



Early childhood
education and care

Edufirst Erasmus+ Project Final Conference

Monday, 21st of September 2026
Barcelona



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Comune di
Milano



10.00h

Official opening ceremony
Institutional welcome

Councillor for Education of Barcelona

Sara Belbeida

**General Manager at the Barcelona Institute for Education
at the Municipality of Barcelona (IMEB)**

Alícia Aguilera

Edufirst Principal Investigator

Jordi Collet



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10.15h

Dialogue

Main Challenges for World and European Childhood Education and Care services (ECEC): Inclusion, Equity and Interculturality

Conductor: Nathalie Guri, Eurocities representative

UNESCO Representative for Early Childhood Education and Protection

Rokhaya Diawara

Former OECD consultant and UOC Lecturer

Alejandro Paniagua

Policy Officer - Early Childhood Education and Care at the European Commission

Géraldine Libreau



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Alejandro Paniagua

Open University of Catalonia (UOC)
and former OECD analyst



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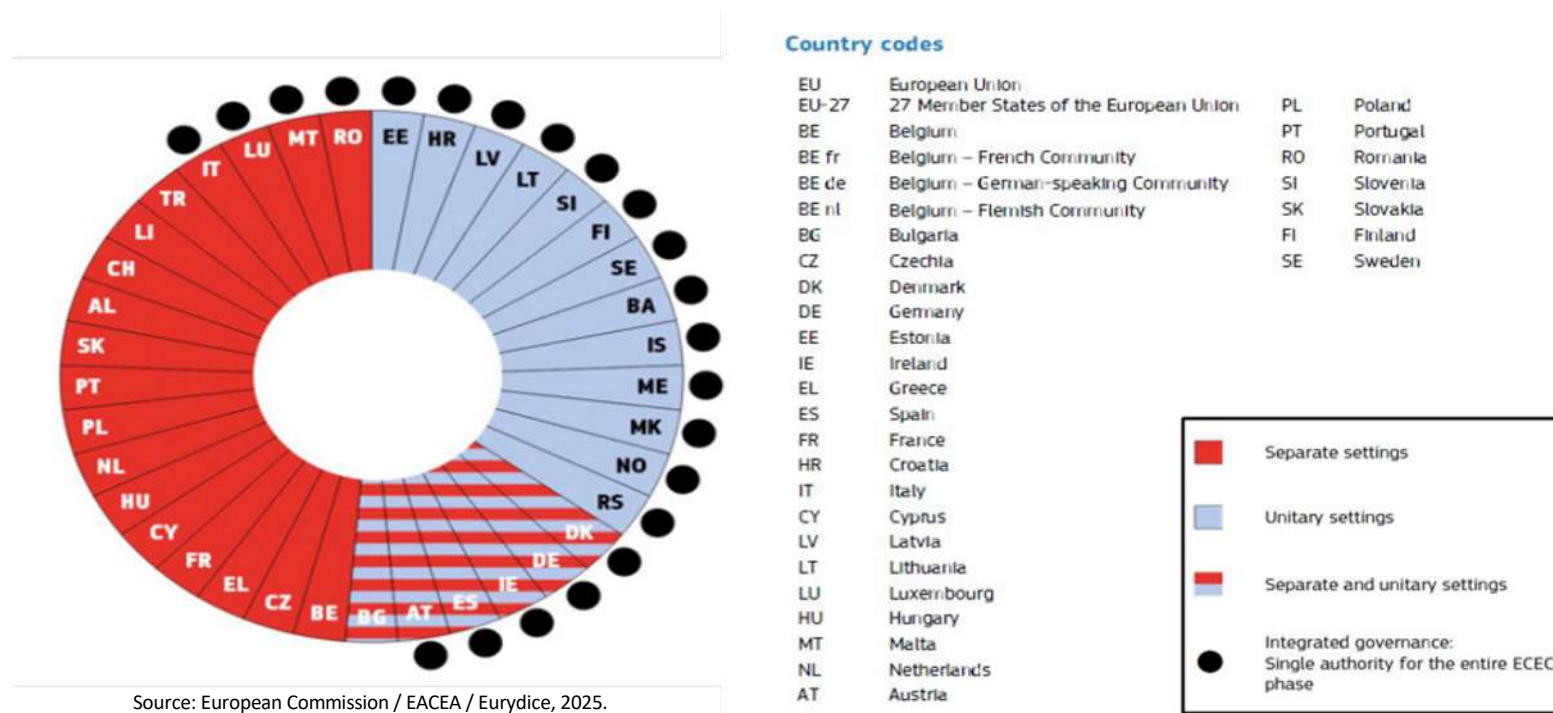
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TAMPERE

ECEC services at the crossroads

--> Integrating Care and Education

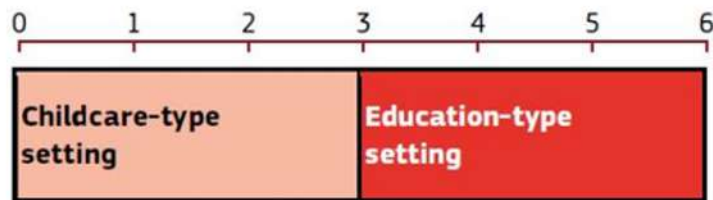


Source: European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2025.

ECEC services at the crossroads

--> Continuity and seamlessness

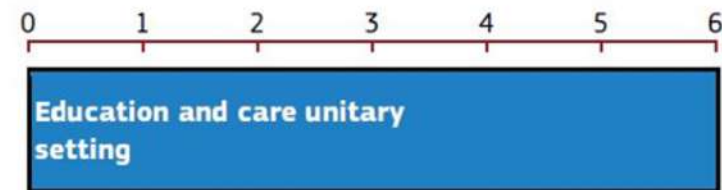
1.a Separate settings for younger and older children



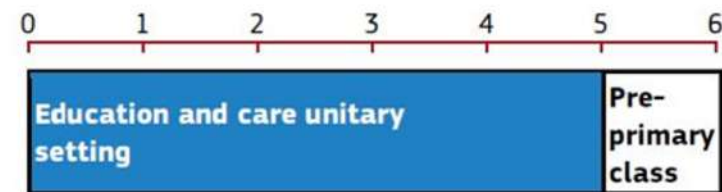
1.b Separate settings with pre-primary class



2.a Unitary setting

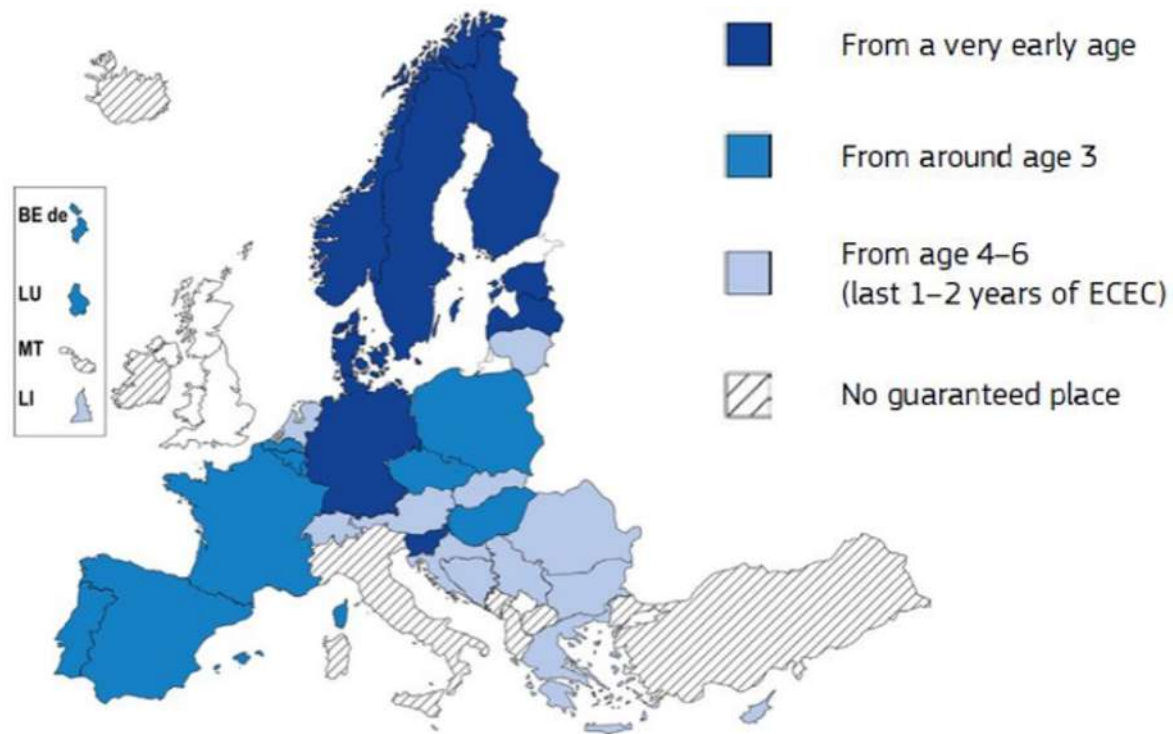


2.b Unitary setting with pre-primary class



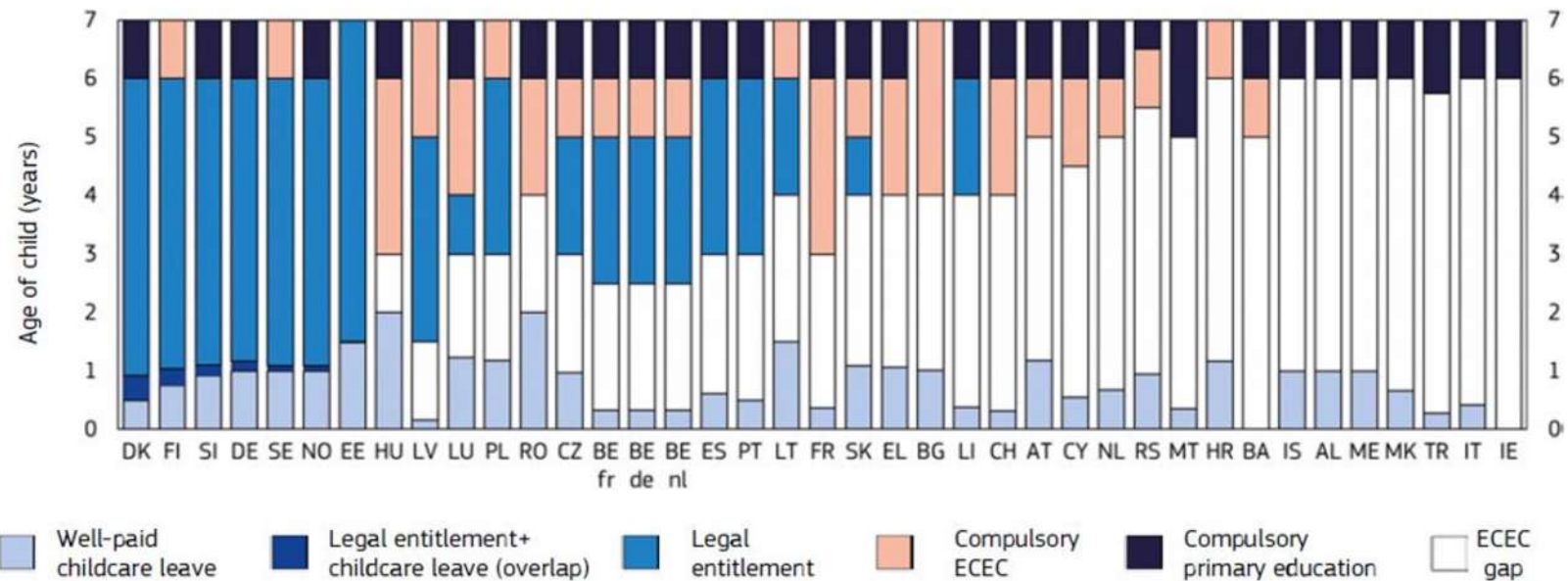
Source: European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2025.

ECEC services at the crossroads --> (Mind) the ECEC Gap!



Source: European Commission /
EACEA / Eurydice, 2025.

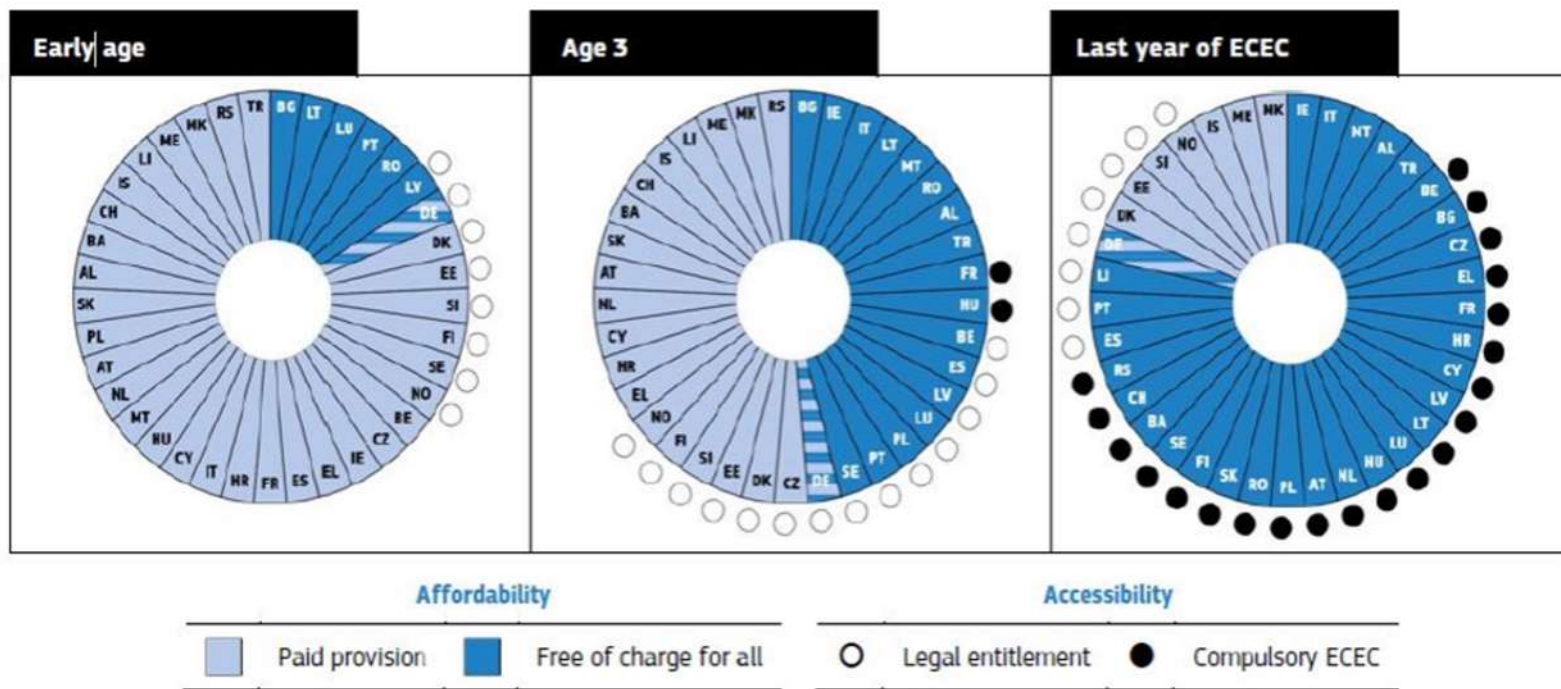
ECEC services at the crossroads --> (Mind) the ECEC Gap!



Source: European Commission /
EACEA / Eurydice, 2025.

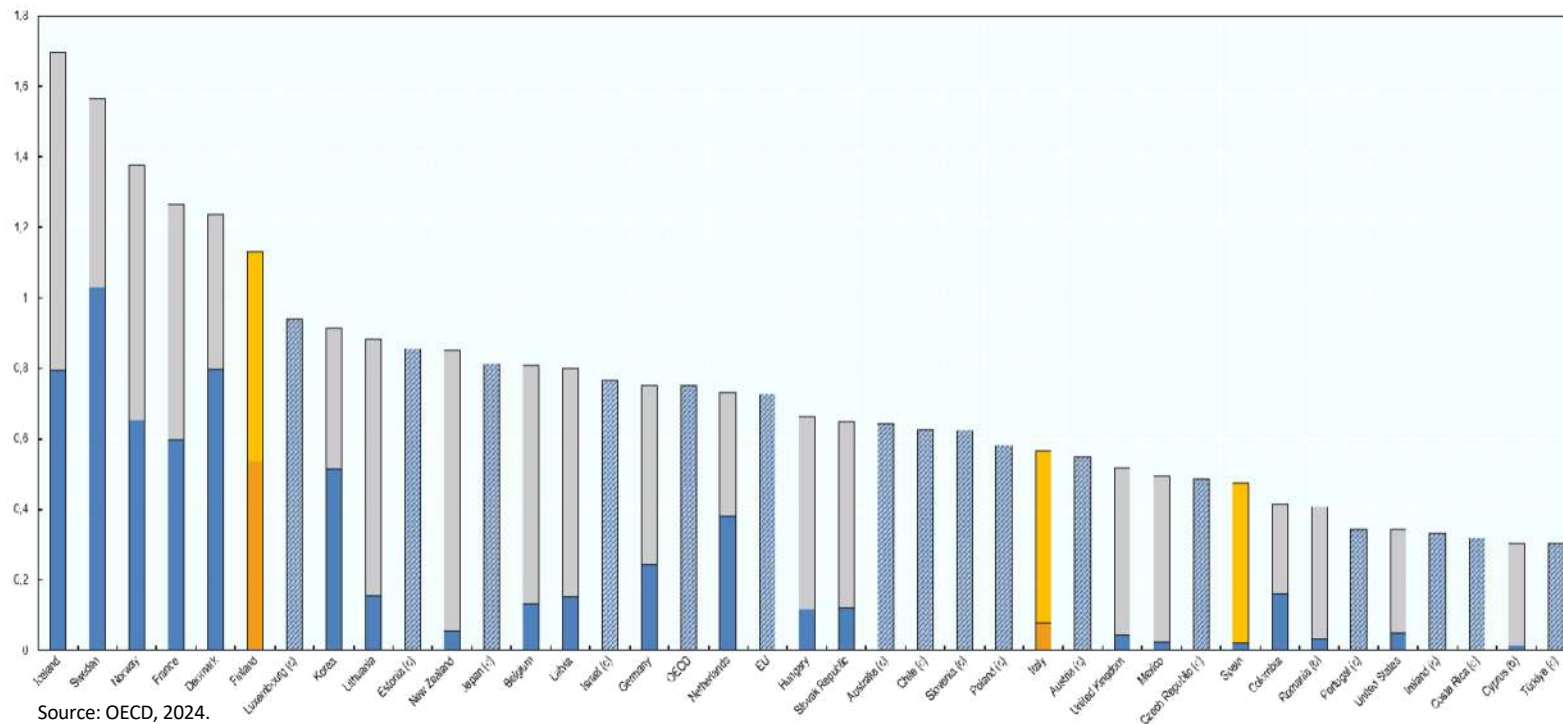
ECEC services at the crossroads

--> Access and affordability



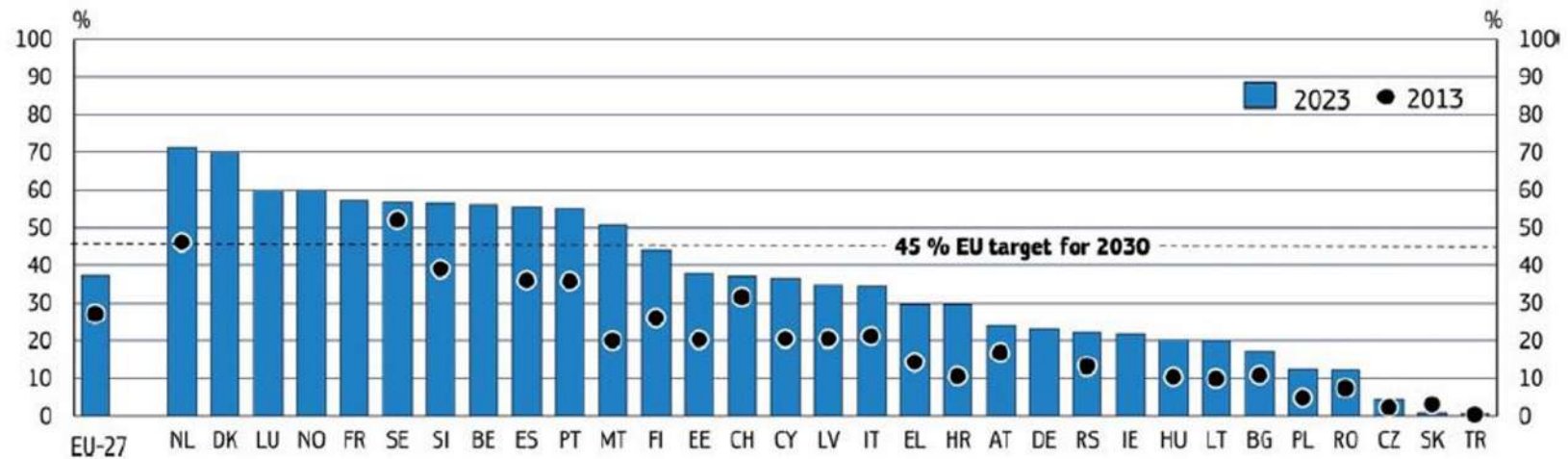
Source: European Commission / EACEA / Eurydice, 2025.

