

**For Official Use**

**EDU/EDPC/ECEC/RD(2010)22**



Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Économiques  
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**17-Jun-2010**

**English text only**

**DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION  
EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE**

**EDU/EDPC/ECEC/RD(2010)22  
For Official Use**

**Network on Early Childhood Education and Care**

**RESPONSES ON FINANCING ECEC SERVICES: SLOVAK REPUBLIC**

**21-22 June 2010  
Conference Centre Room CC4  
OECD, Paris**

Miho Taguma, Policy Analyst; Tel: +33 1 45 24 92 65; Email: [Miho.Taguma@oecd.org](mailto:Miho.Taguma@oecd.org)

**JT03285756**

Document complet disponible sur OLIS dans son format d'origine  
Complete document available on OLIS in its original format

**English text only**

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE 7<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE NETWORK ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC): FINANCING ECEC SERVICES

### 1.1 *General information: types of ECEC services*

1.1.1 This question aims to update the information on childcare and early education services presented for your country. Please review Annex A. If updates need to be made, please provide the necessary information below. If existing information is still accurate, simply indicate “No Change”; you do not need to duplicate.

If your country is *NOT* listed in Annex A, please list different types of ECEC services offered in your country and provide the following information for each of the services:

- Which category: **c) pre-primary education;**
- What age range is covered: **3 to 6 years of age, with the possibility of starting at the age of 2 if openings are available; or the upper limit can be shifted to the age of 8 (there is minimum of such cases) in individual cases (if based on the conclusions of the expert examinations at the facility of upbringing counselling and prevention, the child is not capable of fulfilling compulsory school attendance, which in the SR begins at the age of 6). Children up to the age of 2 are, as a rule, in home care or nurseries, the network of which is, however, insufficient.**
- Whether public or private; and: **this is a public service**
- Whether compulsory or not: **Pre-primary education at kindergarten is not compulsory, but the last year prior to primary school entry is free of charge for all children.**

1.1.2 This question aims to complement Question 1.1.1 and elicit a fuller picture. Which type of ECEC provision is mostly in use or in operation in your country? Please indicate in the table below the proportion of:

- Children registered for each type of ECEC provision as a percentage of the total number of children of the age group; and
- Care services, centres or pre-schools for each type of ECEC provision as a percentage of the total number of such services.

Type of provision	Early Childcare		Pre-primary education		Integrated system	
	% of registered children	% of services, centres, pre-schools	% of registered children In 2007	% of services, centres, pre-schools	% of registered children	% of services, centres, pre-schools
Public provision	„n/a“	„n/a“	71.29	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“
Private not for profit provision	„n/a“	„n/a“	2.21*	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“
Private for profit provision	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“
Other type of provision	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“

\* the data constitutes the overall % of children at private kindergartens, since we can not determine if this is a profit or non-profit facility

Source(s): the age structure is taken from the Statistical Office of the SR, the data on the number of enrolled children come from the database of the School Information and Forecast Institute

Known data limitations: Students from preparatory classes and zero classes of ES are not included in the data, since this pertains to students who are 6 and older.

### 1.2 Public spending on ECEC services

#### 1.2.1 *Public spending on public and private ECEC services*

This question aims to clarify whether public expenditure on ECEC services is spent *only* on public ECEC provision *or* on a mixture of public and private provision, which is not currently well understood.

Annex B provides the public expenditure data on childcare and early education currently available in the OECD Family Database (those figures are currently being updated through other OECD official channels). The public expenditure does not include cash allowances or tax expenditure such as tax credits, parental leave, etc.; here, you should include only public expenditure spent on ECEC services.

Please indicate in the table below the split in public expenditure between public and private ECEC services in your country, indicating the year the data is from.

	Early childcare		Pre-primary education		Integrated system	
	Public services	Private services	Public services	Private services	Public services	Private services
2007						
Public expenditure (as % of GDP)	„n/a“	„n/a“	0.36	0.013	„n/a“	„n/a“

Source(s): The State Treasury ( data for regional school authorities, Ministry of Education of the SR and upper-tier territorial units) and the Datacentre of the Ministry of Finance of the SR (for MaO) processed in the UOE 2009 data collection.

Known data limitations: \_\_\_\_\_

### 1.2.2 Public spending on ECEC services at different levels of government

This question aims to clarify funding arrangements between national and sub-national governments.

While Annex B provides overall public expenditure data on ECEC services, we do not currently have figures for what is spent by national governments *versus* what is spent at sub-national levels (e.g. regional and/or local). Please provide the most recent data for public spending for national and sub-national levels of government. Please note that “fiscal transfers” between levels of government should be netted out in order to avoid double-counting. Please also note that the question focuses on direct public spending on ECEC services, excluding cash benefits or tax credits.

