

Rights of the child and early childhood education and care in Europe ^[1]

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Abstract

‘Securing the rights articulated in the Convention is an effective approach to improving the quality of early experiences.’

This article analyses early childhood education and care and child rights in early childhood and their relationship in the European Union. Both are primarily national competencies. The EU has limited access and tools to influence policies and practices, while there are many ways in which indirect interventions are not only possible, but greatly used, often in areas that do not seem to be closely related to the issues discussed here. Yet there is a strong desire and interest of the different EU institutions to encourage and support Member States to implement both ECEC targets and child rights.

In this article, we show that, while ECEC has become an essential part of different policies at EU level, there have been efforts to implement and mainstream child rights, with special attention paid to specific dimensions in relation to early childhood policies and practices, but a child rights based approach is missing.

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