

2023

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# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION REPORT



## THE 2023 REPORT

The *Early Childhood Education Report* (ECER) is produced by the Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto and the Abilio—Childhood Knowledge Dissemination Centre, formerly the Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development, at the Université Laval and Université de Montréal. By linking research to practice and public policy, the centre seeks to improve outcomes for young children and their families.

The Atkinson Centre relies on its strategic partners who play a critical role in research, content development, and knowledge translation and mobilization. The centre would like to thank our funders listed below.

The report would not be possible without the assistance of provincial and territorial officials who provided data and reviewed drafts. Many others contributed to the development of the ECER, and we extend our gratitude. While appreciating the input of many, the authors accept full responsibility for the content.

**Emis Akbari, Kerry McCuaig, Shelly Mehta**

Cover photo: John MacLennan

This is the 5th edition of the *Early Childhood Education Report* (ECER). Established in 2011, the report is released every three years to evaluate provincial/territorial early years services against a 15-point scale. Results are populated from detailed profiles of each province and territory. The ECER is organized around five categories with 21 benchmarks forming a common set of minimum criteria contributing to the delivery of quality programming. This report captures changes to early years services from March 2020 to March 2023. As such, it is able to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on service provision, as well as the funding and requirements of the [Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreements](#) (CWELCC).

To contact the authors and for the full report, which includes this overview, a profile for each jurisdiction, the methodology that shaped the report, references, charts and figures, and information from past reports, please visit [ECEReport.ca](http://ECEReport.ca).

**Please cite this publication as:**

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## DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPORT

The ECER was informed by the policy lessons emerging from the 20-country review of early childhood education and care (ECEC) conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

In its 2004 report, the OECD provided the following prescription for countries to improve their ECEC services:

- **Pay attention to governance.** Responsibility for services for young children is fragmented among different departments. Give one ministry the lead and hold it accountable.
- **Spend more, but spend wisely.** Children need high-quality early education and the economy needs working parents. High-quality ECEC meets the needs of both.
- **Expand access, but do not take short cuts with quality.** Poor-quality services harm children and waste financial resources.
- **Invest in the workforce.** Early childhood educators (ECEs) need the same level of leadership, professional development, and resources that are provided to public-school teachers.

- **Be accountable.** Ensure evaluation and research are conducted to keep abreast of the burgeoning science and changing social needs. Make findings accessible to the early childhood sector and the public for continuous quality improvement.

Finally, the OECD noted there was no common monitoring mechanism across Canada's 13 provinces and territories to assure Canadians of the value of their investment. To fill this void, the authors developed the ECER in 2011 as part of the *Early Years Study 3*. Twenty-one benchmarks, organized into five equally weighted categories, evaluate governance structures, funding levels, access, quality in early learning environments, and the rigour of accountability mechanisms.

Results are based on detailed provincial and territorial profiles developed by the authors and reviewed by government officials. Authors and officials co-determine the benchmarks assigned. The benchmarks in the report are not aspirational goals, but minimal requirements. Many important indicators are not included because associated data are not available.



## TERMINOLOGY

Various terms are used across Canada to describe programs designed for children before they begin formal schooling. Because of constitutional divisions of power, education is a provincial/territorial responsibility. As a result, federal/provincial/territorial agreements use the term “early learning and child care.” This report uses the international language of “early childhood education and care” or ECEC. ECEC refers to group programs for young children based on an explicit curriculum, delivered by qualified staff, and designed to support children’s development and learning. Attendance is regular and children may participate on their own or with their parents or caregivers. It includes regulated child care, but also school-operated Kindergarten, Pre-Kindergarten, Early Kindergarten, Junior Kindergarten, nursery school, Pre-primary, Maternelle, and parent and child centres, as well as Aboriginal Head Start.

Early Childhood Educator (ECE) is the professional designation for individuals with post-secondary qualifications in early childhood development.

The ECER views ECEC through a children’s rights perspective: Every young child, regardless of where they live, their abilities, their language and origins, or their parents’ work status, deserves access.

