

# Development of participation in early childhood education and care in Europe in relation to social inequality and migration <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Jehles, N.

**Source:** The New Diversity of Family Life in Europe

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 4 Apr 2017

## AVAILABILITY

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

## Introduction

Institutions of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) – also known as preschools – became a highly regarded instrument for employment, family, population and social policy in European countries. ECEC are formal, institutionalized opportunities for children from birth until the start of the school and they are the first elements in the educational system. The participation of families in ECEC should support the work-life balance, especially from women, and should promote gender equality (European Council 2002: 47). ECEC should raise the birth rate in European countries to decelerate the aging and shrinking of the European population. ECEC should be an essential foundation for successful life-long learning, social integration, personal development and later employability especially for immigrant and socially deprived children (European Commission Early Childhood Education and Care 2011: 1). The following article focuses on the aims of integration and compensation of ECEC. For these aims, the findings – that immigrant children and children from socially deprived families are less likely to be successful in school and have poorer competencies in reading, writing and calculating than native children – are fundamental (Becker/Lauterbach 2010:11; Quenzel/Hurrelmann 2010: 1; Müller/Ehmke, 2013: 270; Gebhardt et al. 2013:297; Bos et al. 2003).

In all European countries, institutions of ECEC exist, but there is a variety in organization between the countries in some regards, for example in accessibility (European Commission et al. 2014: 33). On the one hand, there are countries where children have a legal entitlement to ECEC, and on the other hand, there are countries where ECEC is compulsory. A first question is if there are differences in participation in ECEC between the European Countries. With regard to the aims of ECEC integrating immigrant children and reducing social deprivation, the second question is whether the participation of these children in ECEC varies between the countries. To analyze the role of the legal framework on the participation in ECEC, the data of two different survey dates are compared and the role of the legal framework is discussed.

To answer the questions, the terms of immigrant background and social deprivation are defined and the international state of research about the effects of ECEC is summarized. Thus it is clarified that the participation in ECEC contributes to the integration of immigrant children and compensates social deprivation. In the empirical part of the article the PISA data was analyzed by descriptive methods with regard to the question of differences in participation in ECEC by immigrant background and social deprivation. The PISA data was used because it contains information about the participation in ECEC, immigrant background and the social deprivation of children for different European countries, for the years 2003 and 2012. Thereby the development in participation can be analyzed. Furthermore, the information about the legal framework from different publications was used to explain the development of differences in participation in ECEC. The article ends with a short summary of the findings and shows approaches for further research.

## Conclusion Excerpt

These results show that reforms of the system of ECEC influence participation in general, even though the results are inconsistent. Regarding the aims of ECEC of integrating immigrant children and compensating social deprivation, the results are ambiguous. Hence, the reforms of ECEC and their effects on the participation should be analyzed in detail, for example with regard to the cost, long distances or further limitations of access. Furthermore, the analysis of other or newer data could enable findings about newer reforms on one hand, and about more countries on the other, especially that of Eastern European countries.

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

**Tags:** immigrants <sup>[4]</sup>

inequity <sup>[5]</sup>

social deprivation <sup>[6]</sup>

**Source URL (modified on 26 Jul 2023):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/23/07/development-participation-early-childhood-education-and>

**Links**

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/23/07/development-participation-early-childhood-education-and> [2]

[https://www.academia.edu/102690469/Development\\_of\\_participation\\_in\\_early\\_childhood\\_education\\_and\\_care\\_in\\_Europe\\_in\\_relation\\_to\\_social\\_inequality\\_and\\_migration](https://www.academia.edu/102690469/Development_of_participation_in_early_childhood_education_and_care_in_Europe_in_relation_to_social_inequality_and_migration)

[3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/europe> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9338> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9052> [6]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9339>