

Country profile prepared for the
Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007
Strong Foundations: Early Childhood Care and Education

China

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programmes

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CHINA

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECCE) programs

A. GENERAL INFORMATION, STATISTICS AND INDICATORS

Starting age of compulsory education (if applicable):

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics the compulsory education age range is 6-14 years (children can enter primary education at the age of 6 or 7).

1. ISCED 0 PROGRAMS (USUALLY, PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION)

(ISCED = International Standard Classification of Education)

1.1. National definition of ISCED 0 programs:

Pre-school education

1.2. Normative age group(s) covered by ISCED 0 programs:

4-6 years of age

1.3. ISCED 0 programs: statistics and indicators (*source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics*)

1.3.1. Enrolment:

	Percentage	Year
Gross enrolment ratio	36.0	2003/04
Net enrolment ratio	...	
Percentage of children entering primary education with previous preschool experience	...	

1.3.2. Enrolment ratio by age group (percentage, also including the first years of primary education when applicable): Not available

Less than 3 years of age	Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7

1.3.3. Teachers, 2003/04:

Total number of teachers	Of whom female (%)	Percentage of trained teachers (all)	Percentage of trained teachers (males)	Percentage of trained teachers (females)
1,047,323	93.26	95.14	7.24	92.76

1.3.4. Funding:

	Percentage
Public current expenditure per pupil as percentage of the Gross National Product per capita	1.54 (1999)

1.3.5. Main source(s) of financing:

In 2003, 3.28% of the GDP was invested to pre-school education.

2. OTHER ECCE PROGRAMS

(Generally preceding ISCED 0 programs)

2.1. National definition of other ECCE programs:

Not available

(See also point 3.6 below)

2.2. Normative age group(s) covered by other ECCE programs:

Not available

2.3. Estimate number of children covered by other ECCE programs:

Not available

B. BACKGROUND INFORMATION CONCERNING ECCE PROGRAMS (INCLUDING ISCED 0)

3.1. Legislation concerning ECCE:

In recent years, the Ministry of Education has adopted the Rules for the Administration of Kindergartens, the Directive Rules for the Work of Kindergartens, as well as a series of other laws and regulations aimed at promoting the development of pre-school education. The local governments, which are the main providers of pre-school education, also established and promulgated supporting policies and local regulations and systems. Regional education authorities also adopted quality standards and evaluation systems for kindergartens so as to strengthen evaluation and supervision.

In 1989 “Regulations on Work of Kindergartens” and “Regulations on the Management of Kindergartens” were promulgated. These have been supplemented by the “Standard for Kindergarten Buildings”, “Suggested List of Toys for Kindergartens” (1992), “Guidelines for Evaluation of the Work of Preprimary Classes” (1996), “Education Guidelines for Kindergartens” (2001) etc., constituting a fairly complete set of working documents for the management of early childhood education.

3.2. Official body/bodies in charge of supervision or coordination:

Due to the 1987 Circular Concerning the Division of Responsibilities Related to the Management of Early Childhood Education Initiatives, issued by the State Council, China has clarified confusions about departmental responsibilities for early childhood education. The Circular states that the Department of Education is responsible for the development and implementation of policy and regulations concerning kindergartens. Any policies with a bearing on early childhood education must come from the Department of Education.

But other departments also have specific responsibilities for early childhood care and education, in accordance with their work mandates. For instance, health issues in kindergartens are the responsibility of the Department of Health; the inclusion of early childhood education in national social and economic plans is the concern of the Department of Planning; and welfare matters affecting kindergarten teachers and other kindergarten personnel are handled by the Department of Labour and Personnel.

This distribution of sectoral roles and responsibilities certainly facilitates a multi-sectoral approach to early childhood care and education. Meanwhile, the State Council in 1990 set up a Committee for Women’s and Children’s Work to coordinate all matters related to women and children, particularly focusing on laws and regulations concerning their protection. Its membership is drawn from 24 government departments including the Ministries of Finance, Foreign Trade and International Cooperation. The local branches of the committee group representatives from the major agencies and actors in ECCE services from different sectors to promote their coordination at a local level.

3.3. Other entities involved in the provision (e.g. municipalities, local governments) and main types of providers (e.g. public, private, mixed, community-based, etc.):

See point 3.1 above. Diverse forms of pre-school provision have been developed, i.e. integrating formal and non-formal approaches and combining collective education with family education. In remote and poor regions, seasonal classes, week-end classes, tutorial stations, child visit days, home tutorial classes, and other non-formal approaches have been adopted to gradually expand the coverage.