ECEC services at the crossroads -->Unequal investments...



ECEC services at the crossroads

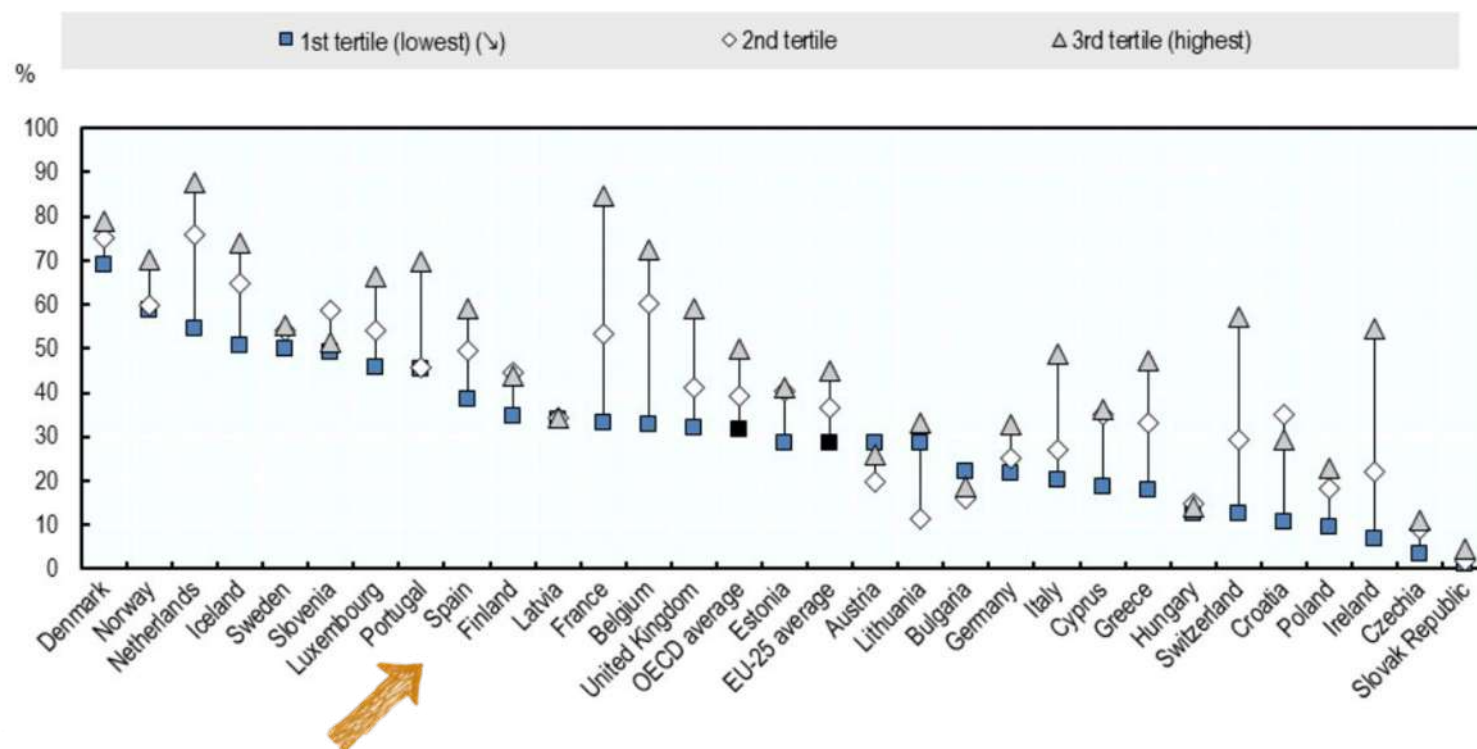
--> ...inequal participation



Source: European Commission /
EACEA / Eurydice, 2025.

ECEC services at the crossroads

--> Not all is universal funding...



Source: European
EACEA / Eurydic



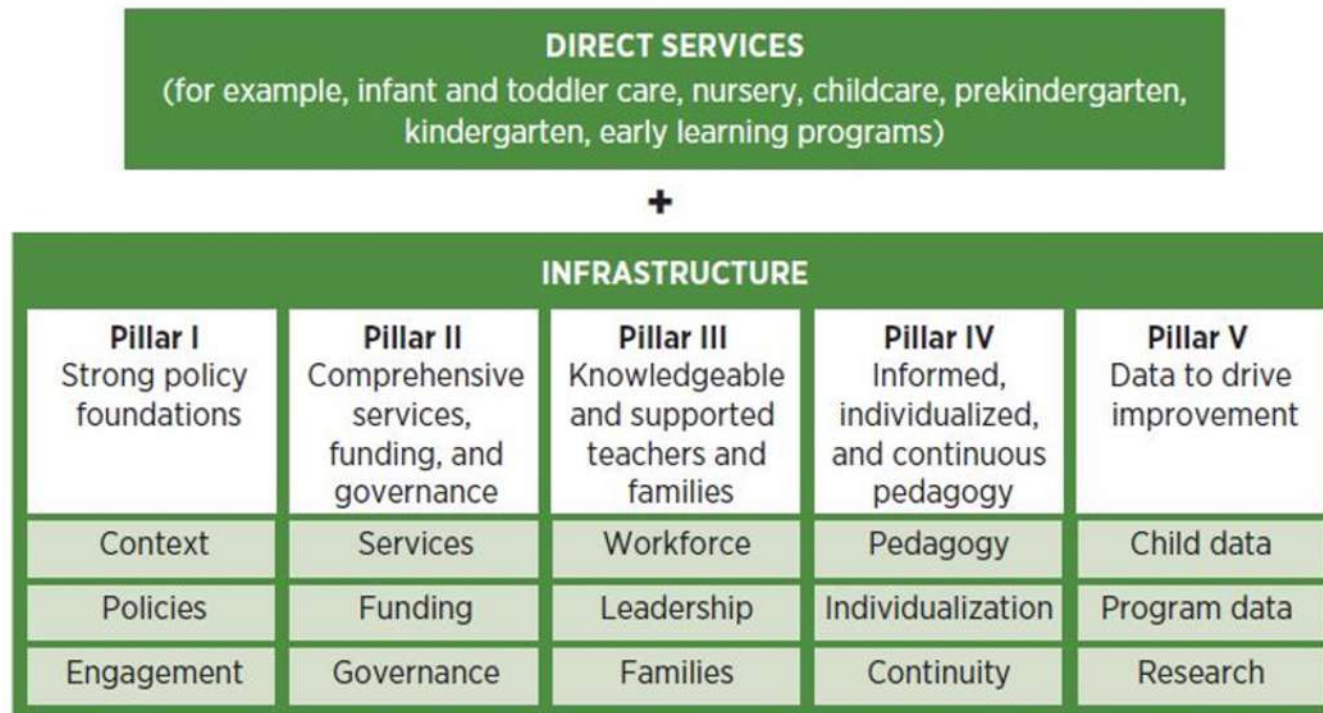
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ECEC services at the crossroads

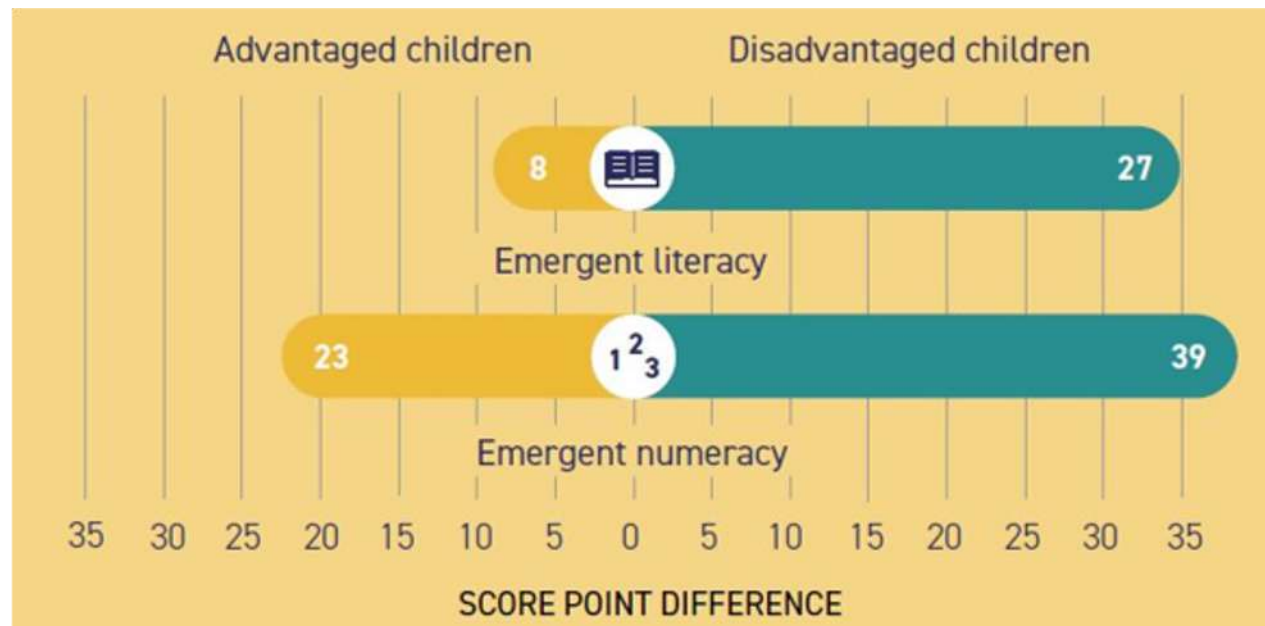
--> ECEC: a system imperative



Source: Bendini and Devercelli, 2022.

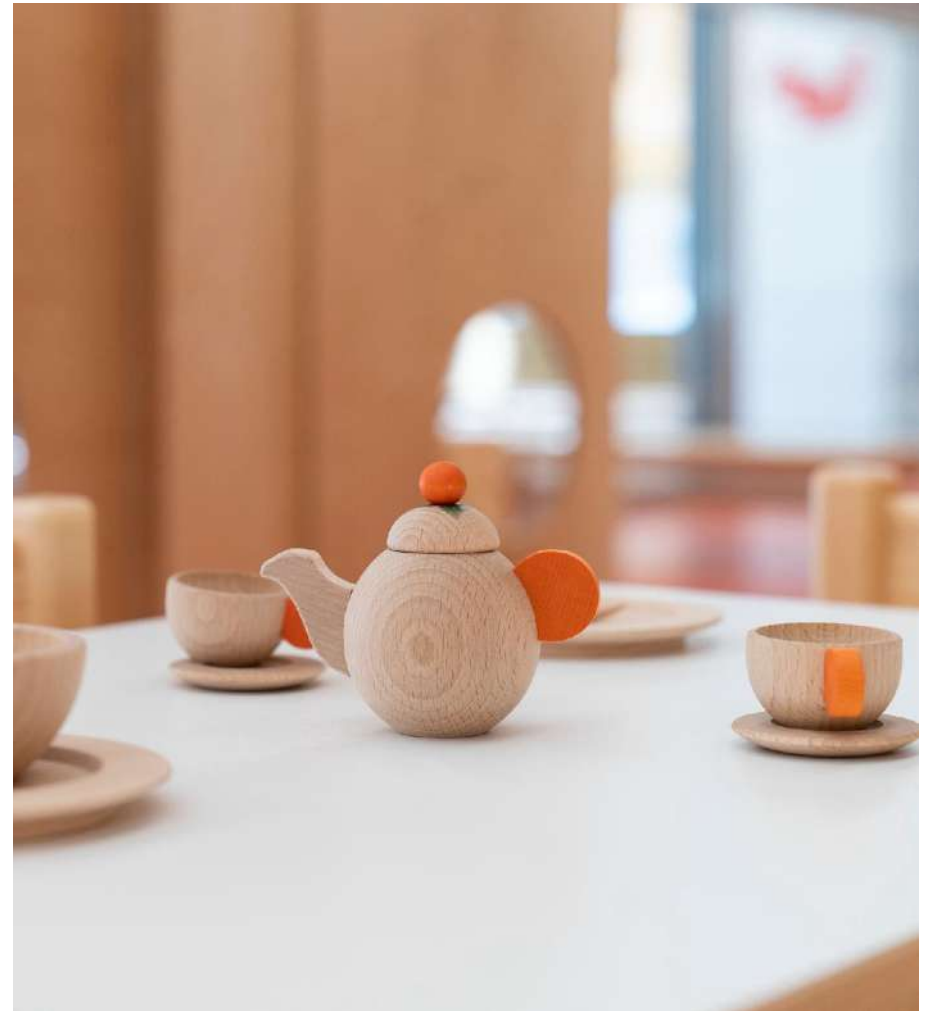
ECEC services at the crossroads

--> ECEC for vulnerable children: another imperative



Source: OECD, 2022.

11.15-11.45h
Coffee break



11.45h

Round Table

Managing ECEC Services in European Cities: Challenges and Opportunities in Barcelona, Milan and Tampere

Conductor: Nathalie Guri, Eurocities representative

Councillor for Education of Barcelona

Sara Belbeida

Vice Mayor of the City of Milan with Competence on Education

Anna Scavuzzo

Deputy mayor and Children Councillor of the Tampere City

Anne-Mari Jussila



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12.45h

Edufirst Erasmus+ Project Presentation
Process, Results and New Approaches to ECEC
Services

Book Launch

***‘Towards a New Global and Responsive Approach
to Early Childhood Education and Care Services’***

Moderator: University of Vic, Edufirst Team



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Erasmus+ EDUFIRST

Process, outputs and new approaches to ECEC services



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EDUFIRST Project

Improving Early Childhood Education and Care services (ECEC) for inclusion, equity, community participation and climate justice

Erasmus+ (KA220-SCH-36AB9B94)

Cooperation partnerships in school education

2023-2026 (33 months)



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EDUFIRST Project



Support municipalities in improving their Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) systems, institutional frameworks, and practices.

Experience of three European cities (Barcelona, Milan, Tampere) and the research and policy expertise of UVic-UCC.

Common challenges addressed:

- Availability** of ECEC services
- Accessibility** and barriers to inclusion
- Quality** of services

EDUFIRST Project (WP2)



Kick-off meeting (Vic)
29th and 30th January 2024

EDUFIRST Project (WP2)

*Inspiring Practices to Rethink
Early Childhood Education*



Tampere visit



Milan visit



Barcelona visit

EDUFIRST Project (WP3)

**Co-create a new
global model for
ECEC services**



High quality

Innovative

Inclusive

Equitable

Cross-sectoral

Accessible



EDUFIRST Project (WP4)

Training Programme

OBJECTIVES

ECEC professionals and policymakers to analyse, rethink and transform educational services.

Promote responsive, communitarian, global and intercultural ECEC services.

PARTICIPANTS

Barcelona: 45

Milan: 45

Tampere: 45

UVic-UCC: 15

Vic (EBMV): 35

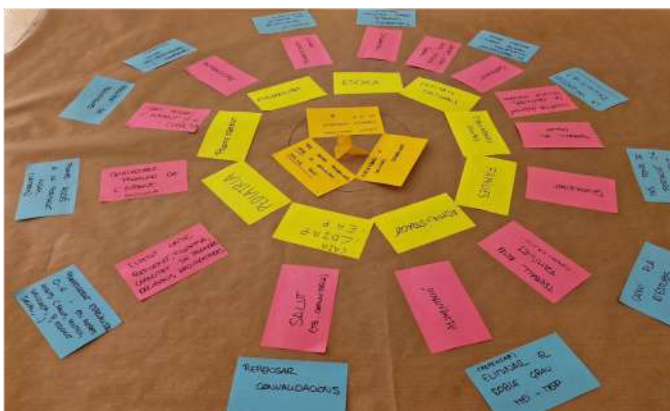
FORMAT

January – March 2026

35-hour blended training programme.

Flexible implementation adapted to each local context.

EDUFIRST Project (WP4)



Lessons from Barcelona, Milan and Tampere



European and global early childhood education and care (ECEC) systems face a paradox. Although ECEC is widely recognised as crucial for children's development and for advancing equity—especially for disadvantaged families—major challenges remain. Access to ECEC remains unequal, with many children from low-income or migrant backgrounds facing exclusion. At the same time, ECEC professionals often work in poorer conditions than other education and care staff, and Europe faces a growing shortage of qualified workers. Debates about the role of gender in care sectors also remain unresolved.

This book is the result of the Erasmus+ KA2 project EDUFIRST, which responds to this situation by learning from innovative practices in Barcelona, Milan and Tampere. Coordinated by the University of Vic (Barcelona), the project promotes a responsive, global ECEC approach that intertwines policy, institutional and pedagogical dimensions. Its aim is to strengthen inclusion, equity, community participation and climate justice while supporting municipalities in improving local systems and advancing the EU Child Guarantee.

Jordi Collet-Sabé is a Full Professor of Sociology of Education at the University of Vic (Barcelona, Spain). He has held visiting academic positions at the UCL Institute of Education, University of Cambridge and UNESCO. His main research interests include education policy, inequalities and strategies to combat them, family, school and community approaches and socio-educational zones as a new unit of education policy.

Glòria Olmos is a Lecturer in early childhood education at the University of Vic and the director of the three municipal nursery schools of Vic. Her professional career combines educational management, university teaching and research in the field of early childhood education, with a specific focus on the 0–3 age group.

Alejandro Paniagua is a Lecturer in Education and Social Sciences at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). He holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) and a degree in Teaching, specialising in primary school education. His professional background includes teaching in both compulsory and post-compulsory education, as well as working as a specialist in socio-educational projects for non-profit organisations.



