



INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (IECE) COUNTRY QUESTIONNAIRE – NETHERLANDS

Definition: Early childhood includes all children up to the age of six or seven years old.

This group can be divided into three sub-groups, namely:

- Children 0–2 years old: childcare (nurseries);
- Children 2–4 years old: pre-primary education (playgroups and/or childcare centres);
- Children 4–6/7 years old: early childhood education (primary education groups 1 and 2).

This questionnaire refers to two groups:

1. Children aged 0–4: early childhood education and care;
2. Children aged 4–6/7: early childhood education and education.

1. ACCESS, PROCEDURES AND PARTICIPATION

Key principles

1.1 Provision that is available and affordable to all families and their children.

1.2 Provision that encourages participation, strengthens social inclusion and embraces diversity.

Appropriate education imposes a duty of care on schools. Since 1 August 2014, schools must provide a suitable place of education to all learners who need additional support. Mainstream and special schools work together in regional partnerships to achieve this.

All children, including those needing extra support, should be given a place in a school that suits their abilities and capabilities. This is the premise of appropriate education. If this is not possible in the school where a child is registered, another mainstream or special school must be found which can. Appropriate education applies to primary school children and young people in secondary schools and vocational schools.

More information:

- <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/passend-onderwijs>
- <https://www.passendonderwijs.nl/>



Guiding questions	Country response
<p>Legislation and policy at national level</p> <p>1. Is there a national policy and legislation that gives the right to all children, without exception, from at least 3 years onwards, to attend mainstream Early Childhood Education (ECE)?</p> <p>2. Is there support available to enable every child to attend ECE?</p> <p>3. Is there a period of compulsory ECE before school starts?</p> <p>4. Are arrangements in place for transition from home to ECE and from ECE to primary education for all children?</p> <p>5. Is inclusion stated as a goal of ECE provision? Is there a policy making ECE accessible to all children?</p> <p>6. Is there a policy that obliges mainstream publicly funded ECE to make adaptations so that all children can attend and participate? Please describe</p>	<p>There is no legal curriculum for children aged 0–4. Many pre-primary organisations are influenced by Starting Strong (www.oecd.org/education/earlychildhood) and the Educational Framework 0–4 years (www.stichtingbkk.nl, pedagogical framework).</p> <p>In 2005, the Dutch government launched a new initiative called <i>Passend Onderwijs</i> (which is difficult to translate literally into English). It aims to retain more learners with disabilities in mainstream schools, in both primary and secondary education. It focuses on the potential and the duty of mainstream schools to adapt their teaching and support to the individual needs of learners with a disability and/or SEN.</p> <p><i>Passend Onderwijs</i> is meant for children from the age of four. Pre-school (from the age of two and a half) is separate to day-care in the Netherlands.</p> <p><i>Passend Onderwijs</i> focuses on the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Improving the quality and organisation of the teaching and learning of learners with a disability or SEN;– Supporting parents in finding a (mainstream) school which provides the teaching and learning their child needs;– Obliging mainstream schools to find and secure an appropriate educational provision for every learner who applies for a place (the ‘one-stop-shop’ principle);– Developing new and bigger consortia in primary education (scaling up, from 234 consortia to 75). This ensures that the special provision needed for all learners within the region can be financed. An average consortium will have 21,000 learners;– The re-distribution of resources from the special schools in clusters 3 and 4 to the primary education consortia and the secondary education networks;– Discontinuation of the Regional Expertise Centres (RECs). Their task of identifying and assessing disability



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>and/or SEN will be transferred to the consortia and networks of mainstream schools;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="549 416 1406 539">– Mandating decision-making about the placement of learners in special schools in clusters 3 and 4 to the consortia and networks;<li data-bbox="549 568 1430 651">– The development of a continuum of provision in each consortium or network;<li data-bbox="549 680 1390 763">– Focusing on what learners are capable of achieving instead of focusing on their shortcomings;<li data-bbox="549 792 1422 875">– Developing a transparent system of budget financing to end open-ended financing.



2. WORKFORCE

Key principles

2.1. Well-qualified staff whose initial and continuing training enables them to fulfil their professional role.

2.2. Supportive working conditions including professional leadership that creates opportunities for observation, reflection, planning, teamwork and co-operation with parents.

