/Intro.htm).

The new management contract of the ONE plans the creation of a User Survey for 2004, covering both regulated and non-regulated arrangements (to be conducted every 2 years). This survey will focus on the situation of each child (relative importance of grandparents in childcare arrangements, needs and satisfaction of users...). A centralised management of all childcare demands will also be implemented for 2005.

Belgium (Flemish Community)

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM AND MEETINGS HELD WITH:

Bea Buysse (Kind en Gezin)

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

The Flemish Constitution determines that everybody has a right to education. There is also compulsory education. This starts at the first of September of the year in which a child becomes six years old and has a duration of 12 full school years. The Flemish Constitution also determines that the access to education is free until the end of the compulsory education (at the age of 18). The access to the Flemish kindergarten is also free, however this is not a part of the compulsory education. The education system is divided in normal and special education. The normal nursery class is accessible for children of the ages 2.5 to 6. The normal primary education is meant for children of the ages 6 to 12 and comprises six continuing years of education. The special primary education is meant for children, who need special help whether temporarily or permanently (physical or mental disability, serious behavioural or emotional problems or serious learning problems). The special primary education has a duration of 7 years.

OVERVIEW OF CHILD CARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Flemish child-minding facilities can be categorised in two groups. The first category covers the group of facilities, which are accredited by Kind en Gezin. Kind en Gezin is an organisation which doesn't organise child care, but which supports and stimulates child care in Flanders. It offers help to the child care facilities and accomplishes inspections. The second category covers the facilities, which are registered with Kind en Gezin, but which are not accredited by this organisation. Most facilities in this second category do have a certificate of inspection, which guarantees that the family or nursery meets certain minimum conditions, such as safety, sufficient living and play space, standards of care, hygiene and an appropriate educational approach.

Child-minding facilities accredited by Kind en Gezin

- Accredited and certified day nurseries: there are two types, which offer an equivalent service. Crèches are for children aged 0 to 3 years old. They have a minimum capacity of 23 places. Kindergartens are for children aged between 18 months and 3 years old. They have a minimum capacity of 20 places. Care is provided by qualified care workers, such as nursery nurses, nursery teachers or educators.
- Outside school services provided by day nurseries: Some of the day nurseries have an additional offer of outside school care for children up to the age of 12.
- Initiatives for outside school services: these initiatives are meant for primary schoolchildren. They offer care for hours before and after school, for the Wednesday afternoons and for school holidays.
- Accredited and certified host families: host families affiliated to a service offer family-based care for at least 10 hours a day and can take no more than 8 children (own children included) at any one time.

Child-minding facilities registered, but not accredited by Kind en Gezin

- Mini-crèches: these are small-scale independent care facilities. Children will be cared for in groups. The smallest crèches can take up to 8 children and the largest can take up to 22 children. There are a limited number of care workers.
- Certified and non-certified day nurseries: they can offer care for pre-school and schoolchildren.
- Certified and non-certified host families: they can offer family-based care for pre-school and schoolchildren.

FUNDING

Accredited and certified day nurseries and outside school care in day nurseries receive approximately 25% of their income from parental payments and approximately 75% of their income is subsidised by Kind en Gezin. Accredited and certified host families receive approximately 75% of their income from parental payments and approximately 25% of their income is subsidised by Kind en Gezin.

Initiatives for outside school care receive most of their income from parental payments. There is also a possibility of subsidising by Kind en Gezin in the future. Finally the Fonds voor Collectieve Uitrustingen en Diensten (FCUD) arranges the subsidising of the co-ordinator and a part of the running costs.

The most important sources of income of the private sector (minicrèches, private day nurseries and private host families) is received through parental payments. Some provinces and counties grant allowances for training and infrastructure. Since 2001 this sector is partly financed by the Flemish government.

QUALITY

Kind en Gezin is responsible for the quality control of child care. As above-mentioned there are two types of child care. First there is child care accredited by Kind en Gezin. This kind of care suffices the quality criteria formulated by Kind en Gezin regarding the buildings, the interior, staff and the way of working. The accredited institutions are annually controlled by a civil worker for inspections of Kind en Gezin.

Second there is child care not accredited by Kind en Gezin. This type of child care is however registered with this organisation and has a certificate of inspection. This means that when child care with a certificate of inspection is chosen, there is an assurance that there are inspections to guarantee that the child will be cared for in a safe and didactically developed environment. Private child care institutions are in principle annually controlled by a civil worker for inspections and private host families are biannually controlled by a civil worker for inspections.

Kind en Gezin continuously develops a system of quality, in which training, a quality helpdesk, high level of communication, (self)evaluation instruments and the stimulation of a solid financial and general management add to the overall quality.

The number of complaints regarding the service in child care slightly rises, but stays relatively minimal.

RECENT CHANGES/REFORM

The Council of Kind en Gezin has approved the policy plan for child care of minister Vogels in 2000. It has been translated in a strategic plan for the period of 2001-2004. The aims of the plan can be divided in 4 main themes:

- further extension of child care;
- working for a better quality of child care;
- conducting a better way of communication;
- the positioning of child care within education support

For all themes, aims will be stated in clearly defined projects.

DATA SOURCES

Providers

Besides the support and stimulation in child care which Kind en Gezin provides in Flanders, it also provides data on child care. Every year this organisation publishes an annual report about their own organisation Kind en Gezin. Also, every year it publishes an annual report about child care. This report contains information on variables like:

- a description of the child care facilities;
- the number of facilities;
- the number of places in child care;
- the developments in the numbers of host families;
- the number of enrolled children;
- the number of days child care is used;
- a description of the target groups;
- a financial analysis;
- the quality of child care;
- the policy of child care.

The latest annual report on child care available on the internet is of the year 2001.

Users

Kind en Gezin also has data on the demand side of child care, though not on a regular basis. In 1999 research is being done by the Higher Institute for Labour (HIVA), Catholic University of Leuven. The aim of the study, commissioned by Kind en Gezin, from HIVA was to organise a large-scale survey of a representative group of parents with young children in Flanders into their use of child-minding and the background to this. The study was to cover both pre-school and schoolchildren. In addition to an analysis of about 2000 'standard' Flemish families, use of child-minding by certain specific groups was also investigated. These were: families with a disabled child, ethnic minority families, disadvantaged families, one-parent families and families where the mother is unemployed. The research contains information on variables like:

- use of child-minding;

- types of child-minding;
- choice of child-minding;
- evaluation of child-minding;
- child-minding in specific circumstances (illness, difficult times, more than one child);
- child-minding for specific groups.

Kind en Gezin regularly organises a survey regarding the use of child care only for children under the age of 3 years, whereas the above-mentioned research contains information about the use of child care for children until the age of 12. After a cycle of annual surveys from 1988 until 1991, the frequency of research was lowered to a biannual survey. In 1999 the content of questioning differed and a larger scale survey regarding the use of child care was accomplished by HIVA. In the fall of 2001 the regular survey was accomplished. It contains information about the use of child care, the different facilities, the intensity of use, the contribution of parents, the care in case of illness and child care for special occasions.

Also, Kind en Gezin accomplished a research into outside school care in the fall of 2002. The research contains information on variables like:

- use of child-minding;
- types of child-minding;
- price of child-minding.

Denmark

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Steffen Hougaard, Statistics Denmark

Tine Rostgaard, Socialforskningsinstitut (SFI)(Danish National Institut of Social Research)

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Compulsory education starts in August of the calendar year the child has its 7th birthday (roughly therefore half of children 6½ when they begin school) and lasts 9 years (at the request of the parents, and if he/she is considered able to follow the instruction, a child may be admitted before age 7. The municipal Folkeskole caters for about 88% of all pupils of compulsory school age, the remaining attending private tuition. Schools are usually open between 8 and 3 p.m. for 200 days a year. The one-year pre-school class (*børnehaveklasse*), although not compulsory, is part of the *folkeskole*.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

Childcare facilities are targeted to children below compulsory school age, i.e. children aged 0-5/6 years and are offered under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Ministry of Education is responsible for the pre-school class (offered under the act on primary and lower secondary education – The Folkeskole Act) as well as for the training and education of child and youth educators – *pædagoger* – and school teachers).

The different arrangements established under the Social Services Act can take the form of:

- **daginstitutioner** (day-care facilities)
 - **vuggestuer** (crèches) for children aged 6 months to 3 years
 - **børnehaver** (kindergartens) for children aged 3-5
 - **aldersintegrerede institutioner** (age-integrated facilities) for children aged 6 months to 6 years - possibly up to 9/10 years
 - **fritidshjem** (after-school centres) for children of school age.
 - **dagpleje** (childminder schemes) where childminders look after a small group of children, normally in private homes (in most cases the childminder's own home).

The **Børnehaveklasse** (pre-school class), under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, is the optional one-year pre-school class for children from the age of 5/6. It is part of the basic school system and although not compulsory, about 98% of all children attend. The weekly minimum number of lessons in the pre-school class is 20 lessons divided on 3-4 hours a day, 5 days a week.

Schools can provide school-based leisure time facilities (**SFO**) for play and other activities to children enrolled in the school outside normal school hours.

FUNDING

About 70% of all day-care facilities in Denmark are municipal (*kommunale daginstitutioner*). However, the privately owned institutions are financed exactly as municipally owned ones and therefore considered as public. Independent day-care facilities are independent legal entities (*puljeordninger*) often run by group of parents which in order to be established must receive the agreements with the local authority (there are currently 200 of these). Local authorities may give (there is no obligation) financial support.

Local authorities pay the cost of operating day-care facilities and schools in the Folkeskole system. The cost is funded on the basis of taxation, government grants to the local authorities and parent contributions. Parents' fees can be reduced by local authorities for lower income families and other conditions, including for siblings using childcare facilities (e.g. if a family has one child using the crèche and one using the kindergarten, the fee for kindergarten – the cheapest of the two – is reduced).

Local authorities may provide grants to reduce parent contributions. Since 1998, under the free-choice scheme local authorities can give grants to parent who opt for private childcare for children aged 24 weeks to pre-school class. Parents must make an agreement with the private childminder or private facility themselves and the agreement must be approved by the local authority. Grants are not given to parents who look after their children themselves.

Access to municipal pre-school (*børnehaveklasse*) is free.

STAFFING

There are two types of staff in day care facilities: child and youth educators (*pædagoger*) and nursery and childcare assistants (*pædagogmedhjælpere*). The former qualify as *pædagoger* after completion of a study programme of 3½ years. No formal education requirements apply to nursery and childcare assistants, although various courses are available to them at adult vocational training centres. The staff in pre-school classes (*børnehaveklasser*) are also qualified educators.

REFORMS/ RECENT CHANGES

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DATA SOURCES

Providers

Data come from the Social Resource Statistics at Statistics Denmark. Data are available on the Internet at www.statistikbanken.dk / “Sociale forhold, sundhed og retsvæsen” / “Sociale ressourcer” /, only in Danish.

Statistics Denmark collects information on childcare every year in two ways: forms and edp-reports. A form is completed each year by each individual childcare service, which makes it possible to describe the infrastructure of services, the workforce and the children attending the services. Information is collected on characteristics, type of owner, running specification, weekly opening hours, number of children enrolled full-time and part-time, age distribution, payments, number of full-time and part-time staff and total number of working hours per week. The forms are distributed to all the institutions according to a register, updated by the local authority every year. The local authority sends one copy of the filled forms to Statistics Denmark.

For most local authorities there is a common register of day care institutions and family day care (edp-register). Statistics Denmark receives data on tape from this register. These provide individual data including information on the personal number of the child, the enrolment of the child and personal number of the paying mother, father or guardian. These reports comprise about 85% of all children under 6 years in day care and institutions.

Places are no longer collected because of low quality in the IT-reports. However, since most children attend on a full-time basis, it can be assumed that each place is taken by one child.

The level of double-counting is relatively low, since children are only counted in the facility where they spent the highest number of hours (i.e. if a school-child spends half an hour in the morning in a SFO facility before school hours and then spend the whole afternoon in another SFO, he/she will only be counted in the afternoon).

Users

No users' surveys are carried out.

Germany

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Compulsory schooling starts on 1 August for all children having reached their sixth birthday date between 30 June and 30 September (depending on the Länder). All children who have their sixth birthday after the statutory qualifying date (between 30 June and 30 September) in the second half of the year up to 31 December may be permitted to start school early on their parents' application. The Länder can also make provision for the possibility of starting school during the course of the school year. The recommendations of the Ministries of Education (*Empfehlungen zum Schulanfang*) aim, in part, to reduce high deferment rates and to encourage parents to send their children to school early.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

One can best classify public day-care centers by the age group of the children they care for. There are:

- **Krippe** – Day-care centers for infants aged 0-3
- **Kindergarten** – Day-care centers for pre-school children aged 3-6
- **Hort** – Day-care centers for (primary) school-age children aged 6-10.

A specific feature of the German situation refers to the large regional disparities. Especially the differences between eastern and western Germany make it necessary to provide a regional breakdown by the former territory of the Federal Republic of Germany and the new Länder and Berlin-East.

FUNDING

Analyses of the German day-care system are normally carried out on the state level (*bundesländer*). It is the local communities, however, that are responsible for financing and providing public day care. Regional variations in supply reflect the fact that the actual planning of the number of slots to be provided takes place at the community level.

The SOEP provides data on the average monthly fees for formal public day care.

Either the municipality itself provides day-care slots, or it allocates subsidies to non-profit organizations, which in turn provide day-care facilities. Admission policies and fees (*Elternbeiträge*) do not differ substantially between the latter and public day-care centers. In both, subsidies cover up to 90 percent of the operating costs, and the costs of care to parents are relatively low, particularly since day-care fees should be charged according to the household income of the parents.

QUALITY AND STAFFING

Information on the quality of German childcare is hard to obtain as national statistics are lacking. A review of existing literature reveals though that the German day-care system in general is characterized by a high level of quality regulation.

RECENT CHANGES/ REFORMS

Care services, especially child care, is Länder responsibility- the Federal law gives children over the age of 3 the right to a place in a kindergarten –whether this is part-time (which is the case in most Länder), includes meals, etc. and the price to be paid by the parents is decided by the Länder. The idea of Minister Bergmann to invest Federal money into child care instead of increasing child allowances failed. There was considerable resistance among the Länder but among the political parties as well. The argument is that giving money to parents allows them ‘free choice’ whereas the support of child care facilities sets wrong priorities. Nevertheless, there is a lively debate on child care, women’s propensity to have children and the difficulties to combine work and family with a pro-natalist background. The actual debate is more engaged than in the last ten years.

DATA SOURCES

Providers

Statistics are available for the number of childcare slot on a national level (differentiated for East and West Germany) and on a regional (*bundesländer*) level. The statistics stem from an article though and are not available on a yearly or other time basis.

Users

Besides the supply of slots, information is also available on the use of slots from a demand side, household perspective. These data stem from the German Social Economic Panel (SOEP). The SOEP is a wide-ranging representative longitudinal study of private households. The Panel was started in 1984. The SOEP provides data on the organisation of childcare beyond formal care, which also include relatives and friends. The part of the questionnaire of the SIPP that is related to child care is attached as appendix.