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Foreword

Rethinking and reforming early childhood services

*Peter Moss**

At a time when early childhood services have come to be recognised as an important part of the welfare state, with countries wanting to boost the attendance of young children, it is problematic that these services (with a few notable exceptions) are deeply and adversely affected by the legacy of their origins more than a century ago. That legacy is dysfunctional systems, divided between ‘education’ and ‘childcare’ services, and often too between providing for children under and over 3 years of age. These split systems are



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Introduction

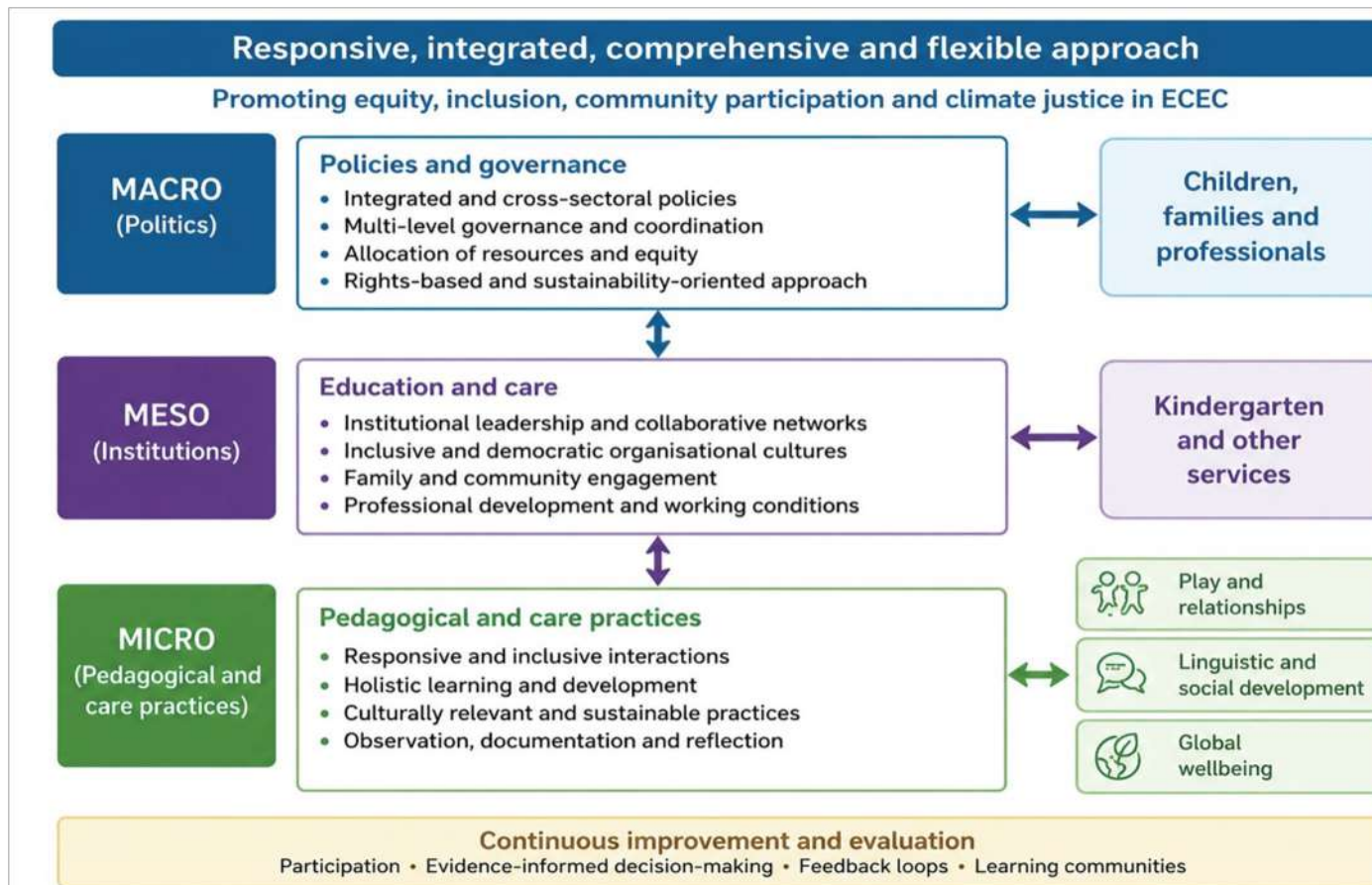
Alejandro Paniagua, Laura Farré and Berta Vila

European and global early childhood education and care (ECEC) services are facing a complex paradox. On the one hand, ECEC is recognised as critical to children's development, particularly for promoting equity for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Various international reports and meta-analyses highlight the significant role of ECEC in closing the learning gap between disadvantaged and advantaged children. More precisely, ECEC promotes cognitive and socio-emotional development, fosters resilience, and ensures equitable educational outcomes and long-term success for all children (OECD, 2020, 2022, 2025; UNICEF and UNESCO, 2024, etc.). The first 1,000 days of a child's life are widely regarded as crucial for their future development, and the EU's Child Guarantee strategy aims to address their needs throughout childhood.

Chapter 1. **Towards a new global and responsive ECEC services approach:** Rethinking policies, institutions and pedagogical practices

- If the nursery school is (almost always) the answer, which was the question?
- ECEC services must be responsive answers to children, families and social questions and needs
- How these ECEC services can bring a good answer to those changing questions and needs?

New model



Chapter 2: Towards a TOOL for the constant evaluation and improvement of early childhood education and care services

On Quality in ECEC: State of the Art

ITERS-R SCALE
(Infant/Toddler
Environment Rating Scale -
Revised) 1990-2003

INDEX FOR INCLUSION:
developing play, learning
and participation in early
years and childcare, 2006

DAVOPSI
(Device for the Analysis and
Evaluation of the
Pedagogical Organisation of
Nursery Schools), 2011

The TOOL for evaluating early childhood education services
is designed to be used in a participatory & reflective manner
by the entire educational community involved in ECEC services

On the use of the
TOOL:

self-assessment

collective
assessment

continuous
feedback

Three Levels of Evaluation of the TOOL (macro, meso, micro):

**Evaluation of early
childhood policies
(macro level)**

**Evaluation of institutional
dynamics in early childhood
(meso level)**

**Evaluation of psycho-
pedagogical practices in
ECEC services (micro level)**

Descriptor	Level			
	Excellent	Good	Sufficient	To be improved

Evaluation of early childhood policies (macro level)

Legislation, regulation and funding	Functions and orientation of early childhood policies	Equality of opportunity and social cohesion
Culture of childhood	Role of families	Inclusion
Universal access	Child's voice	Children's rights Child Guarantee
Family voices	Ratios	Resources
Networking	Spaces	Time
Initial training	Induction	Continuing education
Working conditions		

Evaluation of institutional dynamics in early childhood (meso level)

Community participation

Concept of child and family and implications for the organisation of the daily life

Implementation of curriculum / content / skills

Organisation of spaces

Assessment of the organisation and functioning of the service

Democratic positioning

Educational project

Welcoming children

Organisation of time

Collaboration between professionals

Leadership

Welcoming families and caregivers (Foster's care)

Orientation and coherence of educational and care intervention

Evaluation of psycho-pedagogical practices in ECEC services (micro level)

Implementation of the educational project and curriculum and/ or skills to be developed	Types of learning situations	Assessment of educational practice
Spaces	Time	Selection of play materials
Inclusion	Educational interaction and joint activity	Adult-child relationship
Social organisation of the activity	Type and quality of peer interaction	Assessment
Educators as intellectuals	Reflective practical experience	Observation and listening practices

Chapter 3: ECEC Services as Hubs in a Community and Family Network

A public network rooted in the community

Barcelona



The municipal public network moves toward integrated community models.

From schools to “houses of early childhood”

“Houses of early childhood”

Not only educational centres, but social infrastructures that support care, relationships and community life.

A model against isolated parenting

Strategic lines of action

**Strengthening the
support network among
the families within the
center**

**Fostering active
interaction with the
neighborhood and its
facilities**

**Opening school facilities
as community
infrastructure for local
residents**

Chapter 4: ECEC Services for Climate Justice

Barcelona

Young children are among the most vulnerable groups

The climate crisis is not only an environmental issue: it is also an educational, social and equity challenge.

Climate justice starts with those who are least responsible and most exposed.

Highlight children's needs in the face of the climate emergency,

Reduce the ecological footprint of educational facilities

Promote systemic transformations through networking

47 measures across six axes of action

The strategy translates climate justice into concrete actions that touch spaces, resources, routines and educational practices.

Nature

Renaturalised
playgrounds and
more green spaces

Energy

Renewable energy
and energy
communities

Temperature

Climate audits,
thermal comfort
and climate shelters

Waste

Exchange markets,
less plastic and
reusable cloth
nappies

Food

90% organic, local
and seasonal food

Education

Continuous
environmental
awareness and staff
training

From environmental awareness to institutional transformation.

The outdoor space as a “third educator”

From a pedagogical perspective, naturalised outdoor spaces become places for learning, care and community life.



Renaturalised playgrounds

More shade,
biodiversity and
contact with nature



Climate shelters

Thermal comfort
and protection from
urban heat



Open to the neighbourhood

Shared use in the afternoons
and at weekends

The playground is not a secondary space: it is a pedagogical, climatic and community infrastructure.

Chapter 5: Educational Continuity in the Integrated 0 - 6 System

Milano

Continuity is not only an organisational adjustment.

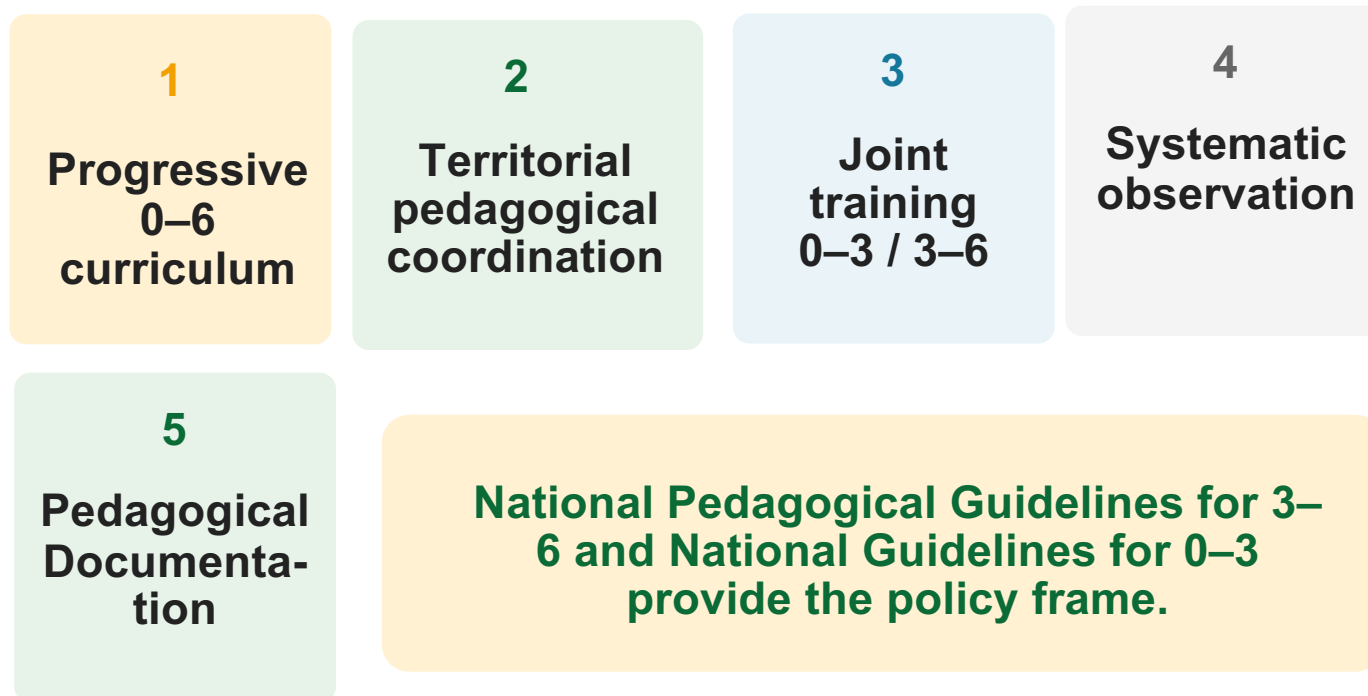
It is framed as a child's right to experience a coherent educational journey without traumatic ruptures.



From separated services to a coherent public architecture for early childhood.

Tools that make continuity possible

The integrated system is supported by national pedagogical orientations and by concrete tools that connect stages, professionals and practices.

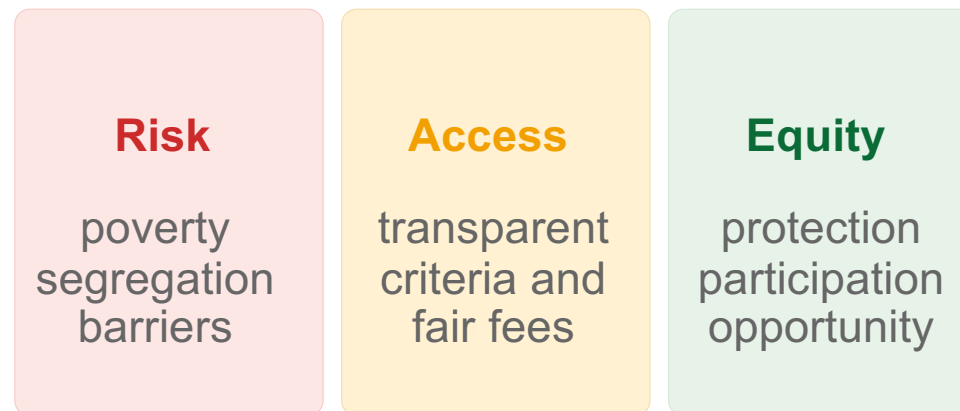


Chapter 6: The European Child Guarantee in a Metropolitan Context

Milano

The European Child Guarantee frames ECEC as a lever to prevent child poverty.

The access to early childhood education and care can help interrupt the intergenerational reproduction of inequalities.



A metropolitan context marked by complexity

Milan is presented as a dense and unequal urban environment, where early childhood services must respond to multiple and intersecting forms of vulnerability.



Milan organises its municipal services through territorial units that coordinate 0–3 and 3–6 settings.

Territorial Educational Units

67

Chapter 7: A Multicultural and Multilingual Approach

Tampere

In Finland, early childhood education is guaranteed for every child from the earliest years.

Tampere uses this universal framework to build participation, inclusion and recognition in a rapidly diversifying society.

15%+

children with
other home
languages

Right

universal
access from
early years

Participation

high levels
of ECEC
attendance

Belonging

languages
cultures
worldviews

**Universal
entitlement is the
starting point for
inclusive and
responsive
practice**

Home language

children can draw on the languages that shape their identity

Classroom life

languages appear naturally in play, routines and relationships

Finnish as L2

learning Finnish grows from recognition, not replacement

Identity

language becomes a bridge to belonging

Translanguaging strengthens identity while opening access to Finnish.

1

S2 teachers

Support Finnish as a second language learning

2

Language assistants

Bridge communication in languages

3

KUKA coordinators

Support cultural and worldview education

4

LangPeda + anti-racist training

Strengthen linguistic environments and inclusive professional practice

Chapter 8: Quality, Evaluation and Professionalism

Tampere

In Finland, educational quality is supported by legislation, curriculum and a national evaluation infrastructure.

The quality not as a checklist, but as a shared framework for continuous improvement.

ECEC Act

legal
basis
2018

National Curriculum

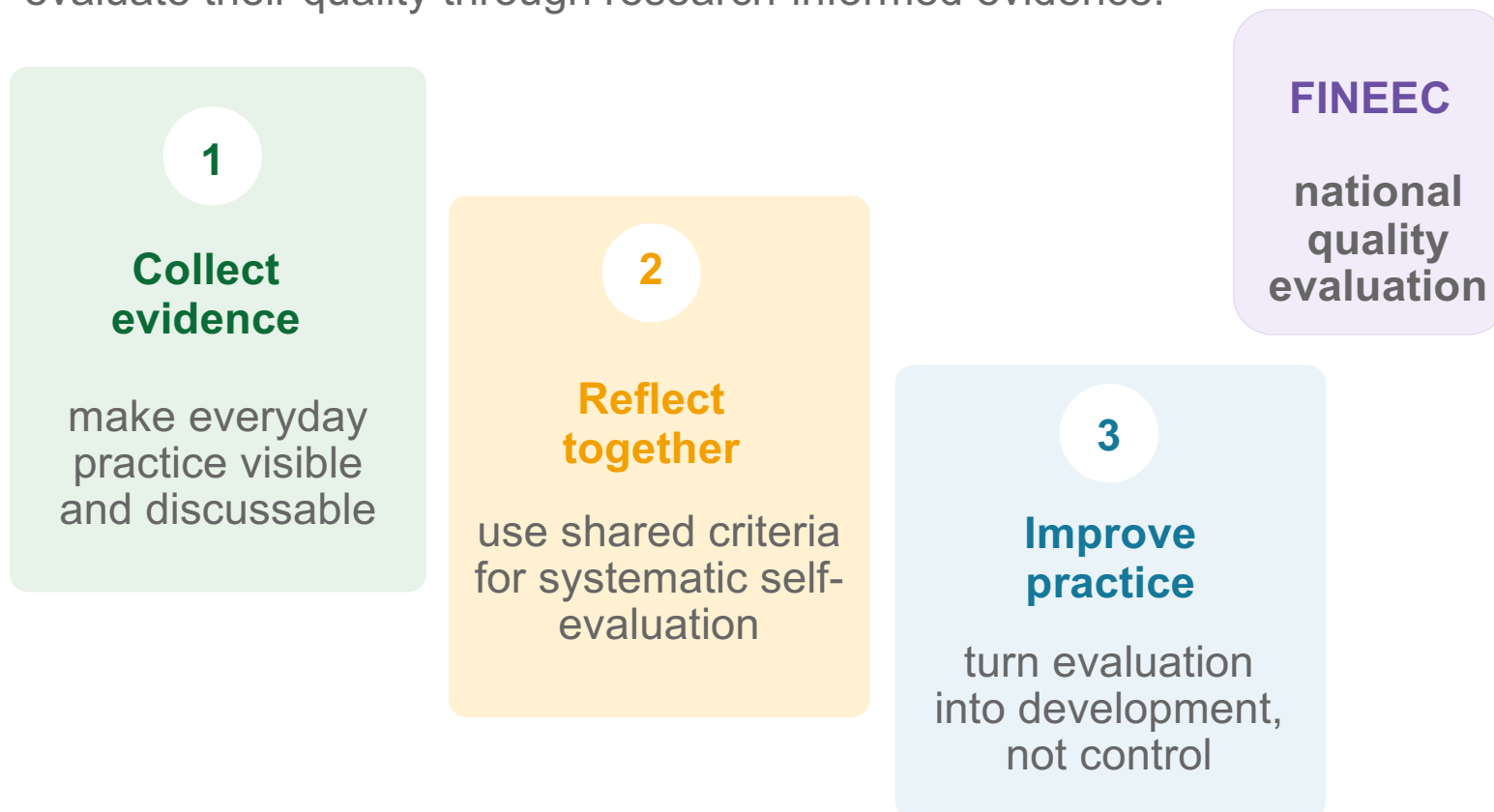
pedagogical
orientation

Valssi

evidence-
based
self-
evaluation

**Quality
becomes
visible when
the system
supports
reflection,
evidence and
improvement.**

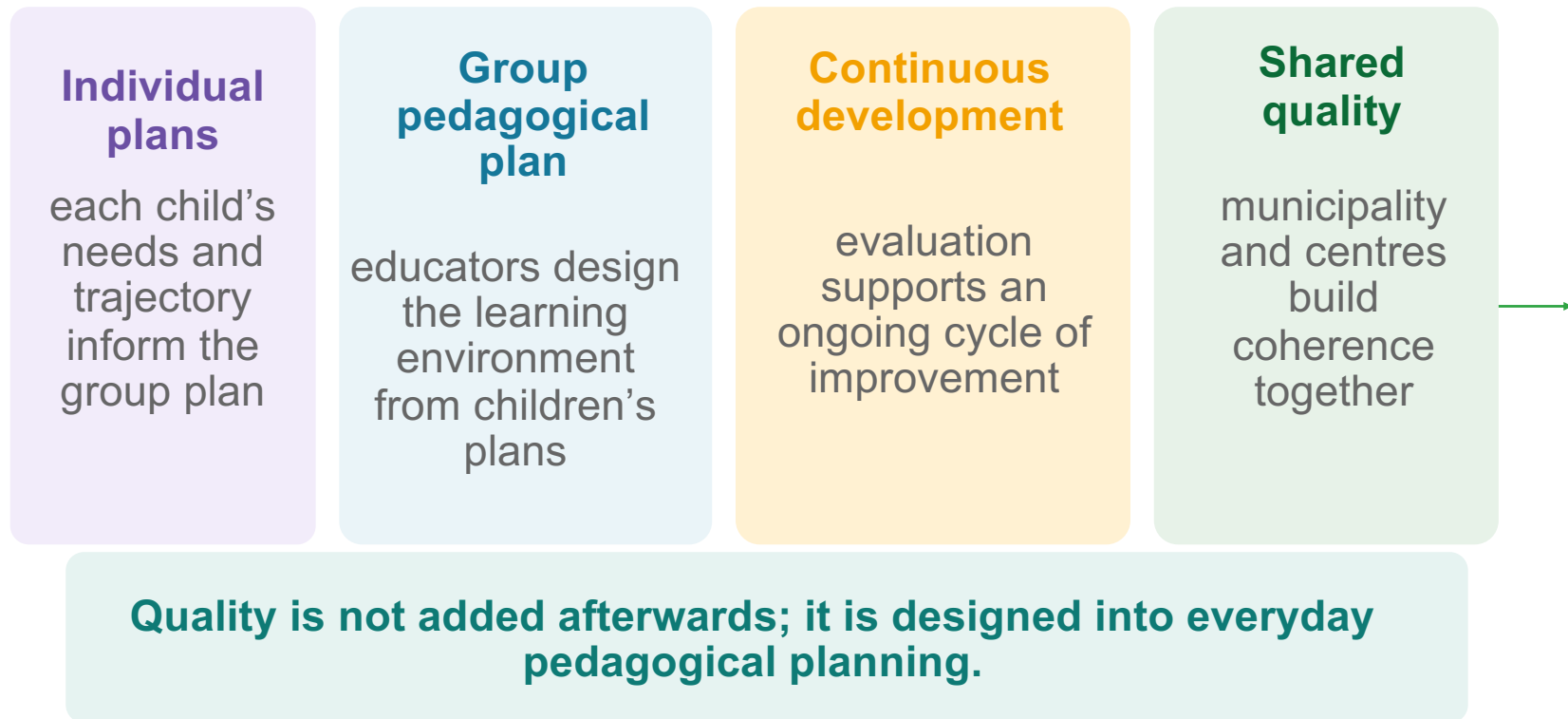
Valssi is presented as a national digital platform that helps centres evaluate their quality through research-informed evidence.