The timing of the ECER 2023 allowed for the evaluation of the impact of the CWELCC on early years services at the midpoint of the agreements’ rollout. The ECER does not cover all policy areas addressed in the agreements, but where applicable, we discuss their influence.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION REPORT BENCHMARKS OF QUALITY

### 5 CATEGORIES

GOVERNANCE	PTS	FUNDING	PTS	ACCESS	PTS	LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	PTS	ACCOUNTABILITY	PTS
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### 21 BENCHMARKS

ECEC under common department/ministry	.5	At least 2/3 of child care funding goes to program operations	1	Full-day Kindergarten	1	ECEC curriculum framework	.25	Current and posted annual progress reports	1
Common ECEC supervisory unit	.5	Managed salary and fee scale in licensed child care	1	Licensed capacity for at least 50% of 2- to 4-year olds in ECEC programs	1	Mandatory use of ECEC curriculum framework	.25	Facilities standards for ECEC programs include Kindergarten	1
Common ECEC policy framework	1	At least 3% of overall budget devoted to ECEC	1	Funding conditional on including children with special needs	1	Alignment of ECEC programs with Kindergarten	.5	Population measures for preschool collected	1
Common local authority for ECEC administration and delivery	1					At least 2/3 of staff in programs for 2- to 4-year-olds are qualified	.5		
						Kindergarten educators require ECEC qualifications	.5		
						Wages of ECEs at least 2/3 of teachers	.5		
						ECE professional recognition required	.25		
						ECE professional development required	.25		
<b>15 POINTS</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>3</b>



## CANADA-WIDE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE AGREEMENTS

In 2021, the Government of Canada committed to sustained funding [to expand access to more affordable child care](#). Agreements signed with provinces and territories prioritize lowering parent fees to an average of \$10 per day and expanding the number of child care spaces. The goal was to create a Canada-wide early learning and child care system to support women's workforce participation, drive economic growth, and support children's development.

The 2021 budget investments totalled \$30 billion over five years ending in 2026, including \$1.4 billion for Indigenous services. After that, \$9.2 billion will flow annually, \$385 million of which will go to Indigenous programs. Funding is allocated based on the number of children under the age of 12 years. Except for Québec's Asymmetrical Component, funding is tied to action plans developed by each province and territory. These action plans include timelines and activities reflecting the principles of improved access, quality, inclusiveness, affordability, and accountability. The second round of action plans are currently in development (2024).

## Canada Early Learning and Child Care Act

[Legislation](#) committing the federal government to long-term funding of the national child care system unanimously passed in the House of Commons on February 29, 2024. The Act enshrines the system into law, making it more difficult for future governments to defund. It sets out the federal government's commitment to long-term funding for the provinces, territories, and Indigenous peoples. The legislation includes the creation of a National Advisory Council on Early Learning and Child Care to advise the federal minister responsible.

