

for lifelong learning, focussing on children's holistic development and giving them a solid grounding for learning throughout their lives. For example, at the end of the 1990s, 12 OECD countries participated in a programme "Making lifelong learning a reality for all". Within this programme the ministers of these countries highlighted the high priority of the aim of improving access to, and quality of, early childhood education in partnership with families. It was significant that the ministers did recognise the importance of strengthening the foundations of lifelong learning starting in the early childhood years. Particularly, the assumed role of childcare and pre-school education in preparing children from socio-economically disadvantaged families for formal schooling in primary school is high on many national policy agendas.

Making use of national reviews on education by UNESCO⁷⁹ and Eurydice⁸⁰, this chapter focuses on discussing and reviewing the rate and extent of access to education-oriented pre-primary institutions. The chapter is structured as follows. Section 2 provides information on the participation rates in the study countries, and aims to classify them according to the level of access. Section 3 outlines the responsibilities of different stakeholders towards making pre-primary education accessible for all. Section 4 discusses the main features of the pre-primary education structures in the study countries. Section 5 outlines criteria for access to pre-primary education, entitlements and obligations regarding pre-primary provisions, and also discusses provisions for specific disadvantaged groups. Section 6 reviews the main barriers to the take-up of educational opportunities for children in the target age-group for pre-primary education institutions and also discusses different provisions to reduce inequalities in access, and different methods to improve access levels. Section 7 discusses key findings and trends. The final section summarises findings and provides an overall assessment of access to pre-primary education in the countries under review.

1.2. Participation in Pre-primary Education

Pre-primary education is available at three years old (or earlier) in almost all the study countries. As displayed in the table 8.1, in most countries participation by four-year-old children is the norm or is rapidly developing, despite the fact that attendance is in most countries voluntary. When looking at the average participation rate of pre-school education⁸¹, the countries covered by this study can be clustered around four groups:

A) Universal access

Belgium, France, Italy and Spain display a situation where children under compulsory schooling age have a universal access to pre-primary education. In fact, in Belgium, France and Italy more than 90 % of children attend pre-school already at the age of three.

⁷⁹ UNESCO (International Bureau of Education): World Data on Education. 2003.

⁸⁰ Eurybase; Structures of education, vocational training and adult education systems in Europe; and National summary sheets on education systems in Europe and ongoing reforms

⁸¹ Refers to the participation rates from the age of three until the age of compulsory schooling in the country. In some countries pre-school provision is available for younger children, however, comparable data is only available from the age of three.

B) Mass participation

On average, over 75 per cent of children are enrolled in pre-primary education in Czech Republic, Latvia, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Hungary, Malta, Portugal, Sweden, Iceland, Norway and Japan. The average access rate is particularly high (over 90 per cent) in Denmark, Malta, Iceland and Japan. The average enrolment rate in Latvia is the only one not reaching over 80 per cent.

C) Non-mass participation

An average participation rate among children below the compulsory schooling age remains below 75 per cent in Austria, Greece, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, UK, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey⁸² and the United States. When analysing the figures more closely, the following trends can be detected:

- According to the available statistics, the enrolment rates are the lowest in Turkey (only every fifth five-year-old child is enrolled in pre-primary education).
- The average participation rates also remain low in Poland (50%), Lithuania (54.8%), Cyprus (55%), Finland (57.6%) and the United States (59.3%). Lithuania, Cyprus and the United States are characterised by relatively stable participation rates, although the enrolment rates tend to increase during the years closest to the entry to compulsory education. The participation in Poland and Finland on the other hand reaches nearly 100 per cent at the age of 6 when children enrol for a year of pre-primary classes before entering compulsory education. These classes are of compulsory nature in Poland, and voluntary in Finland.
- A substantial number of children in Lithuania (27%), USA (25%), Cyprus (24%), Bulgaria (20%), Romania (18%) and Greece (17%) enter the compulsory school system for the first time at primary level.

D) No participation

The Republic of Ireland does not have public pre-primary education systems in a strict sense.

In the Republic of Ireland, there is no national system for pre-school education and the children can enter primary school at the age of four. The first two classes in primary school are known as 'infant' classes. The majority of pre-school children are educated within the primary education system and where pre-school services exist beyond this, they are largely private in nature and outside the formal education system.

