

# Towards a public ECEC system <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Lloyd, E.

**Source:** UCL Press

**Format:** Book / booklet

**Publication Date:** 1 Jan 2020

## AVAILABILITY

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

## Chapter 6: Towards a public ECEC system

### Excerpt

This chapter's analysis of current deficiencies in England's ECEC system has demonstrated the need for its transformation into a public system and outlined pathways towards its realisation. Norway provides one model, offering a mixed economy of high-quality, accessible, affordable and enjoyable ECEC that promotes the interests of children, families, the workforce and the state, while maintaining a balance between these interests. In addition, a variety of parental leave, family-friendly employment and ECEC workforce policies appear essential to a broad-based, effective, comprehensive, inclusive and equitable public ECEC system. Policies and strategies were identified that could prove helpful in realising the required transformation away from a heavily marketised system.

The state must retain ultimate accountability and provide essential financial, monitoring and regulatory support, although it need not provide services directly. A collective sense of responsibility for investing in ECEC and its infrastructure needs nurturing within English society, with the profit motive removed from the system and replaced by a public motive. This requires a new kind of civic solidarity that can turn back 30 years of marketisation.

Undeniably, transformative change in English ECEC needs to be politically driven. Globally, human rights are being challenged by the fast encroaching privatisation and marketisation of human and other public services (UNGA 2018). In a separate United Nations report on UK poverty, childcare and housing costs, alongside benefit cuts and Universal Credit, were identified as factors responsible for 20 per cent of the population, 14 million people, now living in poverty (UNGA 2019).

Official UK poverty figures confirm that families with children are bearing the brunt of rising poverty (DWP 2019). Across the UK, over 4 million children now live in poverty, almost one in three, with children under 5 years old making up 53 per cent of this total – meaning poverty affects over 2 million young children, jeopardising their present and future well-being, health, educational and socio-economic outcomes. Children growing up in Black, certain Asian and other ethnic minority communities and in families with three or more children are disproportionately represented. Clearly, structural problems with England's ECEC system add to the disadvantage these children experience: a transformed public system is long overdue.

*From the book "Transforming Early Childhood in England: Towards a Democratic Education"*

**Related link:** Transforming early childhood in England: Towards a democratic education <sup>[3]</sup>

**Region:** Europe <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** child care market <sup>[5]</sup>

system building <sup>[6]</sup>

universal child care <sup>[7]</sup>

**Source URL (modified on 9 Oct 2024):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/24/10/towards-public-ecec-system>

### Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/24/10/towards-public-ecec-system> [2] <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1503g6p.12> [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/20/10/transforming-early-childhood-england> [4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/europe> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9138> [6]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9240> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9003>