

# Increasing access to early childhood education and care in Canada: The case for a more equitable system for Canadians under 5 <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

## ABSTRACT

Canada lacks a national plan for early childhood education and care (ECEC). Despite being a wealthy nation, in a UNICEF analysis of 25 wealthy countries Canada ranks last for meeting benchmarks set for standards and quality in early childhood education and care. The demand for safe, regulated ECEC is high in Canada, yet there are only spaces available for 24.1% of children under the age of five. Using research methods such as a literature review, semi-structured interviews and system mapping, this project explores the history of child care policy in Canada and examines its current system through the use of system maps and infographics. Other nations' philosophy and delivery of early childhood education and care is explored in order to identify opportunities for Canada's system to be improved and reformed. Some of the common criticisms of public investment in ECEC are tackled to demonstrate how high quality ECEC has shown to not only be self-financing but can yield a high return on investment, and benefit women and children in the short and long term. Finally this project proposes a revised way to allocate existing public funds in order to deliver a universal ECEC system in Canada.

**Region:** Canada <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** child care <sup>[4]</sup>

funding <sup>[5]</sup>

policy <sup>[6]</sup>

data <sup>[7]</sup>

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