The key shift: evaluation becomes a tool for pedagogical dialogue

Quality at municipal and centre level

At local level, quality is constructed through continuous development and pedagogical planning connected to each child.



Professionalisation: the structural challenge

Important structural tensions: a shortage of qualified staff and a more demanding qualification framework by 2030.

1

Shortage of qualified staff

A key challenge for Tampere and Finland as a whole.

2

2030 qualification shift

Two thirds of staff will be required to hold a university-level qualification.

3

Teachers and social pedagogues

Professional profiles become central to quality and continuity.

Professionalisation becomes a condition for sustaining quality over time.

From evaluation to professional learning

Tampere responds to workforce challenges through attraction, retention and peer pedagogical support.

Attract

salary
increases

Develop

career plans and
paid study days

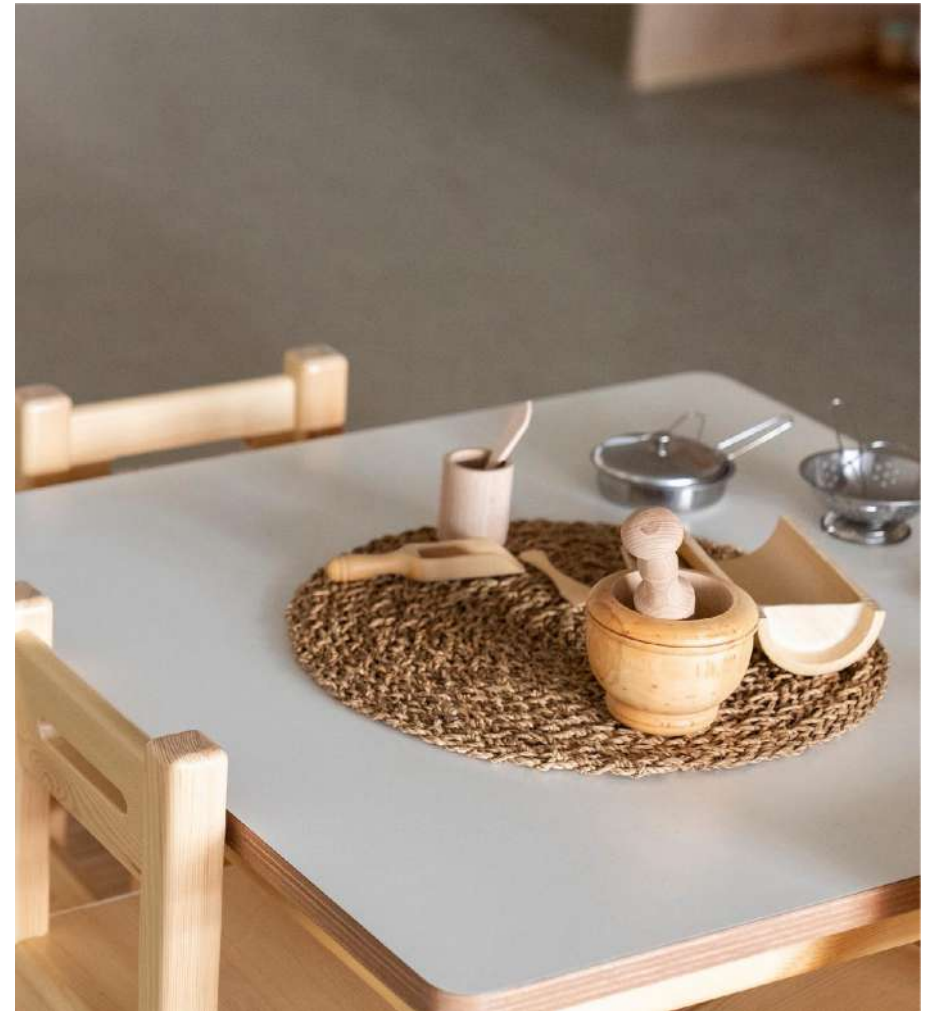
Support

vasu-agents as
expert peer
mentors

Chapter 8 closes the journey with a clear message:

**Quality improves when evaluation becomes shared
professional learning.**

13.45-15.30h
Lunch



15.30h

Round Table

Edufirst Cities Journey and Results: New Proposals for ECEC Services

Conductor: Jordi Collet (University of Vic)

Head of the Early Childhood Education and Care services.

South and Southeast service area. Municipality of Tampere (Finland)

Tanja Moisala

Head of Projects Unit, Labzerosei, Spazi Zerosei. Area of Childhood services.

Education and Instruction Department. Municipality of Milan (Italy)

Franca Locati

General Manager at the Barcelona Institute for Education



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at the Municipality of Barcelona (IMEB)

Alícia Aguilera



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Round Table: Edufirst Cities Journey, Learning and Results: New proposals for ECEC services

Tanja Moisala, Head on Early Childhood Education
and care in City of Tampere Western area, Tampere



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TAMPERE

Beginning of the project

- Four study visits to participating countries.
 - In Tampere, we presented:
 - Overview of Finnish and Tampere ECEC and pre-primary education & Family clubs and family centre activities.
 - Maternity and child health clinic services.
 - Visits to four ECEC centres: Etelä-Hervanta, Kisapuisto, Vuores and Linnainmaa.
 - Topics of interest: Pedagogy for children under three years of age, evening, shift and weekend care services, international discussion and reflection on different ECEC approaches and practices.
- ☑ Valuable exchange of ideas and experiences between professionals from different countries.**

Finnish Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)

- Finland guarantees every child a subjective right to ECEC, regardless of the parents' employment status, income, or family circumstances.
- ECEC is guided by the Act on Early Childhood Education and Care and the National Core Curriculum for ECEC.
- The system combines education, care, and pedagogy, supporting children's learning, development, well-being, and participation.
- ECEC is based on the principles of equality, inclusion, non-discrimination, and children's rights.
- Municipalities are responsible for ensuring access to ECEC services, while families pay fees based on income. Many low-income families receive ECEC free of charge.
- Participation rates are high: in Tampere, around 64% of children under three and 94% of children over three attend ECEC.

Workshops & Training course

- 5 workshops in Tampere with 47 participants (ECEC staff, parents and facilitators).
- Workshops highlighted the need for stronger collaboration, better support for educators and a practical quality assessment tool.
- Training course for 40 social pedagogues in ECEC.
- Focusing on Intercultural and Responsive ECEC.



Co-designing the EduFirst book-

Towards a New Global and Responsive Approach to Early Childhood Education and Care Services

- Tampere prepared two chapters
- **7. Multicultural and multilingual approach in ECEC services-**
Trajectory and current debates in Tampere
- **8. Quality, evaluation and professionalism in ECEC services-** Debates and challenges in Tampere

7. Multicultural and multilingual approach in ECEC services

- Tampere provides inclusive, high-quality ECEC services for over 7,600 children, with strong participation rates and a child-centred approach.
- Cultural and linguistic diversity is growing rapidly: over 15% of children in ECEC have a foreign-language background, and more than 60 languages are represented in some centres.
- ECEC promotes multilingualism through language-aware pedagogy, translanguaging, Finnish as a Second Language (S2) teaching, language assistants, and support for children's home languages.
- Inclusion, equality, anti-racism, and children's participation are central principles, supported by staff training and diversity planning.
- Future challenges include increasing linguistic diversity, regional segregation, declining birth rates, and ensuring equal opportunities for all children and families.

8. Quality, evaluation and professionalism in ECEC services-

- Quality assurance is embedded at all levels through national curricula, local planning, continuous self-evaluation, and the national Valssi quality assessment system.
- Every child has an individual ECEC plan, and each group develops a pedagogical plan to support learning, well-being, inclusion, and continuous improvement.
- Children, families, and staff actively participate in quality evaluation through documentation, feedback, and annual surveys.
- Parent satisfaction is consistently high.
- Professional competence is central to quality, supported by mentoring, induction, ongoing training, and strong pedagogical leadership.
- Future workforce challenges include teacher shortages, staff retirements, and meeting the 2030 requirement for a higher proportion of qualified teachers and social pedagogues.
- Key future priorities are maintaining high-quality inclusive services, strengthening leadership, supporting staff wellbeing, and preparing educators for increasing diversity, digitalisation, sustainability, and lifelong learning.

Future challenges for ECEC in Tampere

- Growing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity
- Addressing Segregation and Inequality
- Workforce Availability and Qualification Requirements
- Maintaining Quality in a Changing Environment
- Sustainability and Climate Responsibility
- Leadership and Resource Management

Growing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

- The number of foreign-language speakers is expected to double by 2040 in Tampere.
- Increasing need for multilingual and culturally responsive pedagogy.
- Stronger support required for Finnish language learning while valuing home languages.
- Recruitment and training of language assistants and S2 specialists remain critical.

Addressing Segregation and Inequality

- Residential and linguistic segregation is visible across Tampere.
- Some ECEC centres have very high concentrations of multilingual children.
- Risk of unequal learning opportunities and reduced peer support for Finnish language acquisition.
- Need to strengthen inclusion, social cohesion, and equal opportunities across all neighbourhoods.

Workforce Availability and Qualification Requirements

- Significant teacher shortage remains a national challenge.
- Approximately one quarter of the current workforce will retire within the next decade.
- By 2030, Tampere needs around 550 additional qualified ECEC teachers or social pedagogues.
- Attracting, retaining, and supporting qualified staff will be crucial.

Maintainig Quiality in a Chainging Environment

- Increasing diversity and support needs place greater demands on staff competence.
- Continuous professional learning is needed in inclusion, multilingualism, and anti-racist practices.
- Ensuring consistent quality across municipal and private providers remains a key challenge.
- Balancing pedagogical work, documentation, and evaluation with everyday operational demands.

Sustainability and Climate Responsibility

- Tampere's Carbon Neutral 2030 goals place new expectations on ECEC.
- Eco-social education and sustainable lifestyles must be embedded in everyday practice.
- Children need opportunities to develop environmental awareness and responsibility.
- Climate change and future migration may further increase cultural diversity and service needs.

Leadership and Resource Management

- Growing service complexity increases leadership demands.
- Managers need sufficient time and resources for pedagogical leadership.
- Financial constraints may limit investments in leadership structures and support services.
- Effective workforce management and staff wellbeing are essential for quality provision.



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Round Table: Edufirst Cities Journey, Learning and Results: New proposals for ECEC services

Alícia Aguilera, General Manager at the Barcelona Institute
for Education at the Municipality of Barcelona (IMEB)



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L'atenció a la primera infància a Barcelona

Barcelona ECEC services



Model educatiu

Educational Model



Línies estratègiques

Strategic priorities



Inclusiva
Inclusive



Comunitària
Community-Oriented



Clima
Climate Action

Barcelona al projecte Edufirst

Barcelona in the Edufirst project



Visite s Visits



Escoles bressol i espais familiars
Nursery schools and family
centers

Aurora
Tres
tombs
Colometa
La Mar

Training and workshops

Jornades i tallers



Escoles bressol comunitàries

Community-Oriented Nursery schools

Polítiques públiques, institucions i
pràctiques educatives

**Public policies, institutions and educational
practices**

Pobresa infantil

Child poverty

I més

And more



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Sinergies Synergies



Col·laboració amb Milà
Collaboration with Milan

Acollida d'educadores
Hosting educators

(aquí em cal ampliar informació)

16.30h

**Video, dialogue and experience
Community and Intercultural Action
in Barcelona ECEC Services**

Conductor: Elisa Stinus, Institut Metròpoli Barcelona (Institut Infància i Adolescència)

Barcelona Community Action Services
Bet Bàrbara

Barcelona Intercultural Commissioned
Richard José Sánchez

Barcelona nursery school experiences
EBM Aurora, EBM Colometa and EBM Teixonera



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Video

Escoles bressol comunitàries

Municipal strategy: Community nursery schools

Barcelona Municipal Institute of Education
Directorate of Community Action
2025



Barcelona 



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18.00h

Final summary

**Visual Relator of the Day and Agenda for the Next
Day**

Edufirst Principal Investigator
University of Vic
Jordi Collet



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Edufirst Erasmus+ Project Final Conference

Barcelona



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 **TAMPERE**



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Edufirst Erasmus+ Project Final Conference

Tuesday, 22nd of September 2026
Barcelona



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Main Conference

Improving Early ECEC for Inclusion, Equity, Community Participation and Climate Justice: Reflections from ToWe Erasmus+ Project

Conductor: Berta Vila (University of Vic)

ToWe Project

Prof. Àngels Geis (Ramon Llull University)



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“Improving Early Childhood Education and Care services (ECEC) for inclusion, equity, community participation and climate justice: reflections from ToWe Erasmus + project”.
Prof. Àngels Geis (Ramon Llull University).



<https://www.toddlerswellbeing.co.uk>



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¿Qué es el proyecto TOWE?

EL BIENESTAR DE LOS NIÑOS Y NIÑAS DE 2 A 3 AÑOS



Fundamentos teóricos

Aportación de las tres universidades participantes:

- Universidad de Kingston (UK)
- Universidad de Stavanger (NO)
- Universidad Ramon Llull (ES)



Método, participantes y análisis

Método - proyecto de investigación-acción basado en observar, reflexionar, actuar y evaluar para mejorar la propia práctica.

Participantes - Profesionales centros infantiles.

Análisis - enfoque cualitativo interpretativo.



Planificación

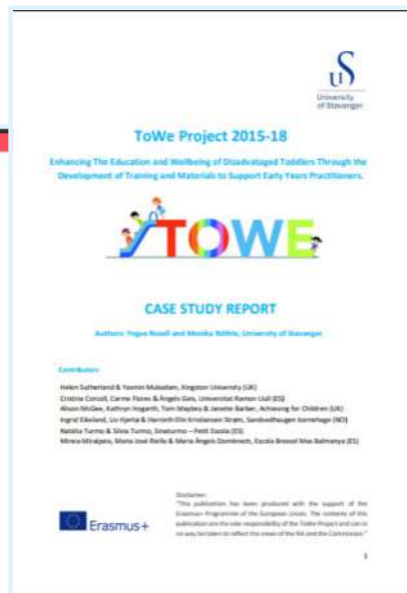
1er año

Jornada de formación y posterior trabajo en cada centro.

2º año

Job Shadowing en el seno de cada país participante.





Manuales de Trabajo Proyecto TOWE — Estructura:

1. Objetivos y marco teórico
2. Preguntas para la reflexión
3. Items para la observación y evaluación



Cuatro bloques temáticos TOWE



BLOQUE 1
EI BIENESTAR INFANTIL



BLOQUE 2
La VOZ y EXPRESIONES de los
niños y niñas - El JUEGO



BLOQUE 3
LENGUA/LENGUAS de los
niños y niñas



BLOQUE 4
EI MOMENTO DE LAS COMIDAS
en los centros infantiles toddler



TODDLER WELLBEING

El bienestar de los niños pequeños

Preguntas para la reflexión:

1. ¿Qué significa para vosotras?

Reflexión sobre el concepto de bienestar y sus implicaciones cotidianas en la primera infancia.

2. ¿Por qué es una consideración importante?

Análisis del impacto clave del bienestar al trabajar directamente con niños y niñas.





La VOZ y las EXPRESIONES de los niños y niñas. El Juego.





La LENGUA/LENGUAS de los niños y niñas.





El momento de las COMIDAS en los centros infantiles.



Impacto del proyecto TOWE. Análisis.

En la práctica pedagógica:

- Calidad, cohesión y aplicabilidad de los materiales.
- Redefinición de conceptos: diversidad y desventaja.
- Cambio metodológico: hacia una pedagogía centrada en el niño.
- Lenguaje compartido, confianza profesional y trabajo en equipo.

Implementación práctica, innovación en rutinas y transformación organizativa:

- Autonomía institucional y concienciación práctica.
- Estrategias colectivas e innovación en rutinas.
- Cultura de autorreflexión e identidad de equipo.

Desarrollo profesional continuo e impacto sostenible:

- Capacitación inicial e impulso del liderazgo.
- Observación laboral entre iguales como espejo reflexivo.
- Impacto en la práctica y el clima del centro.
- Sostenibilidad del cambio y retos futuros.



Los materiales disponibles en la web del proyecto TOWE

Acceso directo y recursos descargables en la [web del proyecto](#):

Manuales

[Manuales completos](#)
para trabajar
detenidamente cada
uno de los temas del
proyecto.

Auditorías

Material de evaluación
diseñado para realizar
las [propias auditorías](#)
en los centros.

Estrategias

[Estrategias clave](#)
implementadas por
cada escuela
participante para
mejorar el bienestar de
los niños.

Presentación

[Presentación modelo](#)
que incluye preguntas
para la reflexión y
comentarios
compartidos en las
Jornadas de cierre
(2018).



Conclusiones finales

El profesional reflexivo no limita su reflexión a las decisiones aprendidas en su entorno inmediato, sino que se convierte en un investigador en el contexto educativo. No está ligado a las teorías ni a las técnicas establecidas, sino que construye una nueva teoría de cada caso único.

Schön, D. A. (1998). *El profesional reflexivo: cómo piensan los profesionales cuando actúan*. Paidós.



Gracias por su atención.