## CWELCC AT THE HALFWAY MARK

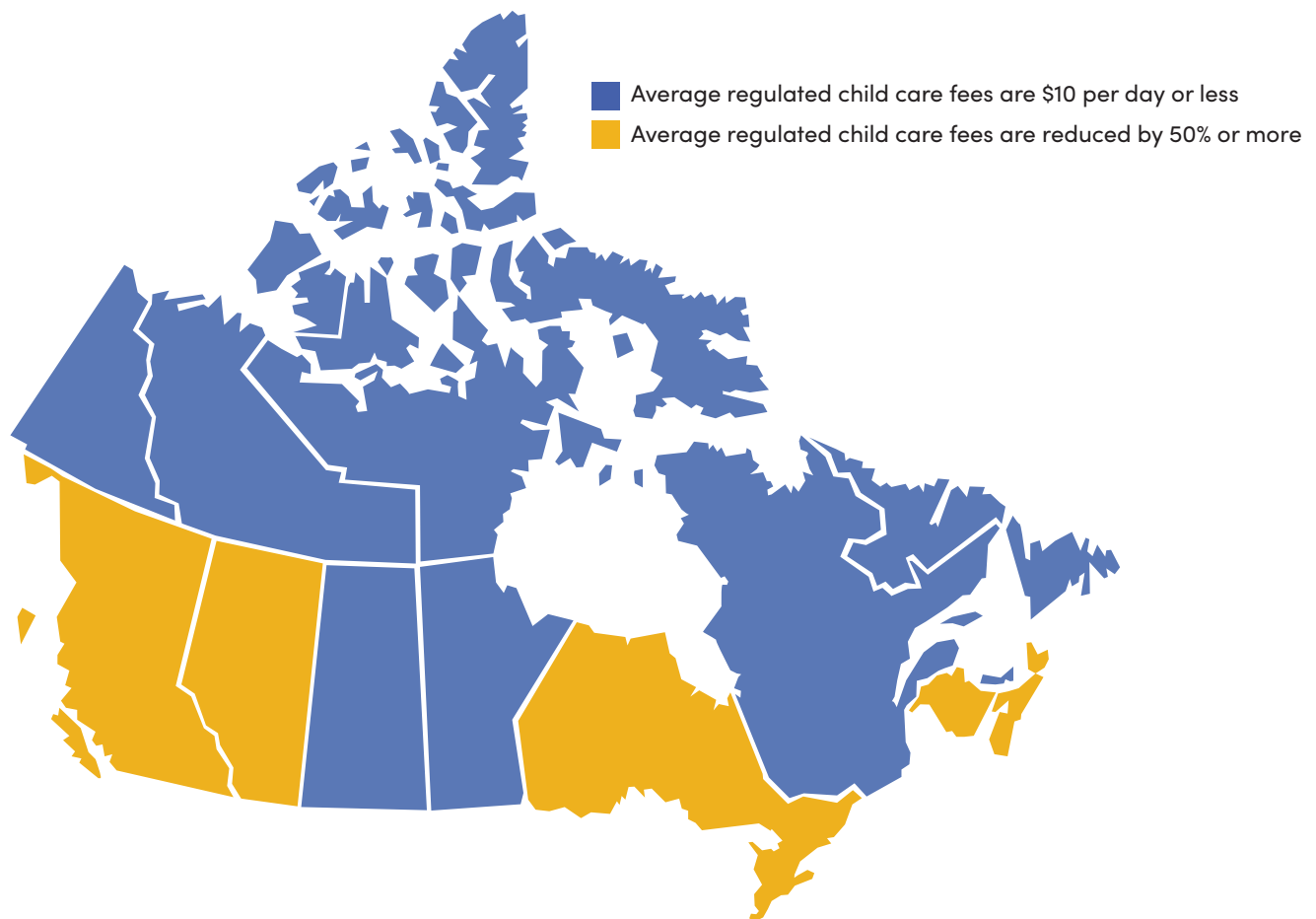
The long-sought-after national child care program was widely welcomed. Of course, there were also concerns. Would quality be sacrificed to low fees? Would vulnerable families be pushed aside in the scramble for limited low-cost spaces? Would commercial care find new ways to profit from public funding? Would the CWELCC be a real program or add to what most agree is an inequitable patchwork of services?

There had never been a better—or a worse—time to embark on a new social program. The global COVID-19 pandemic and the accompanying shuttering of schools and child care had a direct impact on women’s work. The need for child care was made painfully evident as the portion of women aged 15 and over in paid work declined to [56.7 per cent, a level last seen in 2002](#). Economists labelled it the “[she-cession](#).”

As an industry, child care was particularly impacted by the pandemic. [Employment dropped 21 per cent](#) compared to 3 per cent in other sectors, and it has not fully rebounded. Educator shortages have stymied efforts to expand access. A December 2023 [Statistics Canada survey](#) found that while child care is becoming more affordable for parents, accessing it is more challenging. More than 60 per cent of parents wanting child care reported difficulties finding it, up from 53

per cent in 2019. As a result, roughly one in three respondents said they had to change their work or study schedules, take on fewer working hours, or delay their return to work.

The CWELCC racked up a success right out the gate by reducing parent fees by 50 per cent for children under the age of 6 years. This provided widely welcomed relief for families dealing with inflationary spikes to their living costs. Except for Québec and the Yukon, where parents were already paying less than \$10 per day, all jurisdictions met the initial fee reduction threshold. Nunavut, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador then took the lead by providing \$10-per-day child care, well ahead of the 2026 target date. Families in the Northwest Territories joined the club on April 1, 2024.



## Expansion stalled

The CWELCC plan is to add 250,000 new child care spaces by 2026. Halfway through this timeframe (March 31, 2023), 97,859 spaces have been created for children younger than 6 years of age. Several factors are holding up space expansion.

Opening new centres and keeping them operational is challenging. In most jurisdictions, almost as many [centres close as open](#) in any given year. In addition, the pandemic, which brought added costs for health measures coupled with reduced enrolment, caused many programs to collapse.