Year 2007	Early childcare		Pre-primary education		Integrated system	
	Total amount (local currency)	% of GDP	Total amount (local currency)	% of GDP	Total amount (local currency)	% of GDP
National/Federal	„n/a“-	„n/a“	422,333	0.023	„n/a“	„n/a“
State/Provincial/ Regional	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“
Local/Municipal	„n/a“	„n/a“	6,513,092	0.35	„n/a“	„n/a“

Source(s): The State Treasury ( data for regional school authorities, Ministry of Education of the SR and upper-tier territorial units) and the Datacentre of the Ministry of Finance of the SR (for MaO) processed in the UOE 2009 data collection

Known data limitations: The data for other years are currently being processed.

### 1.2.3 What is covered by public spending?

This question aims to understand what the public money is specifically spent on. Please indicate the estimated share, as a percentage of total ECEC public spending, for each category in the table below. The total should add up to 100%.

Service category	% of total public expenditure in 2007on		
	Early childcare	Pre-primary education	Integrated system
Infrastructure	„n/a“	14.9	„n/a“
Workforce supply (e.g. salaries, recruitment etc.)	„n/a“	72.5	„n/a“
Workforce development (e.g. in-service training, support services for staff, etc.)	„n/a“	„m“	„n/a“
Curriculum and pedagogical materials	„n/a“	m	„n/a“
Ancillary services (transport, meals, etc.)	„n/a“	12.6	„n/a“
Research on ECEC	„n/a“	m	„n/a“
Others, please specify	„n/a“	„n/a“	„n/a“
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source(s): **The State Treasury ( data for regional school authorities, Ministry of Education of the SR and upper-tier territorial units) and the Datacentre of the Ministry of Finance of the SR (for MaO) processed in the UOE 2009 data collection**

Known data limitations: **The data for other years are currently being processed.**

### 1.3 *Private spending on ECEC services*

This question aims to give a comprehensive picture of private spending relative to public spending, covering both childcare services and early education, which has long been wished for by many countries.

The UOE (UNESCO-UIS/OECD/EUROSTAT) has attempted to answer this question with regard to early education (\* in shaded cells) and is in the process of updating the data (See Annex C).

In order to complement what is already known from the UOE data, please provide in the table below figures on private spending for early childcare (please indicate the year the data is from).

If your country has an integrated system, please provide the figures, which have not been asked by the UOE data collection process.

		Total spent, in local currency in 2007		
		Early childcare	Pre-primary education	Integrated system
Private sources	Household expenditure	„n/a“	* 1,465,800	„n/a“
	Expenditure of other private entities	„n/a“	* 177,670	„n/a“
	All private sources	„n/a“	* 1,643,470	„n/a“
Private: of which subsidised			„n/a“	* m
Others, please specify			„n/a“	„n/a“

Source(s): **The State Treasury ( data for regional school authorities, Ministry of Education of the SR and upper-tier territorial units) and Datacentre of the Ministry of Finance of the SR (for MaO) processed in the UOE 2009 data collection**

Known data limitations: **tuition expenditures at private schools are not included in the data.**

### 1.4 *Issues on data collection*

Some network members have expressed their concern that data on ECEC in general are collected based on availability rather than policy needs.

1.4.1 What are the most critical gaps in national data and international comparisons? **The data do not incorporate tuition expenditures at private kindergartens, since the obligation of their reporting is not legislatively ensured.**

1.4.2 Bearing in mind the possible quality limitations of comparative data, what internationally comparable data on financing ECEC would be most relevant for policy making in your country?

1.4.3 Where quantitative data is not available, what kind of qualitative information – at a national and international level – on financing ECEC would be most useful for policy making in your country?

1.4.4 What are the biggest challenges in collecting data on financial aspects of ECEC services in your country (e.g. low policy priority, jurisdictional, lack of resources and capacity, fragmentation of ECEC services, lack of agreed common definitions of ECEC services within a country, etc.)?

1.4.5 If you have taken some actions to improve data on financial aspects or ECEC in general, please describe your country experience.

## **Part II. Why invest in ECEC? Research on benefits of ECEC**

This section aims to gather updated information on existing research from network member countries relating to ECEC participation and children's outcomes.

Please provide details of research NOT already included in *Starting Strong II*, which you do not need to duplicate. List relevant references and attach corresponding documents if available. If articles/reports are not in English or French, please provide abstracts in English or French.

2.1 What research has been carried out in your own country on:

- Net benefits to children, parents and society of public and private investment in ECEC
- Net benefits or evaluations of specific ECEC programmes or initiatives

2.2 What research has been carried out in your country on the relative benefits of public ECEC investment to increase accessibility (*i.e.* children's enrolment) *versus* increasing quality of services (*e.g.* raising staff qualifications, improving staff/ child ratio, etc.)?

