

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

Ecuador

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programmes

Compiled by:
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ECUADOR

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programmes

A. GENERAL INFORMATION, STATISTICS AND INDICATORS

Starting age of compulsory education (if applicable):

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), education is compulsory for children aged five to 14.

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

(ISCED = International Standard Classification of Education)

1.1. National definition of ISCED 0 programmes:

Pre-primary/preschool education

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

In Ecuador five-year-olds enter the first grade of primary education. Hence, ISCED 0 programmes generally cater to children aged three to four.

1.3. ISCED 0 programmes: statistics and indicators

1.3.1. Enrolment:

(N.B.: No data are available on coverage for the 0-4 age group, because many institutions keep records only of the total number of children enrolled and do not break this information down into age groups.)

	Percentage	Year
Gross enrolment ratio (age 5)	76.5	2003-04
Net enrolment ratio (age 5)	62.4	2003-04
Percentage of children entering primary education with previous preschool experience	54.8	2003-04

Source: UIS.

1.3.2. Enrolment ratio by age group, 2002/03 (percentage, also including the first years of primary education when applicable):

Less than 3 years of age	Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7
0.0	0.0	11.9	N/A	0.0	0.0
			62.5(**)	99.4(**)	100(**)

Estimate by UIS and UNICEF. (*) Enrolled in primary education. (**) Primary education enrolment ratio.

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)
13,285	87.4	71.6	59.5	73.4

Source: UIS.

1.3.4. Funding: Data not available

	Percentage
Public current expenditure per pupil as percentage of the Gross National Product per capita	...

1.3.5. Main source(s) of financing: Data not available

2. OTHER ECCE PROGRAMMES (Generally preceding ISCED 0 programmes)

2.1. National definition of other ECCE programmes:

Early education (since 2002).

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

Children aged zero to four.

2.3. Estimated number of children covered by other ECCE programmes:

Data not available

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

3.1. Legislation concerning ECCE:

Preschool education is governed by the Education and Culture Act of 1983 and the draft new Education Act of 2001.

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

The Ministry of Education and Culture is the executive organ responsible for the operation of the national education system and for the formulation and implementation of education policy in Ecuador.

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.):

Data not available

3.4. Type of personnel involved (teachers, assistants, other staff):

Data not available

3.5. Type of staff training (requirements):

In order to teach at the preschool level, teachers must hold a bachelor's degree in Educational Sciences, a pre-primary teacher's qualification or a master's degree in Educational Sciences (with a preschool major).

Basic professional training encompasses the following subjects: teaching research; pedagogy; educational psychology; sociology of education; and curricular planning and assessment. Specific professional training covers the following content:

- *special teaching subjects*: Spanish, mathematics, social studies, natural sciences, physical education and related teaching methods;
- *art education*: musical education, artistic expression;
- practical activities;
- teaching internship.

Some universities also offer a four-year master's degree in Educational Sciences (preschool major).

3.6. Recent national policies and reforms:

The Early Education Programme was established under Resolution No. 1947 of 14 June 2002, to provide early care and education for children aged zero to five. The Social Front ministries have put in place programmes that have contributed to the all-round development of children under six, by means of active community involvement, inter-agency coordination and channelling of investment to priority areas.

3.7. Efforts targeted at vulnerable or disadvantaged children:

Data not available

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

- National preschool education programme (PRONEPE), for children aged four to six.
- Operation Child Rescue (ORI), for children aged zero to six.
- National Child and Family Institute (INNFA).
- Integrated Development Programme, for children under age six.
- Child Development Programme (PDI).
- Growing with our Children (CNH).
- WAWAKAMAYOWASI intercultural child development programme.
- Community-based family and children's education (bilingual intercultural education).

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

3.9.1. Objectives and aims:

At the pre-primary level, education is concerned with the motor, biological, psychological, ethnic and social aspects of child development as well as value-building and integration into society in which the family and the State are involved. Pre-primary education aims to contribute to the formation of habits, skills and abilities that are essential for learning.

3.9.2. Learning areas and teaching-learning methods:

The study plan encompasses the following activities:

- socio-emotional skills;

- psychomotor skills;
- cognitive skills.

Socio-emotional activities help children to satisfy their needs and interests, by continually channelling their impulses. This process is an important driver of children's growth and development and helps them to achieve fulfilling interactions with people around them and their environment.

Psychomotor activities help to develop physical bodily control in association with emotional development and with knowledge, in order to build up coordination, speed, accuracy and muscular strength.

Cognitive activities stimulate knowledge acquisition in association with socio-emotional and psychomotor development, through reciprocal and correlated actions.

The schedule is planned using activities to help children to develop the skills set out in the plan, in a global and integrated manner. Children spend up to four hours per day in the nursery school, during which they carry out activities around play, as follows:

- a) Start-up activities (30 minutes):
 - arrival of children;
 - cleanliness;
 - attendance check;
 - joint planning of work;
- b) Programme activities (90 minutes):
 - in the classroom; and
 - outdoors;
- c) Snack (15 minutes) and break (30 minutes)
- d) Individual play (60 minutes)
- e) Closing activities (15 minutes):
 - summary or account of activities;
 - preparation for going home.

3.9.3. Average number of hours per week and average amount of weeks per year:
Five days per week, 20 hours per week.

3.10. Any other relevant and pertinent information

In 1990 around 50% of five-year-olds were in preschool education. This age group was then brought into primary education, as the first grade of basic education. In poor urban neighbourhoods and underprivileged rural communities the percentage was significantly lower.

The level of coverage of development programmes for early childhood is still very low, at barely 10%.

It is estimated that the proportion of new pupils entering the first grade of primary school, having gained some experience of organized early childhood development programme, rose from 34% in 1990-91 to 65.2% in 1997-98.

In the 2000-01 school year 5,099 schools offered pre-primary education (3,435 in urban areas and 1,664 in rural areas). A total of 199,588 pupils were enrolled (155,411 of them in urban areas) and teachers (positions) numbered 13,755 (of whom 10,866 taught in urban areas). [*N.B.*: these data refer to the second grade of primary education (six-year-olds) and not to the present education system.]

[*Sources:* See also website of the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI), <http://www.oei.es/>]

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

4.1. Parenting programmes are usually addressed to parents and families of children less than six 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	Yes INNFA The Our Children programme (CNH)	69,656 69,500
Parent groups that meet to discuss issues of their young children, including health, nutritional status, and development	Yes The Our Children programme (CNH and CRA) Family education (UNICEF and counterpart agencies)	90,600 (including 69,500 in CNH modality) 2,000
As component of adolescent, livelihood or literacy programmes	N/A	
Media broadcast, such as <i>Sesame Street</i> , with media for and with children	N/A	
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)

The early childhood coverage provided through the “Our Children” programme targeted areas corresponding to the four poorest deciles of the population, with an additional emphasis on population groups at some kind of particular risk.

UNICEF family education focuses on rural areas and vulnerable families.

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

Every child development programme has a mechanism for monitoring child development, especially their health and nutritional status. The Our Children programme (an IDB project) has a standard information management monitoring system known as MATRACA. Some programmes have devised a methodology to measure psychosocial development. However, there is no integrated national monitoring system.

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

The 10-year plan (the national plan to meet the commitments regarding the MDGs, WFFC and CRC) was approved in 2004. This plan is intended to be a policy for young children, with targets and action strategies. However, no ministry has undertaken commitments to fulfilling its responsibilities as regards implementation of the 10-year plan.

[Information revised and supplementary data provided by UNICEF, December 2005.]