Because of the very high standards for lawful data protection in the Germany, SOEP data are provided to universities and research centers (shipping and handling fees are charged \$125) and the signature of a contract with DIW is required.

Appendix: Questionnaire SOEP

Do children who were born in 1986 or later live in your household?

Yes

No

In what year were these children born?

What of the following institutions do these children currently attend?

Nursery school, Kindergarten

Babysitter, "Tagesmutter"

Elementary school ("Grundschule inkl. Förderstufe")

General secondary school ("Hauptschule")

Intermediate school ("Realschule")

Upper secondary school ("Gymnasium")

Comprehensive school ("Gesamtschule")

Full-time professional school ("Berufsschule")

Other type of school

Doesn't attend any of these institutions

Who pays for this school or institution?

A public institution, e.g. city-run kindergarten, city-run school

A private non-profit making parent initiative

Church or other common use facility or school a company-run facility, e.g. company kindergarten

A private-commercial facility, such as a private kindergarten/ nursery or private school

Do these children attend these schools or institutions mostly?

Mornings

Afternoons

All day

Can you fully, partly or not at all rely on the hours of care being kept?

Fully rely

Partly rely

Cannot rely

If you want, does the facility provide the child with lunch?

Yes

No

Is attendance of this facility or school free of charge or do you have to pay a fixed sum, i.e. day-nursery fees, kindergarten contribution or tuition fees?

Attendance is free of charge

Pay fixed sum (per month EURO)

Are there additionally other persons outside of the household who regularly watch or take care of your children?

Yes, relatives

Yes, friends / neighbours

Yes, paid babysitters

No

Greece

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Haris Symenidou, EKKE (National Centre for Social Research)

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Compulsory education begins at age 6 with primary school with a duration of six years. Children usually attend either in morning or in afternoon for 25 to 29 hours a week, according to their age. Since 1997, full-day primary schools have been established which give priority access to children of working parents.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

There are two systems of publicly-funded early childhood education and care systems for children under age 6 – social welfare and education – and they overlap for children aged 3½ to 6 years.

The Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Interior share administrative responsibility for the care services, which are operated under the responsibility of local authorities. Free and voluntary pre-school programs are provided, within the education system, to children aged 3½ to 6.

Coverage is estimated at 4-5% for the under 3s and 65-70% for the 3½-6 year olds, largely in part-day programs. (Private facilities accounted for some 2% of children aged 8 months-5 ½ years.)

There are three main categories of childcare and early education facilities:

- **Vrefonipiaki stathmi**, under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Welfare, usually open between 7 am and 4 pm, divided between:
 - crèches for children aged 8 months to 2 ½ years
 - nursery schools for children aged 2 ½ - 5 ½ years
 - day-care centres for children aged 8 months to 5 ½ years
- **Nipiagogeia** (kindergartens) for children aged 4-5 ½ years, which is part of the education system, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and usually open for 3½ hours a day.
- **Kentra imeras** (after-school centres), for school-age children outside regular school hours, but provision is very limited.

Under a 1992 Law (2082/92), firms which employ more than 300 staff have the obligation to set up and run day-care centres for their employees' children. However, since the number of Greek firms employing more than 300 people is very small, this measure is not considered as an important one (there is no data on the number of children covered).

FUNDING

Care and early education arrangements are primarily financed by the State. Local authorities, who have responsibility for operating the facilities, charge income-related fees.

STAFFING

Kindergartens teachers, like primary school teachers, must complete a 4-year course of study at University level.

RECENT CHANGES / REFORMS

At the beginning of the 1997-98 school year, in implementation of a 1997 Law (2525/97), 160 all-day kindergartens were opened on a trial basis with an extended timetable, engaging the children in creative activities (at least eight hours per day). In the school year 1998-1999, this pilot program, i.e. all-day public kindergartens, was expanded to include 350 kindergartens. This number was doubled for the school year 1999-2000 within the context of the goal for all kindergartens to operate all day.

DATA SOURCES

The availability of data is very poor. While some data exist on pre-schools in the education statistics, no consolidated data seem to exist on childcare arrangements. This is partly due to the many instances involved, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Commerce (for private facilities). No users' surveys are carried out.

Some useful statistics are available from research carried out by the National Centre for Social Research, although it is not clear whether these can be easily be updated for Eurostat. Data on the number of facilities childcare facilities were collected as part of the three Fertility Studies conducted by the Centre in 1983-1985, in 1997 and in 1999. Statistics on the regular use of childcare arrangements (both formal and informal) were also published in Symeonidou, H., Mitsopoulos, G.P. & Vezyrgianni, K. (2001). *The Impact of Policies on the Division of Paid and Unpaid Labour in Families*. European Network on Policies and the Division of Unpaid and Paid Work.

Spain

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Jésús IBA•EZ (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports)

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Since the Organic Act on the Quality of Education (LOCE) of December 2002, "Educación Infantil" is reduced to one cycle, from 3 to 6 years of age. The previous level for those aged under 3, is now called "Educación Preescolar".

Compulsory education starts at the age of 6 with primary school and last for six years. Children usually attend from 9h to 12h and from 15h to 17h.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

The system of childcare arrangements in Spain is relatively simple:

Educación preescolar (pre -school 0-3) – in the mid-90s, the educational authorities were given the responsibility for childcare services for those aged under 3. The objective was not only on education but also on the reconciliation of family and professional lives. Almost all provision for this age group is managed by regional and local authorities, however some of them are private.

“Educación preescolar” also covers non pre-school services, usually open for a minimum of seven hours a day (all year long) and which care for children while their parents are at work. These are for instance childcare centres like the “Centros de Educación infantil” (previously called Guarderías Infantiles Laborales) which are provided by local corporations or non-profit making organisations; or “Atención a la primera infancia”, which is also managed by local corporations and focuses more on disadvantaged areas.

Educación infantil (pre-school 3-6) – pre -school generally located in primary schools. Same hours as compulsory schools. They can either be public or private.

Servicios complementarios – Educación primaria (ancillary services) – services generally offered to compulsory school-going children and which include transport services to and from school, school meals as well as before/after school facilities.

FUNDING

Parents with children under 3 benefit from significant tax reductions for their childcare costs. The amount of their contribution is proportional to their income as well as the number of children they have.

STAFFING

According to the Organic Act on the Quality of Education (LOCE) of December 2002, the Maestro certificate is needed to teach in pre-school (3-6) as well as in primary school, whereas professionals with proper qualifications can teach in pre-school for those under age 3.

RECENT CHANGES / REFORMS

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DATA SOURCES

The Ministry of Education publishes data on compulsory school as well as pre-school in an annual report ("Estadísticas de la Educación en España ").

No users' surveys are carried out.

France

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Dauphinelle Clément and Danièle Boyer (CNAF: National Family Allowance Funds)

Marie Ruault (DREES: Research, Evaluation and Statistics Department of the Health Ministry)

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Children reaching the age of six during the calendar year have to attend compulsory education in September of that year.

Pre-elementary schooling is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and is open to children aged 2 at the beginning of the school year or who reach that age between the start of the school year and end-December. The majority of the children however start school at the age of 3. As compulsory education, pre-school is free.

Schools are usually open between 8h30 and 16h30, 34 weeks per year.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

There exists several types of crèches for children aged under 3:

Crèches collectives (collective crèches) – childcare services open on a regular basis, all year long and usually on a full day. They are open to a large range of persons: working parents (either FT or PT) and those participating to a training program or looking for a job.

2/3 of publicly funded crèches are managed by local authorities and the rest by private organisations.

Etablissement d'accueil collectif à gestion parentale (parental crèches, previously called “Crèches parentales”) – childcare centres managed by an association of parents. They are also open on a full day, all year long. Each parent usually works half a day per week in the crèche.

Service d'accueil familial (family crèches, previously called “Crèches familiales”) – organised family day care regrouping 40 family carers (“assistantes maternelles”), employed by a municipality, an administration or an association and supervised by a nursery nurse. Parents pay the required fees to the crèche and not to the carer. The care is provided at the carer's home, with a maximum of 3 children.

Crèches d'entreprise (company crèches) – some companies do provide services similar to collective crèches for the children of their employees.

The following services are available for children up to 6:

Haltes-garderies (nurseries) – childcare facility available during the day for children under 6, but mainly used for children under 3. They usually offer occasional services, but can also be open on a regular part-time basis. Some of them are also available for children going to pre-school outside the school hours. Half of them are managed by local authorities (the remaining half by private organisations).

Assistantes maternelles (childminder) – independent family carers taking care of maximum 3 children at her home during flexible opening hours. They have to obtain an agreement (usually for 5 years) delivered by the General Council in order to take care of children. The difference with family crèches is that childminders are directly employed by the parents and they are not supervised. Parents receive a financial help called AFEAMA (see details below).

Allocation de garde d'enfants à domicile, AGED (domestic staff allowance) – working parents hiring an employee to take care of their children (usually more than one) at home receive financial support from public authorities (see details below).

Additional facilities are also available for children of (pre)school-age:

Ecole maternelle (pre-school) – pre-primary school begins at age 2. It is open from 8h30 to 16h30 (as primary school), and is usually open on Saturdays morning and closed whole day on Wednesdays. Almost 100% of children aged between 3 and 4 attend pre-school.

Jardins d'enfants (kindergartens) – from the age of 2 up to 6. These centres are open full day, all year round. 80% of them are private. They become more and more marginal.

Garderies périscolaires (out-of-school nurseries) – service available outside school hours (before/after school) for children aged 2 to 6 and attending pre-school.

Centres de Loisirs Sans Hébergement, CLSH (leisure centres) – these centres are open on Wednesdays and during school holidays for school-going children (pre-primary and primary).

Out-of-school nurseries, CLSH and independent childminders were identified as additional arrangements, complementary to the main services (crèches, pre-school, nurseries and kindergartens).

Institutions called “Etablissements multi-accueil” are increasingly spreading all over the country, associating different types of provisions within the same structure. They propose for instance a collective crèche gathered with a halt-nursery.

FUNDING

Financial help is provided to parents to support the costs of their childcare arrangements. Two types of support are available when individualised childcare is used: allowances paid to hire an approved family carer (AFEAMA – *aide à la famille pour l'emploi d'une assistante maternelle*), or to employ someone taking care of the children at home (AGED – *allocation de garde d'enfant à domicile*). Parents can also chose to stop working during a certain time to care for their children, in which case, they receive a parental education allowance (APE – *allocation parentale d'éducation*).

AFEAMA⁶ – this allowance exists since January 1991 and is available for parents having recourse to an independent childminder (“assistante maternelle”) to keep their children (under 6 years old). It covers 100% of the social contributions linked to the recruitment, part of the wage as well as a tax reduction (maximum

⁶ “Les bénéficiaires de l’APE, l’AGED et de l’AFEAMA”, Etudes et Résultats N°217, February 2003

575€/year). In 2001, 574.133 families benefited from this aid, representing an annual cost of 1.8 billions € for the CAF⁷.

AGED – implemented in April 1987, it supports 50% (75% when the household income is below a certain threshold) of the social contributions due for the hiring of the employee. Parents also benefit from important tax reductions (maximum 5.000€/year). In 2001, 56.447 families benefited from this aid, representing an annual cost of 130 millions € for the CAF.

APE – created in January 1985, it allows parents to stop working or work part-time when they have their second child (adoption is also taken into account). The allowance is accorded for a maximum of 3 years. In 2001, 506.185 families benefited from this aid, representing an annual cost of 2.64 billions € for the CAF.

The unique allowance called “Prestation d’accueil du jeune enfant” (PAJE) and regrouping the actual different childcare allowances was presented at the National Family Conference on 29 April 2003⁸ and will be implemented in January 2004.

This new allowance is composed of a basic amount plus a free-choice complement. The basic allowance (160€/month provided that the household income is less than 5 times the minimum wage, i.e. around 4.500€) is a child allowance paid to the parents until the child reaches age 3. The complement then allows low and middle-income households to use the childcare arrangement of their choice. Within the current system, these families cannot afford services of an independent childminder, or a domestic carer. Parents earning the minimum income would pay today 28% of this income to hire an independent childminder, whereas with the complement offered by the PAJE, this share would be reduced to 12% (which is similar to the cost paid for a crèche, around 11%). The amount of the financial help is also more important for families who hire an employee to take care of their children, especially for low and middle-income families. As for those wishing to stop working to care for their young children, they can already benefit from the allowance as of their first child (the current APE is only available from the second child).

Local authorities (at the communal and departmental levels), the Family Allowance Funds (CAF) and parental fees are the main sources of finance for childcare services. It is in parental crèches that family contributions were the most important in 1999⁹ (around 35%), whereas the shared financed by the CAF is the highest in collective crèches (31%). Local authorities are the major source of funding (over 50%) in out-of-school nurseries and halt-nurseries.

QUALITY AND STAFFING

A diploma of nursery nurse (nurse or midwife diploma plus one additional year of studies) is required to be primarily responsible of children in collective and parental crèches. No formal education requirements apply to work as a childminder (either in family crèches or as an independent) or in out-of-school nurseries. The formers however have to achieve compulsory training provided by the General Council. Pre-school teachers must have a first degree or any of the French diplomas on the list of requisite qualifications or diplomas.

⁷ Family Allowance Funds (Caisse d’allocations familiales)

⁸ www.famille.gouv.fr

⁹ Le fichier des Equipements Sociaux, Résultats 1999, CNAF, Décembre 2002

RECENT CHANGES / REFORMS

A single allowance (“Prestation d’accueil du jeune enfant”) will replace the current childcare allowances (AFEAMA, AGED, APE) from January 2004. See section on the funding of the services for further details.

The National Family Conference (April 2003) also launched a plan for the creation of 20,000 additional places in crèches . The improvement of the childminders status is also planned: they will be able to take care of more children: 3 FTE places instead of 3 children, and a creation of a continuing vocational training funds is foreseen.

DATA SOURCES

Providers

Data on providers both come from the National Family Allowance Funds (CNAF) and the DREES (Research, Evaluation and Statistics Department of the Health Ministry).

Data are not collected according to the age of the child, but only by broad age groups (0-6). Data collected by the CNAF for year t are usually available in July t+1, and are published in a small leaflet (“L’accueil du jeune enfant”).

Users

A pilot household survey on childcare services was jointly undertaken in May 2002 by the INSEE, DREES and CNAF (“Les Modes d’accueil et de garde des jeunes enfants”).

This survey is based on a sample of households taken from the housing survey of the INSEE (those living with at least one child under 7). 3.300 households were interviewed on their childcare arrangements, considering the most representative week of the year. This is a one-off survey, but a similar one will probably be undertaken in 2005 to analyse and assess the effects of new allowance (PAJE) that will be implemented in 2004.

Very first results are available at: <http://www.sante.gouv.fr/drees/etude-resultat/er-pdf/er235.pdf>

The survey is divided in 5 parts:

the first part analyses the household structure and provides individual information on the children (sex, age, school or non school-going) and the parents (marital status, level of education, training...)

the second bit deals with the working status and conditions of both parents (including parental leave, number of hours/days worked per week...)

the third part focuses on “family proximity”

the fourth part consists of a very detailed uninterrupted calendar representing childcare arrangements during a representative week for each child, from the moment the child wakes up until he goes to bed. There is also a section on the costs of childcare at the household level (amount paid and allowances received). Moreover, a question is also asked on childcare arrangements during school holidays and in case of unforeseen event (when child is sick or the carer is not available).

