

Strengthening the quality of early childhood education and care through inclusion ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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Excerpted from overview

Recently, a vision for a more inclusive Europe has been growing especially given increasing levels of societal inequality and increasing diversity within and between European countries. At the same time, quality in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) has risen up the policy agenda globally, leading to a general consensus that quality ECEC can lead to positive and equitable outcomes for all children. Given these contexts, the European Commission (hereafter, the Commission) considers inclusion as an integral part of quality ECEC. However, ensuring effective access to quality ECEC for all children remains a challenge, especially for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is in part because both inclusion and quality ECEC are multi-faceted concepts. The present policy memo helps policymakers better understand this challenge and suggests some possible solutions. To do so, this memo introduces what inclusion means in education generally and in ECEC particularly, and then discusses how inclusion in ECEC is understood in the current EU policy context. Lastly, the memo summarises findings from recent EU-level projects on how inclusion is integrated into different aspects of quality in ECEC.

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