Guiding questions	Country response
<p><i>Legislation and policy</i></p> <p>1. What level of qualification is required to work in ECE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for teachers? • for other staff? <p>2. What regulation is there for staff-child ratios in ECE?</p> <p>3. What provision is there for additional staffing to support children with diverse and additional needs?</p> <p>4. Does the initial training of staff include understanding and supporting children with diverse and additional needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for teachers? • for other staff? <p>5. Does initial training include preparation for working in partnership with families:</p>	<p>1. There is no legal requirement for children with special needs, up to age four. At the age of four children are covered by the <i>Passend Onderwijs</i> law. Employees in pre-primary education which includes children with special needs have an MBO or HBO degree. In the best cases, this may be supplemented with a Master’s degree in SEN. This is not obligatory.</p> <p>2. In the Netherlands, there are various initiatives to appropriately assist children with special needs, according to <i>Passend Onderwijs</i>. The standard ratio is one staff member to twelve learners. Pre-primary care for children with special needs is currently being tested, with a ratio of one staff member to nine learners.</p> <p>3. There are no additional funds to support children aged 0–4 years with special needs.</p> <p>4. At the age of four, children with special needs are covered by the <i>Passend Onderwijs</i> law. There is also support for teachers regulated by the partnership. Teachers are encouraged to undertake specialist training in the education of children with special needs. This is not obligatory.</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• for teachers?• for other staff? <p>6. Is there a policy for in-service training? Does it cover inclusive education skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• for teachers?• for other staff?	



3. CURRICULUM

Key principles

3.1. A curriculum based on pedagogic goals, values and approaches that enable children to reach their full potential in a holistic way.

3.2. A curriculum that requires staff to collaborate with children, colleagues and parents and to reflect on their own practice.

Guiding questions	Country response
<p><i>Legislation and policy</i></p> <p>1. Is there a national ECE curriculum for <i>all</i> children?</p> <p>2. Does it include skills and competences to be achieved by children?</p> <p>3. Describe how the curriculum facilitates inclusion?</p> <p>4. Is the use of new technologies included in the curriculum?</p> <p>5. Is the curriculum adaptable to meet the needs of all children?</p> <p>6. How are parents involved in the adaptation of the curriculum to individual children?</p> <p>7. Is there awareness of the impact of labelling on children's participation</p>	<p>There is no national ECE curriculum for all children. Neither is there a legal curriculum for children aged 0–4. Many pre-primary organisations are influenced by Starting Strong (www.oecd.org/education/earlychildhood) and Educational Framework 0–4 (www.stichtingbkk.nl, pedagogical framework). There are also guidelines for children aged 2–4 (www.slo.nl/jongekind).</p> <p>There is a primary education curriculum in the Netherlands (www.tule.slo.nl). For younger children (4–6/7 years) there are guidelines. These include aims/goals to be achieved by the end of pre-school and at the end of primary group 2. These aims/goals for younger children do not facilitate any kind of inclusion (www.slo.nl/jongekind).</p> <p>Most Dutch pre-schools use ready-made curricular programmes, selected either by the local government or the organisation itself. Many programmes are designed across pre-primary and kindergarten ranges, while some specifically target ages two and three. Pre-primary curricula vary in nature and content and have been developed by a wide variety of individuals and organisations. Some programmes are comprehensive, while others focus on certain areas such as language or social-emotional development. In addition to centre-based programmes, there has also been a movement towards home-based programmes or programmes for children with special needs.</p> <p>Research has shown that home-based programmes are generally less effective than centre-based programmes, but are still worthwhile. An international meta-study</p>



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	<p>examining cognitive and social-emotional gains indicates that centre-based or combination centre/home-based programmes are the most effective (Blok, Fukkink, Gebhardt and Leseman, 2005). Evaluation research on the three most prevalent programmes in the Netherlands clearly shows the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– cognitive gains for children attending the Kaleidoscope (Dutch version of High Scope) and Pyramid programmes (Schonewille, Kloprogge and van der Leij, 2000; Veen, Roeleveld and Leseman, 2000);– socio-emotional gains for children participating in Startblokken (Veen, Fukkink and Roeleveld, 2006). <p>The Pyramid programme is the most popular pre-primary programme in the Netherlands, used by 64% of Dutch pre-schools (Kloprogge, 2003).</p> <p>For more information about the VVE programmes: www.nji.nl/kennis/dossier/pedagogische-basisvoorzieningen/vve.</p>
<p><i>Practice at national level</i></p> <p>1. Is there assessment of the learning and development of children from age 3 years?</p> <p>2. What arrangements are there for the screening of children's functioning?</p> <p>3. Is children's engagement and participation in ECE activities monitored?</p> <p>4. How do ECE settings</p>	<p>The only obligatory assessment (or rather, observation) is required by the Dutch Inspectorate of Education. This states that children should be observed by a standardised and registered observation tool between two and seven years of age.</p> <p>Organisations and school settings can decide how many times they observe the children.</p> <p>The local government is responsible for the monitoring of ECE activities (children with language delay, VVE).</p> <p>In the Netherlands, there is great variety in the way organisations reflect on and adapt the curriculum. There are no standards for this.</p> <p>The Dutch government prioritises parental involvement, especially when it involves parents of children with language delay (VVE).</p>



