

England is one of the worst countries in Europe for access to childcare ^[1]

World-first study analysing centre-based childcare and nursery data finds almost half of the population in England (45%) live in a childcare desert

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AVAILABILITY

[Access online](#) ^[2]

Excerpts

England is one of the worst countries in Europe for childcare access while Scotland is one of the best, according to a world-first study by Victoria University (VU).

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The research has mapped childcare access for 10 million children across nine countries: England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Australia, France, Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands. It is the first global study to track how and why countries are delivering childcare and the impact it has. At an international level, the research includes centre-based childcare and nursery data down to postcode level so families can get real-time data on childcare accessibility. In additional UK analysis, childminder data has also been included due to its public availability.

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Access to childcare is important for many reasons. It impacts local communities, both in terms of jobs created and the participation of parents – especially women – in the workforce. The positive impact of accessible childcare helps families, employers, and the local economy.

England falls short of childcare accessibility while the Nordics lead the way

When looking at centre-based childcare and nurseries, about half of England (45%) is classified as a childcare desert. This equates to 1.4 million children and their families living in England with poor childcare accessibility.

Compared to other nations, England ranks 8th of the nine nations in the study with Norway, Sweden and Scotland making up the top three for best childcare accessibility. To make international comparisons, childminders were excluded from the international analysis in all countries because the data isn't always available, but even with this caveat, accessibility in England is still lower than most other countries.

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Related link: [International childcare report: Mapping the deserts](#) ^[3]

Region: [Europe](#) ^[4]

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[child care deserts](#) ^[6]

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