The last part of the survey is dedicated to the evaluation of the childcare system used by the parents.

There also exist two annual surveys analysing the demand for childcare. The first one is undertaken since the beginning of the 90s by the CREDOC (Research Centre for the Observation of Living Conditions) for the CNAF survey on the “Living conditions and aspirations” (“Conditions de vie et aspiration des Français”). A section of this survey is dedicated to the preferences of the parents in terms of childcare services.

The second survey was realised by the INSEE between 1996 and 1999 and also gives some information on the use of childcare by parents with young children.

Two surveys will be undertaken in 2004 on parental leave and take-up rates (DREES, CNAF and TARES).

Ireland

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Compulsory school starts at age 6, but almost all children aged 5 and 65% of those aged 4 attend infant classes in primary school (considered as ISCED 0 in the UOE database). Primary schools consist of two kindergarten years (Junior and Senior Infants) for 4 and 5 years old, followed by six year groups.

Primary school day must cover at least 5 hours and 40 minutes per day and 183 days per year.

Ireland has no national system of pre-school education and private provision is normally not subsidised by the Education authorities. In September 1994, the government however launched a pilot project offering pre-schooling to children living in disadvantaged areas.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

Nurseries – full day care provided for children from 3 months up to age 6. These nurseries may be private or public (social services nursery for disadvantaged families). They are usually open on a full-day, all year basis. Many of them organise pre-school sessions for older children aged between 3 and 5 years old.

Childminders – self-employed family carers providing care for non school-going as well as (pre)school-going children. A childminder is allowed to care for up to 6 children of mixed age (included her own).

Playgroups – centres for children aged 3-6 years, usually open part-time. Some playgroups are provided in private houses and open for two sessions (3-4 hours each) a day, between 2 and 5 days a week whereas other are provided in community premises and also open for 4 to 5 sessions a week.

Náíonraí – Irish language playgroups, offering a sessional service to children between 3 and 5.

Pre-school playgroups – most of the pre-school playgroups are private since there exists no national system of pre-school education. They generally accept children from age 2½ until 6. They are usually open from 8h to 18h and children attend sessions of 2½ hours either in the morning or in the afternoon.

Early Start Programme – introduced in 1994, the Early Start is a pre-school education organised by the Ministry for Education and Science. It aims to tackle educational disadvantage by targeting children who are considered to be at risk of not reaching their potential within the education system.

Traveller pre-school – in operation since 1984, these pre-schools for Travellers children are funded by grant-aid from the Department of Education and Science. In addition, the State covers 98% of the tuition and transport costs for a maximum of three hours tuition per day during the regular national school year.

Infant classes – early primary education provided in primary schools for children before compulsory education (at age 6). These classes are divided into two levels: Junior Infants (those aged 4) and Senior Infants (5 years old). Children usually attend in the morning, until 13h30 or 14h30.

Out-of-school care – service providing care for school-age children, outside school hours. These are usually offered in nurseries or community playgroups.

FUNDING

A part of the costs of childcare arrangements are supported by the Local Health Boards whereas early education and pre-school are funded by the national Ministry of Education.

The price of full-day care was estimated to 20% of average earnings in 1998.

STAFFING

Workers in playgroups and Naíonraí must follow a basic training (120 hours) whereas a two-year and three-year post-18 training are respectively required for staff in nurseries' and pre-school, Early Start and Infant classes.

RECENT CHANGES / REFORMS

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DATA SOURCES

Providers

The results and recommendations of the Expert Working Group on Childcare were published in January 1999 in the National Childcare Strategy report. It contains some interesting data on the different types of childcare service provision.

As for the early education system, the Department of Education and Science publishes an annual statistical report presenting inter alia data on the number of pupils by age in the Early Start Programme and in primary school (data are broken down between junior/senior infants and the upper grades).

Users

A national household survey on childcare arrangements was carried out by the ESRI (Economic and Social Research Institute) in 1997 for the Commission on Family. This is the most comprehensive data source available to measure demand for childcare. This survey focuses on childcare services used by parents working full-time during a reference week (during school term). The sample consisted of 1,278 households with children age 12 or under. The results of the survey are presented for two age groups: 0 to 4 years and 5 to 9 years.

Some counties also developed their local household surveys for instance the Waterford county (October 2001) or North and South Meath (December 2000).

Italy

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Isabella MENICHINI, Ministry of Social Affairs, Department for Family Policies

Ermenegildo CICCOTTI, Centro nazionale di documentazione e di analisi per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza (Florence) (no meeting)

Cristina FREGUJA and Elena GRIMACCIA, ISTAT

Maurizio FORTUNATO, Carmen D'EGIDIO, Lucia DE FABRIZIO, and Antonio MARTINO, Mariano FERRAZZANO, Ministry of Education

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Compulsory education starts at the age of 6 with primary school. In order to enrol, children must have reached the age of six at the beginning of the academic year or must do so by 31st December of that year.

The general operation is regulated by the Ministry of Education at the national level, but differences exist between schools as regards the number of pupils, the number of classes and the timetable adopted: 27 or 30 hours per week (*modulo*) or full-time with 40 hours per week (*classe a tempo pieno*).

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

Childcare arrangements fall under the auspices of the Ministry of Welfare (though primary responsibilities is with municipalities). The Ministry of Education has policy responsibility for pre-school, but only around 57% of pre-school are under its direct responsibility (state schools). The other 43% (non-state schools) are operated by the private sector, including religious institutions (around 29%) and by municipalities (14%).

Two are the two traditional facilities:

Asili nido (crèches) – These are aimed at children from 3 months to 3 years. Usually open for 10-11 months a year, for at least 6 hours a day (but up to 11) from Monday to Friday (though some are open on Saturdays) and with a canteen.

Scuola dell'infanzia (pre-school) – Pre-school starts at the age of 3. It is not compulsory but it is the first level of the school system and places are guaranteed to all children. Pre-school is open during normal term-time and is available on a full-time (until 4.30 p.m.) or part-time (until 1 p.m.) basis.

Other typologies (*servizi integrativi*) have developed over the recent past, but they are mostly concentrated in the Northern regions (72%) while they remain very limited in the Centre (22%) and are virtually non-existent in the South.

Spazi gioco (play groups) – Children aged between 18 months and 3 years can attend on a part-time basis for maximum 5 hours a day. No meals are provided.

SERVIZI domiciliari (home-based care) – For children under 3 with qualified personnel at the child's or carer's home (these services are currently almost exclusively located in the Piemonte region and in the provinces of Trento and Bolzano).

Other services are offered during the year outside school hours or during summer holidays, often organised by local authorities (before and after school services, summer centres, summer camps, sport and recreational centres).

FUNDING

Historically, policy for children under compulsory school age has focused on children aged 3-6. The number of public crèches is very limited in relation to the reference population (covering around 6% of children under 3). Most public crèches are under the direct responsibility of Municipalities and are mainly publicly funded. Parents' fees are income-related, with a ceiling of 20% of family income. As regards private services, according to the data collected for the year 2000, 41.6% of private crèches had access to public funds.

Public pre-schools (State and Municipalities) account for 73% of the total pre-schools are public and access to them is free. State and regional funds are also available to confessional pre-schools.

STAFFING

Pre-school teachers are currently paid as primary school teachers and have access to in-service training. Staff in crèches work in much less satisfactory conditions, working longer hours, having more limited access to in-house training and lower salaries. A reform is currently underway (see below).

Although the provision and the quality of childcare and early education differ significantly across the country, many Italian programmes known world-wide for their high quality and innovative approach. The Emilia-Romagna region, for example, and the city of Reggio Emilia in particular, has established an innovative system of infant and toddler care under the auspices of the public education system which has become a world-model.

RECENT CHANGES / REFORMS

A proposal is currently under way to transfer responsibility for the 0-3s from regions and municipalities to the Ministry of Education. The planned reform aims also increasing staff training and skills, such as requiring teachers and co-ordinators to have a university degree and other contact staff to hold a 3-year, tertiary diploma.

DATA SOURCES

Providers

The availability of traditional childcare services (crèches) for children 0-3 had not been measured in a regular way since 1992. An extensive survey was carried out for the reference period of September 2000 by the Centro nazionale di documentazione e di analisi per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza (Istituto degli Innocenti) in Florence on behalf of the Ministry of Social Affairs. This covered both crèches and additional services (*servizi integrativi*). The officials responsible for childcare services in all Italian communes have been interviewed by telephone. Private services have been surveyed only partially because complete lists do not exist.

The variables in the 2000 survey include the number and type of facilities, whether regulated and in receipt of public funding, the number of hours per day, days per week and weeks per year when facilities are open and the number of children enrolled.

It is not yet clear whether the survey is intended to be carried out on a regular basis in the future. At the time of writing this note, the intention is to carry out every year a web-based survey at regional level. The questionnaire will include a common set of questions and a specific set adapted to the region's characteristics. The advantage of a web-based survey is that being relatively less expensive than traditional surveys, it is more likely that it will be carried out on a regular basis. The risk, however, is that, only regions with efficient systems of monitoring services will provide information.

As regards the pre-school (*scuola dell'infanzia*), data are collected every year by the **Ministry of Education**. The last published data (on paper) refer to the school year 1997-98, however, data have been received from the Ministry of Education for the school year 2000-2001.

The survey includes two separate questionnaires, one for State schools and one for all other schools. The latter include other public schools (under the responsibility of local authorities or other public institutions), schools run by religious institutions and private schools. Whereas State schools are surveyed on census basis, for non-State schools questionnaires are sent to each education area manager (*circolo didattico*) and therefore coverage is less complete (coverage is estimated at 70-80% of the total).

The reference period is the beginning of each academic year, therefore September 2000 for the year 2000-2001. The data collection is usually completed in Spring of the following year and data should become available one year after. Priority is given to standard tables. This means that even if data are collected on all variables they are not all treated, corrected and published.

The variables include the number and type of school, the number of children enrolled by age, the hours per week, plus some additional quality indicators.

Users

Data on users of childcare services come from the Multipurpose household survey (*Indagine multiscopo sulle famiglie*) which is carried out by ISTAT.

The objective of this survey is to collect information on the life of individuals and households in Italy. It consists of one general survey and 6 thematic ones. A general survey on the aspects of daily life (*Indagine sugli aspetti della vita quotidiana*) is carried out every year (the reference period is November) delle famiglie. Of the 6 thematic surveys, the one on travel and tourism is carried out every three months, while the other 5 every five year in turn (the reference period is either June or September). The 5 topics covered are: health and use of health services, time-use, safety of citizens, leisure time and culture, and family, social actors, children.

The most relevant survey, for the purpose of this study, is the one on families and children. The last survey was carried out in 1998 and will be carried out again in 2003.

From the questions on children and grandchildren, help given and received, and private services to the family, it is possible to obtain information on informal care, namely:

- whether grand-parents look after their grand-children and in which situation (while parents are at work, occasionally, during the holidays, when child is sick, in emergencies, other)

- whether help has been given and received free of charge in looking after children, by whom and for how many hours over past 12 months
- whether the family make us of a baby-sitter and for how many hours a week.

A separate questionnaire is reserved to children aged 0 to 17. For each child in the household, the survey collects information on the age of the child, whether the child attends the crèche, nursery school or compulsory school (and which type), the number of hours attending (although data collected in 1998 proved to be not reliable), the person who takes the child to and from school, whether the child has lunch at school, the costs, and, if relevant, the reasons for not using formal childcare. For children up to 13, a few questions are also asked on informal care, including whom is the child normally left with when not with parents or at school and how often.

Some information can also be gathered from the Time Use Survey which was carried out in 2002. Form this, data are available on the number of children attending crèches or nursery school, for how many hours a day and days a week and whether the family uses a baby-sitter and for how many hours a week.

No question on childcare is included in the Italian LFS.

Luxembourg

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Claude JANIZZI and Frank MAAS (Ministry for Family Affairs, Social Solidarity and Youth)

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Primary school starts at the age of 6. In order to enrol, children must be above the age of six at 1 September. School is open from 8h to 12h and from 14h to 16h three days a week and only half-day the other three days. Very similar opening times are applied in pre-school and kindergartens.

An optional pre-school year called “éducation précoce” is available for children aged 3. From the age of 4, children must attend two additional compulsory years of pre-school (“Spillschoul”).

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Ministry of Education has the responsibility for pre-school. Many childcare facilities are run by private organisations and have an agreement with the Ministry for Family Affairs and Social Solidarity.

Some childcare services have been implemented exclusively available for children under 3 or 4:

Crèches – available for children under 4 years, and open all year round on a full-day basis.

Crèches d’entreprises (company crèches) – childcare facilities for children up to 4 years old have also been developed in hospitals, public and private companies as well as within European institutions (European Investment Bank for instance).

Jardins d’enfants (kindergartens) – centre-based service open at least four hours a day all year round and available for children aged 2 and 3.

There exist other types of services, which are available for broader age groups:

Tagesmutter (childminder) – family day carer taking care of children aged under 3 (on a full-time basis) and school-going children (outside school hours). They are working either within an organised family day care service or as self-employed.

Garderies (nurseries) – occasional part-time childcare service where children aged between 2 and 10 can be left for a few hours during the day.

Foyer de jour (regular out-of-school centre) – centre-based facility for children aged between 4 and 12, available outside school hours and during holidays. Registration is fixed and is open to all children wherever they live.

Foyer de jour porte ouverte (occasional out-of-school centre) – centre-based service for children living in the residential district and aged between 6-12 years, available outside school hours and during holidays.

Enseignement pré-scolaire (pre -school) – pre -school education available from the age of 3 (“éducation précoce”), and compulsory for children aged 4 and 5 (“spillschoul”). Open from 8h00 to 16h00, usually closed on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

Three additional facilities are available for children of compulsory school age:

Accueil temporaire (outside school hours service) – before and after school service for children aged between 6 and 12.

Aides aux devoirs (homework support) – school-based service available for children in primary education after school hours and which provides some support to the children for their homework.

Service de restauration scolaire (lunch service at school) – school-based service available for children in primary education between 12h and 14h.

FUNDING

Childcare facilities which have signed an agreement with the Ministry for Family Affairs and Social Solidarity benefit from a public funding: the state covers 100% of the debit balance when childcare services are designed for very young children and 50% for services taking care of school-going children outside school hours.

Parents contribution is fixed according to the household income as well as the number of children. Childcare centres which have no agreement with the Ministry for Family Affairs may also receive a state subsidy (for infrastructure and operating costs) and are free to fix their prices.

Tax relief exist for families with children under 14 to support the costs of caring services.

QUALITY AND STAFFING

All childcare structures (both “conventionnés” and “non-conventionnés”) must have the authorisation of the government before opening. The managing unit, the infrastructure (hygiene, security...) and the staff (diploma, child-staff ratio...) are controlled. Once they obtain the agreement, all services are then regularly controlled by officers.

The standard child-staff ratio in childcare centres with agreements with the Ministry for Family Affairs and Social Solidarity is set to one adult for 5 non-walking children or one adult for 8 walking children. The personnel must be qualified either as graduate educators (3 years post-18 training) or educators (3 years post-16 training).

