



Right from the start

Build inclusive societies through inclusive early childhood education

GLOBAL EDUCATION MONITORING REPORT

2021

Inclusion and education:

ALL MEANS ALL

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Global
Education
Monitoring
Report

All means all

Countries have committed to providing inclusive pre-primary education

- SDG 4 Education target 4.2: ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality ECD, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education
- The Nurturing Care Framework for Early Childhood Development
- Coming soon: The Global Partnership Strategy for Early Childhood



Equitable access to pre-primary education is a precondition for inclusion

The pre-primary gross enrolment ratio remained at **61.5%** in 2019

Four in ten children are **not in education** during the period countries expect them to be in school

One in four children are **not in education** the year before the official entry to primary school

Just three in ten countries have at least one year of **pre-primary education as compulsory**



The most vulnerable are at the greatest risk of being left behind

Those who would benefit the most access it the least

Participation rates and **vast disparities** exist between the **richest** and **poorest children**

Over half of Roma children in Europe are **missing out** on pre-primary school

FIGURE 2:

Roma children in Europe are less likely to participate in early childhood education than their peers

Early childhood education participation rate, Roma children and general population, selected European countries and territories, 2014–2020



Note: Reference to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).
Source: FRA (2016) for EU countries; UNICEF MICS survey findings reports for South-eastern Europe.

Early childhood education has long-term individual and social benefits for inclusion

ECCE creates the foundations for expanded opportunities and offers a chance to escape poverty

Diversity in schools strengthens social cohesion

- In **Chile**, learners who had attended early childhood education before going to kindergarten scored higher in reading, mathematics and social sciences than others



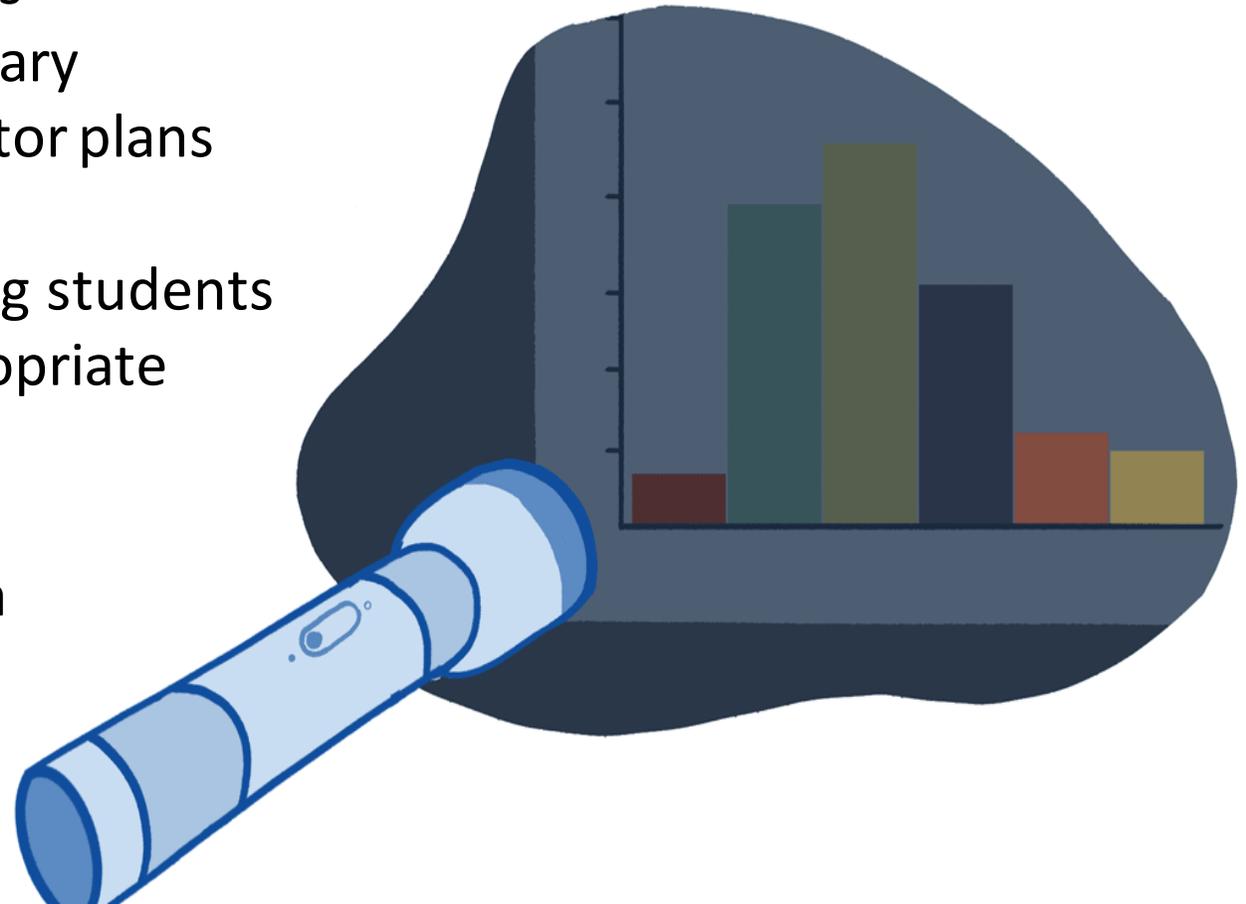
One study in the **USA** found that attending pre-primary education increased secondary school completion by as much as 11 percentage points