### Part III. Financing mechanisms and funding strategies

This section aims to elicit:

1. information on overall policy contexts and trade-offs between different policy alternatives;
2. where resources on ECEC come from;
3. how the resources are managed; and
4. other policy issues.

#### 3.1 Overall policy contexts

##### 3.1.1 Policy objectives

*Starting Strong II* identified 5 main policy objectives for public investment in ECEC:

1. Responding to the rise of the service economy and the influx of women into salaried employment;
2. Reconciling work and family responsibilities in a manner more equitable for women;
3. Managing demographic challenges: falling fertility and continuing immigration;
4. Acting against child poverty and educational disadvantage;
5. Early childhood education and care as a public good.

Please indicate which of the above can explain the current policy objectives, underpinning your country's public investment in ECEC. If there has been a shift of policy focus in recent years, please describe how policy thinking has evolved. **In the Slovak Republic, increased emphasis is placed on ensuring pre-primary education in institutionalized form – at kindergartens. Currently (approximately in the last two years and for at least two more years) we have registered the elevated interest of parents in enrolling their children in kindergarten. The demand for kindergarten placement exceeds the existing availability in the prevailing part of the Slovak Republic despite the adoption of temporary measures in the form of establishing new classes in adapted spaces. The fact that parents do not pay for children one year prior to starting compulsory school attendance and that the state provides a special purpose allowance for upbringing and education constitutes the system solution in combating poverty and the educational disadvantages of children from socially disadvantaged environments.**

##### 3.1.2 Political debate – balance between parental leave benefits and childcare services

Countries often look to find a balance between encouraging parents with young children to stay home to care for their children and encouraging parents, especially mothers, to maintain an attachment to the labour market by providing ECEC services. Policy instruments – which can be used in combination – include:

- Paying parents through “parental leave”, “child-rearing leave” with low flat-rate payment, etc.
- Giving universal child/ family allowances;
- Giving targeted child/ family allowances by income level,
- Giving targeted child/ family allowances by work status, etc.

Regarding public investment in childcare services *versus* parental leave benefits, what are the current challenges and trade-offs in your country? Are these underpinned by specific policy objectives? **In the Slovak Republic, every mother who gives birth to a child receives a maternity allowance for a period**

of 6 month from the start of her maternity leave; the amount of such allowance depends on the mother's previous income. After 6 months of maternity leave up to the time that the child reaches the age of three, the mother (or the father, if he stays at home with the child) receives a parental allowance, which is paid regardless of the mother's previous income. The state provides child allowances according to the age of the children and the amount of income of individual families and depends on the amount of the subsistence level per one dependant child.

### 3.2 *Main sources of financing ECEC – where do resources come from?*

#### 3.2.1 *Various sources*

This question aims to give a fuller picture of the main sources of financing ECEC services in your country to complement your responses in questions under 1.1.2 and 1.3. Six major sources of financial resources have been identified in past research:

1. governments (See question 3.2.2);
2. parents;
3. for-profit providers,
4. ECEC as business communities;
5. social organisations, and
6. international organisations

Please indicate which of the above is applicable in your country and describe challenges and advantages associated with the current financing mechanism. Feel free to answer separately for the childcare and early education sectors if more appropriate in countries with the "split systems". **The main source of pre-primary education financing are the funds from the state budget in the form of mutual taxes. The parents contribute to the partial reimbursement of the expenditures of kindergarten for children up to the age of 5 as follows: monthly they pay a maximum of 15% of the sum of the subsistence level for each dependant child. Sponsors' donations or donations from large companies or private entrepreneurs also constitute an insignificant source of financing. But this form of financing is rather indirect, in the form of material gifts, such as new digital technologies, teaching aids, etc.**

#### 3.2.2 *Sources from governments*

This question aims to identify what kind of public revenue sources are allocated to ECEC services at different levels of governments. Please complete the table below, indicating "x" in the columns applicable in your country.

