

# Early childhood education markets and democratic experimentalism: Two models for early childhood education and care <sup>[1]</sup>

Discussionpaper

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## AVAILABILITY

- Full paper in pdf <sup>[2]</sup>

## Description:

This paper is a contribution to democratic debate about an important field of service provision, early childhood education and care (ECEC), though its argument applies in large measure to schools. There are different models of provision for ECEC services, including centralised state-run systems and systems relying heavily on the provision of services by workplaces. But today, a particular model is increasingly dominant, spreading from the English-speaking liberal market economies into Continental Europe and beyond: provision delivered through markets, in which consumers shop for and purchase services on offer from a variety of competing suppliers.

The paper defines and compares two models for the provision of early childhood education and care (ECEC) services: the market model, which is currently spreading and receiving increasing policy attention; and the model of democratic experimentalism, which has a low policy profile, though examples are given of where this model has been proposed or implemented. These are not the only models available, and the intention is not to prove that one model is objectively better than the other. Rather the intention is to resist the hegemonic tendency of the market model, by arguing it is neither necessary nor inevitable; and to move discussion of ECEC services from technical to political and ethical questions through demonstrating there are alternatives and, therefore, the need for democratic decision-making.

**Tags:** privatization <sup>[3]</sup>

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[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/08/03/early-childhood-education-markets-and-democratic> <sup>[2]</sup>

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