⁸² EUROSTAT does not hold data on the participation rates of four-year-old children in Turkey, but only 22.7 per cent of children aged 5 are enrolled in pre-schools.

Table 1⁸³: Gross enrolment rates at ISCED level 0 – as percentage of population aged 3, 4, 5 or 6 in 2003 and an average participation rate.

COUNTRY	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years	Average
EU 25	68.2	85.7	74.6	26.1	63.7
EU 15	72.7	91.2	76.5	15.9	64.1
NMS 10	43.0	55.4	64.7	78.9	60.5
Belgium	99.6	100.5	99.2	-	99.8
Czech Republic	66.3	89.8	97.6	-	84.6
Denmark	82.7	93.2	92.0	99.6	91.9
Germany	71.4	85.9	86.8	-	81.4
Estonia	76.2	80.9	83.2	103.3	85.9
Greece	n.a.	57.0	82.7	-	69.9
Spain	95.3	100.2	103.0	-	99.5
France	100.9	103.1	101.0	-	101.7
Ireland	2.3	-	-	-	2.3
Italy	100.0	102.8	99.9	-	100.9
Cyprus	30.9	58.0	76.2	-	55.0
Latvia	63.7	66.5	90.2	90.0	77.6
Lithuania	46.3	53.1	64.9	-	54.8
Luxembourg	55.1	68.3	97.6	-	73.7
Hungary	73.4	91.6	97.8	-	87.6
Malta	81.2	98.7	-	-	90.0
Netherlands	0.1	-	-	-	0.1
Austria	44.2	82.5	93.5	-	73.4
Poland	24.5	34.1	44.5	96.7	50.0
Portugal	60.5	80.7	91.3	-	77.5
Slovenia	62.3	73.5	80.0	-	71.9
Slovakia	57.5	70.0	84.1	-	70.5
Finland	35.8	44.7	52.9	96.9	57.6
Sweden	79.5	82.7	85.0	96.5	85.9
United Kingdom	50.4	94.9	-	-	72.7
Bulgaria	63.9	76.6	80.1	77.4	74.5
Romania	44.1	66.2	81.8	92.9	71.3
Turkey	n.a.	n.a.	22.7	n.a.	22.7
Iceland	92.9	93.7	95.3	-	94.0
Norway	76.6	84.2	86.5	-	82.4
United States	41.4	61.6	74.8	-	59.3
Japan	66.3	92.7	97.1	-	85.4

Source: EUROSTAT 2003

⁸³ n.a.= not available

These statistics also demonstrate a trend where enrolment rates tend to increase during the years closest to the entry to compulsory education.

1.3. Responsibilities of Different Stakeholders

This section describes the division of responsibilities between national and local public authorities, private providers and parents in the design, delivery and operation of pre-primary education in the study countries. It focuses on assessing the situation where the national (and regional and state) authorities generally provide the quality, funding and legislative framework for pre-primary provision, although recent developments in a number of the study countries have displayed a trend of decentralisation where responsibilities have been devolved to municipalities, private providers and families. This shift has been motivated by efforts to bring decision-making and delivery closer to the people being served and to adapt services to meet local needs and circumstances.

Responsibilities for the Provision of Pre-primary Education at National Level

The responsibility for providing the overall regulative framework (most often pedagogical, funding and quality measures) for pre-primary education from the age of 3 or 4 falls on ministries of education in a great majority of the study countries. The responsibility, however, has shifted in many of these countries from the social and health authorities to the education authorities over the past 10 years. This shows a clear trend in the way in which many governments view pre-school education as an element of the wider education system rather than only as a form of childcare. For example, in all the new Member States and Accession countries the national ministries for education hold the responsibility for the framework and the quality of the pre-primary provision. A similar situation also applies to half of the study countries with universal access to pre-school: France and Italy.

