



## INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (IECE) COUNTRY QUESTIONNAIRE – FINLAND

### 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.

#### *Legislation and policy at national level*

Guiding questions	Country responses
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>There are two different laws that define ECE in Finland.</p> <p>The amendment of the Day-Care Act came into force on 1 August 2015, creating the ECEC (Early Childhood Education and Care) Act. This concerns mainly 0–5-year-old children.</p> <p>Pre-primary education is defined in the Basic Education Act.</p> <p>According to the ECEC Act, there are three different forms of ECE: centre-based ECE (kindergartens), home-based ECE (usually by one child-minder with 4 children) and other ECE, such as playground activities and weekly clubs.</p> <p>Children are legally entitled to a publicly subsidised ECE place from the end of the parental leave period. According to the ECEC Act, every child under the age of compulsory education has a right to early childhood education. The right to ECE is reduced from full time to 20 hours a week from 1 August 2016.</p> <p>The Government has decided that each child will have a statutory right to a weekly 20 hours of early childhood education and care. However, a child has the right to early education on a full-time basis if the parents or other guardians work or study full time, or if it is in the child's best interest with regard to his or her development, need for special support, or family circumstances.</p> <p>Municipal authorities make decisions on services for more than 20 hours. Parents pay for the services. The fees are based on the parents' income and family size. The half-day provision</p>



Guiding questions	Country responses
	<p>of pre-primary education, during the final year of ECE, is free of charge.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education and Culture is also drafting a new law on client fees in ECE. The Government programme obliges the increase of client fees by 16%. The maximum fee is currently 283 euros per child, per month. The fees are index bound and the maximum fee would therefore be 290 euros from the following August due to the index increment.</p> <p>According to the bill, the maximum fee would be 354 euros per child per month. The fee for a second child would be a maximum of 90% of the first child's fee, that is, 319 euros per month. For each additional child the fee would be 20%, or 71 euros per month.</p> <p>For low-income families, ECE would still be free of charge. The lowest fee collected would be 27 euros.</p> <p>The fee for part time ECE (20 hours per week) would be set to a maximum of 60% of the maximum fee, that is, 212 euros per month.</p> <p>If parliament accepts the bill, the reform will come into force on 1 August 2016.</p> <p>Pre-primary education is offered free of charge by municipalities to every 6-year-old (instruction, materials, transportation if the distance is more than 5km, support for learning and wellbeing, meals, etc.).</p> <p>The minimum scope of pre-primary education is 700 hours per year. Usually municipalities offer 4 hours a day during the school year. Children are entitled to extra ECE services to make up a full day if necessary.</p>
2. Is there support available to enable every child to attend ECE?	Children are entitled to special needs education services if needed. According to the ECEC Act there have to be special needs education teachers in every municipality. Children are also entitled to medical and health care services (doctors, medical nurses, therapists, psychologists) and special equipment if needed.



Guiding questions	Country responses
	In pre-primary education, the same services are available.
3. Is there a period of compulsory ECE before school starts?	Pre-primary education (6-year olds) lasts for one year. Compulsory education starts the year children turn 7.
4. Are arrangements in place for transition from home to ECE and from ECE to primary education for all children?	The National Core Curriculum for Pre-primary Education 2014 regulates transition. Each education provider has to make a plan for transition as part of their local curriculum. The same principles are written into the new National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care 2016. The new ECEC curriculum will be put into action in 2017.
5. Is inclusion stated as a goal of ECE provision? Is there a policy making ECE accessible to all children?	Legislation concerning ECE and pre-primary education in Finland is based on ideas of inclusion. All children are entitled to ECE and pre-primary education as well as to basic education. The Basic Education Act defines three so-called support system steps (general, intensified and special support levels) for children in pre-primary education. The principles in action are specified in the National Core Curriculum for Pre-primary Education. The same principles are applied in the forthcoming Core Curriculum For ECEC even though the definition concerning support in the ECEC Act is not as clear.
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>The ECEC Act and Basic Education Act oblige municipalities to offer ECE services and pre-primary education to all children. Facilities, learning environments, etc. have to be safe and healthy for all children.</p> <p>Seriously ill or disabled children may be entitled to <a href="#">disability allowance</a>. The allowance is meant to help in everyday life extra costs.</p> <p>When a child is in hospital, early childhood education and care or pre-primary education is arranged in hospital to allow education to continue as normally as possible.</p>