RECENT CHANGES / REFORMS

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DATA SOURCES

Providers

The 2002 annual report of the Ministry for Family Affairs and Social Solidarity contains interesting information on childcare structures which have signed an agreement with the Ministry (“structures d’accueil conventionnées”):

- Number of full-time and part-time staff, rate of turnover
- The cost per place (for children 0-4 and 4-12)

- Number of places and children (PT and FT) enrolled in “structures d’accueil conventionnées” in November 2002
- Number of places and average opening hours in “garderies conventionnées” in 2002
- Data on waiting lists for children 0-2, 2-4 and 4-12
- Data on continuing training.

Users

There exists no household survey dealing with the issue of childcare arrangements.

Netherlands

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Gusta VAN GESSEL-DABEKAUSSEN, Henk-Jan DIRVEN - CBS Netherlands Heerlen

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

In the Netherlands compulsory education starts when children are five years old. The entrance age to education preceding the first level is four. The Netherlands do not have a pre-primary school system (such as Kindergarten).

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

Organised formal child care in the Netherlands is directed at children between 0 and 13 years old. The main forms are:

Day care centres: for children between 0 up until 3 years old.

Outside school care: for children between 4 up until 12 years old.

Hosting family: children between 0 up until 12 years old are taken care of by a host family through the agency of a centre for host family.

There are three ways to get a place in child care:

1. Company place through the employer

Dutch employers are not obliged to provide child care; as a result there are hardly any employers with a child care centre of their own. Employers are also not obliged to contribute in the costs of child care for their employees. Yet, a considerable share does provide financial support. At the moment the share of collective agreements with an arrangement on child care is 77 per cent. Not all arrangements include a financial contribution, the arrangement may for example be restrained to offering help in finding a place in a child care centre. Still, a substantial share of working parents receives financial support from the employer; the amount may vary between organisations/collective agreements.

2. Private place

Private places are paid for by the parents themselves (partly tax deductible).

3. Subsidised place through the municipality

The municipality pays the main share of the child care, parents pay a contribution depending on income and type of care.

Parents without an employer can get - under certain conditions – a contribution for child care. Target groups are lone parents on social welfare, unemployed persons and disabled persons reintegrating in the labour market and newcomers in the Netherlands who are obliged to naturalise.

Between-school-care/staying at school during lunch break

While there is a professional market for child care outside school hours—though the number of places is not sufficient—there is still no (professional) provision of care during the lunch break. The ‘regular’ outside school care is limited to hours before and/or after school; it does not include between school care. Yet, the number of children that stay at school for lunch has increased sharply over the last years. At the moment, 460.000 children stay at (primary) school during lunch break per day, which corresponds to about 30% of all children at primary school (VWS 2002). About 680.000 children stay at school for lunch at least once a week.

According to the Act on Primary Education the management of a school has to offer the opportunity to stay at school under supervision. However, it is not specified who has final responsibility. Moreover, quality of the care and supervision are not specified. This means that most schools do not have professional supervisors during the lunch break; often parents (most often mothers) volunteer. There is little attention to training and/or development of expertise among the supervisors and the pedagogical climate is not guaranteed. Government policy intends to create more professional between-school-care and has subsidised several experiments (VWS, 2002).

Play groups

Play groups have been organised in the Netherlands since the sixties. One of the driving forces behind play groups is the assumption that collective (part-time) child care benefits the development of the child. While day-care centres focus mainly on the care of children, play groups are intended to contribute to the education of the pre-schooler in the age of 2-4 years old. Play groups are always part-time; research shows that 85 percent of the children attend a play group for two daily periods (often two mornings of three hours) per week. The organisation of play groups shows quite some difference. There are independent play groups, or play groups offered by welfare organisations, child care centres and primary schools.

The responsibility for play groups is delegated to municipalities. This implicates that there are no central or standard rules. Most municipalities, however, have laid down three purposes of play groups: to stimulate the general development of a child, to generate easy accessible care and to observe early any developmental problems. About 80% percent of the municipalities monitors the quality in play groups. However, in 33 percent this monitoring is only done in subsidised play groups (De Weerd & Van der Vegt, 2001).

FUNDING / RECENT CHANGES/REFORMS

Formal child care for children between 0 and 12 years old has developed rapidly in the Netherlands the last years. Between 1995 and 2000 the capacity measured in number of full-time places has almost doubled from 65.195 to 124.938. Given this increase, the legal framework became less adequate. Therefore, the government developed a new legal act: Act Basic Facility Child Care (Wet basisvoorziening kinderopvang). If the Parliament agrees with this act, it will come into force January 2005. Central in this act is that parents will receive a subsidy from the government in order to give them more opportunities in choosing child care. In addition, the act should improve accessibility and quality of child care. Child care is important for parents, employers and the state. Therefore, the central idea is these three actors should share the costs. This implies that employers should pay one third of the costs (actually, one sixth, since employers from both parents are involved). However, the act does not oblige employers to contribute to child care.

QUALITY AND STAFFING

The Dutch government wants to guarantee the quality of child care. In the ‘Temporary decree quality rules child care’ minimum requirements have been formulated with respect to the interior hygienic situation and safety of a centre, the influence of group leaders on the policy of the centre and liability and accident insurance. Moreover, standards have been formulated with respect to size of the group of children and number of leaders in relation to the number of children.

Municipalities are responsible for the quality of child care centres and for inspection with regard to compliance. Municipalities have to have their own statute that minimally meets the Temporary decree. Centres have to meet the municipal statute in order to get a permit. In addition, the branch has developed its own quality rules, that go beyond the minimum standards of the governmental decree. When a centre meets these rules it gets a certificate.

DATA SOURCES

Providers

Statistics Netherlands collects data among institutions that provide childcare (Statistics on child care centres; Statistiek Kindercentra). Childcare is defined as: provision of child raising and caring of young children by others than the own parents or carers in a way that is adjusted to duration of a day, the age of the children and the needs of the parents or carers.

The population of Statistics Netherlands consists of all institutions. Addresses are provided by provincial and metropolitan offices on childcare. Unit of observation is the company or association that is signed up at the Chamber of Commerce. This may have one or more establishments.

Statistics Netherlands provides data on number of facilities broken down by forms of work. The forms of work that are distinguished are:

1. whole-day care: the facility is meant for children between 0 up until 3 years old and is, on a continuous basis, 8 hours or more available on work days
2. half- day care: meant for children between 0 up until 3 years old and is per work day more than 4 but less than 8 hours available;
3. outside school care: meant for children between 4 up until 12 years old and is available before and/or after school hours, as well as on Wednesday afternoon and during school holidays;
4. host family: children are taken care of by a host family through the agency of a centre for host family.

These data are available for institutions as well as establishments, with the exception of host family (only data available on number of institutions).

Users

Data on the demand side are available from Statistics Netherlands, though not on a regular basis. In 2001 a set of questions on child care was added once only in the Permanent Survey on Life Situation (POLS, Permanent Onderzoek Leefsituatie). These questions were asked to parents of one or more children younger than 13 years old. Questions on different types of child care were asked for each child in the household (use in number of hours, costs and satisfaction). POLS is a survey among individuals and the results are different

from Statistics on child care centres. Figures from the last data source are lower. One reason is that the data for Statistics on child care are collected only in institutions with a main activity in child care. The data of POLS are re-weighted, but there seems to remain a small difference with statistics on the total population of households with children younger than 13 years old.

Austria

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Inge GROSS, statistic Austria

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Compulsory education covers 9 years and is in force for all children staying in Austria. It starts at the first of September after one has reached the age of 6 years. Generally, compulsory education is being fulfilled in Grundschule for the first 4 years. The following 4 years are spend in Hauptschule. The ninth year is spend in a technological school or spend in a middle or high school.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Austrian child-minding facilities can be categorised in several groups, which will be discussed below.

Kindergärten: This form of child care is meant for children of age 3 to compulsory school age. In almost all municipalities kindergärten can be found. The kindergärten has the task to support and complement the upbringing of children. The children are being educated, raised and looked after by skilled people. For children in the age category of 5 to 6, the kindergarten serves as pre-primary education. A distinction can be made in the following types of kindergärten:

- Public kindergärten: these are publicly established and maintained and are accessible for everyone.
- Private kindergärten: these are all other kindergärten. The admission can be restricted by the organisation.
- Company kindergärten: these exist for the employers of the company and sometimes for children outside the organisation as well.

There are kindergärten for whole-day care and half-day care, as well as whole-year round and seasonal kindergärten. The costs differ between the different Bundesländer.

Tagesmütter/väter: this form of child care is home-based. The tagesmütter needs a licence of a district authority and needs to complete a short training, which will prepare her for this kind of work. Some tagesmütter are registered with an organisation for well being and some are working independently. Most of the children are of the ages 1 to 3 years, but there are older children as well, which use this form of child care as an additional form. The hours of care and costs differ between the different host families.

Kinderguppen: in these groups children of the ages 1 to 6 years are being looked after. This form of care differs a lot between the Bundesländer. There are public and private organisations. The size of the groups is dependent of the age of the children. Also the opening hours and costs differ a lot. Support and responsibility of parents is required.

Kinderkrippe: The kinderkrrippe is child care meant for children of the ages 0 to 3 years. It has the task to support and complement the upbringing of children through supervision and care. This form of child care

does sometimes look after children of the ages 4 to 6 years, who need a lot of care. There are also public and private organisations in this form of child care and therefore the costs and opening hours differ a lot.

Kinderhort: a hort is an organisation, which takes care of schoolchildren for a part of the day at outside-school hours. The children have school obligations and spend their leisure time at a kinderhort. There are public and private organisations and the opening hours and costs therefore differ a lot.

Selbsthilfegruppen: initiatives of like-minded fathers and mothers who have similar problems in finding child care. This form is an alternative to the existing child care facilities and requires a lot of engagement of the parents, as well as a good co-operation between parents, children and carers.

Schools: some schools offer child care for part of the time. This type of care consists of learning and leisure time. Enrolment of children is required.

FUNDING

(<http://www.bmsg.gv.at/bmsg/relaunch/familie/welcome.htm>)

Between 1997 and 2000 € 87,2 million is being ascribed to the support of the extension of child care facilities in whole Austria. Because of the fact that the separate states must double this amount, € 174,4 million is being invested in this period.

The allocation of funds occurred through a commission initially constituted by the secretary of female affairs, the secretary of family affairs, the secretary of finance, representatives of the province which was in charge of the project subject to decision and representatives of the municipalities involved. After the transformation of the government in 2000 the secretary of social affairs and the secretary of finance belonged to the commission.

Because of this enactment 32.188 extra child care places for children of all ages could be created. 11.135 of these offer care for children under the age of 3 and pupils or care in a company kindergarten. Also, extended opening hours in the afternoon and during holidays can be financed, as well as projects for the integration of disabled boys and girls.

This financial support of training and retraining of tagesmüttern/-vätern can improve this form of home-based child care.

QUALITY AND STAFFING

(<http://www.bmsg.gv.at/bmsg/relaunch/familie/welcome.htm>)

The regulation of kindergärten and kinderhorten come under the law and performance certification of the Bundesländer according to the Austrian constitution.

Additionally, the tagesmütter as well as the care for young children is partly being regulated in the law of youth welfare and partly in a special constitution for child care or day care. The result is that there is no general Austrian quality standard.

The terms of approval are, however, regulated in separate state laws, for example the size and furniture in rooms and the qualification of the carers. The practice of a child care facility or the occupation as a tagesmütter/väter generally needs an official approval.

RECENT CHANGES/ REFORMS

(<http://www.bmsg.gv.at/bmsg/relaunch/familie/welcome.htm>)

The number of places in child care has been increased in the last couple of years. In 2001 267.111 children have been looked after in child care facilities. According to the Österreichischen Statistischen Zentralamtes (ÖSTAT) there was a demand for 139.500 supplementary places for children under the age of 14 in 1995. This shortage has been determined with children under the age of 3 and with schoolchildren in the outside school care.

This deficit has clearly been reduced in the last couple of years, because of a collective expansion initiatives of Bund, Ländern und Gemeinden and because of a reduction in the number of births.

DATA SOURCES

Providers

Every year *Statistik Austria* publishes information about the number of children being looked after in kindergärten, kinderkrippen and kinderhorten. This information is also available for the different Bundesländer. Furthermore, *Statistik Austria* gives information about the number of 3-year, 4-year and 5-year old children in child care.

Users

Mikrozensus is a longitudinal random check poll, held four times a year (March, June, September and December) since the fall of 1967. It is held by Statistischen Zentralamt (öSTAT) in Austria. The size of the population is approximately 30.000 households. There is a rotation of the addresses in which an eight of the addresses is being exchanged four times a year. The interviews are face-to-face and contain information about the expenses for houses, population- and family structure, household expenses and unemployment. Variables about child care are also included, like:

- Use of child care;
- Reasons for not using child care;
- Types of child care;
- Frequency of child care use;
- Price of child care.

These data are, however, not published.

Portugal

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Paula AGUIAR and Maria NUNES (Ministry of Education – Basic Education Department)

Isabel VAZ (Ministry of Education – Department of Evaluation, Prospective and Planning, DAPP)

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Enrolment in primary school is compulsory for all children reaching the age of 6 by September 15th. Children usually attend school 25 hours a week, from Monday to Friday. The normal schedule is from 9h to 12h and from 14h to 16h, but a two shift scheme may also apply (children attending either in the morning –from 8h to 13h– or in the afternoon –from 13h to 18h).

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

Three types of childcare arrangements are available to parents with children under age 3. They are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.

Amas (nannies) – independent family worker caring for one or more children (not of her family) at her home, during parents working time. Available all year round, on a full-time basis. They need to have a licence in order to take care of the children.

Crèches – infant-toddler centres open 5 days a week, all year round. The opening hours vary between 4 and 11 hours a day. Some of them have their premises in jardins de infância. Provision may also be offered within private companies.

Crèches familiares (family crèches) – organised family day care service open all year long, and regrouping between 12 and 20 nannies. These crèches mainly receive technical and financial support from the Social Security Regional Centres and private associations like charity association (“Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa”).

Several additional provisions are available for older children and are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education:

Jardims de Infância (kindergartens) – most common pre-school institution for children between 3 and 5 years old, but the priority is given to those aged 5. According to the law, all activities must be education-oriented. Some private companies do also provide such provision.

Itinerant education: pre-school education for children between 3 and 5 years old and living in rural areas where the minimum number of children (15) was not reached to settle a “jardim de infância”. The service is usually open only part-day.

Centro de Animação Infantil e Comunitário, CAIC (children’s community centre) – transitory centre-based programme organised by the Ministry of Education and available in priority for children aged 5 (children aged between 3 and 4 can however also attend) and living in particularly deprived and/or highly populated areas where the access to cultural and educational facilities is difficult.

Actividades de Tempos Livres, ATL (out-of-school activities) – the Ministry of Social Security and Labour may organise and/or subsidise socio-educational activities and care mainly for children between 3 and 5 years old after pre-school hours. This service is also available for those attending primary school.

FUNDING

Public funding for pre-school is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education as well as the Ministry of Social Security and Labour. The amount of the funding varies according to the network type. Hence, the public network is fully funded by the State, whereas 62% of the costs in the private solidarity network is supported by public authorities and the corresponding share represents only 5% in the private network (including private and co-operative units).