Barcelona, 22 de septiembre del 2026

Round Table
Research-Based Knowledge to Better Address
Current ECEC Services Challenges

Conductor: Dr. Sabilah Eboo Alwani (University of Cambridge)

Institut Metròpoli Barcelona (Institut Infància i Adolescència)
Laia Pineda

Autonomous University of Barcelona
Sílvia Blanch

COFACE Families Europe
Martino Serapioni



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The art of developing evidence-based public policies for early childhood education and care services

Ten years of bridging the gap between research and public child policy in the city. Laia Pineda



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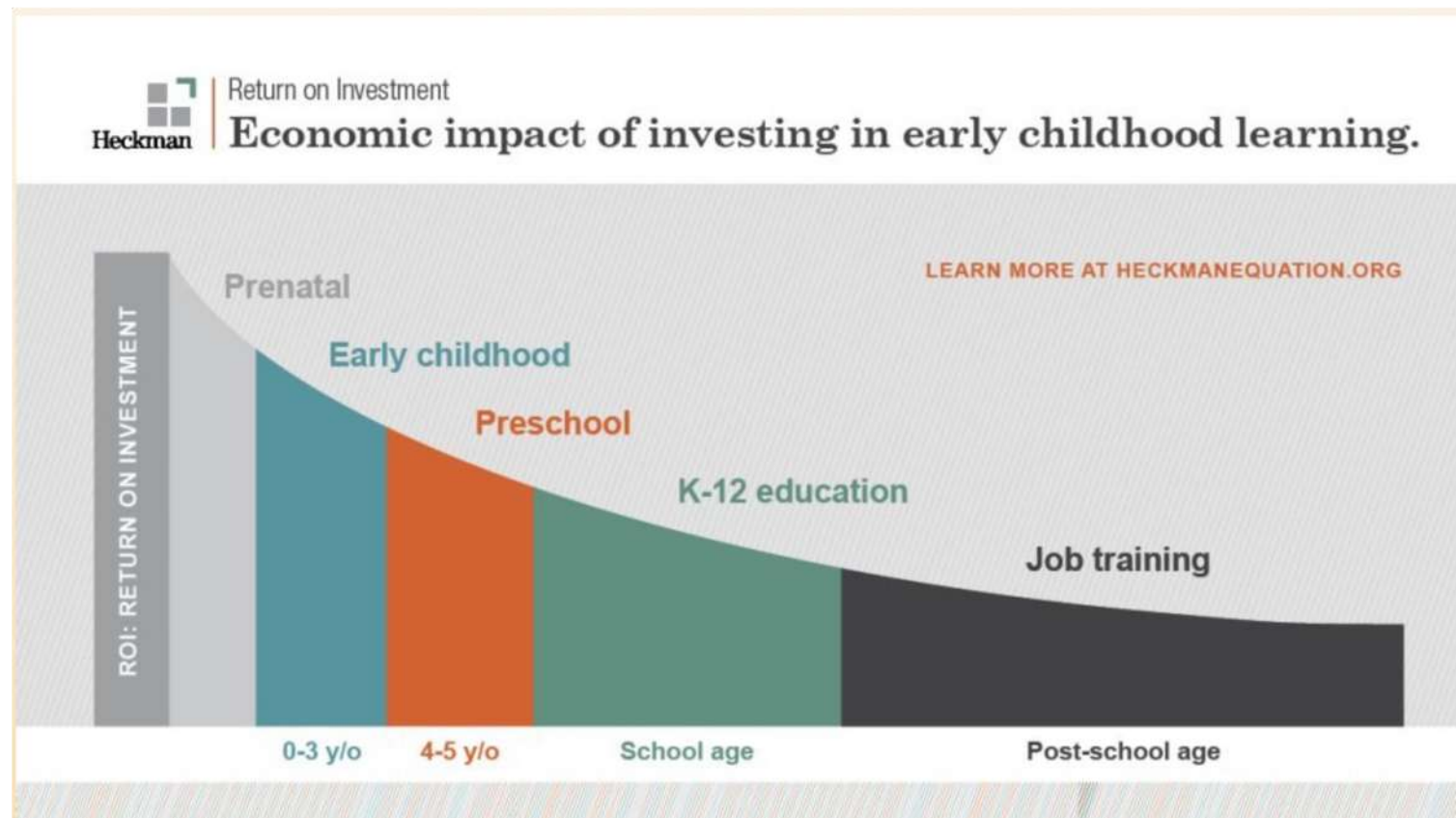
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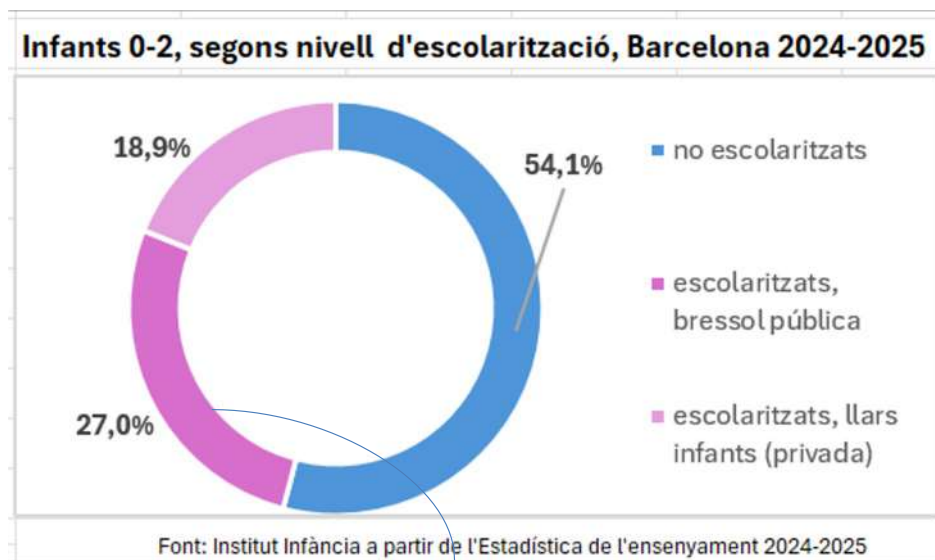
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The investments with the highest social return



Font: Heckman, James J. (2008). "Schools, Skills and Synapses," Economic Inquiry, 46(3): 289-324

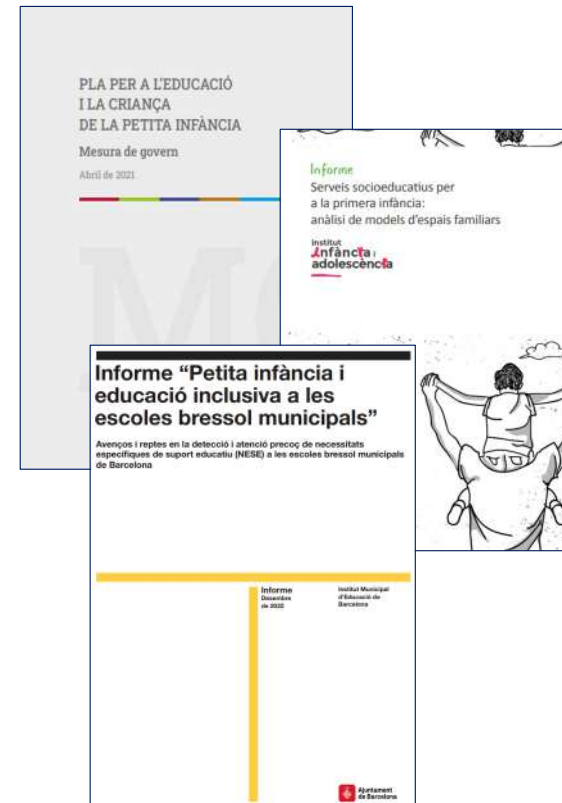
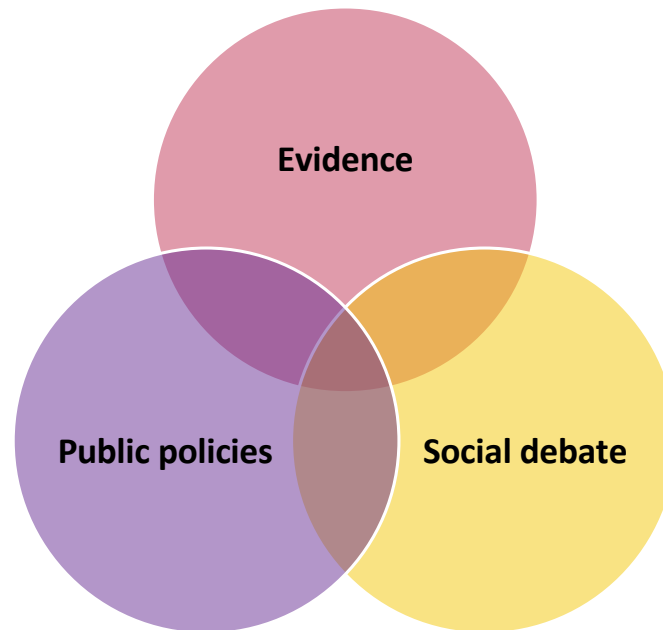
Efforts to guarantee nursery school places for young children



Font: Institut Infància i Adolescència de Barcelona (IIAB-Institut Metròpoli) a partir de les dades de l'Ajuntament de Barcelona (IMEB), la Diputació de Barcelona (Educació i HERMES) i la Generalitat de Catalunya (Estadística de l'ensenyament). Curs 2022-2023

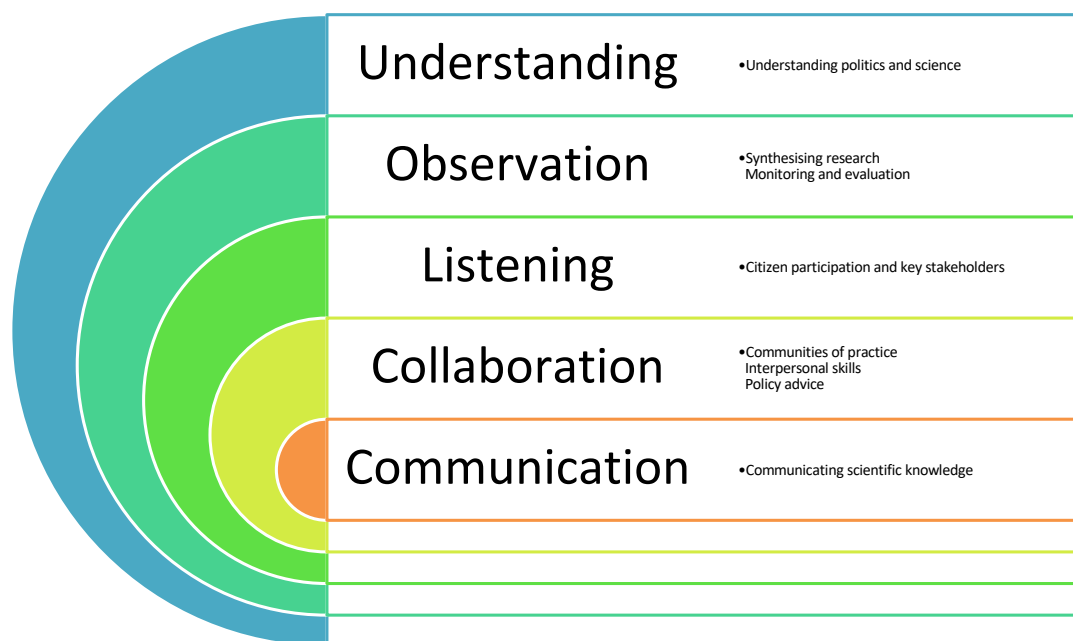


A public knowledge institute to co-create public policies with evidence



Act as knowledge brokers

Competencies for evidence-informed, deliberative policymaking



Font: Institut Infància i Adolescència de Barcelona, based on the Joint Research Centre 2018 i 2025

Evidence and policy: a complicated relationship

Evidence	Political action
Academic time • Slow - Linear - Structured	Political time • Fast - Nonlinear - Unstructured
Academic language and logics	Political language and logic
Tension: the availability of data for decision-making purposes.	Tension: it needs time to assimilate; they may not like the evidence

Font: Institut Infància i Adolescència de Barcelona – Institut Metròpoli

An example: 0-6 services guide



Font: Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2025

An example: 0-6 services guide

1 

SUPORT EN LA CRIANÇA DEL TEU NADÓ

Prepara't per a l'aventura de fer créixer la família!

Why it's important?

Per què és important?

L'arribada d'un nadó a casa és un punt d'inflexió per a la família. A Barcelona t'ajuda a preparar-te per a l'arribada del teu nadó d'abans del seu naixement, arriba a la família i també durant la criança. Els primers anys de vida són uns anys molt importants en de tota una vida.

7

CONEIXES ELS DRETS DELS INFANTS?

Els infants tenen uns drets específics, reconeguts per la Convenció sobre els drets de l'infant de les Nacions Unides. Conèixer aquests drets és important per poder-los defensar des del primer dia.

The rights perspective

Diversity, inclusion, interculturality, Gender equity



An example: 0-6 services guide





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Thank you!

lpineda@institutinfancia.cat

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Research-based knowledge to better address
current ECEC services challenges

The First 1,000 Days: Bridging the Gap Between Science and Political Will

Dr. Sílvia Blanch Gelabert
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
BES



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***Children begin to exist when
they are fantasized***

Winnicott, 1966



The Law of Neurological Gravity



Extreme Neuroplasticity

The maternal cerebral cortex transforms by 94% during pregnancy. Neural connections form at an unrepeatable velocity during the first three years (Bergman, Linley & Fawcus, 2004).



Risk of Toxic Stress

Chronic exposure to poverty or social isolation alters neurobiological development, compounding lifelong educational and mental health risks (Shonkoff, 2012).



Cyrulnik Commission (2020)

The first 1,000 days dictate lifelong health and resilience. Acting later in development is biologically less effective and significantly costlier.

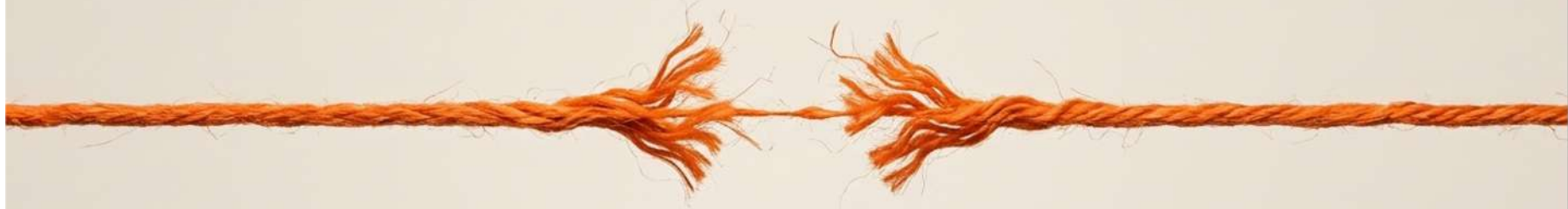


The Danger Zone: Navigating the 19-Week Gap

Phase 1
(Pregnancy)

The Gap
(19 Weeks)

Phase 3
(1 to 3 Years)



Medical focus is strong, but crucial opportunities for psychosocial screening are routinely missed.

Paid leave ends. Low-income families cannot afford unpaid hours reductions. The system offers no structural bridge.

Unequal access to Escolas Bressol (ECEC). Vulnerable families are forced to rely on fragile, informal care arrangements while missing critical developmental windows.

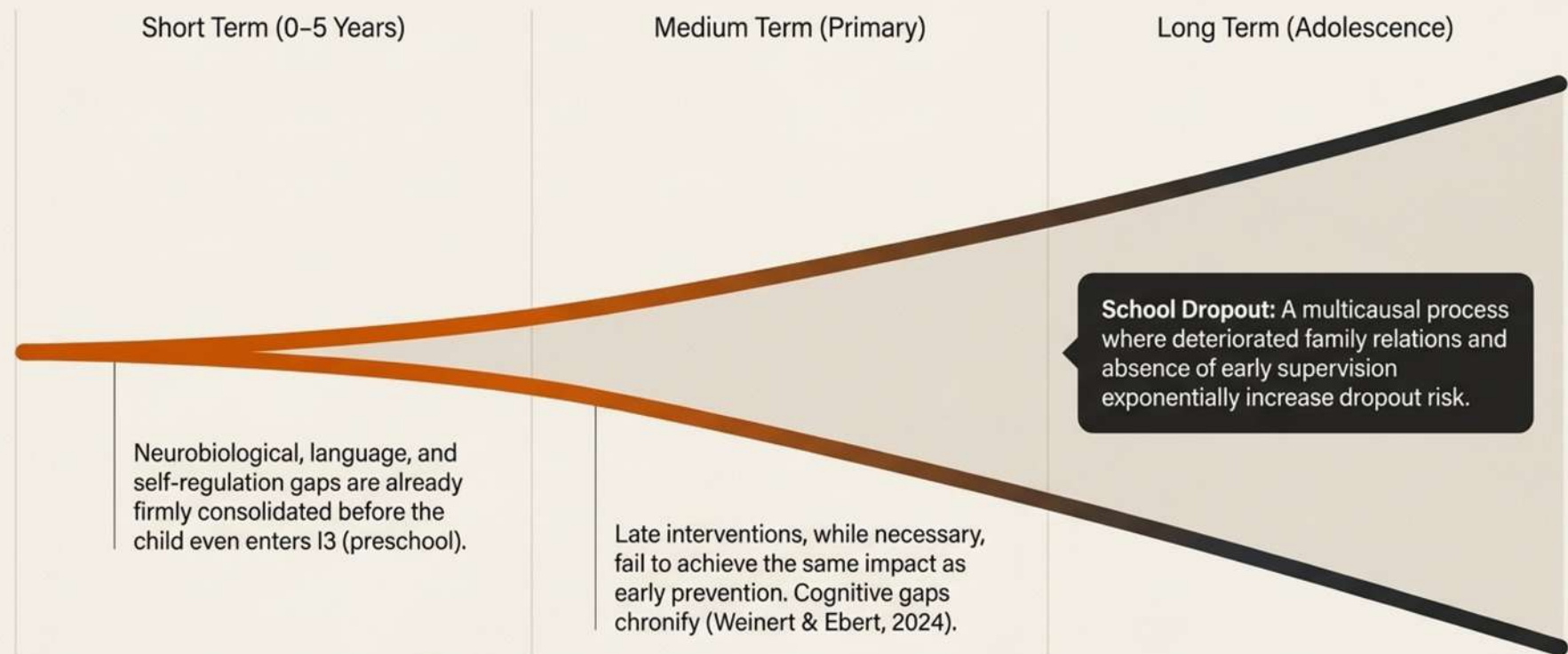
Fundamental Needs of Early Childhood

- **Emotional security and a stable, exclusive bond** (Bowlby, 1982).
- **Sensitive and consistent responses** to their signals and rhythms (Goldschmied & Jackson, 1994).
- **Intersubjectivity and individualised attention:** being seen, heard and recognised (Trevarthen, 1998).
- **Emotional and physiological self-regulation (stress)** (Tronick, 2007).
- **A rich environment, without excessive noise,** and opportunities for simultaneous interactions (Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001).
- **Exploration and free play** in a safe environment (Edo, Blanch, Anton, 2015).
- **Respect for the family bond** and for the diversity of contexts.



At this stage, educational figures must respond to these primary needs of the newborn, and not to the organisational or emotional demands of adults.

The Accumulation of School Disadvantage



Acting late is less effective, much more expensive, and profoundly unjust.

Parenting Support Works

Global Evidence Base

Synthesizing data from **102 clinical trials across 33 countries** (Jeong et al., 2021), universal interventions in the first 3 years demonstrate measurable, long-term improvements in child development.