The overreliance on voluntary organizations to operate an essential service like child care contributes to the sector’s flatlined growth. We don’t expect parent school advisory committees to build schools, but parent child care boards are required to oversee all aspects of service provision.

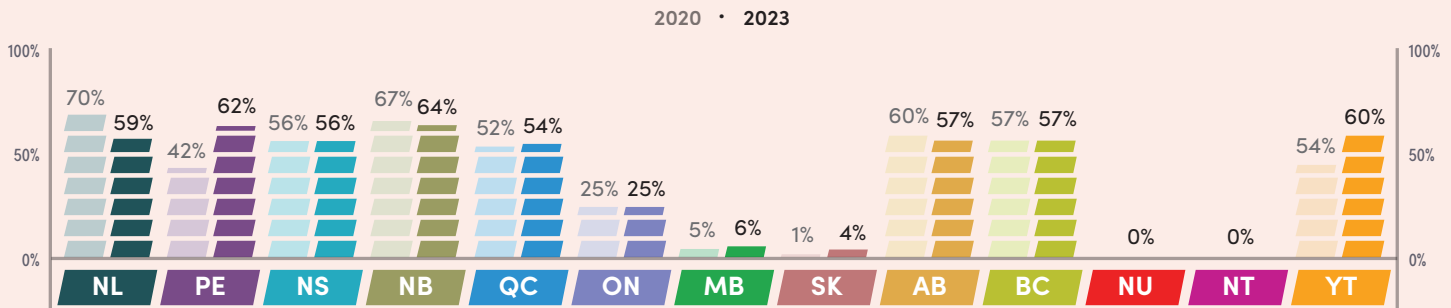
Not all governments are comfortable with the CWELCC’s preference to expand through non-profit or public providers. New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Ontario, and Alberta

secured waivers for commercial providers in their agreements. Governments do not always provide sufficient funding to meet the actual cost of new builds and renovations. This offers advantages to for-profit operators, which can take their public down payment to a bank and secure the necessary funding to expand. Non-profit organizations do not have that option, and neither do public operators. The Toronto District School Board, for example, has been unable to proceed with [50 planned child care centres](#) in its schools due to insufficient provincial funding and delayed approvals.

The inability of the non-profit sector to respond to parent frustration over insufficient access creates a greenfield for big box child care. International chains are [buying up smaller for-profit operators](#), and investment capital is showing an enhanced interest in acquisitions.

The for-profit sector has grown since 2020, notably through designated centres. These publicly managed programs must meet high standards and the profits made on operations may be minor, but assets bought with public funds remain in private hands.

### PER CENT CHANGE IN FOR-PROFIT FACILITIES/SPACES BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY 2020 AND 2023



Spending includes family child care, which some jurisdictions classify as for-profit.  
 MB and SK license but do not fund for-profit child care.  
 NU and NT only license non-profit and public centres.





Although the CWELCC has added \$4.5 billion to public child care spending since 2020, most governments have not used this opportunity to build their systems. Instead, they continue to use old processes such as announcing funding with the expectation that community organizations will step up to fulfill the mandate. Jurisdictions are reluctant to take direct responsibility for ensuring the goals of the CWELCC are met. Yet without active government leadership, Canada's national child care plan will flounder.

Québec is the only jurisdiction where the government says it will ensure child care for every family who wants it. Nova Scotia entered the CWELCC with a bold plan to provide a comprehensive infrastructure for service development and delivery, but due to protests it was almost immediately scaled back. Newfoundland and Labrador has added a position to assist operators who want to expand or create new programs.

The major roadblock to expansion is staff shortages. [ECE graduates](#) avoid child care as a career path, and those working in the field are not staying. Staffing challenges directly impact program availability, stability, and quality. Without educators, newly built classrooms remain empty. Vacancies due to educator scarcity impact the financial viability of centres, and programs operate without the legislative requirement for qualified staff.

The federal government has given substantive one-off infusions to help stem the child care workforce exodus. In addition, some jurisdictions are using their CWELCC money to create more permanent solutions:

- Six jurisdictions have mandated wage grids, with an additional one in development.
- Four jurisdictions have enhanced educator wage supplements.
- Manitoba funds operators to meet its wage guidelines.
- Ontario funds a wage floor.
- Prince Edward Island, Québec, and Manitoba have public pension plans, with Nova Scotia's in development.
- Prince Edward Island and Québec have public benefit plans, with Nova Scotia's in development.

