

Enhancing Quality in Family Day Care

Denmark

Timeline of recent policy measures

2004 - Pedagogical Learning Plan for ECEC on the Act of ECEC: Introduced for the first time, some pedagogues found this a risk of schoolification while others saw the curriculum as a recognition of the ECEC profession. The topics of the curriculum are quite similar to those of the curriculum for the kindergarten-class.



2014 - Reform of the 2014 primary school: The reform introduced longer school days and a closer cooperation between school and leisure time centres in order to promote play and learning. The reform was heavily criticized by teachers because of deteriorations of their working conditions. Pedagogues weren't happy about the reductions of the time for activities in the leisure time centres.



2018 - a strengthened pedagogical curriculum for ECEC was decided by the parliament: It marked a shift from the risk of schoolification and different ideas of testing and use of pre-fixed concepts to emphasize the importance of children's play and the pedagogues' development of a comprehensive learning environment.



2021 - Act on minimum ratios in ECEC: This Act is going to improve the ratio of staff to children in the future. From 2024, the minimum ratio will be 1 staff to 3 children aged 0-2 years and 1 staff to 6 children aged 3-5 years. Some municipalities already introduced the new ratios.

Early Childhood Education and Care

Attendance

Most children start in the services at the age of 10-12 months.

Attendance rates are:

- 12-24 months; 86%
- 24-36 months; 93%
- 3-5 years; 98%

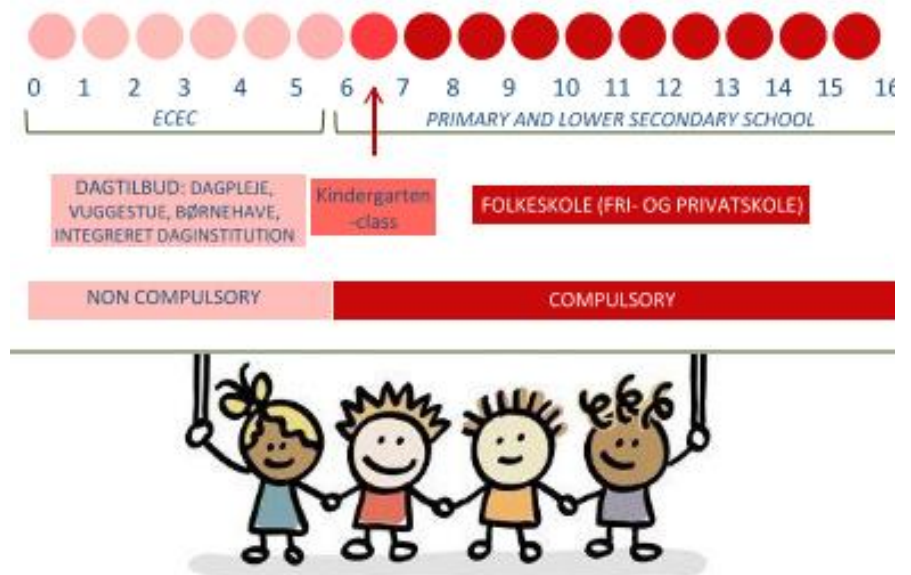
Provision

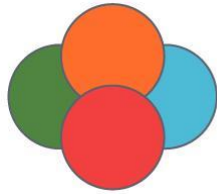
93% of ECEC are public or independent and all supervised by the municipalities. 7% are private but with an agreement with the municipality, so they get funding and are supervised like the municipal services. 75% of the costs are paid by the municipalities and 25% by the parents. There is fee reduction for low-income parents.

Personnel

55% of the staff are pedagogues with a bachelor's degree. 45% are assistants – some of them with a vocational training. The services are led by leaders who have the pedagogue education and further education.

STRUCTURE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND PRIMARY EDUCATION





Enhancing Quality in Family Day Care

Family Day Care

Numbers

The top-level authority responsible for home-based ECEC provision is the Ministry of Children and Education. The establishment of a home based ECEC setting has to be approved by the local municipality. In 2019, 12% of children in day care were in a home-based ECEC provision (Statistics Denmark, 2021). According to municipal salary database (Kommunernes Lønndata) in July 2022 there were 7,933 family day care home care providers in Denmark.

Regulation

According to the top-level regulations on home-based provision, one childminder is allowed to take up to five children. If two or more persons are carrying out childminding together, the municipality may allow the childminders to receive up to ten children. The services are mostly organised in a way that all family day care providers and pedagogues working in family day care have one leader. In most big cities, they also have areas leaders.

Costs

Child care provision greatly depends on the family location in the country: the further the family lives from a big city, the greater the probability the child will be looked after by a home care provider. Home-based settings are subsidised by the municipality. Parents receive public grants to help them afford fees in home-based settings (75% of the price of a place in a public day care ECEC setting). This way, the cost of home care and centre-based care are the same.

Organisation

The family day care organisation is structured at the municipal level. It includes 350 family day care pedagogues, a leader of each unity (can be one for the whole municipality, or for an area in large towns) and family day care providers. No minimum qualification level more specific training is required for childminders in a home-based provision. The average age of child care workers is increasing. Currently, 62% of the child care workers are over 50 and 18% over 60 years old.

Personnel shortage