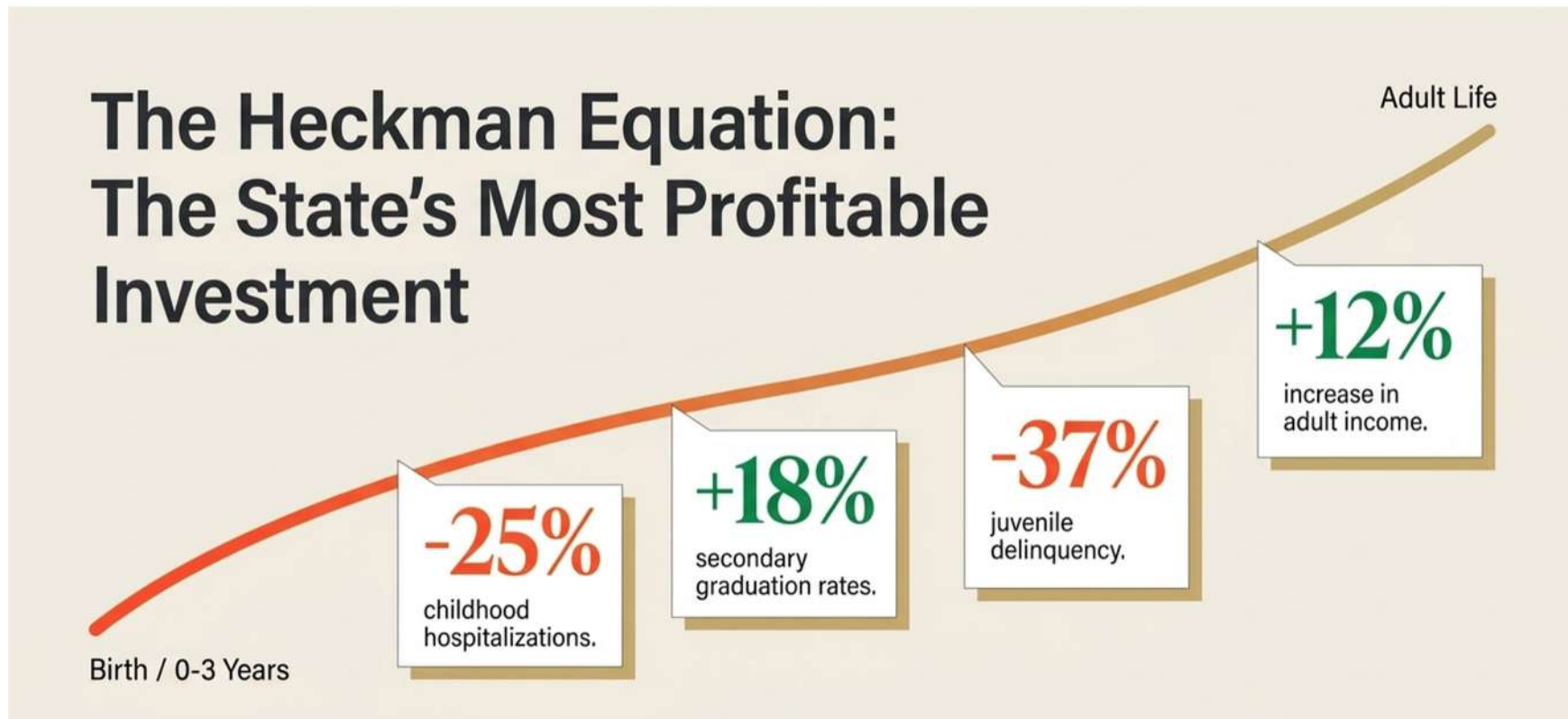
The Fundamental Principle

Holistic development relies on the emotional and physical availability of the primary caregiver (Winnicott, Bowlby). Professional guidance translates this psychological theory into scalable public policy.



The Heckman Investment ROI

Heckman, J. J., & Karapakula, G. (2022).



"Early support is not a welfare expense; it is a **macroeconomic policy of prevention.**"

The Catalan Friction: Low Protective Intensity

36.5%

of children and youth under 18 in Catalonia live at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE, Idescat 2025).

Unprotected Time

Parental leave limited to 19 weeks per parent, leaving a severe gap before guaranteed educational access.

Siloed Systems

Health (Pediatrics/ASSIR), Social Rights, and Education operate in parallel circuits with no shared data.

Isolated Parenting

Economic stress combined with unequal support networks penalizes the emotional availability required for child neurodevelopment.

The Sure Start Model: The Umbrella Effect

The Insight

Physical grouping of services eliminates opaque bureaucracy and drastically reduces therapeutic or social abandonment.

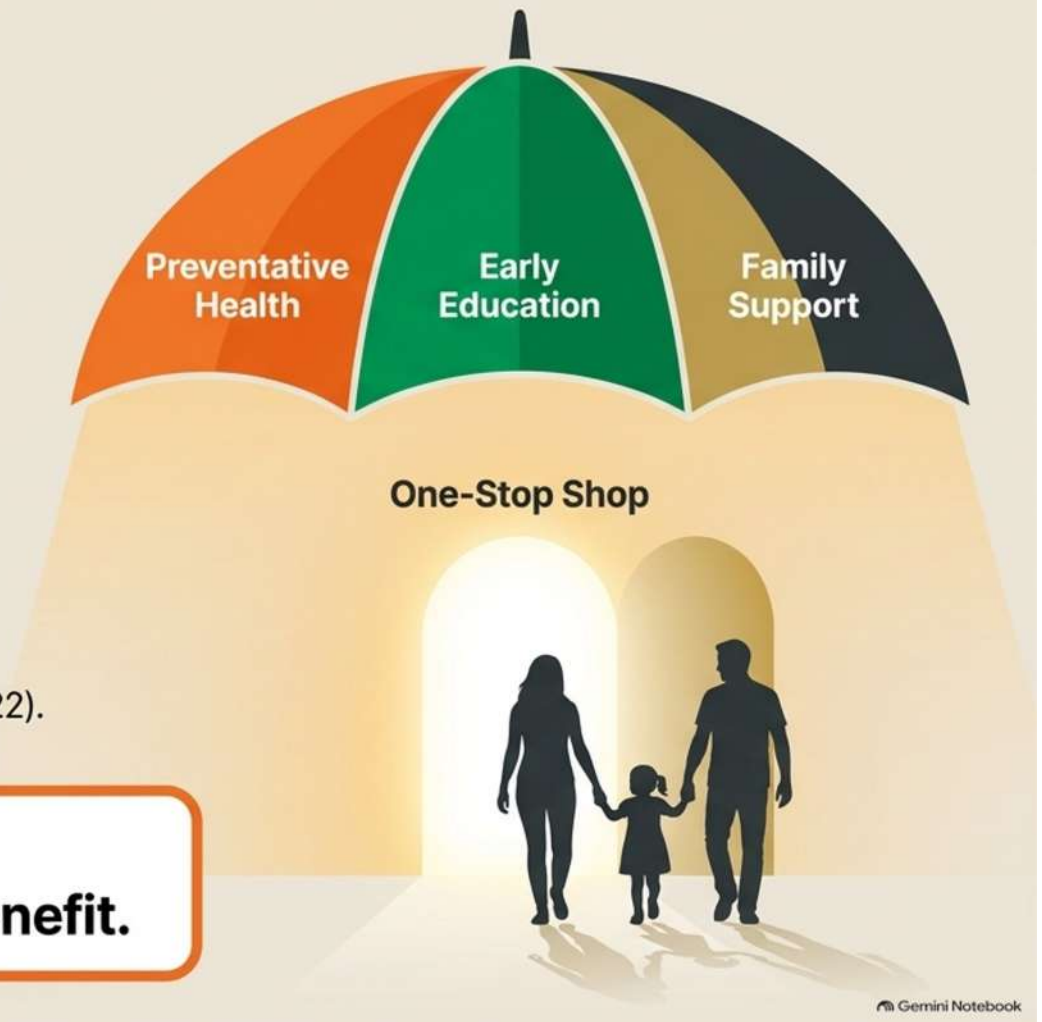
Global Precedents

UK (Family Hubs) & France (Maisons des 1.000 jours).

Proven Impact

Clear improvements in educational performance, language development, and reduced hospitalizations (Cattan et al., 2022).

**The Economic Guarantee: Every £1
invested generates £2.05 in social benefit.**



The False Debate: Complementarity, Not Competition

Family & Community Care

Core Strength

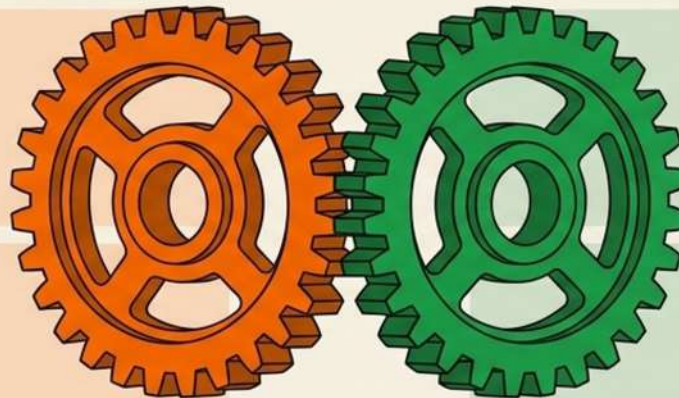
Autonomy, emotional security, relaxed emotional environment.

Condition for Success

Protected time, reduced economic stress, network support.

Risk of Isolation

Parental overload, toxic stress, missed cognitive windows.



Early Childhood Education 0-3 (ECEC)

Core Strength

Cognitive/linguistic skills, early socialization, structured stimuli.

Condition for Success

Qualified staff, low ratios, equitable access (no segregation).

Risk of Isolation

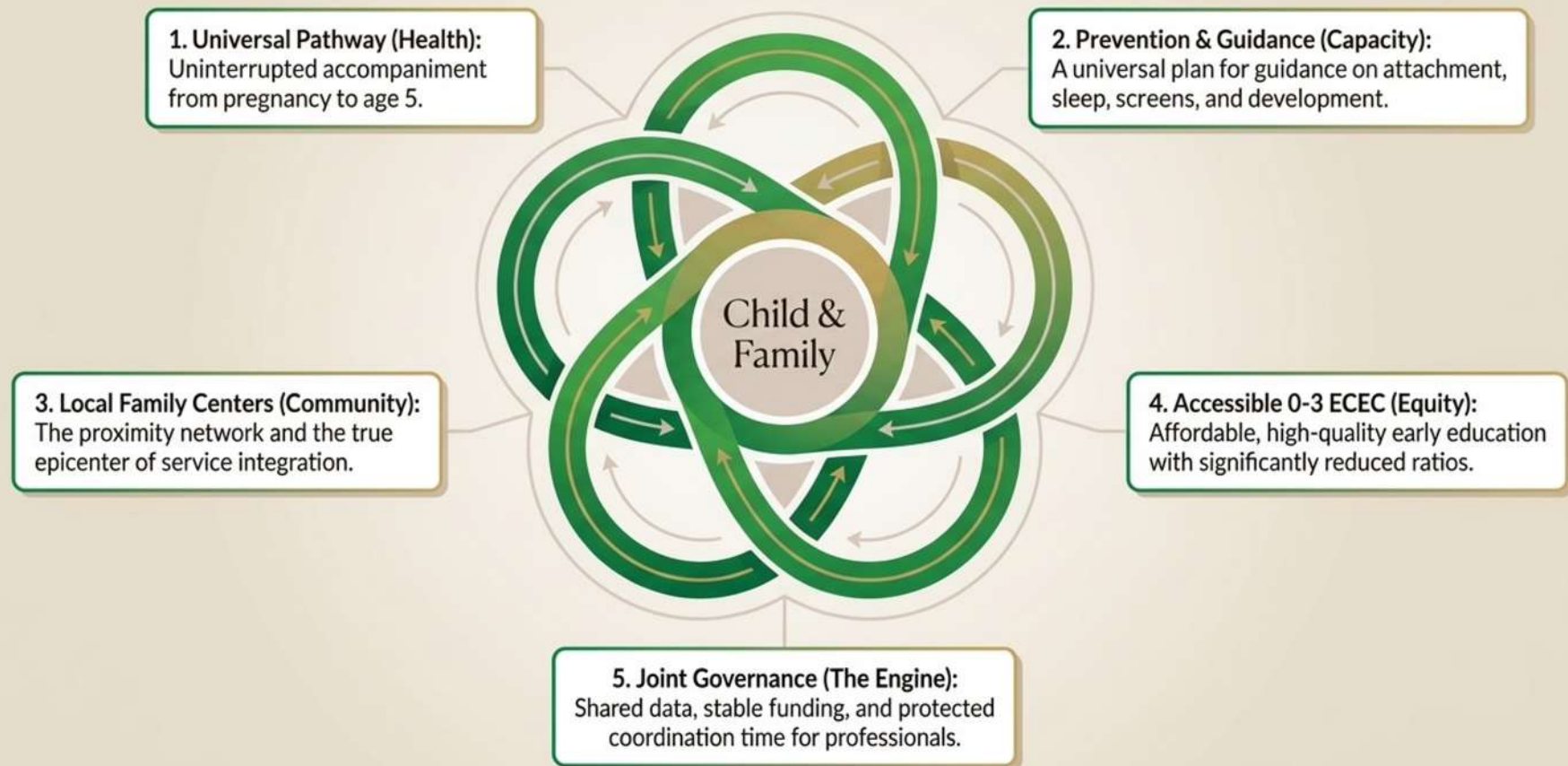
Cognitive benefits dilute if the family environment lacks support or coordination.

The determinant variable is not the resource, but the quality of interaction (Belsky et al., 2007). Success depends entirely on a mixed, coordinated system.

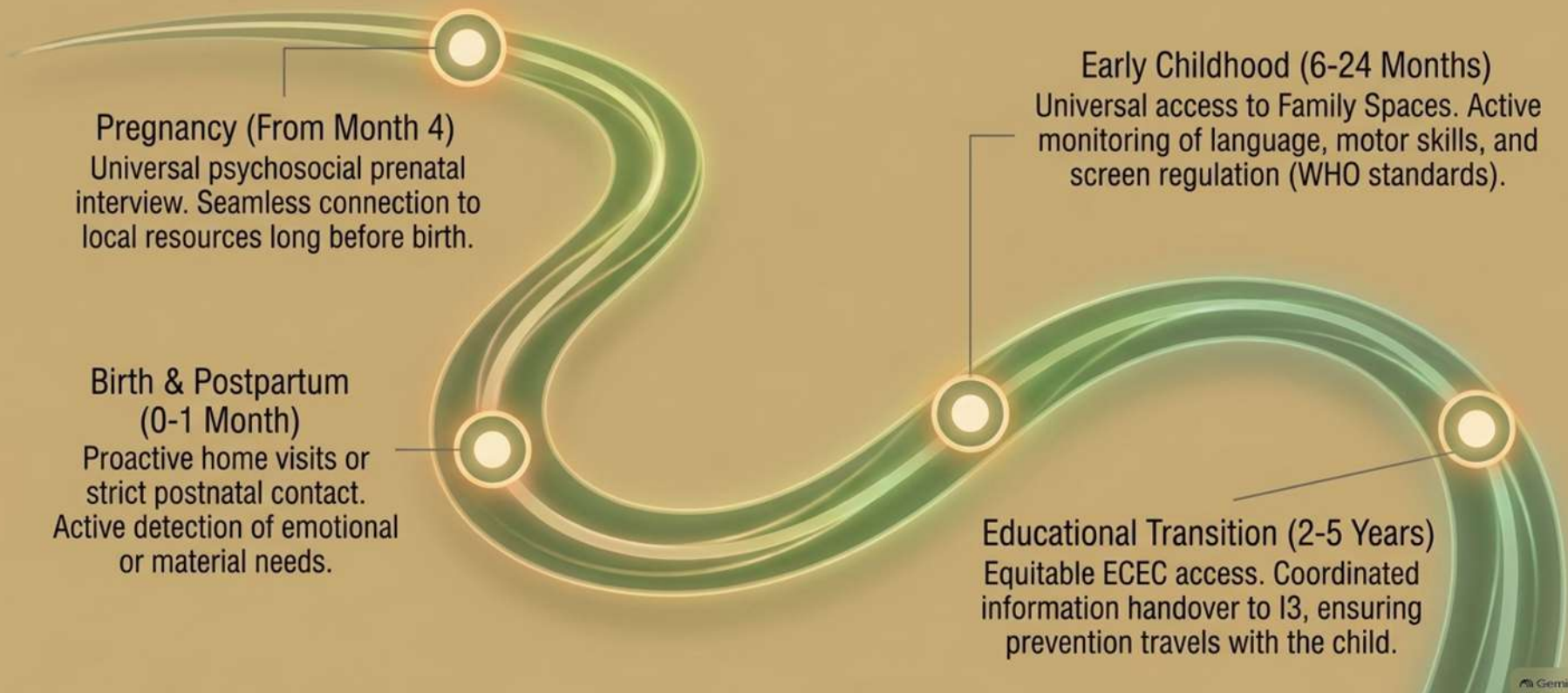
Model Diagnosis: From Fragmentation to Integration

	The Fragmented Reality	The Integrated Ecosystem
Entry Point	Multiple disconnected doors, opaque bureaucracy.	A single community window; proactive, universal access (Proportional Universalism).
Family Support	Isolated services dependent on temporary local projects.	Continuous pathway from pregnancy, built into the 0-5 territorial infrastructure.
Transitions (0 to 3)	Leaps into the void. ECEC acts alone, often compensating for lack of family leave.	Organic continuity. Home, Health, Family Space, and ECEC act as a coordinated net.
Governance	Isolated professional cultures. Lack of shared data or protected time.	Intersectoral leadership, stable multi-year budgeting, and common referral protocols.

A Proposed 0–5 Public Policy Architecture



The Universal Support Pathway



Pregnancy (From Month 4)
Universal psychosocial prenatal interview. Seamless connection to local resources long before birth.

Birth & Postpartum (0-1 Month)
Proactive home visits or strict postnatal contact. Active detection of emotional or material needs.

Early Childhood (6-24 Months)
Universal access to Family Spaces. Active monitoring of language, motor skills, and screen regulation (WHO standards).

Educational Transition (2-5 Years)
Equitable ECEC access. Coordinated information handover to I3, ensuring prevention travels with the child.

The Material Conditions for Integration

Coordination cannot rely solely on the heroism of overloaded professionals.

Protected Time

Stable professionals with explicitly recognized and paid hours specifically dedicated to intersectoral coordination, not just direct care.

Shared Governance

A 0-5 interdepartmental structure bridging Health, Education, and Social Rights with shared referral protocols and crossed data systems (guaranteeing privacy).

Public Financial Commitment

Sustained, multi-year investment. Escaping the cycle of temporary local "pilot projects" to build a permanent structural infrastructure for the country.