### ***Practice at national level***

<b>Guiding questions</b>	<b>Country responses</b>
<p>1. What percentage of children attend mainstream ECE provision at ages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 years</li><li>• 4 years</li><li>• 5 years (if not primary)</li><li>• 6 years (if not primary)?</li></ul>	<p>Participation rates ISCED 0:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– 3 years: 50.9%</li><li>– 4 years: 59.3%</li><li>– 5 years: 68.2%</li><li>– 6 years: 97.7%</li></ul>
<p>2. What are the main factors preventing some children from accessing mainstream ECE?</p>	<p>Child home care allowance can be claimed by a parent or other legal guardian with a child under 3 years of age who is not in municipal day-care. The child can be looked after by one of the parents or another person (e.g. a relative) or a private day-care provider (e.g. private day-care centre). If there is a new baby in the family, children older than three years are also taken care of at home. The use of the home care allowance is popular, especially within families with lower income or mothers with low education levels or an immigrant background. The allowance is national, but some municipalities pay extra local allowance. Because of the allowance, the participation rates at ECE services in Finland are low.</p>
<p>3. Are there children who attend special ECE settings? Please provide data if available.</p>	<p>There are special groups and inclusive settings. No data available.</p>
<p>4. Describe arrangements for inter-service</p>	<p>According to the ECE Act municipalities have to co-operate with the authorities responsible for education, physical activity, culture, social care, childcare, child health centres and</p>



Guiding questions	Country responses
collaboration to enable children's attendance and participation?	other health care services. The same principles also concern pre-primary education.
5. What proportion of children is formally identified as having additional needs at: <ul data-bbox="180 808 344 1032" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 years</li><li>• 4 years</li><li>• 5 years</li><li>• 6 years</li></ul>	There is no official data, as additional needs were not properly identified in legislation before 2015. According to the National Institute for Health and Welfare report of 24 January 2014, in 2010, 8.3% of the children in municipal ECE (day-care centres and home-based municipal day-care) got special needs support in some form. Formally identified children have medical or psychological diagnosis or their additional needs are identified by ECE personnel (THL report, 24 January 2014).



## 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 cooperation with parents.

### Legislation and policy

Guiding questions	Country responses
<p>1. What level of qualification is required to work in ECE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for teachers?</li> <li>• for other staff?</li> </ul>	<p>ECE or kindergarten teachers are educated in scientific universities and in universities of applied sciences. The required teaching qualification level in ECE for 1–5-year-old children is bachelor level. Some teachers have master’s level education. In pre-primary education, teachers with scientific university kindergarten teacher education (bachelor) or class teacher education (master) are qualified.</p> <p>Special needs education teachers are qualified teachers with (extra) specialised studies (60 credits) in special needs education didactics.</p> <p>Practical nurses must have appropriate (ECE related) vocational upper-secondary education.</p> <p>There is no qualification level determined in legislation for support personnel who work as assistants in ECE settings or as childcare staff in home-based ECE settings.</p>
<p>2. What regulation is there for staff-child ratios in ECE?</p>	<p>The staff-child ratio has changed from 1:7 to 1:8. The government decided a change in the adult-child ratio in centre based ECE was required because of the difficult economic situation in Finland. The new ratio for children over 3 years old will be eight children per one adult instead of seven. The amendment to the ratio comes into force on 1 August 2016.</p> <p>There is a higher staff-child (1:13) ratio in half-day groups.</p> <p>There are no strict adult-child ratios in pre-primary education, but the national recommendation is 1:13.</p>



