

Childcare services for school age children^[1]

A comparative review of 33 countries

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AVAILABILITY

Report in PDF^[2]

Excerpts from the executive summary:

Many working parents in Europe rely on childcare services for their children during the hours they are at work. Until now, policy concern has tended to focus on young children and especially those below compulsory school age. The role of out-of-school services for school-going children has received relatively less attention. Implicitly it is presumed that the educational system takes over part of the care responsibility as school-going children spend a considerable part of the day at school. However, in most countries school hours are part-time and generally not compatible with a full-time working week. In addition, school holidays tend to be longer than holidays for employees, as result of which working parents not only face problems during the week, but also over the year.

This report provides a first comprehensive analysis of the availability, quality and affordability of out-of school-services for school-going children in the 27 EU Member States, the three EEA-EFTA countries (Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein), Croatia, the Former Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Turkey. The main focus is on children in pre-school and primary education. The report updates and complements earlier reports on the reconciliation of work and private life and on the provision of childcare services (Plantenga & Remery 2005 and 2009).

The results of this report make clear that the level of provision of out-of-school services in quite a number of European countries is rather limited; large groups of children have no or only very limited access to such services. In addition, the quality of services is often not regulated. As such the provision of out-of-school services remains an important policy priority, both at the EU and the national level. A more coherent perspective on the matter, taking into account the interest of both the child and the parents, seems essential from a social, economic and gender-equality point of view. Within this context, the development of more detailed harmonised data on out-of-school services may be extremely helpful in order to monitor and assess the provision of these services.

Region: Europe^[3]

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Links

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