

Is childcare affordable? ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Access online [PDF] ^[2]

Excerpt from Key findings

- The cost of non-parental childcare is high in many OECD countries, e.g. about half of women's median full-time earnings for a two-earner family with two children in care in Japan, and the United Kingdom. Support programmes often reduce the costs for low-income families, but out-of-pocket costs often still sum to a large share of earnings for low-paid parents, including single mothers (e.g. Ireland, the Slovak Republic, and the United Kingdom).
- The widespread closure of childcare facilities during the unfolding COVID-19 crisis only highlights the importance of access to affordable care. In the absence of special measures to deal with unforeseen childcare needs during lock-down periods, many working parents are struggling to balance their work and family responsibilities (OECD, 2020^[1]). Childcare affordability is likely to remain a key concern as parents gradually return to their workplaces.
- High childcare costs are one of the factors contributing to inequalities in childcare use across income groups. In European OECD countries, children under the age of 3 in low-income households are one-third less likely to participate in early childhood education and care (ECEC) than those in high-income households.
- Childcare costs can substantially weaken employment incentives for parents. On average across OECD countries, a low-paid single mother, who takes up full-time work, loses almost two-thirds of her in-work earnings to childcare costs, taxes and the loss of social benefits.
- Accessible, affordable and good-quality ECEC carries many positive social and economic benefits. Where possible, countries should increase investment in ECEC, provide carefully designed targeted support measures to preserve equity and boost work incentives, and introduce suitable price regulations or guidelines to ensure that public support reaches the parents who need it most.

Region: International ^[3]

Tags: affordability ^[4]

parent fees ^[5]

policy ^[6]

Source URL (modified on 30 Jun 2021): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/21/06/childcare-affordable>

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