Guiding questions	Country responses
<p>3. What provision is there for additional staffing to support children with diverse and additional needs?</p>	<p>Additional staff include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– assistant staff for individual children with special needs (working regularly at ECE groups);</li><li>– Finnish or Swedish as a second language teachers (visit ECE groups);</li><li>– consultative early childhood special education teachers (visit ECE groups, giving consultation to teachers and other staff);</li><li>– occupational therapists (visit client children and consult staff);</li><li>– speech therapists (giving individual therapy and consultation to staff);</li><li>– psychologists (visit ECE groups, giving consultations to teachers and other staff, carrying out learning and development tests to children if needed and taking part in transition and child school placement planning during the pre-primary year).</li></ul> <p>Additional staff are used only with permission of parents.</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"><li>• for teachers?</li><li>• for other staff?</li></ul>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>5. Does initial training include preparation for working in partnership with</p>	<p>Yes</p>



Guiding questions	Country responses
families: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for teachers?</li> <li>• for other staff?</li> </ul>	
6. Is there a policy for in-service training? Does it cover inclusive education skills? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for teachers?</li> <li>• for other staff?</li> </ul>	There is specialist training available for ECE teachers (extra 60 credits).  For other staff there are limited possibilities.

***Practice at national level***

Guiding questions	Country responses
1. What proportion of staff has the required qualification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• for teachers?</li> <li>• for other staff?</li> </ul>	There is no official data collected at a national level. Municipalities collect their own data in different ways. However, it is well known that there are not enough qualified kindergarten teachers applying for work. In 2007, 30% of special needs education teachers were unqualified (report for Ministry of Social Affairs and Health).  Qualification requirements for ECE staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 1/3 of staff must have a bachelor’s or master’s degree in Early Education or a bachelor of Social Sciences (including studies in early childhood education and care and social pedagogy);</li> <li>– 2/3 of staff must have upper-secondary education with an emphasis on early childhood education.</li> </ul>
2. Please describe any proposed changes to the required	The Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council evaluated the professional programmes that lead to qualifications in ECE in 2013. According to the evaluation report, there were issues in need of development in every programme. The Ministry of Education leads the development of tertiary level



Guiding questions	Country responses
qualifications.	qualifications and the Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE) is responsible for the upper-secondary level qualifications.
3. Describe the role of leaders of ECE settings in ensuring inclusive practice?	<p>ECE leaders are responsible for human resources, recruitment, financial planning, evaluation and development of staff and ECE. Leaders have to ensure that the law and regulations of ECE are taken into account in practice. They ensure that early childhood education plans and other documents guiding the activities are put into practice.</p> <p>Leaders plan the child groupings together with staff. They make decisions to place children in ECE units. The idea is to take the interests of the children into account. Competent management is a big role in developing inclusive practices. Leaders must be experts in early childhood education and day-care. Pedagogical knowledge is crucial.</p> <p>Leaders decide on support services for the children with special needs. They also decide how the facilities and the staff resources are used.</p>
4. Provide any data on staff–child ratio.	<p>The staff–child ratio is based on the ECE Act (see 2.2).</p> <p>The law sets the minimum. For instance, in Jyväskylä city, the staff–child ratio follows the ECEC Act. For children aged three and over, there are normally two kindergarten teachers and one nurse in a group of children (the ECEC Act requires one kindergarten teacher per group).</p> <p>There is no staff–child ratio defined in the Basic Education Act. The Ministry recommends 1:13 and 2:20.</p>
5. Please describe the range of specialist support that is available and how it is organised?	<p>Support measures can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Changing the staff–child ratio;</li><li>– Appointing a special day-care instructor to a group with children with special needs;</li><li>– Creating inclusive or separate special groups;</li><li>– Placing a special needs assistant in a group;</li></ul>



Guiding questions	Country responses
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Special needs teacher consultation or instruction;</li><li>– Use of other special support professionals (see 2.3).</li></ul> <p>Special groups are quite rare. A special group is a day-care centre group for six to eight children who need special support to an extent that cannot be provided through the day by a care centre's other support measures.</p> <p>An inclusive special group is a day-care centre group of up to 12 children, five of whom are children with special needs, whose systematic support requires more extensive expertise in special education than is inherently present in regular day-care groups.</p>
6. How do regular and support staff collaborate in IECE settings?	Regular and support staff have meetings and communicate in many ways with each other and with parents. This all happens only with permission from the parents.
7. Describe the role of support assistants in the ECE setting?	Day-care assistants are only in place when there are children with special needs. There might be students or other trainees in child groups but they do not have the duties of normal staff (see also 2.3).