However, implementation is uneven. Some apply their interventions to ECEs only, while others cover all staff working in licensed child care. The table on the next page shows the impact of government compensation policies. The amounts show the annual wage for full-time, centre-based educators holding a legislated credential, usually a two-year diploma.



It is vital that governments pay attention to how they invest. Too many early childhood programs were in difficulty before the onset of COVID-19, unable to recruit qualified staff and struggling financially.

Those that made it through the lockdowns are ill-equipped to compensate children for lost time. Early childhood education and care needs be removed from market fluctuations and take its place as education's first tier, supported by a strong public infrastructure and open to all children.

—Margaret Norrie McCain, Philanthropist

## POLICY AND PER CENT CHANGE IN ECE ANNUAL WAGES 2020 TO 2023 BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY

Province/Territory	Annual Wage Rate 2020	Annual Wage Rate 2023	Per Cent Change	Policy Initiative
NL	\$37,253	\$50,915	37%	Mandated wage grid
PE	\$42,765	\$64,085	50%	Mandated wage grid
NS	\$34,196	\$48,727	42%	Mandated wage grid
NB	\$42,369	\$46,313	9%	Mandated wage grid
QC	\$52,312	\$54,655	4%	Mandated wage grid
ON	\$43,243	\$44,512	3%	Wage floor/Wage supplement
MB	\$43,826	\$49,441	13%	Wage guidelines
SK	\$33,280	\$46,176	39%	Wage supplement
AB	\$34,691	\$56,140	62%	Wage supplement
BC	\$41,848	\$51,376	23%	Wage supplement
NU	\$50,502	\$71,531	42%	Mandated wage grid
NT	\$40,384	\$49,634	23%	Wage supplement/ wage grid in development
YT	\$67,038	\$68,598	2%	Wage supplement

Note: ECE wages are based on government supported compensation for FTE staff with legislated credentials.



Canada enrolls [6,500 ECE students every year](#), the vast majority in colleges in Ontario and Québec. Many are international students who will be impacted by [new limits on visa applications](#). Meeting expansion targets will require far more graduates than are being produced. Canada needs an additional [32,000 educators](#) just to cover the planned new spaces. This excludes replacing the one in five educators expected to retire over the next decade, and those who leave the field for other reasons.