3.4. Type of personnel involved:

Not available

3.5. Type of staff training (requirements):

The academic requirements for different levels of teachers' qualifications are as follows: graduates from normal schools for pre-school education or above for teachers in nurseries and kindergartens. Those who can not meet the requirement have to take the examination supervised by local educational authority for qualification.

Preschool education programme in normal tertiary education helps to train teachers in kindergartens. Graduate with a 2-year diploma and 4-year degree will be qualified to be teachers. Students graduated from the normal schools have to take 3 or 4 years study.

3.6. Recent national policies and reforms:

- Innovative ECCE national policy matching economical development. In March 2003, the State Council enacted the "Recommendations on Early Childhood Education Reform and Development", which promoted the early childhood education reform and development in marketing economy implemented by China and set the milestone for ECCE. Goals for development of ECCE that assuring the enrolment rate of children in preschool education to 55% by 2007, one-year-before primary education enrolment rate to 80%, universalizing three-year-before primary education in major cities and capacity building for parents and child care staffs have been put forward in the Recommendations.
- Expansion of ECCE system to cover the 0-3 age group. In developed area of China where ECCE has met the needs of 3-5 age group children, local government has integrated the preschool education for 0-3 age group children into economical and social development plan, under supervision of local education system.

3.7. Efforts targeted at vulnerable or disadvantaged children:

A great number of local governments have established specific education funds for vulnerable and disadvantaged children. The government has taken special measures to guarantee the access of children from low income families and migrant families, and in terms of social charity organizations and migrant children hospices, children can attend free of charge.

3.8. Special projects/programmes aiming at expanding or improving ECCE:

- Programme on Early Childhood Care and Education and Development in West China remote areas (2001-2005), co-organized by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education. The programme is expected to explore approaches for under-developed and ethnical minority areas to integrate resources to serve ECCE.
- Development of Training Video for Administrative Staffs and Teachers in ECCE (2002) sponsored by UNESCO, implemented by the Ministry of Education, which helps to train local educational and administrative staffs in ECCE and advocate new concept in ECCE.

3.9. Information concerning the curriculum (if applicable) or the contents of ECCE programs

3.9.1. Objectives and aims:

- Harmonized development of children in terms of health, behaviour and mental health;
- Formulate a healthy life style with hygiene and develop a interest in sports;
- Develop intelligence of children, capability of effective communication, knowledge on environment, learning motivation and practice ability;
- Nurture a love for family, hometown, homeland, labour and science;
- Learn to be honesty, confident, friendly, bravery, hard working, polite and disciplinary;
- Cultivate a prime taste, sentiment and ability of beauty.

3.9.2. Learning areas and teaching-learning methods:

Learning fields include hygiene and health, language, social science, natural science, art. Methods are adopted by kindergartens to guide children actively, positively to learn new things.

3.9.3. Average number of hours per week and average amount of weeks per year:

For pre-school classes, instructional time is no more than 12 classes per week and each class is no longer than thirty minutes. No tests or examinations are conducted at the pre-school level.

3.10. Any other relevant and pertinent information

By the end of 2004, there are some 117,900 kindergartens nationwide, with a total enrolment of 20.894 million children.

C. SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION REGARDING ECCE (TO BE COMPILED IN COLLABORATION WITH UNICEF OFFICES WHERE POSSIBLE)

(Information is not available)

4.1. Parenting programmes are usually addressed to parents and families of children less than 6 years of age. Please provide information about any parenting programmes in your country according to the table below:

Type of programme	Yes or No (note for each programme)	Please estimate the number of beneficiaries (if possible)
Parenting education through early learning centres and child care centres		
As component of health and nutrition programmes, such as information about child development included in health and nutrition visits		
Parent groups that meet to discuss issues of their young children, including health, nutritional status, and development		
As component of adolescent, livelihood or literacy programmes		
Media broadcast, such as <i>Sesame Street</i> , with media for and with children		
Other (please specify)		

Are any of these programmes targeted specifically toward the vulnerable, poor, disadvantaged or excluded? If so, which ones? (Please provide/attach any additional and relevant information if available).

4.2. Is there a national-level system for monitoring children's development or school readiness prior to entering primary school?

4.3. Is there a policy on early childhood (ECCE, ECD, etc.) that has been accepted? If not, is there one under development?