In four of the study countries, the responsibility for pre-school provision belongs to the regional authorities. The situation applies, for example, to Austria, Belgium and Germany where it is the duty of the regional authorities to provide the structural, financial and pedagogical pre-school arrangements. In Austria, nursery school provision is entrusted to the provinces (Austrian *länder*) in both legislative and executive matters. In Belgium, the Federal government awards financial resources for each Community for education, and each Community government exercises executive power over the organisation, administration, structure and curricula of education. In Germany, the most traditional form of pre-school education, kindergartens (available for children aged 3 to 6), are the responsibility of the ministry of social affairs in each *länder*, except in Bavaria or Lower Saxony where the ministries of education are in charge of this provision. But pre-primary classes (for five-year-olds who have not yet reached compulsory schooling age) in primary schools tend to be the responsibility of educational authorities in each *länder*. In the United States, the overall responsibility for the pre-school provision and child care is devolved almost completely to the individual states, although the system has traditionally relied on market approaches with fairly little government (state or federal) regulation.

The following table outlines the authorities responsible for the provision of pre-schools in a number of the other study countries:

Table 2: Distribution of responsibilities in pre-primary education

COUNTRY	RESPONSIBILITY
Japan	Kindergartens that provide pre-school education to children 3 to 6 years of age are under the authority of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Nursery schools are for children under 6 years of age whose parents are at work, and are the responsibility of the Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry.
Denmark	Pre-primary institutions, such as day nurseries (0-3) and kindergartens (3-7), are the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs and are run by the municipalities or independent / private bodies. On the other hand, pre-school classes (5-7), which are often attached to primary schools, come directly under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.
Finland	From birth to the age of six, children can attend day-care centres (kindergartens) or family day-care groups in private homes. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is in charge of this provision. Each local authority is also obliged to provide pre-school classes for all children in the year preceding the start of basic education (which begins at the age of seven) either in kindergartens or primary schools. Ministry of Education together with the National Board for Education are responsible for providing the pedagogical and quality framework for pre-school classes.
Norway	Pre-primary (0-5) education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. School provision as such starts with compulsory primary education.
Portugal	Ministry of Education is responsible for running most of the nursery schools in the country but also Ministry of Labour and Solidarity is responsible for a proportion of pre-school establishments, mainly those with emphasis on family support.
Scotland (UK)	The Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) has responsibility for pre-school provision.
Turkey	Ministry of Education is responsible for providing pre-primary education in nursery classes (for children aged 3 to 6) and 'practical' nursery classes (5-6). Responsibility for day nurseries, nursery schools and child care institutions are the responsibility of other ministries and institutions in the educational or care sector.

In terms of children aged under 3, the ministries of education also carry the responsibility for the provision of formal day-care / pre-school provisions in many of the study countries. For example, in the Baltic States, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden ministries of education are the only authority responsible for pre-primary provision to one-year-olds. However, in many countries other ministries are responsible for child care services (0-3), which are not part of pre-primary education provision as such⁸⁴. For example in France, responsibility for the care for children under the age of three belongs to the municipalities and the ministry of social affairs. In other

⁸⁴ See the Section 1 for the European definition of a pre-primary institute.

countries provision of nurseries for children aged under 3 may also come under the ministries of youth or childhood provision.

Decentralisation of Responsibilities for the Provision

While the national and regional⁸⁵ authorities in most countries hold the executive and legislative decision-making power over structural, financial and pedagogical matters, responsibilities have also been decentralised to local stakeholders (mainly municipalities) over the past 10-15 years. Decentralisation has been expected to facilitate the development of pre-school services that are more "client-orientated", address individual needs and reinforce diversity of choice. The process has also facilitated diversification of the types of provision in a number of countries⁸⁶. As an example, a general regulatory framework for the pre-school provision exists in some of the Nordic countries, but municipalities are now responsible for deciding the appropriate balance of services, are given a considerable discretion in fixing staff ratios, and are responsible to a certain extent of the supervision of the services. In Italy and Portugal, new laws have decentralised responsibilities to the school level which now have the autonomy to decide staffing levels and budgets. In the new member states, the decentralisation has enabled the development of privately- or church-operated alternatives, contributing to a greater diversity in the pre-school provision. In some countries the decentralisation process was also accompanied by de-regulation to introduce market-driven policies. For example in England, the Local Early Years and Child Care Development Partnerships work in partnership with state, private and voluntary providers to expand pre-school provision, with the aim of improving access.