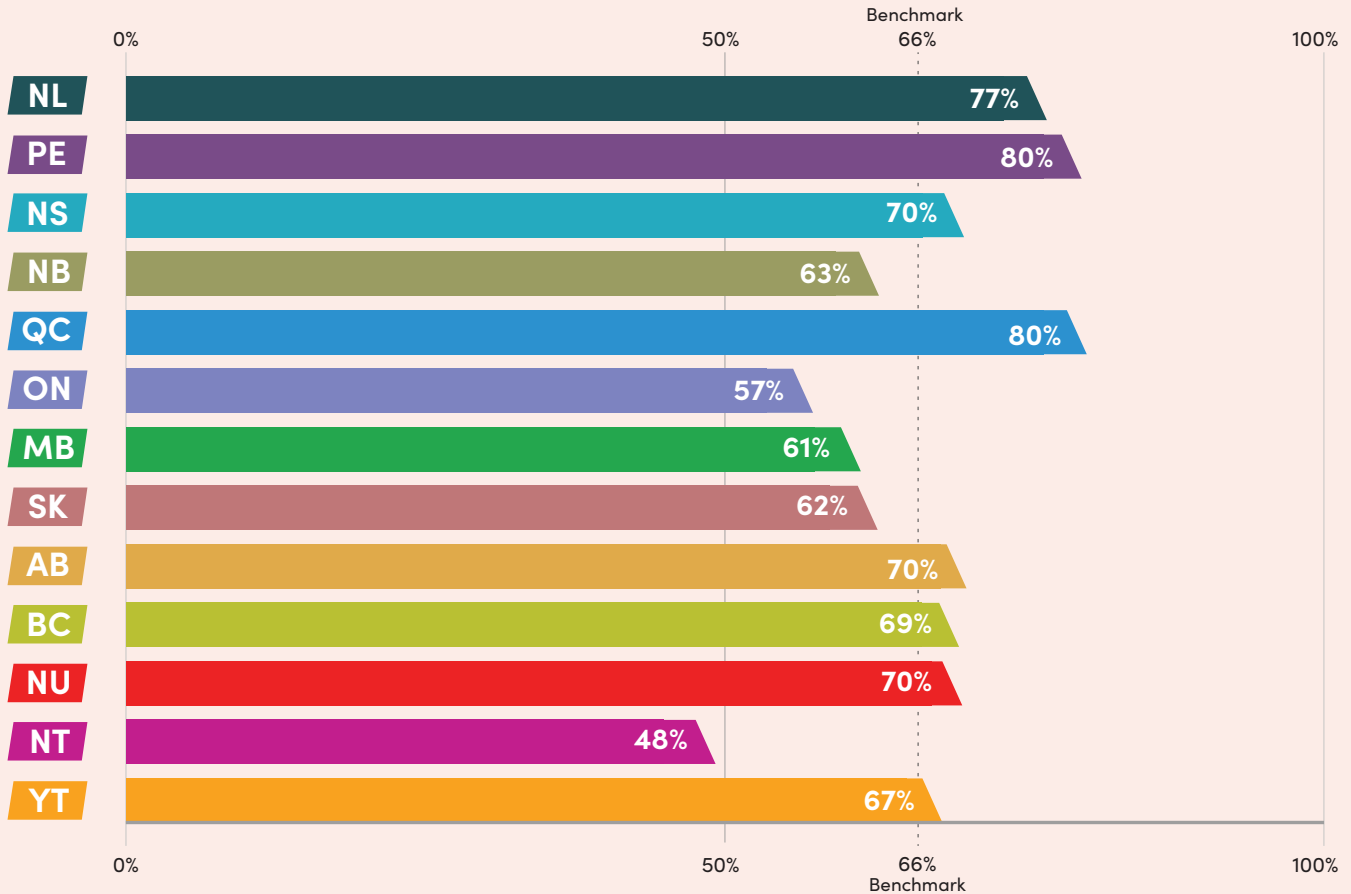
In addition, the high demand for educators is not creating corresponding job opportunities. A year after graduation, [50 per cent of ECE grads](#) are piecing together several part-time jobs. This is compared to only 6.8 per cent of multiple jobholders among other working women—a staggering difference.

In terms of the post-graduate lives of ECE degree-holders, half go straight into the K to

12 system. But government wage policies are narrowing the earnings gap. Compared to elementary school teachers, who require four to five years of post-secondary training, ECEs are closing in. Pay equity evaluations that account for educational differentials establish a wage rate for an ECE with a two-year post-secondary credential at about two-thirds of that of an elementary school teacher. In jurisdictions providing additional compensation for directors and staff with university degrees, teacher and ECE salaries are comparable.

The gap in wage rates between elementary school teachers with five years' experience and ECEs with the same seniority is narrowing. Of course, wage rates are only one pillar of a compensation system; ECEs still have a way to go to match teacher benefits. The wage gap between the two professions is an indication of the relative value that policymakers ascribe to early education.

**ECE WAGES AS A PER CENT OF TEACHER WAGES BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY (2023)**



Helping parents reduce their child care bills will require increasing cash infusions. Over the last decade, when inflation rates were at record lows, [parent fees increased](#) at double the rate of inflation. In today's environment, costs for rent, food, and supplies have escalated, driven by higher interest rates—effectively wiping out the value of any educator pay increases.

Most provincial and territorial governments are using their federal funds to stabilize parent fees or offset rising operating costs. The Government of Canada is only committed to maintaining its

funding at [\\$9.2 billion annually](#) past the end of the agreements in 2026. This is not enough to support existing service levels, and it is certainly too little to spur expansion. Provinces and territories are left to deal with frustrated parents who cannot get their children into care, and complaints about the quality of care from parents who have it. Provincial and territorial governments could, of course, add their own funding to cover shortfalls. Very few have done so, and a reliance on federal funds is now the norm.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF CHANGES TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION REPORT (ECER) 2023

This edition has seen minor changes to two benchmarks influenced by the CWELCC agreements and workforce challenges.

### Benchmark 9

As a result of substantial vacancies due to workforce shortages in many jurisdictions, the wording for this benchmark has been updated to reflect licensed capacity, rather than attendance in ECEC programs.

### Benchmark 21

Due to residual effects from the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent delays in the collection and reporting of population measures, this edition considers the benchmark reached if population measures were collected within the last three years, regardless of public reporting.



# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION REPORT

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2023



## GOVERNANCE

Fragmented governance structures are associated with lower-quality ECEC services that create a discontinuum of learning as children move from early years programming into Kindergarten and the primary grades. When the OECD's report on child care in Canada was released in 2004, no province or territory had an integrated governance structure. Since then, all jurisdictions except for Alberta and Québec have merged their child care divisions with their education ministries.

It is also important to consider what takes place within departments that house both education and child care services. Due to the added workload of the CWELCC agreements, and the exclusion of school-operated programs such as Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten from the agreements, some jurisdictions have split their supervisory units. Three jurisdictions have a common supervisory unit. Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and the Northwest Territories were among this group, but these jurisdictions have since moved Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten from their early years units to the exclusive oversight of their K to 12 systems. Québec has

strengthened service integration, forming a permanent working group to coordinate between its family and education ministries.

The disparity between education and child care is most pronounced at the local level where child care and education have divided delivery and administrative structures. Some regions have taken steps to address the schism. Ontario social service regions are responsible for the planning and administration of child care and family supports. They are required to collaborate with school boards and other stakeholders in carrying out their duties. Ontario also funds an early years lead in each school board who works with children's service managers on planning and development. New Brunswick closes the gap by integrating its early years administrators into regional school management teams. In British Columbia, school district early learning leads collaborate with early years partners to support smooth transitions for children into Kindergarten.

The CWELCC's action plans have replaced integrated policy frameworks in Nova Scotia, Manitoba, and British Columbia.



Children have one chance at childhood—the most sensitive stage of human development when deprivations are particularly devastating and long-lasting. The earlier and longer a child is materially deprived, the more costly to the individual child and to society. Childhood is also when positive investments in early learning and child care, and income supports, have amplified impacts on child well-being and the greatest economic returns.

Only a system that views early education as a child's right and a public good can deliver the goals of Canada's national child care plan. Delivering on the promise requires public funding and management that puts children, families, and educators first.

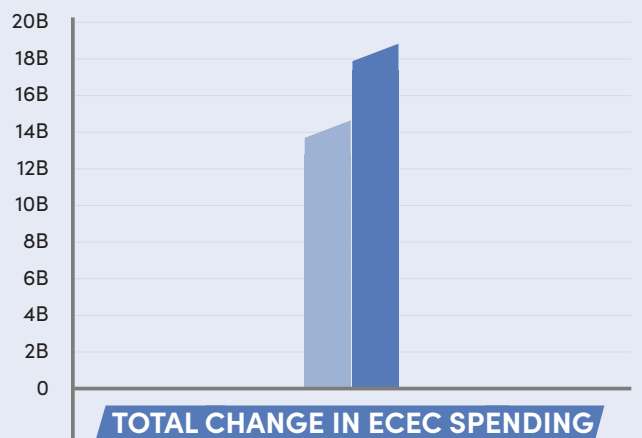
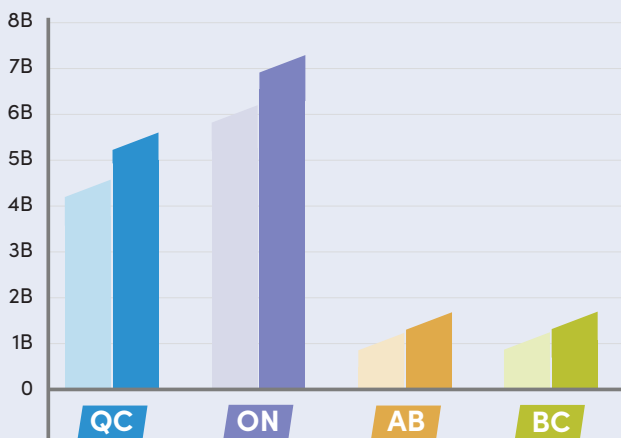
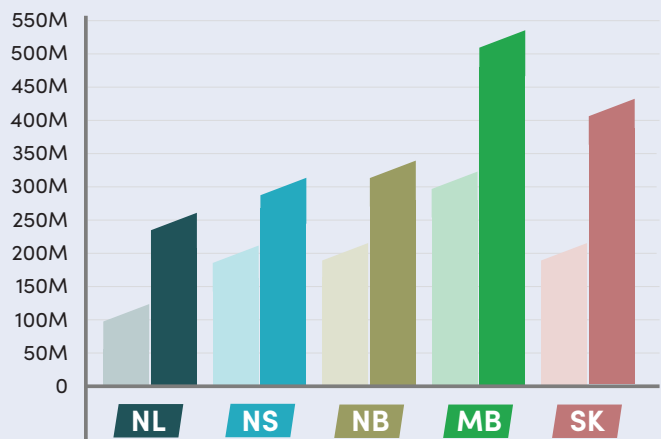
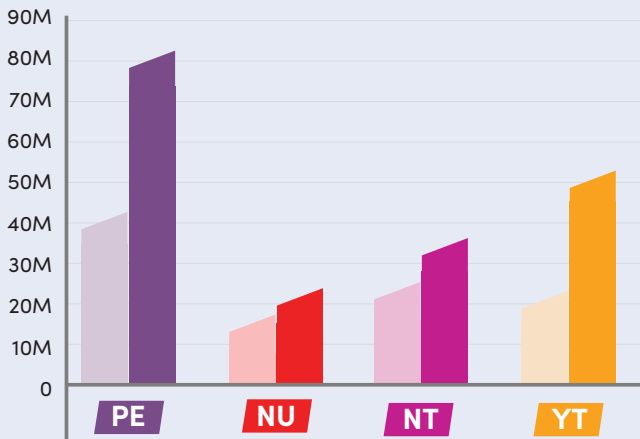
—Neria Aylward, Executive Director, Jimmy Pratt Foundation