**If a community
values its
children,
it must cherish
their parents.**

John Bowlby





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Round table: Research-based knowledge to better address current ECEC services challenges

Martino Serapioni, COFACE Families Europe



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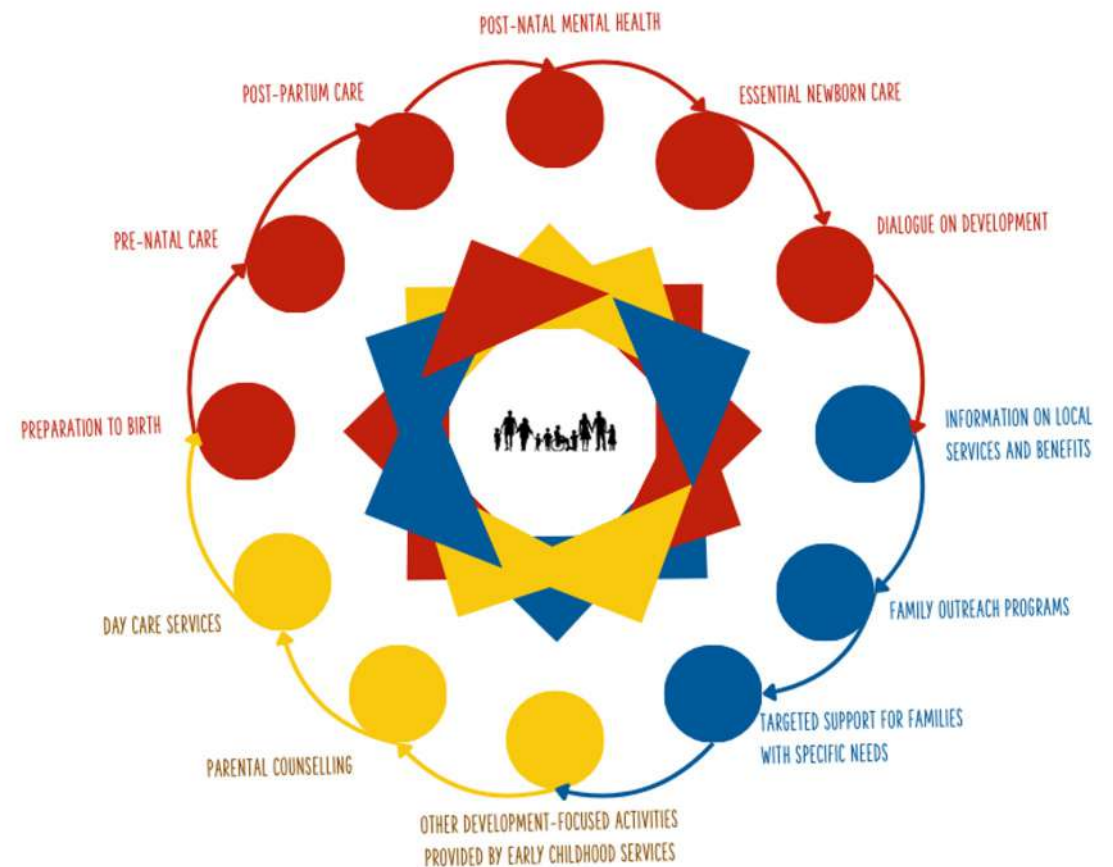
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A SUPPORTIVE ECOSYSTEM

While material resources, public facilities, and employment framework structures form the crucial baseline of state intervention, they do not complete the causal picture of child well-being.

Early life trajectories are strongly determined by proximal environmental processes: regular routines, the availability of interactive materials, and the quality of domestic socio-emotional interactions.

To effectively close systemic inequality gaps early, public policy must actively address, validate, and reinforce parental competencies and domestic micro-ecosystems.



STRATEGIC PILLARS: R – S – T - G

Resources (R)

Establishing reliable, adequate economic security and family transfers (regularly indexed to cost of living standards), to neutralise systemic poverty traps.

Services (S)

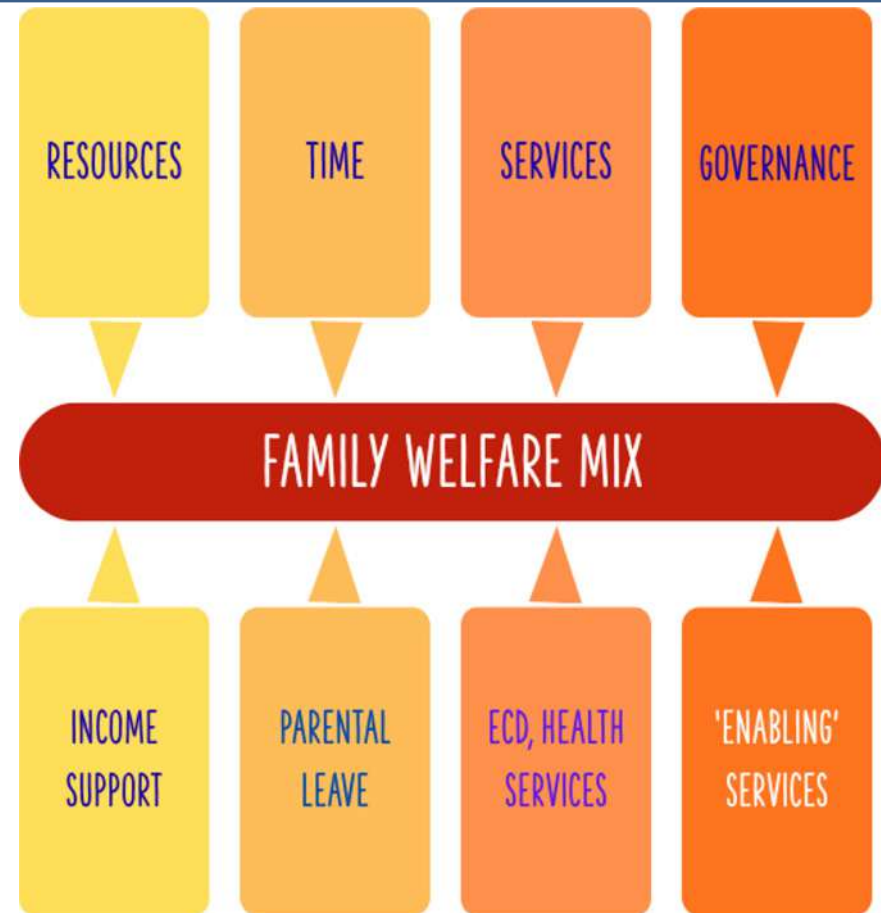
Enforcing universal accessibility to high-quality ECEC, healthcare, and social systems operating as inclusive communal hubs.

Time sovereignty (T)

Leave frameworks and working arrangements that ensure parents have space and time required for direct, high-value developmental interaction.

Integrated governance (G)

Breaking bureaucratic silos through cross-sectoral tracking, monitoring, and structural cooperation to ensure R, S, and T perform as a unified strategy.

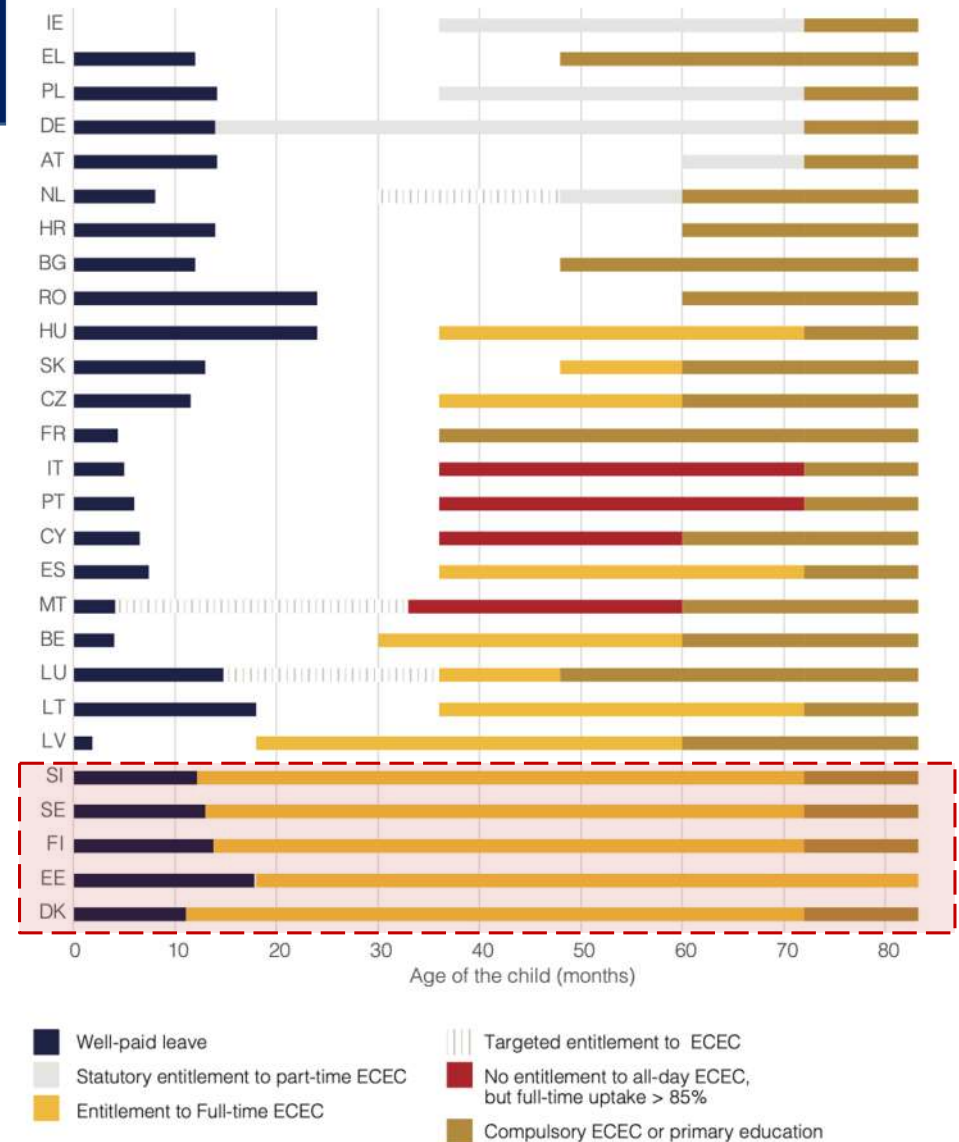


A "CHILDCARE GAP" STRUCTURAL FAULTLINE

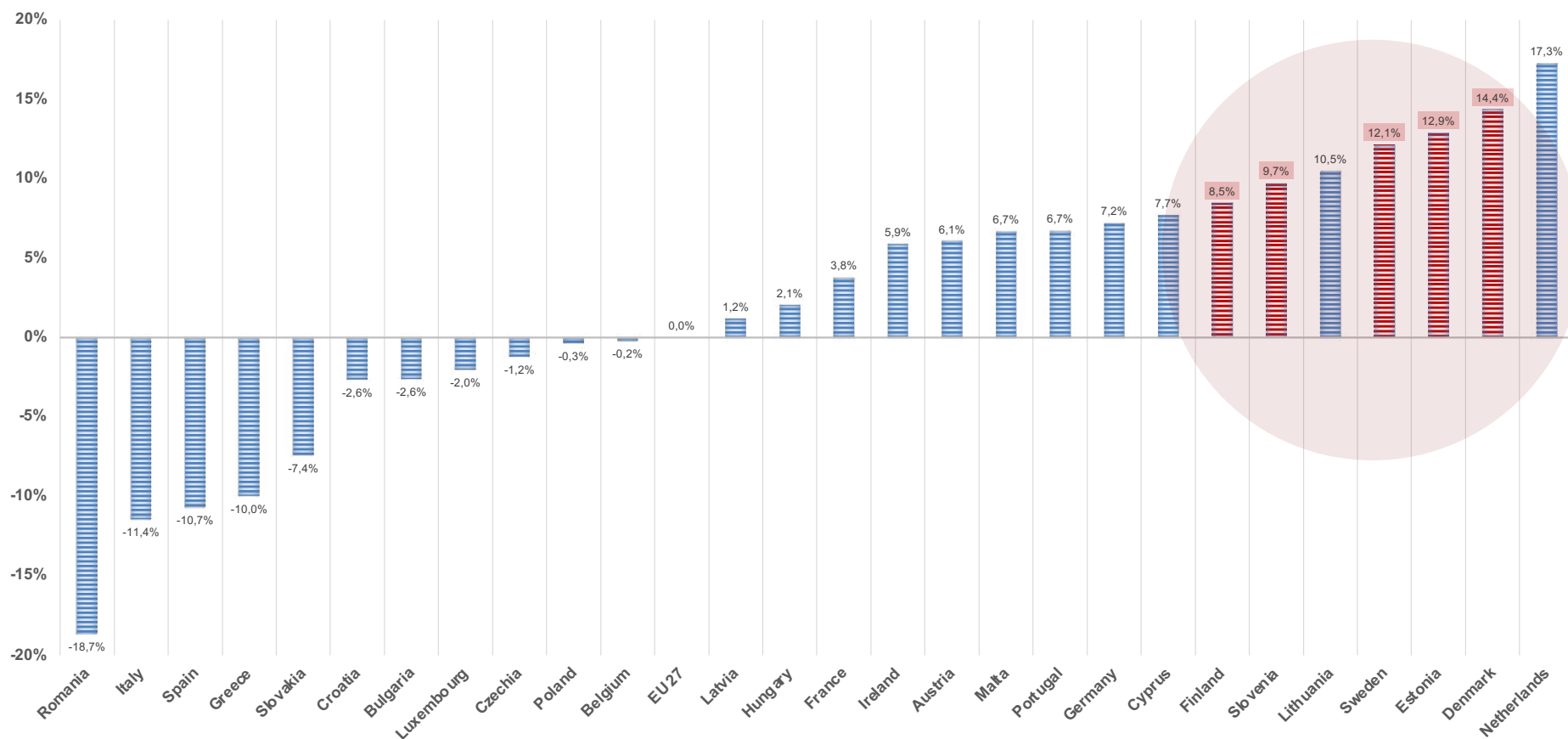
Institutional misalignment

Childcare gap □ institutional void occurring when expiration of **well-paid parental care** leave *does not align chronologically* with **guaranteed ECEC access**

- **Systemic fragmentation** □ **ECEC and LEAVE** driven by distinct legislative paradigms operating in programmatic isolation.
- **Compounded risks** □ social care burdens externalised onto families □ private market or parental (female) labour market detachment.

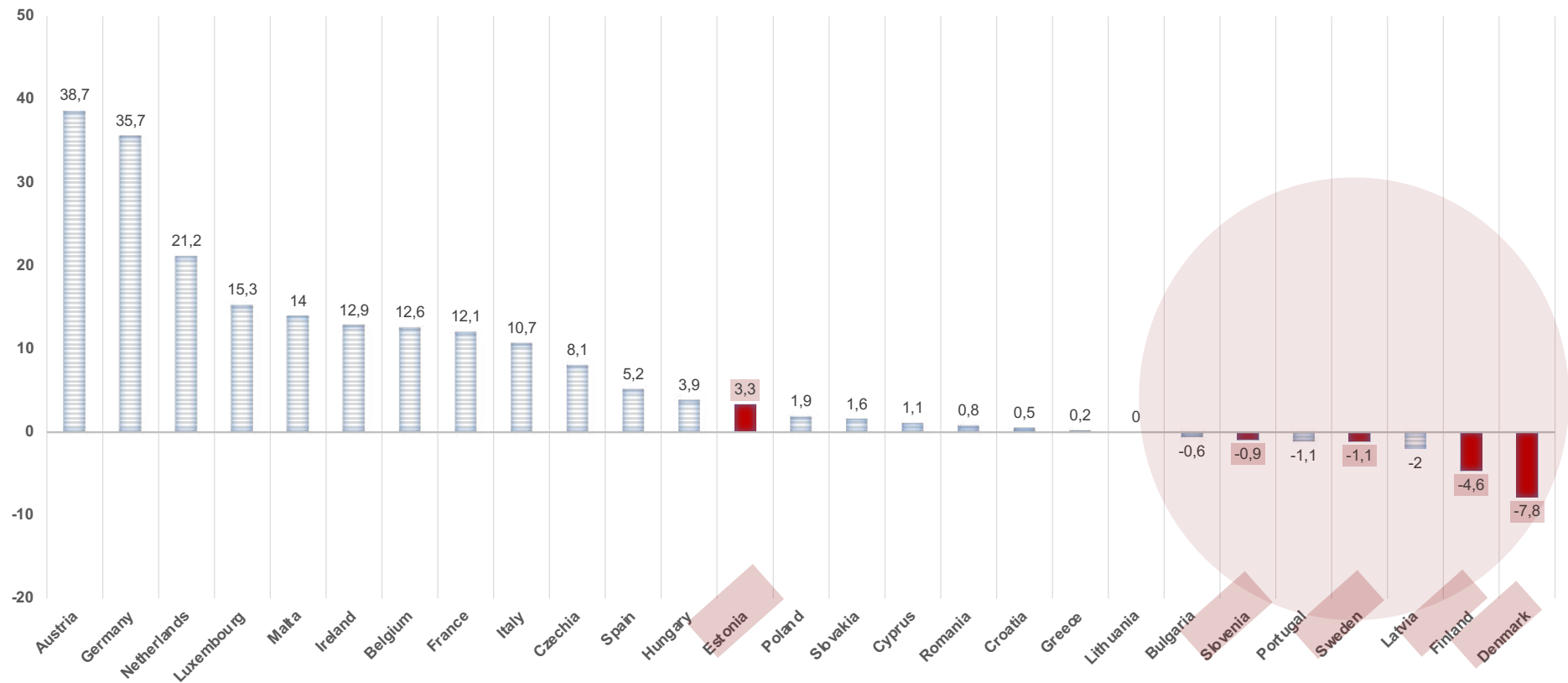


FULL-EMPLOYMENT HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN, DEVIATION FROM EU AVERAGE (2025)



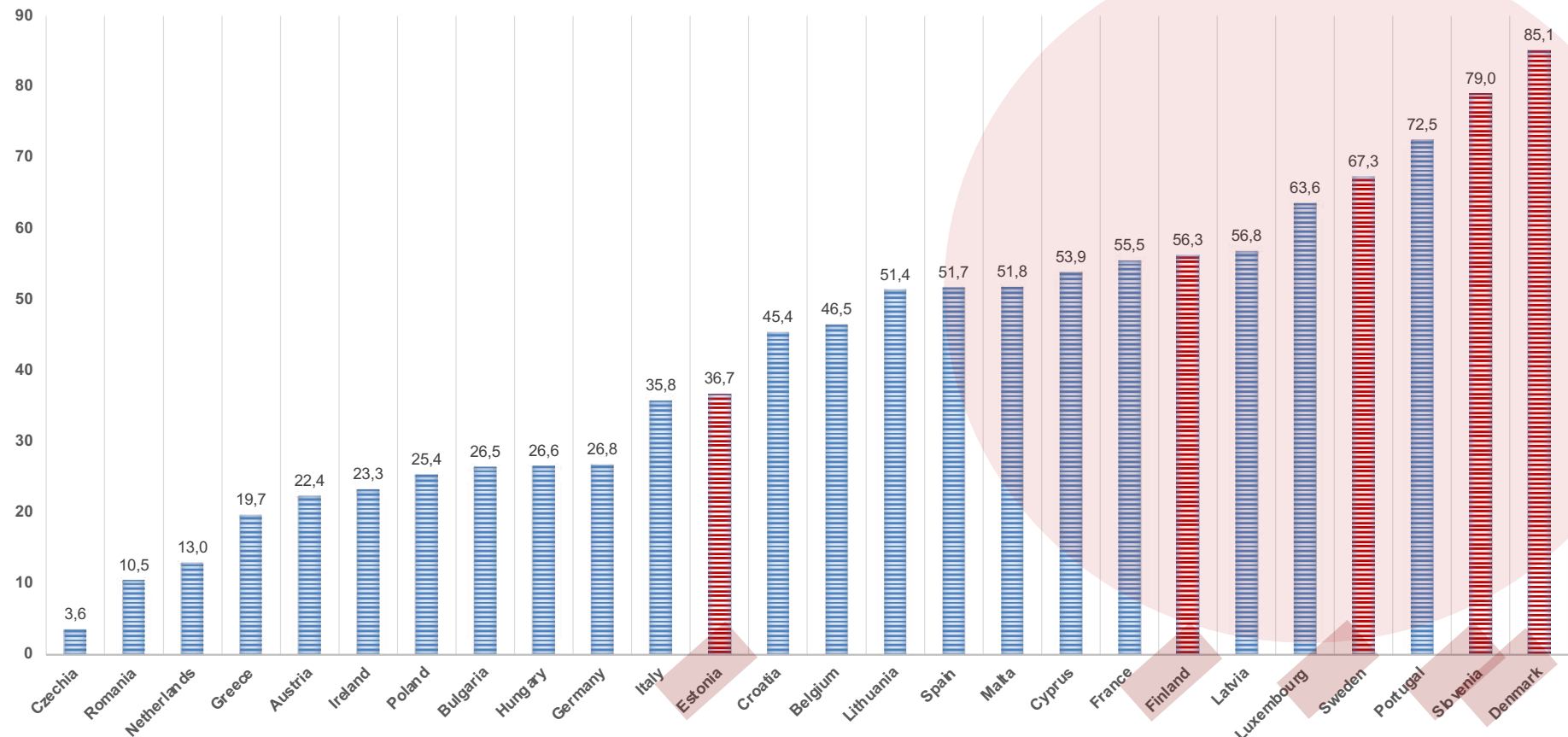
Source: EU SILC, Ifst_hhptety database

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT RATE DIFFERENTIALS AMONG WOMEN, BY PRESENCE OF CHILDREN (2025)



