

Cash for childcare: Experiences from Finland, Norway and Sweden ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf ^[2]

Summary:

- Finland, Norway and Sweden have cash for childcare schemes for children under 3 years of age not enrolled in state-subsidised childcare services. They were introduced in Finland in 1985, in Norway in 1998 and in Sweden in 2008. However, the schemes differ in the three countries.
- The basic benefit is rather low, about 10 per cent of an average monthly wage; only Finland provides supplementary payments.
- The proportion of parents' taking up the benefit varies considerably. The proportion has the highest level in Finland, whereas only a few parents take up the benefit in Sweden.
- Characteristics of those receiving the benefit are fairly similar in the three countries. The large majority are mothers, and mothers with low income, low educational levels and immigrant background are overrepresented.
- Parental »choice« has been a major objective in all three schemes. However, costs have been an overarching concern in Finland. While the home care allowance has been more accepted in Finland, its future is uncertain in Norway and Sweden, where opposition is still strong.

Region: International ^[3]

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