Responsibilities for the Operation of Pre-primary Establishments

Public providers

Pre-primary education can be operated by public or private providers, and the importance of different types of providers varies from country to country. In terms of public provision, in most of the study countries municipalities are responsible for the operation and day-to-day management of a great majority of pre-school establishments. This applies to countries with universal/mass/non-mass participation levels, for example Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Slovenia and UK.

Regional and national authorities also own and operate some pre-primary schools, although normally only a small fraction of the total provision in the country. In Romania public kindergartens are established by county school inspectorates. Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Japan and Slovak Republic, for example, have directly state funded pre-schools, although in many cases these tend to be special pre-school institutions (e.g. aimed at children with disabilities). *Communes* are responsible for financing and setting up pre-schools in France and Luxembourg.

⁸⁵ In the case of Austria, Belgium and Germany.

⁸⁶ OECD: Early Childhood Education and Care.

Private stakeholders also play an important role in setting up, operating and managing pre-schools in some of the study countries. The following paragraph will explore the role and responsibilities of private stakeholders in more detail.

Private providers

Private provision includes for-profit and non-profit services that are managed by an individual or private organisation. Private non-profit providers include voluntary and community groups (e.g. parent co-operatives), churches with the legal status of charities or other non-profit organisations. Private provision may be fully or partly publicly-funded or entirely privately-funded. In many countries private pre-school providers must meet the same quality standards as those run by municipalities (or the state), in others quality standards between providers differ as content and structure is not standardised.

As mentioned, decentralisation and devolution of pre-primary service provision to the local level have facilitated the diversification of providers, meaning privatisation of services in some cases. In spite of this development, non-public nursery schools still remain less common in countries with fairly low levels of overall participation, for example in the new Member States and candidate countries (e.g. Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Romania and Turkey). However, Romanian and Czech authorities interviewed for this study have noted they are receiving more and more requests from private organisations to set up kindergartens. In the UK, the division between public and private pre-primary structure has become less distinct. Publicly-funded early-year's education is being expanded and developed in co-operation with the private and voluntary sectors.

Private providers in some countries were found to be increasingly prevalent due a lack of adequate state provision. For example, in the US millions of children, especially those children from low-income families, do not have access to early care and education due to a limited state provision⁸⁷. Accessing quality early education in the US is both expensive and difficult, as availability and financial assistance are scarce relative to the demand⁸⁸. The prevalence of privately funded providers has also increased in Germany (particularly in Eastern Germany) where approximately 70 per cent of kindergartens are run by independent bodies such as churches, voluntary and charitable associations (*Verbände der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege*). Nearly 60 per cent of kindergartens in Japan are private, while 40 per cent of children in Italy attend non-state institutions.

⁸⁷ OECD: Early Childhood Education and Care in the USA.

⁸⁸ Williams & Mitchell: The Status of Early Care and Education in the States. The Institute for Women's Policy Research.

Role of Parents

In most countries the role of parents (the guardians or the carers of the children), is viewed as a crucial supplement to pre-primary education in the process of bringing up a child. Parent engagement to the pre-school education promotes positive attitudes toward children's learning and supports parent and community empowerment⁸⁹. The main responsibility for children's education lies with the family, and the education providers' function is primarily to provide a supporting, pedagogic environment for the child's development. Informal contact between the institutions and parents is therefore viewed as important because parents can assist the school staff to tailor educational programmes to the needs of particular children or groups. This contact is mainly facilitated through meetings between education providers and parents. In Portugal for example, school-based parent associations defend and promote the interests of their children through joint meetings with the school leaders. In Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway parents have a clearly defined role in planning and running pre-school activities, including financial and staffing decisions. In Norway this relationship is formalised through parents' participation in the co-ordinating committees of the pre-schools establishments and through parents' councils. In the case of Cyprus, approximately 53 per cent of pre-school establishments are run in collaboration with parents' associations and local authorities (and are subsidised by the Ministry of Education and Culture). There are pre-primary schools in Iceland that are fully operated by associations set up by parents and in Czech Republic⁹⁰ a trend (since 1989) toward decentralised decision-making has increased parental influence on the pre-primary provision at local level.