### 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.

#### Legislation and policy

Guiding questions	Country responses
1. Is there a national ECE curriculum for <i>all</i> children?	Yes, there are two. The National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care 2016 will be mandatory for municipalities and private providers from the beginning of August 2017. The National Core Curriculum for Pre-primary Education 2014 is also mandatory.
2. Does it include skills and competences to be achieved by children?	<p>Not for ECE. Goals are set for teachers and other professionals, but there are no performance requirements for the children. The focus is on individual learning and the overall wellbeing of the child.</p> <p>The National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care 2017 has six extended competencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Thinking and learning to learn;</li> <li>– Participation, influencing and creating a sustainable future;</li> <li>– Multimodal literacy;</li> <li>– Taking care of oneself, managing daily activities, safety;</li> <li>– Cultural competence, interaction, expression;</li> <li>– ICT competence.</li> </ul> <p>Development of extended competence begins from early childhood and continues throughout life. Extended competence is strengthened through multifaceted learning, in daily activities and in interaction with others. The world changes and as such extended competencies are needed.</p>
3. Describe how	Inclusion is the basic principle of the curriculum and all work in



<b>Guiding questions</b>	<b>Country responses</b>
the curriculum facilitates inclusion?	ECE. Every child has a right to participate in ECE and to get instruction and support if needed. Children have an opportunity to receive support for their growth and learning and to develop their learning abilities on their own terms. Diverse learners, different learning styles and starting points for learning, as well as children’s cultural and linguistic backgrounds, need to be taken into account.
4. Is the use of new technologies included in the curriculum?	Yes
5. Is the curriculum adaptable to meet the needs of all children?	Yes
6. How are parents involved in the adaptation of the curriculum to individual children?	Parents have a chance to participate in national curriculum processes by commenting in different ways. Parents’ involvement and participation in local processes is also recommended.
7. Is there awareness of the impact of labelling on children's participation and learning.	Yes. The implementation of children’s participation and learning is seen as very important. Learning, belonging in the group and welfare becomes meaningful to the child.

***Practice at national level***

<b>Guiding questions</b>	<b>Country responses</b>
1. Is there assessment of the learning and development of children from age 3	Learning, development and wellbeing are assessed individually. Objectives are set and written together with teachers, parents and children based on the child’s individual education plan. Teachers will gain the knowledge needed about children’s previous ECE, their goals and interests and



Guiding questions	Country responses
years?	<p>development from their past teachers and parents. This knowledge is used as the basis for further observation, data collecting and feedback.</p> <p>The assessment concentrates on assessing the pedagogy, learning environments, support and other set goals, not the individual child.</p>
2. What arrangements are there for the screening of children's functioning?	<p>Children are observed and their activities documented. The documentation is used for staff self-assessment and to give feedback to the children and parents. If needed, different tests can be used. Professional teams discuss the progress of the children and the results are documented to children's individual education plans.</p>
3. Is children's engagement and participation in ECE activities monitored?	<p>The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre is responsible for evaluation on a national level. The centre started in 2015 and has not made any evaluations of ECE yet. The evaluation research is going to be sample-based.</p>
4. How do ECE settings reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of all children?	<p>There are ECE services available in three national languages (Finnish, Swedish and Sami). Sign language support is available if needed.</p> <p>There are also private kindergartens with different languages in the largest cities.</p> <p>When a child has a first language other than Finnish or Swedish, he or she will receive education in Finnish or Swedish as a second language. The child's first language development is supported if possible.</p> <p>Children's home cultural identity is supported and Finnish culture is introduced.</p>
5. How do staff adapt (prepare and present) the curriculum and the learning activities to make them	<p>Supporting child development is one of the main purposes of ECE. The forms and scope of the support are adapted to the individual needs of each child. In certain situations, the support measures require authoritative decisions and special pedagogical expertise.</p>