Early identification of needs is a necessary investment

Among **51** low- and middle-income countries **none** reported whether children in pre-primary education had disabilities or not in their sector plans

Pre-primary education is critical in identifying students with special needs and assigning them appropriate interventions

In **Bulgaria**, the ministry plans to introduce a functional assessment toolkit in at least 400 Schools and kindergartens



Legislation and policies support equitable access to early childhood education

Governments are making specific legal and policy provisions for vulnerable groups

- **Cambodia** provides instruction to ethnic minority groups in preschool and in the first three years of primary school **in five languages** other than Khmer
- In **Cuba**, children with disabilities are **included in mainstream ECD programmes**
- In **Croatia**, kindergartens have to **include children with disabilities** under the Pre-School Education Act of 1997

Curricula need to respond to all children's needs

Two factors are essential for quality inclusive early childhood education curricula:

- 1. Flexibility** – eg. flexible schools for nomadic people in Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan
- 2. Play** – eg. Kidogo in Kenya targets children under age 6 living in slums

Represent all groups without stereotypes

- In **New Zealand**, Te Whāriki, the early childhood curriculum, adopts bicultural framing to encourage the inclusion of Indigenous learners



One in 3 education systems in Europe do not provide standardized curricula for children under three

Ensure cooperation across government

Promote **horizontal collaboration** across ministries:
Data collection is the least likely area of collaboration

- e.g. In **Chile** Crece Contigo (Chile Grows with You) provides coordinated services across all relevant sectors covering prenatal to age 4

Promote **vertical collaboration** between government levels: ensure schools and local governments have **capacity**

- e.g. In the **Netherlands**, the MOE developed agreements with 37 municipalities to support disadvantaged children's transition from preschool to primary



Train early childhood educators in inclusion

In most low-income countries teachers are not equipped for inclusive practice in pre-primary schools

In **Malawi** - a survey of 127 caregivers found that only one in three had completed secondary school or had any education qualification

In **Tuscany**, about 60% of teachers reported lack of familiarity with the conditions of immigrant, refugee, and Roma students



ADEME

Out of **13** countries in Asia and the Pacific, only **Viet Nam** covered **inclusion in training policies** at the pre-primary and primary level

Recommendations on inclusion

- Equitable access is a precondition for inclusion
- Inclusion in early childhood education is but a subset of social inclusion
- Early identification of needs is a necessary investment
- Curricula need to respond to all children's needs
- Educators' competences, knowledge and attitudes need to respond to all children's needs



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