Parents may also have to contribute to the funding of the provision as only a few of the study countries provide either fully free or partly free pre-primary education. Belgium and Luxembourg are the only countries where participation to pre-primary education is free of charge for everyone in both public and private establishments. Many other countries have free public pre-primary schools, whereas enrolment fees are often payable in the private sector. Only Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Cyprus, Austria, Slovenia, Sweden, Iceland and Norway do not have free public pre-primary schools (see Table 3)⁹¹. Means-tested pre-school fee system is prevalent across the study countries, including Austria, Finland, Sweden, Portugal and Romania. There would appear to be no direct relation between free pre-primary education and participation rates as high participation rates are apparent in some countries where the admission is fee-paying, and relatively low in some where it is free (at least in the public sector)⁹².

⁸⁹ OECD: *Staying Strong, Early Childhood Education and Care in the USA*.

⁹⁰ OECD: *Staying Strong, Early Childhood Education and Care*.

⁹¹ EURYDICE/EUROSTAT: *Key Data on Education in 2005*.

⁹² EURYDICE/EUROSTAT: *Key Data on Education in 2005*.

Table 3: Availability of free pre-primary provision offered in education-orientated institutions in Europe, 2002/2003

Country	BE	CZ	DK	DE	EE	EL	ES	FR	IE	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU
Public	x	x				x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
Private	x						x						x	*	x
Country	MT	NL	AT	PL	PT	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK	IS	NO	BG	RO	
Public	x	*		x	x		x	x		x			x	x	
Private	x	*			x			x		x					

Source: Eurydice/Eurostat: Key Data on Education in Europe 2005.

* There are no pre-primary education institutions of this kind

Pre-primary education is usually subsidised by local authorities / municipalities, state or provision is enabled through contributions from parents. Alternatively the operation is ensured by contributions from all these stakeholders, like in the case of Norway where the costs are shared between the State, municipalities and parents. In some study countries (e.g. Hungary, Turkey), participation is free but parents may be asked to contribute towards activity and school materials (e.g. exercise books). It is also quite common for parents to be asked to contribute towards the costs of meals and transportation for school trips and optional extra-curricular activities (such as sports classes). On the other hand in Cyprus, the government covers the cost of the pre-primary tuition fees and subsidises the equipment needed, with parents covering all other expenses concerning the operation of the schools (e.g. staff costs). Similarly, in Estonia, parents are asked to cover the cost of the child's catering at their child's institution, and the partial financial coverage of management costs, remuneration for staff, social tax and the cost of teaching aids. Again the actual amount of the rate covered by parents will differ according to their means but will in not case exceed 20 per cent of the minimum wage rate established by the government of the republic.

Responsibilities, Trends and Implications to Access

When looking at the division of responsibilities for the provision and operation of pre-schools in the study countries, a few clear trends have been detected:

- There is a growing view of pre-primary education and care as a shared responsibility. Traditionally non-parental care before the entry to primary education was seen as inferior to the care that parents can provide. There has been a longer-term shift toward a view of children's early education and care as a shared responsibility between the family and the state, and parents increasingly recognising the role of pre-school in preparing children to succeed in formal schooling, the labour force and society as a whole.
- The overall executive and legislative responsibility has shifted in many of the study countries from social to education authorities. This however does not seem to have a direct impact on the participation rates.
- Recent trend of decentralisation and devolution of responsibilities to municipalities level (and schools, parents and communities) in a number of study countries (countries with universal/mass/non-mass participation levels) has promoted a more co-ordinated working at certain localities, however, has also led to some concerns about variation in quality and

access across municipalities and regions. These can be demonstrated by examples from Sweden and USA. In Sweden, the decentralisation took place during the period of recession and resulted in lower quality standards in some municipalities than others⁹³. The system from the United States is characterised by a market approach with few national guidelines and regulations. And the weak regulative framework has resulted in widespread variation in staff-child ratios, and even in health and safety standards and access rates. The success rate of decentralisation reforms depends on the local expertise and the degree to which a wide range of local stakeholders take part in negotiating the local pre-school quality and access standards.