Guiding questions	Country responses
accessible to all children?	
6. How are parents involved in this process?	Parents are invited to meetings where the curriculum is introduced to them and planned together with ECE staff. Parents also give feedback to ECE units and municipalities through official questionnaires (customer feedback) and in everyday dialogue with the staff. An individual ECE plan is drawn up for each child in collaboration with the staff and parents.
7. How are children themselves involved in this process?	Through interviews and observations by the staff and parents.
8. How is ICT used to overcome barriers to participation and learning?	There is a lack of modern ICT connections and equipment in Finnish ECE settings. More in-service training for staff is also needed. However, special needs education teachers use ICT tools more than other staff.  The available resources needed to use ICT in ECE and pre-primary to support children vary. However, children who have special needs may have, for example, their own tablet in ECE.
9. What provisions are there for meeting children's additional needs?	See 2.5 and 2.6.
10. How is the environment adapted to the needs of all children?	Children with special needs are mostly integrated into settings near their home. The new curriculum stresses the importance of using and developing multi-faceted learning environments. The curriculum also highlights the importance of interaction. The ECE environment as a whole comprises physical, psychological and social elements. The concept encompasses built indoor and outdoor facilities, the immediate neighbourhood and psychological and social settings, as well as various materials and equipment. The aim is for children to participate in planning their own ECE environment. The ECE



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<b>Guiding questions</b>	<b>Country responses</b>
	environment should enable and promote diverse ways of working, including activities in small groups.



## 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.

### Legislation and policy

Guiding questions	Country responses
1. What standards are in place for ensuring the quality of ECE at national level?	<p>There are no specific quality standards for ECE, but the legislation and curricula set quality standards in many ways.</p> <p>The Finnish ECEC Act (19.1.1973/36) has 10 main goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– to promote each child’s age and holistic development according to their growth, development, health and wellbeing;</li> <li>– to support the child’s learning conditions, and to promote lifelong learning and the implementation of educational equality;</li> <li>– to implement play, movement, arts and diverse educational activities based on cultural heritage and to enable positive learning experiences;</li> <li>– to ensure that the ECE environment is developed for children, promotes their learning and is healthy and safe;</li> <li>– to ensure a respectful approach to children and possible permanent interactions between children and ECE staff;</li> <li>– to provide all children with equal access to ECE, to promote gender equality and prepare children to understand and respect the common cultural heritage, as well as the linguistic, cultural, religious and life background of others;</li> <li>– to recognise the need for individual child support and organise appropriate support for ECE when the need arises and, where appropriate, multi-disciplinary co-</li> </ul>



Guiding questions	Country responses
	<p>operation;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– to develop the child’s co-operation and interaction skills, to promote the child’s peer group, as well as acting to guide ethically responsible and sustainable activities, respect for other people and members of society;</li> <li>– to ensure the child has the opportunity to participate and to influence matters pertaining to themselves;</li> <li>– to work together with the child and the child’s parent or guardian for the child’s balanced development and overall welfare, as well as to support the child’s parent or guardian in their educational work.</li> </ul> <p>The forthcoming National Core Curriculum for ECEC 2016 is based on the ECEC Act and the goals defined in it. The curriculum in Finland is both an administrative and pedagogical mandate to the local education providers and staff. The New National Core Curriculum for ECEC has been created in line with the National Core Curriculum for Pre-primary Education and the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education. Using shared pedagogical principles and goals for operational culture makes the transition easier for the children. Staff from different levels of education work in co-operation during local curriculum processes. Participation in professional processes, sharing ideas and developing local curricula with other professionals ensures quality in ECE and other levels of education.</p>
<p>2. Describe the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the quality of ECE provision?</p>	<p>See 3.3.</p>
<p>3. How is the participation of all children reflected</p>	<p>During the preparation for updating the ECEC Act in 2012–2014, Professors Karila and Alasuutari made a study of children’s opinions and expectations of good quality ECE. The</p>