Monthly allowances are paid to services to reduce the cost of early childhood care as well as other costs like meals for instance.

STAFFING

Early childhood teachers working in crèches and pre-school must hold a Licenciatura (BA with Honours), and an initial training course is compulsory.

RECENT CHANGES / REFORMS

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DATA SOURCES

Providers

Both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Security and Labour collect some data on early childhood education and care. Data on *amas* and crèches are published by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour in an annual report (“Carta Social”) and are available only for continental Portugal. The Ministry of Education on the other hand publishes each year data on *jardim de infância* in “Statistics of Education”.

Users

There is no survey specifically designed to collect data on childcare at the household level. However, some data are available from European household surveys like ECHP for instance, where it is asked whether children are taken care of, if parents benefit from a childcare subsidy or support from their employers, and if daily activities include unpaid childcare. The Household Budget Survey as well as the Time Use Survey also include a few questions relating to childcare.

Finland

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Hannele Sauli (Statistical Office)

Salla Säkkinen (STAKES)

Kirsi Alila (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Compulsory education is provided by local authorities from the age of seven (provided a certificate states readiness to attend school, the child can start one year earlier). The youngest children attend school for an average of 20 hours a week. Most basic education is provided by municipal comprehensive schools. Private comprehensive schools, which are also connected with local authorities, represent around 1% of total provision.

Local authorities have the obligation to provide also pre-school education but each authority can decide whether pre-school education is organised within the social or education system.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

The Finnish system of early childhood education and care (ECEC) policy may be described with the concept of EduCare, which has been used internationally to describe more extensively the ECEC model of a Nordic welfare state, where care, education and instruction have been combined to form an integrated whole.

Alongside the day-care system, since the mid-1980's, parents can benefit of a child home care allowance, through which they can choose to care for their children themselves or use private day care (as from August 1997, however, the child home care allowance is being granted mainly to parents and there are separate provisions on private child-care allowance).

The main facilities include:

- Municipal day care. Every child under school age has an unconditional *right* to day care provided by the local authority once the mother or father's period of parental allowance comes to an end, irrespective of the parents' financial status or whether or not they are in work. This includes:
 - day-care centres, for children from birth to 6 on a part-time and full-time basis. Although there is no division between nurseries and kindergartens, children are usually grouped according to their age.
 - family day care, traditionally for younger children, is provided in a home-like setting. This can be at the child-care minder's home, the child's home or, in the case of group family care, in premises provided by the municipality.
- Pre-school education. From 1 August 2001 (see also section on recent changes), each child has the right to pre-school education, which generally starts in the year that the child becomes six. The pre-school providers decide on the number of hours of pre-school education but with a minimum of 700 hours a year (i.e. 18 a week) and maximum 5 hours a day.

Local authorities are responsible for arranging the pre-school education, either by the municipality or by private providers, from which the municipality buys the service.

Other arrangements. Several local authorities organise supervised play activities open to everyone in playgrounds and at open day-care centres. Other arrangements are also provided by parishes, including Sunday schools for 3-6 year-olds, pre-school circles for 5-6 year-olds and afternoon activities for school children.

Private care is very modest, accounting for about 5% of day-care services.

FUNDING

Care and early education is almost entirely funded through tax levied by the State and local authorities. While pre-school education is free of charge, income-related fees are charged for day care services. Fees may be adjusted for part-time care and are usually charged for 11 months of the year, which means that the family's month of holiday is free of charge, even if day-care facility is available all-year-round. Parents' fees cover an average of 15% of day care costs.

In addition to municipal care, a number of instruments exist to give financial support to families with young children. Families can therefore choose either public day care or financial support. Parents of children under 3 who take unpaid childcare leave from their work have access to child home care allowance, which is paid by the local authority. The allowance is paid for each child in the family who does not use the municipal day care facility and is payable until the youngest child in the family reaches the age of three. In addition to the basic allowance for each eligible child, families may receive a means-tested supplement.

If one of the two parents takes partial child-care leave reducing the hours work to less than 30 per week, they are entitled to a partial home care allowance to compensate for the loss of income. The two parents cannot take the partial care leave simultaneously. Local authorities may pay private child-care allowance to look after a child under school.

The private childcare allowance is payable after the end of the parental allowance period until the child reaches school age, on condition that no use is made of a municipal facility. The allowance is made of a basic care allowance per each child, plus a supplement according to the size and income of the family.

STAFFING

Staff in day care centres come from diverse educational backgrounds. However, in each day-care centre, at least every third person with care and education responsibilities must have professional qualifications, in terms of a post-secondary level qualification. Other people with care and education duties must have an upper secondary level qualification.

No specific vocational or educational qualifications are required for childminders working in family day care, whose suitability is assessed in terms of their personal qualities and traditional family know-how. However, training courses are available and largely used by childminders in the family day care. Adults already active in the field can demonstrate their knowledge and skills in competence-based tests and thereby gain initial vocational, further vocational or specialist qualifications.

In pre-school education, within the educational sector, teachers are qualified class teachers. For pre-school education provided in a separate pre-school class, the people responsible for instruction include those with a kindergarten teacher's degree or a Bachelor of Education degree.

RECENT CHANGES / REFORMS

The reform of pre-school education for six-year-olds was introduced in 2000 and took effect from 2001. Local authorities have the obligation to provide free-of-charge pre-school education to all six-year-olds. The reform is being implemented in Finland as a 'mixed model', in which the local authorities may decide whether to provide pre-school education within day care or school system. Irrespective of where pre-school education is provided, it has to be organised according to the Act of education and the core curricula for pre-school education. Children attending pre-school education still have a right to day care as a complement to the pre-school education.

COMMENT: Public debates on lowering the starting age of compulsory school are raised every now and then, but they have not lead to any changes or even formal proposals.

DATA SOURCES

Providers

Data on providers come from STAKES, the National research and development centre for welfare and health.

As regards public arrangements, the information is collected yearly from the municipalities as municipally based summary data. The statistics contain information on municipally-funded services, that is, services that the municipality provides itself its inhabitants or purchases from other municipalities, municipal federations, the state or private service providers. Finland has 446 municipalities and the data covers all the municipalities.

Data are collected on the number of children in full-time and part-time care in day care centres and family care, by one-year age groups, numbers of child day care days per year in full-time and part-time day and family care, average number of children in guided play during one day.

STAKES also collects data from private day care providers on the number of children in full-time and part-time day care in day care centres (under 3 years, 3-6 years and 7+), the number of day care days per year and the average number of children in guided play during one day.

However, the data published in the English edition of the Statistical yearbook on Social Welfare and Health Care, published by Stakes, show only the total number of children enrolled in each type care facility, but no breakdown by age is available. The data by age are available, in Finnish, from a data bank of municipal statistics (SOTKA) upheld by STAKES (access is open to all registered users). The figures are also used and published on a national level in different governments' reviews and studies, mostly by the ministry of health and social affairs. Special, tailor-made tabulations are available for those who order them. STAKES may charge the costs of producing the extra tabulations, if they are very time-consuming.

STAKES also collects data from private day care centres on the number of children in full-time and part-time day care in day care centres (under 3 years, 3-6 years and 7+), the number of day care days per year and the average number of children in guided play during one day.

Users

Statistics Finland collects some information about the use of day care in three of its surveys. The Labour Force Survey, the Household Budget Survey and the Income Distribution Survey are interview surveys in

which respondents in child families report about the form and costs of the day care the children in their families receive. All three surveys cover children aged under 9. The LFS includes questions on the type of day care arrangement (including informal care) and the person who primarily looks after the child when at home.

In 1995 - 1998, the LFS included all members of households in the sample. In 1999 – 2002, household design was abandoned and the survey was conducted as a person sample including only persons aged 15-75. Questions about childcare arrangements were addressed to sampled mothers and fathers, but not other household members, which causes some under-coverage. From 2003, all members of the household have been re-introduced to the survey.

After 1998, reporting of these data has no established or regular media or form. According to the information received from a statistician of the LFS team, the data is available for 2001 and available to researchers.

The HBS, the Household Budget Survey, is the main source for statistics on child care costs on the household level every three-to-five years (the pace of the survey varies). The figures are published in print. Moreover, data exist on the household's costs of day care per child from the yearly FIDS-statistics (Income Distribution Survey). Some data from FIDS was published in Children in Finland and they are also available for special researchers in micro-data. As a cost-information source the HBS is more commonly used than the FIDS.

Sweden

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Anna Enstrom Jarleborg, Skolverket

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Compulsory education includes the regular compulsory school, Sami school, special school, and programs for pupils with learning disabilities. The 9-year compulsory school program is for all children between the ages of 7-16 years. Upon the request of the parents, a child may begin school one year earlier, at the age of 6.

The school year normally begins at the end of August and ends at the beginning of June the following year, for a total of around 40 weeks. The regular school week is five days long, Monday through Friday.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

Swedish childcare has the double objective to support and encourage children's development and learning and to make it possible for parents to reconcile parenthood with employment or studies. This approach was officially laid down in the early 1970s with the launching of a large-scale development programme for child care, which since then has been a cornerstone of Swedish family welfare policy. Since 1996, childcare falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

Childcare mainly covers children aged 1 to 12. Very few children below 1 are enrolled in childcare facilities because parents benefit of parental leave. Almost all six-year-olds attend voluntary pre-school classes designed to prepare them for the first grade of compulsory schooling. Children who have yet to start school or pre-school classes for six-year-olds can attend regular pre-schools, family day-care homes and open pre-schools while older children have access to leisure-time centres, family day-care homes and open leisure-time activities.

The main existing arrangements are here below.

Förskola (pre-school, formerly day care centre), offering care and education for pre-school children on a full-time basis (those aged 3-5 are reported in ISCED 0 since there is a curriculum)

Familjedaghem (organised family day care), where municipal childminders in their own home take care of children; they mainly serve children of pre-school age and children of school-age outside school hours. The children are registered and opening hours are varied to fit in with the parents' schedules.

Öppen förskola (open pre-school), available to all pre-school children who are not enrolled in other public childcare arrangements. Children must be accompanied by their parents (for this reason they would be excluded by the European data collection)

Fritidshem (leisure time centres) are open to school children when they are not at school or during holiday times. Open leisure time centres are mainly for children aged 10-12 and do not require children to be enrolled. This form is not much developed and exist in around 27% of municipalities.

Förskolaklass (pre-school class) is a voluntary and free-of-charge school form for all 6-year-olds on a part-time basis.

FUNDING

Child care in Sweden is financed partly by central government grants and partly by tax revenue and parental fees. The government grants are not specifically earmarked for child care but are part of a general-purpose grant. Public funding varies between 75% and 84% for childcare and 100% for the pre-school class.

In 1998, gross costs for child care amounted to 15% of local authorities' total costs. Parents pay a fee but the level of this is determined by the local authority. On average, in 1998 parental fees accounted for just under 17% of the gross cost of childcare.

No fees are charged for the pre-school class for up to 15 hours a week (525 hours per year), which is the minimum number of hours for the pre-school class programme.

Municipalities can grant permission for privately run pre-school classes, which are supervised by the municipality in which they operate.

STAFFING

Staff in child care services are well trained. Virtually all have some form of training for working with children. There are four staff categories - pre-school teachers, recreational instructors, day-care attendants and childminders in family day-care.

Pre-school teachers and recreational instructors undergo a three-year pedagogical training programme at university. As a rule, day-care attendants have upper-secondary qualifications while municipal childminders have often attended training courses organised by the local authority itself.

Over half of all pre-school employees have university degrees in pre-school education while just over 40% of staff are day-care attendants. At leisure-time centres some 70% have degrees in recreational or leisure education or in some other kind of teacher's training, while 20% are day-care attendants.

RECENT CHANGES/REFORMS

In the autumn of 2000, the Parliament passed a decision on the introduction of new child care reforms. These reforms aim at increasing accessibility to pre-school and leisure time centres.

A ceiling was set on 1st January 2002 on the fees payable by parents for pre-school activities as well as care of school-age children.

At pre-school facilities (pre-school and home day-care nursery), the fee charged may be no more than between 1% and 3% of the family's income, and no more than 1-2% in the school-age child care system.

For the municipalities, introduction of the maximum fee will be voluntary. Those municipalities adopting the new system will receive compensation for loss of income and they will also receive funds for the introduction of measures to ensure that there is no drop in overall quality.

Since July 2001, municipalities have had the obligation to offer places at pre-school or in a home day-care nursery not only to children aged 1 to 5 whose parents are employed or studying but also to children whose

parents are unemployed. Since January 2002, the obligation is extended to children whose parents are on parental leave and to a younger sibling.

On 1st January 2003, universal pre-school has been introduced for all four and five-year olds for at least 525 hours per year. Although the provision is mandatory for municipalities, children will be able to participate on a voluntary basis.

DATA SOURCES

Providers

The data on providers come from: Official Statistics of Sweden, National Agency for Education.

Surveys are carried out every year. The reference date is October 15th for children and staff and data are published in March the following year.

Data exist for the number of children enrolled in each of the services listed above, by individual age of the child. Data are not available on the number of places. This information does not seem to be relevant in the Swedish system since municipalities have the obligation to provide places for all children in Förskola (the average waiting time for a place in Förskola is less than 3-4 months). (Children of unemployed have the right to childcare at least 3 hours/day.)

Users

As regards data on users, a Child care investigation is carried out every three years separately for children aged 1-5 (the sample includes 80,000 children) and 6-12 (sample including 11,000 children).

The reference date is 1 – 15 September and data are published in March of the following year. (The latest survey was carried out in 2002.)

Questions are asked for each child and include the age of the child, the number and age of other children in the household, the main occupation and weekly hours of work/study of adults, the type of care arranged and number of hours a week (N.B. for the age group 6-12, the question refers only to time outside school hours), satisfaction with arrangement, desired arrangement, reasons for not using preferred arrangement, the use of municipal open pre-school, and reasons for not using childcare.

UK

COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM:

Stephen COOK, Richard Heyes, Steve HEWITT – Department of Education and Skills

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Compulsory education starts at the age of 5 in England and Wales. Children have access to school from the term following their fifth birthday although the admission varies between local authorities and schools, with some schools offering a single annual admission, and others having three intakes a year. In Scotland, schools have only one intake per year at the beginning of the winter term. Children born between March and August must start school in the year in which they become five. Children born between September and February can either start school at age four or defer entry into primary school by one year. In Northern Ireland the age of compulsory schooling is four, and schools tend to have a single annual intake.

Pre-compulsory education for children aged 3 to 5 year old has been provided until recently at the discretion of the Local Education Authorities (LEA), and so provision was uneven across the UK. Since September 1998, however, universal early education must be provided for all 4 year olds, and targets have been established to increase the provision of part-time early education for all 3 year olds whose parents want it.

OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ARRANGEMENTS

The childcare and early education system in the UK is characterised by a significant diversity and complexity.

Day Nursery: These may be run by local Social Services Departments, by employers (workplace nurseries) or private companies. They provide part time or full day childcare sessions to children from birth to school age 5 years and usually offer an extended day, running from 8.00 am - 6.00 pm (or later). Most operate all year round. The adult:child ratio depends on the age of the child, and varies from 1:2 to 1:6.