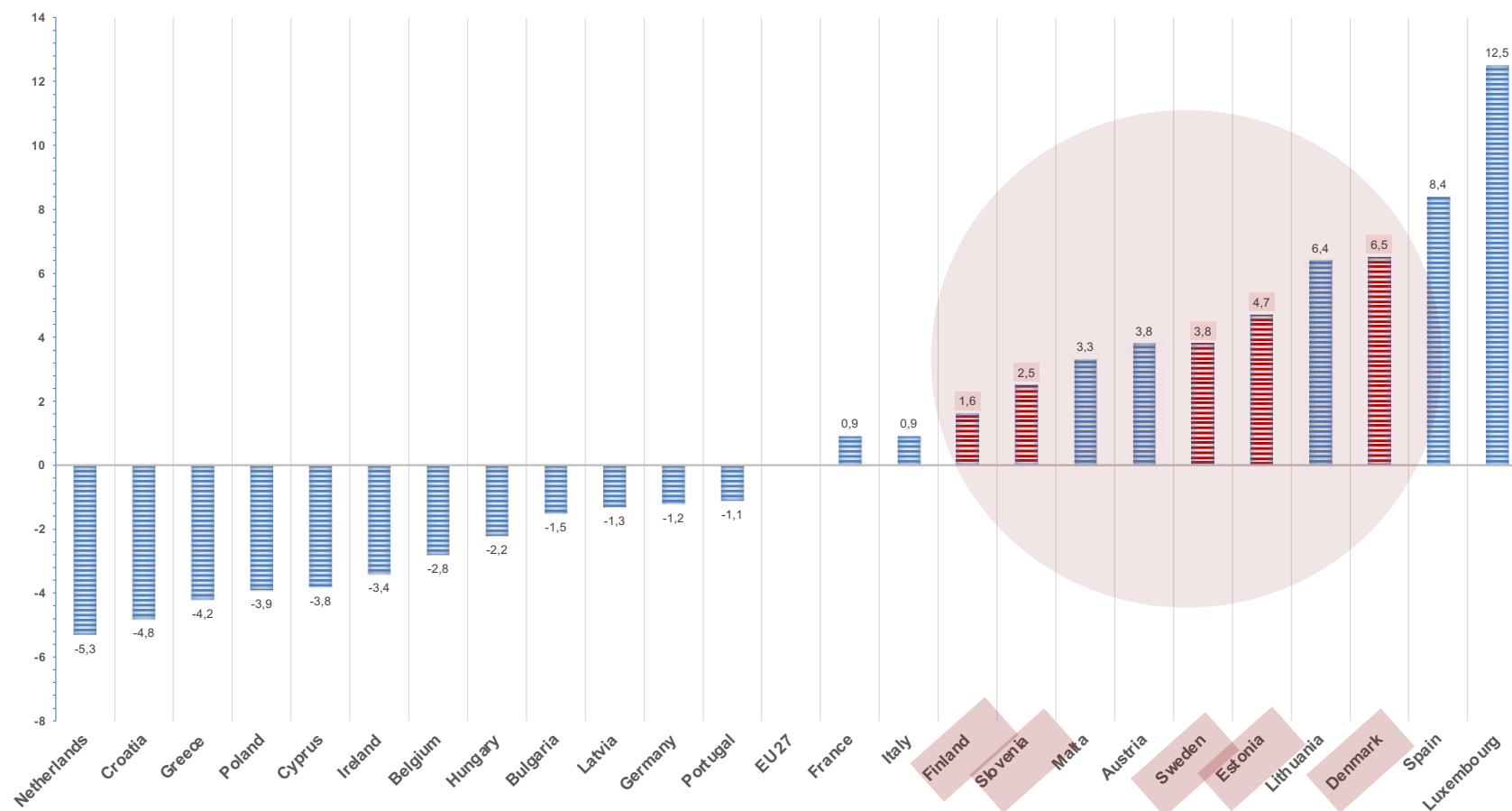
Source: EU SILC, *lfst_hhptety* database

FULL TIME (> 25H/WEEK) ECEC ATTENDANCE (AGES 1-2), (2025)



Source: EU SILC, ilc_caindform25 database

AROEPE CHILDREN (AGES 1-2) IN FULL-TIME ECEC: DEVIATION FROM EU AVERAGE (2025)



Source: EU SILC, ilc_caindform25 database

STRUCTURAL FEATURES DRIVERS



EARLY ONSET
ENTITLEMENT



12 MONTH
LEAVE



FEE PAYING
INCOME BASED



SINGLE-CYCLE 0-6

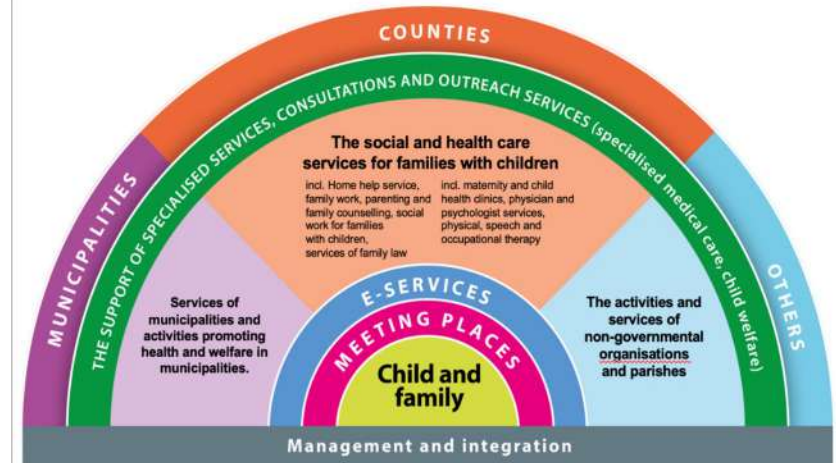
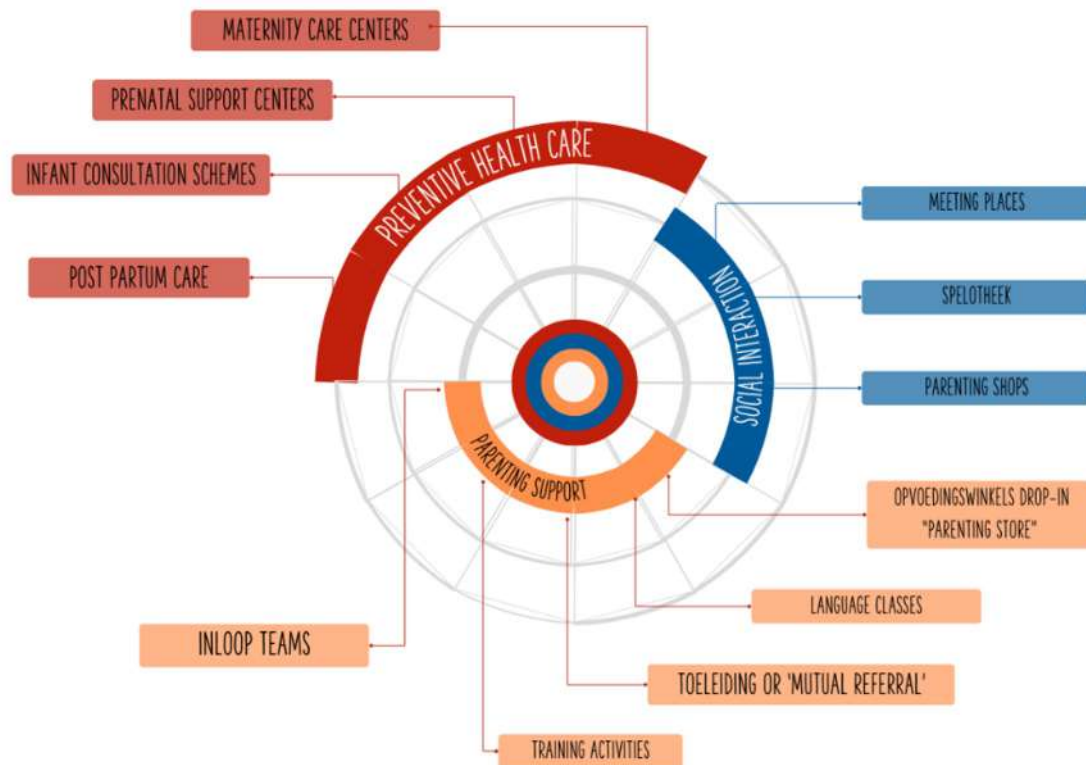


PROFESSIONALISED WORKFORCE
ACROSS BOUNDARIES



MULTI-AGENCY HUBS

MULTI-AGENCY HUBS



Finland ☐ *Perhekeskus*

Flanders ☐ *Huis van het Kind*

Sweden ☐ *Familjecentraler*

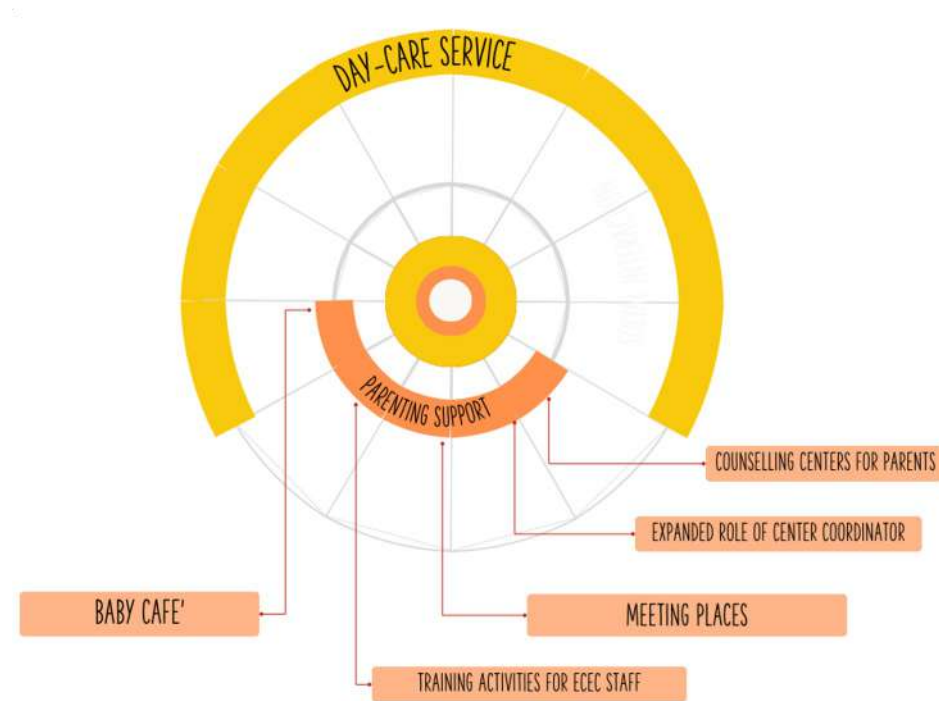
Ireland ☐ *Family Resource Centre*

Estonia ☐ *Perepesa* ("Family's nest")

Germany ☐ *Familienzentrum*

Italy ☐ *Centro Famiglie, Villaggi per Crescere*

MULTI-AGENCY HUBS



SYSTEM DEMANDS AND CONCLUSIONS



ECD : SOCIAL
CHALLENGE



SERVICE ECOSYSTEM ESSENTIAL
PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE



UPTURNING SEPARATION
BETWEEN ECD AND WLB



CHILD GUARANTEE: STRATEGIC
LEVER FOR INNOVATION

SYSTEM DEMANDS AND CONCLUSIONS



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LEVER FOR INNOVATION

Thank you for the attention.



Challenges and Future Scenarios for European ECEC Services

University of Vic research team



Early childhood
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Challenges and Future Scenarios for European ECEC services

UVIC research Team



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UVIC-UCC
UNIVERSITAT DE VIC
UNIVERSITAT CENTRAL
DE CATALUNYA

Barcelona

INSTITUT INFÀNCIA
I ADOLESCÈNCIA

Unitat especialitzada de
Institut
Metropoli

Comune di
Milano

TAMPERE

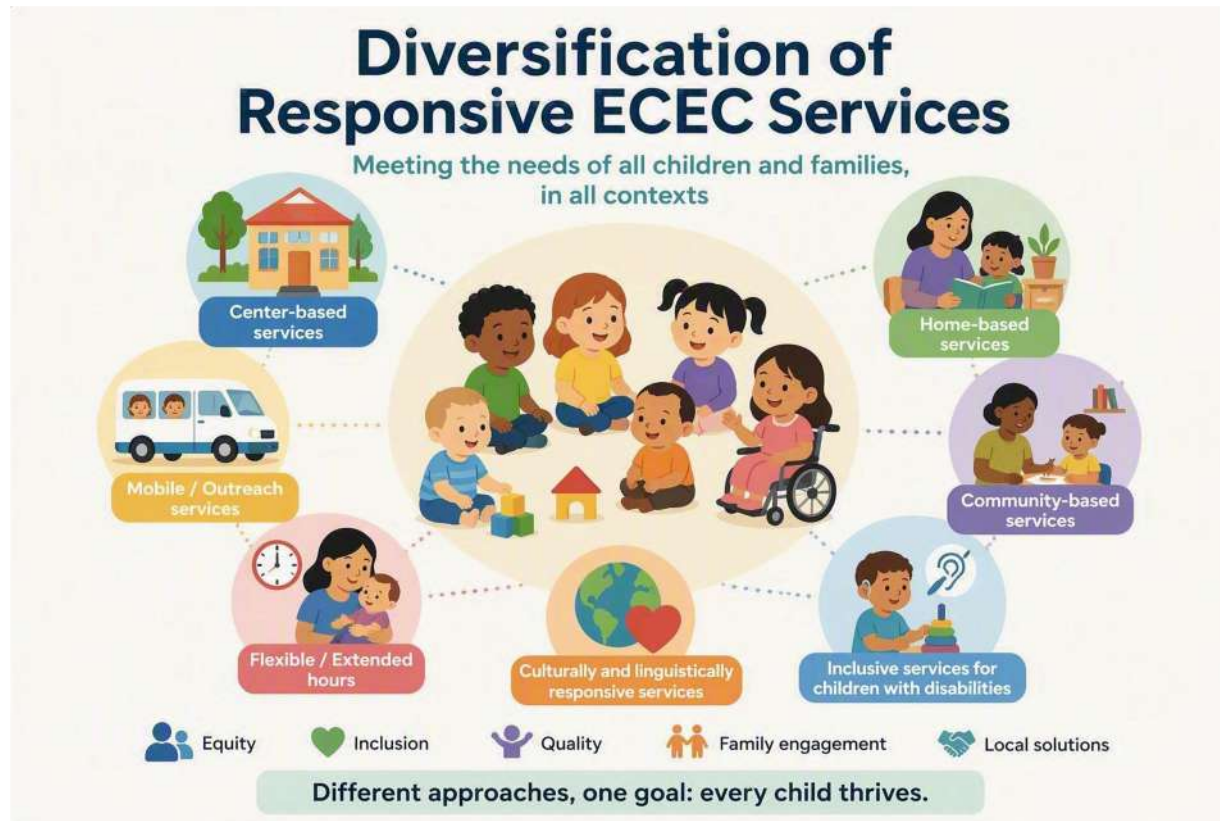
1. A NEW GOVERNANCE

Don't just do more or better of the same

Try new things and procedures (e.g. bureaucracy).



2. DIVERSIFICATION OF RESPONSIVE ECEC SERVICE



3. UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO ECEC ACROSS A RANGE OF SERVICES



4. HIGH QUALITY OF ALL ECEC SERVICES - (SELF) EVALUATION FOR IMPROVEMENT

Rights - Needs of ALL Children and Families



5. OLD AND NEW DIVERSITIES AND INEQUALITIES



6. COMMUNITY AND TERRITORY APPROACH - GLOBAL NETWORK



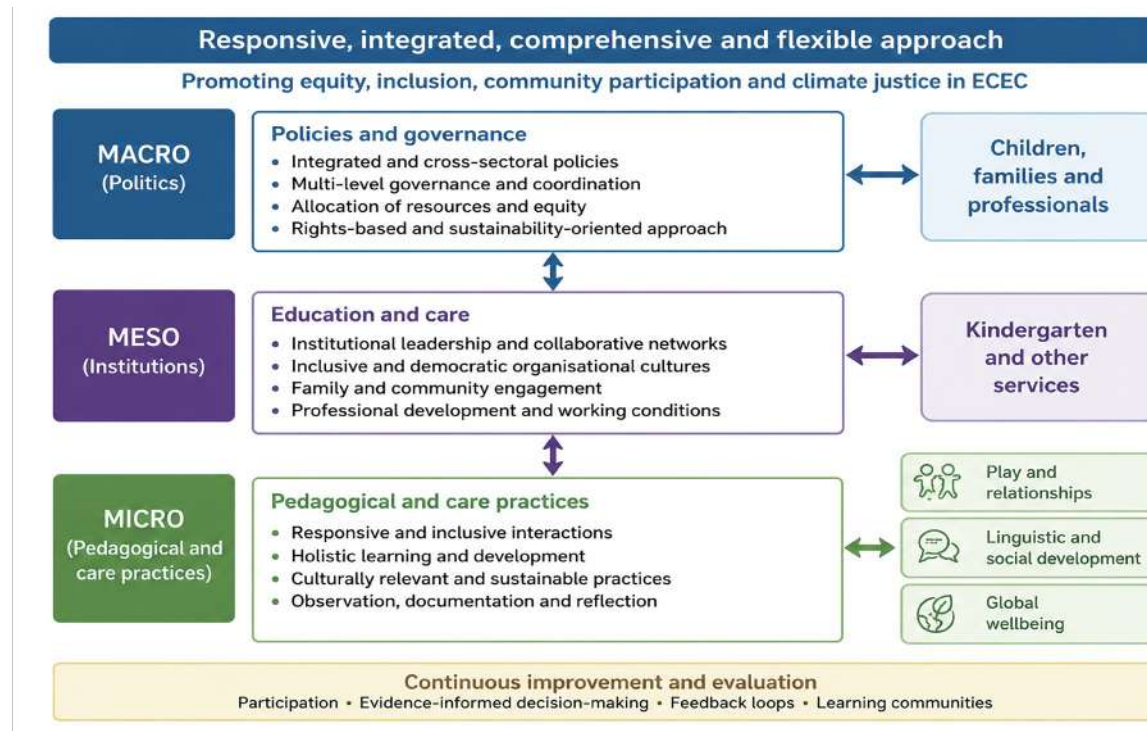
7. NEW UNEXPECTED CHALLENGES: CLIMATE DISORDER, EMERGENCIES, MIGRATIONS...



8. BETTER TEACHER TRAINING AND SHORTAGE – SOCIAL RECOGNITION AND CONTINUING TRAINING



9. COHERENCE BETWEEN THE POLITICAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND PEDAGOGICAL – PRACTICAL LEVEL



10. HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN?

The 0-6 age group is a key stage in the lives of children and families, but because it falls outside the remit of the state, it is often overlooked.

EDUFIRST proposes, led by organisations such as Educities, COFACE, universities, municipalities and regions, unions, etc. to establish a European network to help make these urgent and crucial challenges a reality in the short term.



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Closing Ceremony

Director of Education and Instruction, City of Milan

Franca Locati

Director of Early childhood education and care, City of Tampere

Tanja Moisala

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**Commissioner for Education,
Barcelona City Council**

Marta Sendra



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Edufirst Erasmus+ Project Final Conference

Barcelona



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