<b>Guiding questions</b>	<b>Country responses</b>
in the national quality standards for ECE?	results have been used during the updating of ECE goals in the Act. The results are also used in the national curriculum process.
4. How does national policy identify and address inequalities in participation in ECE?	Inequalities are identified only in public discourse. Unfortunately, the latest political decisions most probably widen the gap between the families with low and high income. Until 2015, there was a subjective right to ECE services for all children. Now the right has been reduced to 20 hours a week; for instance, if the parents are unemployed their children can only take part in 20 hours of ECE per week. At the same time, the fees that families pay are increased.
5. How does research inform policy and practice in ECE?	There is a lot of relevant research available. Researchers try to inform policy but it seems to have very little effect. The education of kindergarten teachers and early childhood special education teachers is arranged in universities and is research-based.

### ***Practice at national level***

<b>Guiding questions</b>	<b>Country responses</b>
1. How do staff monitor and evaluate the participation and learning of all children?	In ECE, there are no performance requirements for the child but the focus is on the overall wellbeing of the child. This is also reflected in the assessment. An individual ECE plan is drawn up for each child, in collaboration with the staff and parents. The plan takes into account the child's experiences, interests and strengths, as well as their need for support and guidance. The ECE staff are expected to systematically and consciously observe and document the child's development and take account of their observations in planning activities.
2. How are parents involved in this process?	The implementation of the plan is monitored and assessed regularly both among staff and with parents. The individual ECE plan is a central instrument in dialogue with parents and it must be done for each child attending day-care, according to legislation.
3. How are children	Children's own interests and needs, as well as local



<b>Guiding questions</b>	<b>Country responses</b>
themselves involved in this process?	circumstances, should guide the content of education and the individual ECE plan. Children can participate in the individual ECE plan discussions with parents and staff, or they can be interviewed or monitored before the discussion.



## 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.

### Legislation and policy

Guiding questions	Country responses
1. Under which ministry(ies) / department(s) are ECE provisions regulated and funded?	The Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for all education, including ECE. Some family allowances are under the Ministry of Social and Health Affairs. The FNBE works under the Ministry of Education. FNBE is responsible for developing ECE and for the national core curricula.
2. How is intersectorial (health, social and education) collaboration promoted among all stakeholders in ECE?	Ministries co-operate with each other.
3. How is free or affordable provision guaranteed to all children age 3 years and over?	Parents' income and family size are taken into account when defining the ECE payments for 1–5-year olds. Pre-primary education (6-year olds) is free. Children with severe disabilities are entitled to start their free pre-primary education one year earlier, when they are 5. Pre-primary education goals are set individually.
4. What additional economic measures are available for	Seriously ill or disabled children may be entitled to <a href="#">disability allowance</a> . The allowance is meant to help in everyday life extra costs.



<b>Guiding questions</b>	<b>Country responses</b>
children with additional needs and their families to access mainstream ECE?	
5. How is additional funding allocated?	It is allocated according to specific Acts.

### ***Practice at national level***

<b>Guiding questions</b>	<b>Country responses</b>
1. How far does the standard of ECE provision vary across regions and localities?	<p>The organisation and implementation of instruction and education, child welfare, co-operation between pre-primary education and guardians and other pre-primary education activities are decided upon in the local curriculum, based on the national core curriculum. The curriculum is formulated to determine, steer and support the organisation of ECE and pre-primary education in all ECE units.</p> <p>When preparing the curriculum, the education provider shall take into account local specificities, the needs of the children, and outcomes of self-evaluation and development work relevant to pre-primary education.</p> <p>There is still variation across localities. Pedagogical variation and a certain amount of freedom are necessary for development. There is also variation in resources, which is not desirable. For instance, the availability of qualified staff varies across municipalities, especially the qualified kindergarten teachers and early childhood special education teachers. There is also lack of other support or additional service staff, especially in rural areas.</p>
2. How effective is collaboration between the ECE and health, social and other relevant agencies for	Collaboration seems to function well. There is no specific data available.



Guiding questions	Country responses
children and families?	
3. What proportion of children (3 years to primary education) make use of additional funding?	See 1.6.
4. How well does additional funding support inclusive education?	Additional funding in education is targeted at the providers of education (municipalities) to organise ECE, not to individuals.