Pre-Schools/Playgroups: These are occasional, sessional or all day pre-schools or playgroups who may offer places for children from 2 - 5 years, and may be run by a community or volunteer group, by the parents themselves or by a private, for profit business. Fees are usually charged, with sessions of up to four hours, though some offer all day provision. They are registered and inspected by local Social Services Departments.

Nursery School: They can be state funded schools in their own right, provided by the Local Education Authority, providing early education for children aged 3 - 4 years. They can also be run by private companies or trusts and are financed through fee income and investments. They are regulated and inspected by Social Services Departments. Usually, sessions are offered for 2 to 2.5 hours morning and afternoon during school term times only, although some offer all day sessions. They are staffed by trained nursery teachers and nursery nurses, with an adult:child ratio of 1:10. For state funded schools and 1:8 for privately run ones.

Nursery Class: This is a state funded nursery class which operates as part of a state funded primary or infant school, provided by the Local Education Authority and offering early education for children aged 3 -4 years. Usually sessions are available for 2 to 2.5 hours morning and afternoon during school term times only.

Places are provided free to children and are usually on a part time basis. They are staffed by trained nursery teachers and nursery nurses, with an adult:child ration of 1:13.

Early Years Unit: This is a state funded early years unit, provided by the Local Education Authority, which operates as part of a state funded primary or infant school, providing early education for children aged 3 - 5 years during school term times only. Sessions may be offered on a full or part time basis and are free. They are staffed by trained nursery teachers and nursery nurses, with an adult:child ratio of 1:13.

Reception Class or Class R: This is a state funded Reception class which operates as the first class of a state funded primary, first or infant school which is provided by a Local Education Authority in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Scotland does not have such classes). It offers early education for children aged 4 - 5+ years during the term times only. Full time education places (usually 9 am - 3.30 pm) are provided free to children, running during the three school term times. They are normally staffed by trained teachers and qualified classroom assistants, and with the intention to put in place adult:child ratios of 1:15.

Independent Schools: These are run by private companies or trusts and are financed through fee income and investments. They provide part time or full day educational sessions to children from 3 - 5+ years, during school term times only. They are regulated and inspected to ensure standards. They must register with the DfES and are regulated and inspected by OFSTED.

Before/After School Club: These clubs provide care for children from 3 to 14 years on school premises or on the premises of a privately run day care centre, but outside school hours. They can be run by schools, private or voluntary organisations. Fees are usually charged on an hourly or sessional basis. They are staffed by a range of differently qualified childcare workers.

Holiday Club: This provides care for children from 3 to 14 years on school premises or in a community or day care centre during school holidays. Fees are usually charged and they are staffed by differently qualified childcare workers. They may be run by schools, private or voluntary organisations.

Childminder: Childminders offer childcare sessions, for up to 3 children under 5 years old, including the childminder's own children, within a home based setting, for children from birth on. Parents are usually charged on an hourly basis for the amount of childcare they need. They may offer the service throughout the day and over the whole year. They are registered and inspected by OFSTED.

Nanny/Au Pair: Nannies or au pairs work within a family's home offering full or part time childcare for the children within the family. They may 'live in' or come in on a daily basis. The hours worked and the salary paid are negotiated individually with the child's parents. Some are qualified nursery nurses and some are unqualified. Regulations are currently being developed to cover this form of childcare service.

Parent and Toddler Group: This is an informal group which may be offered within a community centre, a school or a day nursery for children from birth to 5 years. It is staffed by a range of differently qualified childcare workers or volunteers and the parent remains present throughout the session (and therefore outside the scope of this data collection).

Additional arrangements exist for children with special needs, such as:

- Special School, provided by the Local Education Authority for children who have been identified with special needs from 3 - 5+. It is non fee paying and normally be staffed by trained teachers and qualified classroom assistants, with an adult:child ratio of approx. 1:4.

- Opportunity Groups, offered by Local Educational Authorities Social Services Departments and/or Health and offered on free, sessional basis for children who have been identified with special needs, to provide an added support to facilitate their entry into mainstream schooling. They are staffed by teachers and trained assistants, with an adult: child ratio of approx. 1:4.

A small number of integrated early education and childcare centres are developing which offer both childcare and early education within one location. They are often jointly funded and regulated by local Education and Social Service Departments.

- Combined Nursery/Family Centres offer both early education and day-care facilities for children from birth to 5 years. The early education generally operates only during school term times, but the day care continues year round. They may also offer other services for families such as, drop in facilities; adult education and training; advice/counselling; family support.
- Early Excellence Centres offer integrated centre based or networked education and care services for children from birth and their families. A range of provision may be found within the Centres. They would generally provide early education places for 3 - 5s during school terms, with extended day care usually available for children from birth to 5+ years all year round.

FUNDING

The Government has undertaken to provide a free, good quality, part time early education place for every eligible four year old whose parents want it. This part time entitlement is for five two and a half hour sessions per week. Parents may decide not to take up their full entitlement, in which case the place may be funded on a pro-rata basis. For three year olds, the policy does not currently allow universal places. The Government is committed to offering children, particularly those in social need, more early education before they commence compulsory schooling (currently around 33% of all 3-year-olds).

Childcare with few exceptions, is paid for totally by the parents. Access is therefore currently limited significantly by cost and the shortage of quality childcare places available, particularly for babies.

The introduction of the new Working Families Tax Credit and the Disabled Person's Tax Credit from October 1999 marks a significant contribution to the funding of childcare for low income families in the UK. The tax credits are targeted at low and middle income families for childcare for under 8s which is registered under the Children Act, (such as childminders and nurseries), and out of school childcare for the 8's and over, (such as breakfast clubs, after school clubs and holiday play schemes, provided on school premises or by a Local Authority). Other provider organisations may apply to become an accredited organisation and so eligible for the Tax Credit.

STAFFING

The staff who work in early education and childcare services in the UK constitute a diverse and varied group, working in a wide variety of centre based and home based services. According to the (HERA 2 Report (1999), staff range from graduate and post graduate qualified teachers and childcare workers, to unqualified workers, who have had no specialist training for the job. At least half of all UK childcare staff are working without the benefit of specialist training and 1 in 5 have a graduate level qualification.

Childcare staff who do not have to be trained include childminders, some childcare staff in nurseries, some play workers and nannies.

The early education standards and procedures are set by the Department of Education and Skills and inspected by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted¹⁰). Until 2001, day care and childminding were regulated by local authorities which each setting their own criteria and procedures. In May 2001, the DfES published the first National Standards for under eight's day care and childminding and in September 2001, Ofsted became responsible for their registration and inspection.

RECENT CHANGES / REFORMS

In 1998, the Government set the objective to increase accessibility to early education and childcare by the expansion of new early education and childcare places. Providers from the private, voluntary and state sector are involved in the expansion programme. To achieve the projected expansion levels the Government are working through local EYDCPs, who are required to draw up local early education and childcare plans in line with national targets, and to identify and assess local need, paying particular attention to rural areas and the needs of shift workers. The expansion programme is being approached on two fronts; one focusing on the development of increased early education places (Early Education Scheme), the other focusing on developing childcare places (National Childcare Strategy), and where possible to do this in unison.

DATA SOURCES

The UK is very rich with data and many different administrative and statistical sources exist in relation to early childhood policy. However, data collection falls under the responsibility of national authorities (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) and no aggregate figures at the UK level are currently readily available.

Providers

The DfES collects and publishes annually a comprehensive set of figures about the implementation and take up of early education and care. Three main data collections include information on services in England:

- i) The Annual School Census collects data in January each year from all schools, including registered private schools. These data provide information about teachers and teacher assistants, as well as the number of pupils registered at the school, their age, gender and full or part time status, at the time of the survey. These data are collected at school level and published nationally in statistical bulletins.
- ii) The Early Years Census began in January 1999. It was designed to assist OFSTED and the DfES in the tracking of private and voluntary providers who are members of the local EYDCP, and in receipt of funding for educational places for 3 and 4 year olds. This survey focuses on the number of children who should have attended the provision during the week of the survey.
- iii) The Day Care Survey is a survey initiated in 1999 and carried out annually in March. It counts the number of childcare places in registered provision at local authority level, and includes childminders, out of school clubs, day nurseries, playgroups and holiday schemes.

¹⁰ Ofsted is a non-ministerial government department whose main aim is to help improve the quality and standards of education and childcare through independent inspection and regulation, and provide advice to the Secretary of State.

In Scotland, the system for data collection is very similar to England. There are three types of data set:

- i) The School Census: which covers registered school places available.
- ii) The Pre-school Education Centres Census: which covers education places available and was extended to include private and voluntary funded educational provision in 1999.
- iii) The Day Care Survey: which covers day care places in the private and voluntary sectors.

The childcare workforce survey, also under the responsibility of the DfES, gives information about the childcare across England, namely on Childminders, Day Nurseries, Holiday Clubs, Out of School Clubs and Playgroups and Pre-schools. The last survey was carried out in 2001 and results were published in 2002.

A similar survey, the Early Education and Childcare Workforce Survey, was carried out for the first time in 2001 by the Scottish Executive Education Department.

Users

Surveys on Parents' Demand for Childcare are carried out in England and Wales (last one 2001) and, separately, in Scotland (last one 1999).

The survey had two parts: part 1 aimed to examine in depth parents' use of, views on and demand for childcare. Part 2 aimed to assess the factors which determine parents' decisions to use childcare, with a focus on affordability, but also with some consideration for other important influences, such as quality and accessibility.

The survey collected comprehensive information on the current use of childcare for 0-14 year olds. It included both formal arrangements (e.g. playgroups, day nurseries, early years education, out-of-school clubs) and informal arrangements (e.g. grandparents, friends). The only types of childcare that were excluded were times when a child was at school or when they were being looked after by the respondent or their spouse. Details were collected on usage 24 hours a day, seven days a week, which therefore included "non-standard" times such as early mornings, evenings and nights, as well as weekends. Parents were asked a number of general questions about their use of childcare in the last year, while more detailed information was collected about the childcare used in the reference week.

Childcare variables were included in the LFS in the last quarter of 2002, but results are not publicly available. The new variables relate to the type of child attendance, the reference week school period and other people looking after the child. The areas for which data are collected are England, Scotland and Wales.

Annex 3 – Allocation of national education programmes to ISCED-97 (level 0) of the UOE data collection

National name of the programme	Description name of the programme in English	Typical starting age	Theoretical duration of the programme	Typical duration of the programme	Programme specifically designed for part-time attendance	Reported in the UOE data collection	Notes
Belgium (Flemish Community)							
Gewoon kleuteronderwijs	Regular nursery education	2.5-3	3	3	No	Yes	This level of education is not compulsory but free of charges. Nearly all children attend nursery school in Flanders. The staff requirement is a non-university tertiary education diploma (1-cycle).
Buitengewoon kleuteronderwijs	Special nursery education	2.5-3	3	3	No	Yes	Enrolment in special education can only be allowed on the basis of the immatriculation report. This report is conducted by the CLB (Pupil Guidance Centres).
Europese en internationale scholen	European and international schools	2.5-3	3	3	No	No	
Belgium (French community)							
Enseignement maternel ordinaire	regular pre-primary education	2,5/3	3	3/3,5		Yes	This level of education is not compulsory but free of charges. Nearly all children attend nursery school.
Enseignement maternel spécial	special pre-primary education	2,5/3	3	3/3,5		Yes	Enrolment in special education can only be allowed on the basis of the immatriculation report. This report is conducted by the CLB (Pupil Guidance Centres). Children can remain at this level up to the age of 8.
Denmark							
Børnehave	kindergarten	2-5	4	3			Age-integrated institutions included.
Børnehaveklasse	Pre-school class in primary school	5-6	1	1			The pre-school class is voluntary for the children, but must be offered by municipalities. 97% accept this offer.
Germany							
01 Kindergärten	Kindergarten	3	3	3			Centre-based institutions for children aged 3 to less than 6. The programme includes educational activities. As a rule, the staff have special educational qualifications, which are officially recognised.
02 Schulkindergärten	School kindergarten	6	1	1			School-based programme for children of at least compulsory school age (6 years) who are not yet ready to attend primary school. They prepare for entry into primary school. As a rule, staff have teaching qualifications. Most are attached to primary schools.
03 Vorklassen	Pre-school classes	5	1	1			School-based programme designed for children from the age of 5 to under 6 who are capable to attend school but who have not yet reached compulsory school age (6 years). As a rule, staff have teaching qualifications. Mostly attached to primary schools.
Greece							
Nipiagogeio	Kindergarten (Pre-primary)	4-5	1-2	1-2	No	Yes	Not compulsory

National name of the programme	Description name of the programme in English	Typical starting age	Theoretical duration of the programme	Typical duration of the programme	Programme specifically designed for part-time attendance	Reported in the UOE data collection	Notes
Spain							
Educación Infantil	Pre-school education	2-3	3	3	No	Yes	
France							
Enseignement préélémentaire	Pre-school education	2-3	3-4	3	No	Yes	Pre-school classes can be attached to primary schools.
Ireland							
	Pre-primary education (early start + private)	3-4	1	1		No	Only a very small number is reported in the UOE. Most of these pupils are missing from the data collection
Italy							
Scuola dell'infanzia	Pre-primary education	3	3	3	No	Yes	Nearly all handicapped pupils attend regular schools; only very few attend special programs
Luxembourg							
Précoce	00 Education précoce (early maturity education)	3	1	1	No	Yes	this programme is NOT compulsory
Spillschoul	01 Education préscolaire (pre-primary education)	4	2	2	No	Yes	this programme IS compulsory
Netherlands 2000-2001							
Basisonderwijs en speciaal onderwijs	Primary education and primary special education; pupils 3-5 years of age	4	2		No	Yes	
Austria							
	Kindergarten	3-5	3	2			
	Vorschulstufe (pre-primary stage)	6	1	1			
Portugal							
Educação Pré-Escolar	Pre-school education	3-5	3	3	No	Yes	
Finland 2000-2001							
Esiopetus	Pre-primary (preschool) education including special education	3-6	1-4		No	Yes	Kindergartens (3 to 5-year-old children) and pre-primary education for 6-year-old children in kindergartens and comprehensive schools.
Sweden							
Förskola	Pre-school, for children/pupils 3 years of age or older	3-5	3	1-3	Yes	Yes	Daycare centres deliver a combination of daycare and pre-school education, with the education component estimated to be 50%. Only children that also need daycare take part in this education.
Förskoleklass	Pre-school classes	6	1	1	No	Yes	Pre-school classes are designed primarily to introduce very young children to a school-type environment. It is voluntary for the children.
United Kingdom							
	Nursery schools and classes	2-3	2	1-2			Non-compulsory, not specifically designed for part time attendance but 95% of pupils attend part time.
	Playgroups and day nurseries	2-4	1-3	1-3		No	Non-compulsory, contains educational content (inspection system), data currently coming on stream.
	Reception classes	4	1	1			Includes first year of primary in Northern Ireland.