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<p>reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of all children?</p> <p>5. How do staff adapt (prepare and present) the curriculum and the learning activities to make them accessible to all children?</p> <p>6. How are parents involved in this process?</p> <p>7. How are children themselves involved in this process?</p> <p>8. How is ICT used to overcome barriers to participation and learning?</p> <p>9. What provisions are there for meeting children's additional needs?</p> <p>10. How is the environment adapted to the needs of all children?</p>	



4. EVALUATION AND MONITORING

Key principles

4.1. Monitoring and evaluating produces information at the relevant local, regional and/or national level to support continuing improvements in the quality of policy and practice.

4.2. Monitoring and evaluation which is in the best interest of the child.

Guiding questions	Country response
<p>Legislation and policy</p> <p>1. What standards are in place for ensuring the quality of ECE at national level?</p> <p>2. Describe the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the quality of ECE provision?</p> <p>3. How is the participation of all children reflected in the national quality standards for ECE?</p> <p>4. How does national policy identify and address inequalities in participation in ECE?</p> <p>5. How does research inform policy and practice in ECE?</p>	<p>Two organisations are involved in monitoring children aged 0–4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– the Municipal Health Service (GGD) is responsible for monitoring in day-care and pre-schools (www.ggdghorkennisnet.nl/thema/toezicht-kwaliteitkinderopvang);– the Dutch Inspectorate of Education is responsible for monitoring in pre-schools for children with language delay (VVE) (www.onderwijsinspectie.nl/onderwijssectoren/voor-envroegschoolseeducatie). <p>The Dutch Youth Health Centre (NCJ, <i>consultatiebureaus</i>) promotes job development research in youth health care (JGZ). It also encourages early detection of developmental problems and disorders and supports scientific research and development in this field and others.</p> <p>There is also a renewed method for identifying language deficiencies in two-year olds. It is an expansion of the existing Van Wiechen Research, in which language deficiencies are identified in a clinic. There are standard agreements regarding referral. Thanks to new screening tools, language deficiencies are addressed at an early age, allowing children to make a better start in primary school (https://www.ncj.nl/programma-s-producten/van-wiechen-ontwikkelingsonderzoek1/signalering-taalachterstanden).</p> <p>Various research organisations and universities undertake different studies in the field of early childhood education.</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
	There is no research on inclusive education in the Netherlands. Scientists and researchers involved in the studies include Prof. Dr Paul Leseman, Dr Lotte Henrichs, Prof. Dr Ruben Fukkink, Prof. Dr Sieneke Goorhuis and Prof. Dr Louis Tavecchio.
<i>Practice at national level</i> 1. How do staff monitor and evaluate the participation and learning of all children? 2. How are parents involved in this process? 3. How are children themselves involved in this process?	See above



5. GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING

Key principles

5.1. Stakeholders in the ECE system have a clear and shared understanding of their role and responsibilities, and know that they are expected to collaborate with partner organisations.

5.2. Legislation, regulation and/or funding supports progress towards a universal legal entitlement to publicly subsidised or funded ECE, and progress is regularly reported to all stakeholders.

Guiding questions	Country response
<p><i>Practice at national level</i></p> <p>1. How far does the standard of ECE provision vary across regions and localities?</p> <p>2. How effective is collaboration between the ECE and health, social and other relevant agencies for children and families?</p> <p>3. What proportion of children (3 years to primary education) make use of additional funding?</p> <p>4. How well does additional funding support inclusive education?</p>	<p>In the Netherlands, there is great variety in the way organisations reflect on and adapt the curriculum. There are no standards for this.</p> <p>The only obligation is on local government, which has to present performance agreements on education for children with language delay (VVE) (http://www.oberon.eu/ons-portfolio/item/resultaatafspraken-vroegschoolse-educatie.html).</p>