- As a whole, parents are more integrally engaged in pre-school education than before, but the patterns of parent participation differ from country to country. Some of the challenges to active engagement of parents include cultural, linguistic, attitudinal and logistical barriers. It is relatively common for the study countries to experience difficulties in ensuring equitable representation across families from diverse backgrounds.

1.4. Structures of Provision

Four different models of pre-primary education are dominant in the study countries. Nursery schools / kindergartens provide the general structure for pre-primary school systems across all the study countries. In addition, many of the study countries also have complementary pre-school structures in place. Rural, mobile, home based and integrated services are illustrations of more flexible and diverse arrangements. Seven study countries have also introduced one-year pre-school classes and targeted programmes aimed at disadvantaged groups are fairly common all across the study countries.

Predominant Structure⁹⁴

The most common structure for the pre-school provision is a 'mono-systemic child focussed, centre based, professional delivery strategy'⁹⁵ – generally known as nursery schools / kindergartens that are typically available for children from the age of 3 to 6. This principal structure applies to the vast majority of pre-school establishments across the world. The institutions may be public or private, or they may come under the authorities responsible for education or other government departments, such as social services or health – but staff responsible for children's education, almost without exceptions, have qualifications in education.

This structure is very much predominant in all of the study countries. So the structure is very similar, but the enrolment age and the age at which children start primary school vary. Czech Republic, Italy, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Hungary, Germany, Austria, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Japan and Romania have pre-schools available for children from the age of 3 to 6. The provision expands over a longer period in other countries, for example pre-primary

⁹³ OECD: Starting Strong, Early Childhood Education and Care. 2001.

⁹⁴ Mainly based on Eurydice/Eurostat: *Key Data on Education in 2005*.

⁹⁵ Leseman (2002) *Early Childhood Education and Care for Children from Low-income or Minority Backgrounds*. University of Amsterdam/OECD.

education in Slovenia and Iceland is available for children aged 1 to 6. On the contrary, the standard provision is available in Greece, Malta and UK only for a two-year period.

One-year Pre-school Classes

The structure of pre-primary provision in Denmark, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Poland and Sweden differs from the other countries in a sense that they all provide, as an *additional* element to the standard provision, special pre-school classes for children the year before the start of their compulsory education. This trend is dominant in non-mass participation countries⁹⁶ that are characterised by a relative late enrolment age to primary schools and the availability of a very early provision. The implication of this provision to access is very clear; it widens participation to the great majority of children in Bulgaria and Lithuania and makes access universal or nearly universal in other countries.

In Poland and Bulgaria the attendance to these classes has recently become mandatory, while participation remains voluntary in the others. These classes are often organised in a primary school setting, while the other form of pre-primary institutions in these countries tend to function in non-school settings. Supply of pre-school establishments in primary school premises is also fairly common in Belgium and Slovenia.

Home Based Care Services and Education Programmes

To ensure access to children from remote villages and towns, some countries have started to run 'mobile' pre-school education units (e.g. France, Portugal and Spain). The most common forms are visiting teacher and home educational activity schemes. The Itinerant Child Education is a form of pre-primary education in Portugal for children between 3 and 5 years of age in isolated rural areas, where it is difficult to gather a group of children to create a nursery school⁹⁷. This service is organised by a teacher who goes to various places (e.g. community centres) or directly to the families on a daily basis. This type of provision in Portugal is the responsibility of the Regional Education Boards (*DRE*).

Municipalities in the Nordic countries, principally in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, also provide additional family day-care provisions (besides the traditional form of kindergartens and pre-school classes in primary school settings). The family day-care involves municipal pre-school teachers providing care in private homes for children from several families. Similar home-care provision also exists in Austria, although not to the same extent than in the Nordic countries, as the educational level of care-takers is lower. In Austria, so-called 'day parents' mainly look after children in their own private homes, usually in addition to their own children. However, this form of provision has strongly gained in significance in recent years due to the increasing childcare demand as well as improving qualifications levels of 'day parents'.

⁹⁶ Excluding Estonia, Denmark and Sweden.

⁹⁷ Minimum pre-school group size is 15.