Annex 4 – Enrolments rates in pre-primary and compulsory education by age, 2001

	BE	DK	DE	EL	ES	FR	IE	IT	LU	NL	AT	PT	FI	SE	UK
<i>e-primary education (ISCED0)</i>															
Less than 3	14	-	-	-	9	11	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
Y3	98	77	55	-	88	101	3	95	44	-	41	60	34	71	55
Y4	99	92	86	58	100	102	2	99	94	98	79	76	43	76	99
Y5	98	91	90	86	101	100	1	97	94	100	93	89	50	79	0
Y6	5	98	68	0	1	1	0	1	5	0	34	5	90	96	0
Y3 to 6	98	87	77	48	96	101	2	97	78	66	72	75	43	75	51
Y3 to compulsory school age	98	90	77	48	96	101	2	97	78	49	72	75	55	81	77
<i>Primary and secondary education (ISCED 1-3)</i>															
Y4	-	-	-	-	-	-	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Y5	1	-	-	1	-	1	99	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	99
Y6	95	-	50	102	101	101	101	100	95	99	62	107	1	4	98
Y6-12	98	82	91	101	103	101	101	100	96	99	94	108	82	85	99
Compulsory school-age to Y12	98	100	91	101	103	101	100	100	96	86	94	108	99	99	99

Notes: BE – Data are for 2000

IE – No official provision of ISCED 0 education. Most provision is private and data re not available.

NL – The low figure for the age group 6+ is due to missing data for 4 and 5 year-olds

Annex 5 – Usual opening hours of primary schools

Country	Opening hours	Meal provision/ supervision during lunch break
Belgium	Generally Monday to Friday, from 8.30 h to 12.00 h and from 13.30 h to 15.30 h/16.00 h (except on Wednesday afternoon).	Many
Denmark	8:00-15:00	Yes
Germany	8:00-12:30, hours increase with age from 2.5 to 4.5 hours a day	Very few
Greece	8:30-13:00 or 13:15-19:30 (hours increases with age from 20 to 29 weekly hours)	No
Spain	9:00-12:00 and 15:00-17:00	Increasing number
France	8:30-19:30 (26 weekly hours)	yes
Ireland	9:00-14:00 (minimum 4 hours)	Supervision
Italy	8:00-12:30 or 8:00--16:30 (minimum 27 weekly hours, max 30 hours)	Yes, for the latter
Luxembourg	8:00-11:45 and 14:00-15:45 on Mon., Wed., and Fri. 8:00-11:30/12:00 on Tues., Thurs., and 1 Sat out of 2. (28 weekly hours)	Increasing number
Netherlands	8:30-12:00 and 13:15-15:30 (currently max 5½ hours a day – bill for changing to min. 3 hours a day)	Yes (child care during lunch break is organised by parents in school)
Austria	8:00-12:00 or 13:00 (between 20 and 24 weekly hours, according to age)	Few
Portugal	9:00-12:00 and 14:00-16:00 or 13:00-15:00 (normal scheme) 8:00-13:00 or 13:00-18:00 (two-shift scheme) 25 weekly hours	Yes
Finland	19 to 30 hours per week, according to age	All
Sweden	Flexi-time patterns (around 20-25 weekly hours)	Yes for children in school for about 5 hours
UK	9:00-12:00 and 13:00-15:30 (number of hours increase with age)	Yes

Annex 6 – Activity and employment rates of men and women (as % of total population in same age group), 2001

	BE	DK	DE	EL	ES	FR	IE	IT	LU	NL	AT	PT	FI	SE	UK	EU15
<i>Activity rates of men and women aged 15-64</i>																
Men	72.7	83.3	78.8	76.2	78.1	75.1	79.0	73.7	76.4	84.2	79.3	79.3	79.6	80.3	82.5	78.1
Women	54.5	75.0	63.7	48.8	50.3	62.3	56.0	47.1	52.4	67.0	62.5	64.5	74.7	76.0	67.8	60.0
<i>Activity rates of men and women aged 25-54</i>																
Men	90.9	91.4	93.5	94.0	91.6	94.0	91.7	90.6	95.1	93.9	93.4	92.6	91.2	90.4	91.3	92.4
Women	70.7	83.5	77.5	61.3	60.8	78.3	66.0	59.4	65.7	74.2	77.2	78.1	85.4	85.4	76.3	72.3
<i>Employment rates of men and women aged 15-64</i>																
Men	68.5	80.2	72.6	70.9	72.3	69.7	75.9	68.1	75.0	82.7	76.7	76.8	71.6	76.1	78.2	73.0
Women	50.7	71.4	58.7	41.2	42.7	55.7	53.9	40.9	51.0	65.3	60.2	61.0	66.6	72.6	65.0	54.9
<i>Employment rates of men and women aged 25-54</i>																
Men	86.5	88.7	86.9	88.8	85.9	88.3	88.6	85.3	93.1	92.7	90.9	90.2	84.7	86.8	87.6	87.3
Women	66.4	80.1	71.7	52.9	52.5	70.7	64.0	52.8	63.6	72.6	74.6	74.6	78.8	82.5	73.6	66.7

Note: The figures in full-time equivalent terms show a much larger difference between men and women in many countries, especially in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK, as many women with children in these countries work part-time.

Annex 7 – Statutory leave arrangements for parents¹¹

DEFINITIONS

Maternity/Paternity leave: paid leave during the period immediately prior and after childbirth (in some countries called parental leave because both parents are eligible)

Parental leave: optional extended leave to take care of young children (in some countries also called parental leave)

BELGIUM

Maternity leave

15 weeks. One week must be taken before the birth and 8 weeks after the birth; the remaining 6 weeks can be taken either before or after birth or divided before and after the birth. Paid at 82% of earnings for the first month, and 75% of earnings (up to a maximum level) for the remaining period. If the baby has to remain in hospital for more than 8 weeks, the mother may take her remaining period of post-natal leave after the child is discharged home.

A 1991 law enables fathers to take the post-natal period of leave if the mother is dead or seriously ill.

Paternity leave

3 days paid at 100% of earnings, in the private sector. 4 days paid at 100% of earnings, in the public sector.

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1998.

Each parent is entitled to 3 months full-time leave or up to 6 months half-time leave, which can be taken until the child is four years old (or eight years if the child has a handicap; or during the 7 year period after adoption). Leave therefore is an individual entitlement, not transferable between parents.

Parents taking leave receive a flat rate benefit payment of approximately BF20,000 per month.

In addition, there is a system of 'career breaks' from employment. They were first introduced in 1985 as part of collective agreements, and were dependent on the employer's agreement. Since January 1999, however, 'career breaks' are an individual entitlement for all workers (except for workers at managerial level or working in companies with less than 10 employees). The only condition now is that the employer must be prepared to accept a previously unemployed worker as a replacement. The employer can also defer the employee taking career break, if s/he is satisfied that taking leave would have a serious adverse effect on the operation of the business.

¹¹ Based on information from Work-Life Research Centre and Anne H. Gauthier, Public policies affecting fertility and families in Europe, A survey of 15 Member States

Under this system, workers may take up to 5 years of full-time leave and up to 5 years of part-time leave over the course of their working lives. Leave may be taken for any reason including the care of children; it seems likely that it is mostly taken to enable mothers to care for children.

Workers can take a career break of between 3 and 12 months; but the length of the career break can be longer if the worker applies for an extension at the end of the initial period. Instead of a full-time 'career break', workers employed at least 3/4 time can request to work half-time, for a period ranging from 6 months to 5 years.

Workers using this measure receive a flat-rate payment, approximately BF12,000 a month for a full-time 'career break', with a reduced payment if taking part-time leave. But a higher payment is made if leave is taken within 6 years of birth or adoption of a second child (approximately BF13,000 a month for a full-time 'career break'), or of a third or higher order child (approximately BF14,000 a month for a full-time 'career break').

DENMARK¹²

Maternity leave

18 weeks. Four weeks before birth; 14 weeks after birth. Maternity benefits are calculated (as sickness benefits) on the basis of the hourly pay for employees and on the basis of the income from the business activities for self-employed. In both cases, the maximum amount payable is DKK 3,016 per week (2002 level).

Paternity leave

Two consecutive weeks during the 14 weeks of maternity leave. Paid as for Maternity leave

Parental leave

After the 14th week after the birth the parents are between them entitled to benefits for a period of 32 weeks. These weeks can be divided freely between the mother and father; this means that they can be taken by the parents at the same time, as alternating periods or as consecutive periods. The system is very flexible. First, families are given the option of postponing part of the leave to be taken later. The period that may be taken at a later date is between 8 and 13 weeks; if they wish to postpone a longer period, this must be agreed with the employer. Secondly, there are good opportunities for returning to work on a part-time basis subject to agreement with the employer. It is also possible to prolong the period on benefit so that benefits will be paid during the entire period of leave. This means, for instance, that a parent may work half-time and thus prolong the leave period from 32 to 64 weeks. Thirdly, the parents have a right to prolong the 32 weeks' leave to either 40 weeks (for all) or 46 weeks (only employees). The right to benefits is reduced so that it corresponds to 32 weeks at the full rate of benefit.

¹² As amended in Spring 2002

GERMANY***Maternity leave***

14 weeks (+extra for multiple/premature births). Six weeks before birth; 8 weeks after the birth plus an extra 4 weeks for multiple or premature births. Paid at 100% of earnings.

Paternity leave

None

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1986, restated in 2001.

Each family is entitled to full-time leave until a child reaches 36 months (including 36 months after the adoption of a child, if the child is under 8 years when adopted).). It is possible to take a maximum of 12 months until the child reaches the age of 8 years. Leave therefore is a family entitlement; leave can be taken by the mother or the father, or both, shared or together. The leave taken by the mother, the father or both and can be blocked up to 4 times.

The parent taking leave is entitled to work part time, between 15 to 30 a week for any employer (unless the employer from whom the parent is on leave has a valid operational reason for objecting to the parent working).

The restated law is valid for births since 2001. It distinguishes between two possibilities, a regular benefit (307 euro) and a budget (460 euro). Both benefits are income related and linked with the number of children (i.e. it is paid for the first 6 months and is reduced from the 7th month if the household income is over a certain level). The regular benefit of 307 euro/month is valid for each child from the day of birth until the child reaches 24 months. The budget of 460 euro/month may be taken until the child reaches 12 months. In addition, 5 of the 16 Länder make benefit payments for at least 12 (Landeserziehungsgeld).

GREECE***Maternity leave***

14 weeks. At least 7 weeks must be taken after the birth, 3 weeks must be taken before the birth, while the remaining 4 weeks can be taken before or after the birth or divided before and after birth. Payment made at 100% of earnings

Paternity leave

None

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1986.

Each parent is entitled to 3 months full-time leave, which can be taken until the child is three and a half years old. Leave therefore is an individual entitlement, not transferable between parents.

Parents taking leave receive no benefit payment.

Employers may refuse leave if it has been claimed by more than 8% of the workforce during the year. The entitlement only applies to enterprises with more than 50 employees.

SPAIN

Maternity leave

16 weeks + 2 weeks extra for multiple births. At least 6 weeks must be taken after the birth, while the remaining 10 weeks can be taken before or after the birth or divided between before and after birth. Payment at 100% of earnings, up to a maximum level. The mother may chose to transfer part of her maternity leave, up to a maximum of 4 weeks, to the father.

During the first 9 months after birth, employed mothers or fathers have the right to one hour of absence from work per day, without loss of earnings; this period can be divided into two half-hours or may be replaced by a half-hour shortening of the normal working day.

Paternity leave

2 days. Paid at 100% of earnings.

The mother may choose to transfer part of the end of her maternity leave, up to a maximum of 4 weeks, to the father.

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1980; further legislation in 1995

Each family is entitled to full-time leave until the child is 3 years old. During the first year the employee is entitled to return to his/her former job. Otherwise, he/she is only entitled to return to a job of the same level. Leave therefore is a family entitlement; leave can be taken by the mother or the father, but only one parent may take leave at any one time. It must be taken when children are under three years old.

Parents taking leave receive no benefit payment. Employers' social security payments are reduced if they hire an unemployed substitute for an employee on maternity or parental leave.

Parents with a child under 6, or a disabled child, can reduce their working hours by between a third and half, but with no compensation for lost earnings; this can be claimed by both parents at the same time.

FRANCE

Maternity leave

16-26 weeks (+extra for multiple births). A minimum of 4 weeks must be taken before the birth, with a further 2 weeks [or 4 weeks for a third or later order child] which can be taken before or after birth. There is a further 10 weeks after birth [or 18 weeks for third or later order child]. In addition, in the case of a first child, a woman is entitled to two extra weeks of post-natal leave if she has twins, and 12 weeks extra for triplets; in the case of a second child, a woman is entitled to 12 extra weeks of post-natal leave for a multiple birth; with two extra weeks for multiple births to women who already have two or more children. Paid at 84% of earnings (but not taxed).

During the first year after birth, employed women who are breast-feeding are allowed two breaks per day from their employment, each of 30 minutes.

Paternity leave

Since 2002: 11 days, to be taken within four months following the birth, and remunerated like the maternity leave. Fathers are entitled to 3 additional days from their employers.

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1977; further legislation in 1984, 1986, 1991 and 1994.

Each family is entitled to full-time leave until a child reaches 36 months. Leave therefore is a family entitlement; leave can be taken by the mother or the father, or the parents may share the leave between them, one following the other.

The parent taking leave may work part time (defined as between 16 and 32 hours per month).

Parents taking leave receive no benefit payment if they have only one child. They receive a flat-rate benefit payment if they have two or more children of 460€ per month (rather more than half the 'SMIC' or guaranteed minimum wage). The benefit is paid at a reduced rate if the parent taking leave works on a part-time basis (305€ per month if working under 20 hours a week; 229€ if working between 20 and 32 hours a month).

From January 2004, parents with one child will also be able to benefit from this allowance within 6 months following the maternity leave.

Eligibility conditions for receiving a benefit payment are more restrictive for parents with only two children compared to parents with three or more. In the former case parents are only eligible if they have worked for at least two years out of the five preceding birth; in the latter case parents are eligible if they have worked two years at any time in the last ten years preceding birth.

Parents are also entitled to an allowance when they take a temporary leave to care for their sick children. The benefit is paid during 6 months and is renewable once.

IRELAND

Maternity leave

14 weeks. At least 4 weeks must be taken after the birth, with the remaining 10 weeks to be taken before or after birth or divided between before and after the birth; a further 4 weeks leave can be taken if the mother requests. Payment made at 70% of earnings (but not taxed) for the basic 14 weeks, but no payment for the optional 4 weeks.

Paternity leave

None

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1998.

Each parent is entitled to 14 weeks, which can be taken until the child is five years old (or, in the case of a child adopted between the ages of 3 and 8 years, leave must be taken within 2 years of the adoption order). Leave therefore is an individual entitlement, not transferable between parents.

Leave may be taken as a continuous block of 14 weeks or, if the employer agrees, may be taken in shorter blocks spread over a longer period of time; for example, the time may be broken down into individual days or weeks or taken in the form of reduced hours of work.

Parents taking leave receive no benefit payment.

The employer can postpone the leave for up to 6 months, if s/he is satisfied that taking leave would have a serious adverse effect on the operation of the business.

ITALY

Maternity leave

5 months, to be taken before and/or after birth as the mother chooses. Paid at 80% of earnings.