Types of public finance	Federal/ national	State/ province/ region	Local/ municipal
General tax revenues			
Ear-marked tax revenues for ECEC sector			
Earmarked tax revenues for specific ECEC programmes, type of services or categories of expenditure			
Transfers from other levels of government as part of general block grants			
Transfers from other levels of government as block grants to ECEC sector			
Transfers from other levels of government earmarked for specific ECEC programmes, type of services or categories of expenditure			

Source(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Known data limitations: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.3 Funding strategy – how to manage financial resources for ECEC

#### 3.3.1 Strategies to increase public spending on ECEC

Has there been an increase in public spending on ECEC services since 2005? If yes, how much increase? What were the driving forces in making a case for increased spending on ECEC? Feel free to answer separately for the childcare and early education sectors if more appropriate in countries with the “split systems” Beginning in 2005, but particularly in 2008, expenditures for pre-primary education increased in the Slovak Republic (kindergartens became schools providing a level of education (pre-primary) after passing the new School Act). The changes in the classification of kindergartens from the system of school facilities to the system of schools came as a result of the reports of the State School Inspectorates, showing the positive influence of pre-primary education at kindergarten on the success of pupils at primary school. Currently, the possibility of introducing compulsory pre-primary education for children of 5 years of age is being discussed in the Slovak Republic (so far this education is not compulsory, only free of charge). The increased expenditures for pre-primary education are especially used for the enhancement of the quality of upbringing and education for children aged 5 to 6, the financial remuneration of kindergarten teachers was increased; the school attendance of children from socially disadvantaged environments to kindergarten has also improved.

Please share your country experience such as:

- where the increased resources came from;
- strategies or research evidence that helped the argument for the increase;
- challenges associated with the increase and policy lessons you have learnt in tackling them;
- key political debates among politicians, general public, and the media of the time;
- how the increased budget was spent (e.g. to build more childcare places, increase the number of staff, increase staff salaries, increase participation of low-income families, etc.); etc.

#### 3.3.2 Distribution of public resources to the providers (supply-side subsidies)

Past research categorises supply-side subsidies broadly into two types:

1. government-run and subsidised non-profit private ECEC services; and
2. subsidies to for-profit private providers.

Please fill in the table below with relevant information. Examples are provided in Annex E. Where information is missing, please enter “m”. If your country has the “split system” for childcare and early education sectors, please prepare separate tables; one table for childcare and another for early education.

	Government-run and subsidised non-profit private ECEC services	Subsidies to for-profit private providers	Others (Specify)
Name/ type of scheme	„m“	„m“	„m“
Duration of programme: hours per day, days per week, hours per year	„m“	„m“	„m“
Purpose of subsidies	„m“	„m“	„m“
Universal or targeted (if targeted, specify conditions or eligibility)	„m“	„m“	„m“
Parents’ share (e.g. %, free, set ceiling, etc.)	„m“	„m“	„m“
Annual costs of programme per child/ family (in local currency, year)	„m“	„m“	„m“

Source(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Known data limitations: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.4 **Other policy issues**

*Market mechanisms to widen access to, and ensure quality of, ECEC services*

3.4.1 *How are ECEC services regulated by public authorities? Please detail minimum quality standards. How are these statutory quality standards set? Who polices them and how? How is the quality (e.g. curriculum, staff qualifications, staff-child ratio, space, etc.) of individual services communicated to parents?*

**In 2008, the Ministry of Education approved the State Educational Programme ISCED 0 – pre-primary education, which constitutes the state curriculum. The state educational programme constitutes the baseline for the design of school educational programmes of actual kindergartens, which reflect the specific regional and local conditions and needs.**

**The state educational programme defines the compulsory content of upbringing and education for acquiring the key competences, with children at kindergartens included in the network of schools and school facilities of the Ministry of Education, regardless of their founder. The content of upbringing and education is designed in the form of educational standards – content and performance. It establishes the key competences, which a child who completes kindergarten should have achieved before entering primary school. The educational programmes for children with special upbringing and educational needs are also part of the State Educational Programme ISCED 0 – pre-primary education.**

3.4.2 *Are the for-profit providers eligible for public funding in your country? If yes, besides the financial incentives, what other incentives do you give to stimulate them to provide more and better ECEC services (e.g. regulation or deregulation on the minimum standards)?*

**All of the providers of pre-primary education (municipalities/towns, state administration organs, natural or legal entities and churches are equally financed from public resources; moreover, founders of private kindergartens may collect so called school fees from parents in addition to the fees established by the law.**

3.4.3 *If your country has any case studies of a provider failure, inspectorate reports, and/or research on low quality of the private ECEC services, please list references and attach relevant documents, if available. State School Inspectorate findings show that no significant difference exists in the quality of pre-primary education provided by various founders. The outcomes of state, private and church kindergartens are comparable. The results of upbringing and education at kindergartens are not dependant on the founders, but on the quality of the pedagogical activities provided by the kindergarten teachers.*

*Financial crisis and ECEC*

3.4.4 *Please share your country experience with an increase/ decrease on the budget on ECEC services as a result of, or in response to, the economic crisis. Was there a budget cut on ECEC as a result of the crisis; if yes, how much? Has ECEC been included in the stimulus package; if yes, what was the rationale/policy thinking behind the decision?*