During the first year after birth, mothers in full-time employment have the right to two daily periods of rest, each of one hour, and without loss of earnings; these periods can be taken together, in which case mothers can effectively shorten their working day by two hours; mothers normally working less than 6 hours a day, are entitled to a rest period of one hour a day.

Maternity leave and rest periods can be taken by the father in the case of the mother's death or severe disability.

Paternity leave

None

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1977. The Government put a proposal for revised legislation before Parliament in Autumn 1998, which was approved in January 2000.

Under the new legislation, entitlement is for 10 months leave after Maternity leave, to be taken at any time until the child is 8 years old; this is extended to 11 months if the father takes at least 3 months leave. Leave is therefore a family entitlement, which parents can mostly share between themselves, but with some limitations on how parents can choose to share the leave providing an incentive for the father to use leave ('use it or lose it').

Parents taking leave receive a benefit payment equivalent to 30% of earnings.

In the case of parents who have a child with a serious disability, the period of leave can be extended to the child's third birthday, paid at 30% of earnings, or may be taken as two hours a day of paid leave.

Employers who offer part-time employment opportunities to parents after they have taken leave will receive state financial incentives.

LUXEMBOURG

Maternity leave

16 weeks (+extra for multiple births). Eight weeks before the birth; 8 weeks after birth plus an extra 4 weeks for multiple births. Paid at 100% of earnings.

Paternity leave

Two days after birth.

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1998.

Each parent is entitled to 6 months full-time leave or up to 12 months part-time leave. Leave can be taken until the child is 5 years old (this applies to one parent; the other parent must take Parental leave immediately after Maternity leave). Leave therefore is an individual entitlement, not transferable between parents.

One parent can opt to receive a flat-rate benefit payment paid over 22 months at LF 16,640 per month, but without guarantee of re-employment (i.e. not tied to Parental leave); or s/he can opt for a flat-rate benefit payment of LF 60,000 per month (net of tax) for 6 months, with a guarantee of re-employment (i.e. Parental leave can be paid for one parent).

NETHERLANDS***Maternity leave***

16 weeks. A maximum of 6 weeks can be taken before the birth and a minimum period of 4 weeks must be taken at this time, leaving between 10 and 12 weeks to be taken after the birth. Payment at 100% of earnings, up to a maximum level.

Paternity leave

None

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1991; further legislation in 1997.

Originally, each parent was entitled to a period of 6 months when they can work reduced hours (i.e. a parent taking leave must work at least 20 hours per week). As a result of the EU Directive, each parent is now entitled to 3 months full-time leave. Leave can be taken until the child is 8 years old. Leave therefore is an individual entitlement, not transferable between parents - but until recently, it has only been available on a part-time basis.

Parents taking leave receive no benefit payment.

The employer can postpone the leave because of 'serious reasons' (i.e. when a small company cannot immediately find a replacement for a worker taking leave).

AUSTRIA***Maternity leave***

16 weeks (+extra for multiple births/premature births). Eight weeks before the birth; 8 weeks after birth plus an extra 4 weeks for multiple or premature births. Paid at 100% of earnings.

Employed women who are breast-feeding are allowed one 45 minute break a day if working between 4.5 and 8 hours a day.

Paternity leave

None

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1990.

Each family is entitled to full-time leave until a child reaches 24 months. Leave therefore is a family entitlement, which parents can share between themselves; however, the payment system, discussed below, contains an incentive for the father to use leave. Leave can only be transferred once between parents.

The father can only claim Parental leave if the mother meets the eligibility conditions (i.e. the father's entitlement is dependent on the mother).

Alternatively, part-time leave may be taken, and if certain conditions are met this leave can be extended until the child is 4 years; the number of hours worked must be reduced by at least two-fifths. A new regulation also provides for payment of parental leave allowance if the parent takes up short-term employment; this is intended to enable parents to maintain contact with employment

Parents taking leave receive a flat-rate benefit payment of ATS 185.50. A higher rate is available for single parents or a parent with a partner on a low income [ATS 267.70 per day], but the difference between this rate and the basic rate is treated as a loan to be repaid by the parent(s). If only the mother takes leave, then benefit is paid until the child reaches 18 months; but if the father takes some leave, the benefit can be paid until the child is 24 months (i.e. in the case of a lone mother or of a partnered mother who takes all the leave, any leave taken between 18 and 24 months is unpaid; the failure of the father to share any part of the leave means that 6 months paid leave is lost, thus providing some incentive for the father to use part of the leave period).

A reduced benefit is paid to parents taking part-time leave, the reduction corresponding to the reduction of hours up to a maximum of half the normal benefit payment.

PORTUGAL***Maternity leave***

120 days. Sixty days must be taken after the birth, while the remaining 30 days can be taken before or after birth or divided between before and after the birth. Payment at 100% of earnings.

Fathers are entitled, in their own right, to leave and the accompanying maternity benefit payment in the case of the mother's death or disability; or in the case of the mother attending a training course that might be affected by a long period of absence.

During the first year after birth, employed women who are breast-feeding are allowed two breaks a day from employment, up to a maximum of 1 hour for each break.

Paternity leave

5 days.

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1984; further legislation in 1998

Each parent is entitled to a period of 6 months full-time leave. Leave can be taken until the child is 3 years old. In the case of the birth of a third or higher order child, 2 to 3 years can be taken. Leave therefore is an individual entitlement, not transferable between parents.

Parents taking leave receive no benefit payment.

A period of 100 days adoption leave can be taken until the child is 3 years; parents taking this leave are entitled to a benefit payment.

FINLAND

Maternity leave

17.5 weeks (i.e. 105 working days including Saturdays). At least 5 weeks must be taken before the birth and 9.5 weeks after, while the remaining 3 weeks can be taken before or after the birth. Paid at between 43% and 82% of previous earnings - the higher the earnings, the lower the percentage paid. The average rate is 66% of previous earnings (the average payment in 1997 was FIM167 a day for women and FIM264 a day for men taking Paternity or Parental leave).

Paternity leave

1 week (i.e. 6 working days). Paid as for Maternity leave. In addition, fathers are entitled to take 6 to 12 days leave at the time of the birth of their child, and this period of leave comes out of the total parental leave entitlement.

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1980, as a father's right to share part of the Maternity leave period; terminology changed to Parental leave in 1985. Home Care Leave (or often referred to as just Care Leave) introduced in 1990.

Each family is entitled to 26 weeks of Parental leave (i.e. 158 working days including Saturdays), extended by 10 weeks in the case of multiple births, to be taken after Maternity leave. Paid as for Maternity leave.

In addition, each family is entitled to a further period of Care Leave available until a child is three years old. Parents taking this leave receive a low flat-rate benefit payment, currently FIM1,500 per month, with a supplement of FIM500 a month for each child under 3 years old and FIM300 a month for each child over 3 years. This basic national payment may be supplemented by local authorities if they wish to do so and the average payment made by local authorities is approximately FIM1,000 a month. The payment for parents taking this type of leave is conditional on their child under 3 years not attending publicly-funded child care institutions.

Both Parental and Care Leaves are therefore family entitlements, which parents can share between themselves. Each parent is entitled to take both Parental and Care Leaves in two blocks (i.e. in each type of leave, parents in a two parent family can split leave into four blocks shared between themselves). Since 1998, a parent can take Care Leave in more than two blocks, with the agreement of her or his employer.

Each parent is also entitled to work reduced hours (either a six hour day or a thirty hour week) until the end of the year when their child goes to school (i.e. when the child is about 7 years old). Parents working reduced hours receive an allowance until their child is 3 years old, at 25% of the flat-rate payment for parents taking Care Leave. This is an individual entitlement, and both parents can work reduced hours at the same time.

SWEDEN***Maternity leave***

60 days leave before birth for women who cannot continue with their ordinary job and cannot be transferred to alternative duties; 50 days are covered by a maternity allowance, while payment for the other 10 days must come from Parental leave allowance. Alternatively, women can take up to 60 days of Parental leave before birth. Paid at 80% of earnings. All women, including those not eligible for Parental leave, are entitled to 6 weeks leave before and 6 weeks after birth.

Paternity leave

2 weeks (10 working days). Paid at 80% of earnings.

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement introduced in 1974. Several further changes in legislation, most recently in 1995.

Each parent is entitled to 18 months of full-time leave (Child Care Leave). A benefit payment (Parental Allowance) is available for 450 days per family, paid for 360 days at 80% of earnings, and for 90 days at a flat rate of SEK 60 per day. For multiple births, paid leave is extended by 90 days at 80% of earnings and by a further 90 days at SEK 60 per working day. However, there is an upper limit on the amount of parental allowance that can be paid, and this stood at SEK 273,000 a year in 1999 (or SEK 672 a day).

Thirty days of the parental allowance must be taken by the father. If he does not do so, this leave period cannot be transferred to the mother and is lost. Paid leave therefore is a family entitlement, which parents can mostly share between themselves, but with some limitations on how parents can choose to share the leave providing an incentive for the father to use leave ('use it or lose it').

Leave and payment must be taken before a child reaches the age of 8 (or by the end of the child's first year at school), and can be taken in one block of time or several shorter blocks. Paid leave can be taken on a full time, half time or quarter time basis (e.g. 1 month full-time, 2 months half-time, 4 months quarter-time).

Parents are also entitled to work 75% of normal working hours until their child has completed her first year of school, although there is no payment for lost earnings (unless parents choose to use part of their Parental Allowance).

UK***Maternity leave***

All pregnant employees are entitled to 18 weeks of leave and (with some exceptions) a flat-rate payment. Women who have 1 years employment with the same employer are entitled to 40 weeks, 11 weeks before the birth, 29 weeks after the birth, with payment at 90% of earnings for 6 weeks, and a flat-rate payment for up to a further 12 weeks. Employees with weekly earnings of £30 or more, who have been employed for at least 26 weeks by the 15th week before the baby is due, are entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay.

Paternity leave

None

Parental leave

Statutory entitlement was introduced in 1999.

Each parent is entitled to 13 weeks full-time leave per child, to be taken at any time until the child is 5 years old (or, in the case of an adopted child, during the five years after the child is placed with the family for adoption). But only up to 4 weeks leave can be taken in any one year (i.e. a parent wishing to take a full entitlement of 13 weeks will need to do so by taking 4 weeks per year for 3 years, then one week in a fourth year). Parents taking leave receive no payment.

STATUTORY LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PARENTS – SUMMARY TABLE									
	Maternity leave			Paternity leave			Parental leave		
	Duration	Benefit	Note	Duration	Benefit	Note	Duration	Benefit	Note
BE	15 weeks	82% of earnings for first month; 75% thereafter	Obligatory: 1 week prior and 6 weeks after birth. Remaining 6 weeks either before or after.	3/4 days in private/public sector	100% of earnings		3 months each parent until child is 4	Flat-rate: +/- €495	Both parents entitled. Part-time leave (6 months) also available.
DK	18 weeks	On the basis of the hourly pay for employees and of the income from the business activities for self-employed. Ceiling for both: +/- €406 (DKK 3,016) per week (2002-level).	4 weeks prior and 14 after birth.	2 weeks	As maternity		32 weeks	As maternity	1. can be shared between parents 2. 8-13 weeks can be postponed with the agreement of the employer up to age 8 of the child 3. Can be doubled if coupled with part-time work 4. Can be extended to 40 weeks (all) or 46 (employees) and rate reduced proportionately
DE	14 weeks	100% of earnings	6 weeks prior and 8 after birth (+4 for multiple or premature births)	None			36 months ¹³ up to child's 3 rd birthday, therefrom a maximum of 12 months may be taken until the child reaches the age of 8	regular benefit of € 307 (24 months) or budget of € 460 (12 months)	Family entitlement, can be shared or taken together by both. Part-time allowed.
EL	14 weeks	100% of earnings	3 weeks prior and 7 after birth. Remaining 4 either before or after	None			3 months each parent until child is 3.5	Unpaid	Only in enterprises with 50+ employees.
ES	16 weeks	100% of earnings with ceiling	6 weeks after birth. Remaining either before or after (+2 for multiple births).	2 days + 4 weeks transferable	100% of earnings 100% of earnings with ceiling		36 months ¹⁴ up to child's 3 rd birthday. If child <6, reduced	Unpaid No compensation	Family entitlement, can be shared between parents.

¹³ Including maternity leave¹⁴ Including maternity leave

			Up to 4 weeks transferable to father.	from mother			working hours		
FR	16-26 weeks	84% of earnings	4 weeks prior and 10 after birth. Remaining 2 either before or after. Extra weeks for multiple births.	11 days plus 3 additional days from employers	84% of earnings	Within 4 months following the birth	¹⁵ 36 months up to child's 3 rd birthday.	Flat-rate if two or more children: €460/month	Family entitlement, can be shared between parents. Part-time allowed.
IE	14 weeks	70% of earnings Unpaid	4 weeks before birth, 10 either before or after. +4 weeks on mother's request	None			14 weeks each parent until child is 5.	Unpaid	
IT	5 months	80% of earnings	Either prior or after birth	None			10 months until child is 8; 11 months if at least 3 taken by father.	30% of earning	Family entitlement, can be shared between parents. Incentives to employers offering part-time leave.
LU	16 weeks	100% of earnings	8 weeks prior and 8 after birth. +4 for multiple birth	2 days	100% of earnings		6 months each parent until child is 5.	Flat-rate of €412/month for 22 months with no re-employment guarantee (no tied to childcare) or €1490 for 6 months+guarantee (tied to childcare)	Or 12 months part-time leave. One parent must take leave immediately after Maternity leave. Childcare leave payable to one parent only.
NL	16 weeks	100% of earnings with ceiling	4 weeks before birth; 12 either before or after	None			3 months each parent until child is 8	Unpaid	
AT	16 weeks	100% of earnings	8 weeks before birth and 8 after; + 4 for multiple or premature births	None			¹⁶ 24 months up to child's 2 nd birthday.	Flat-rate: €13.50/day for 18 months for mother, 24 months for father.	Family entitlement, can be shared between parents with incentive for father. Part-time leave allowed until child is 4.

¹⁵ Including maternity leave¹⁶ Including maternity leave

PT	120 days	100% of earnings	60 days after birth, 60 either before or after.	5 days			6 months each parent until child is 3	Unpaid	Extension after 3 rd child.
FI	17.5 weeks	43%-82% of earnings (average 66%)	5 weeks before birth, 9.5 after and 3 either before or after. Higher benefit level for men	1 week	As Maternity leave	+6-12 days out of Childcare leave	26 weeks+10 for multiple births Further period until child is 3	As Maternity leave Flat-rate: €250/month +supplement for other children	Immediately after Maternity leave. Both family entitlement, can be shared between parents with incentive for father. Part-time leave allowed
SE	12 weeks	80% of earnings		2 weeks	80% of earnings		18 months each parent until child is 8	80% of earnings for 360 days and €6.50/day for 90 days with ceiling	Part-time leave allowed.
UK	18 weeks for all women and 40 weeks if employed for over 12 months with same employer	11 weeks before birth, 29 after.	90% of earnings for 6 weeks and flat-rate for 12 weeks (rates depending on earnings).	None			13 weeks each parent until child is 5	Unpaid	Up to 4 weeks only in any one year