# FUNDING

Provincial/territorial investment in early education and child care rose by over \$4.5 billion between 2020 and 2023, just \$1 billion more than during the prior three-year period preceding the CWELCC agreements. Halfway through the CWELCC, only 15 per cent of the total \$30 billion has been budgeted by March 2023. This brings total spending across Canada to \$18.3 billion. Increases are largely due to regulated child care, where spending increased from \$7 billion in 2020 to \$11.6 billion in 2023.

## CHANGE IN TOTAL ECEC SPENDING BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY 2020 TO 2023

2020 • 2023

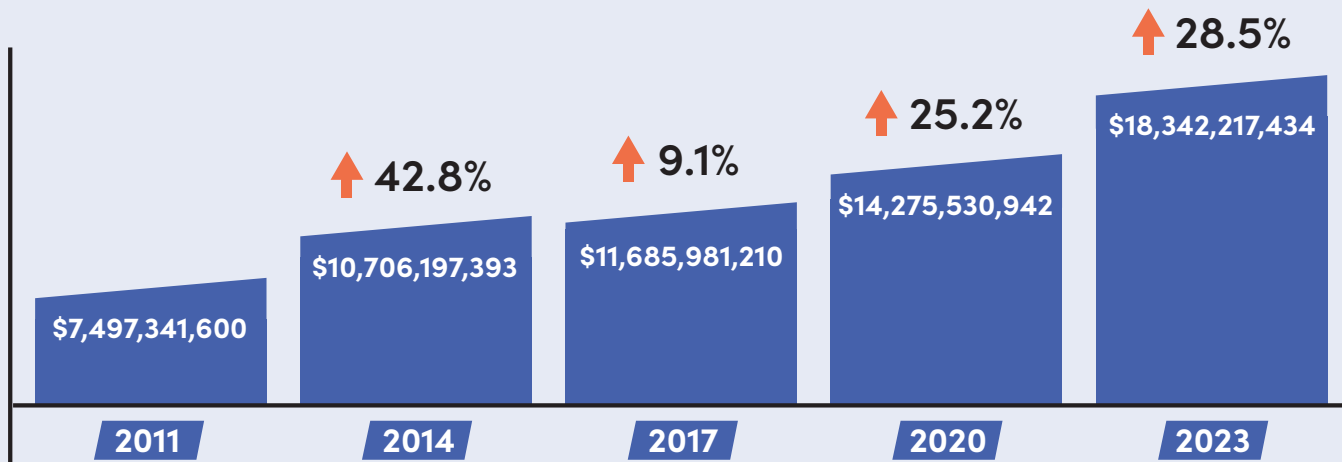


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Includes spending on regulated child care and school-operated ECEC programs.

## CHANGE IN TOTAL PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL ECEC SPENDING

Per cent change from previous report.



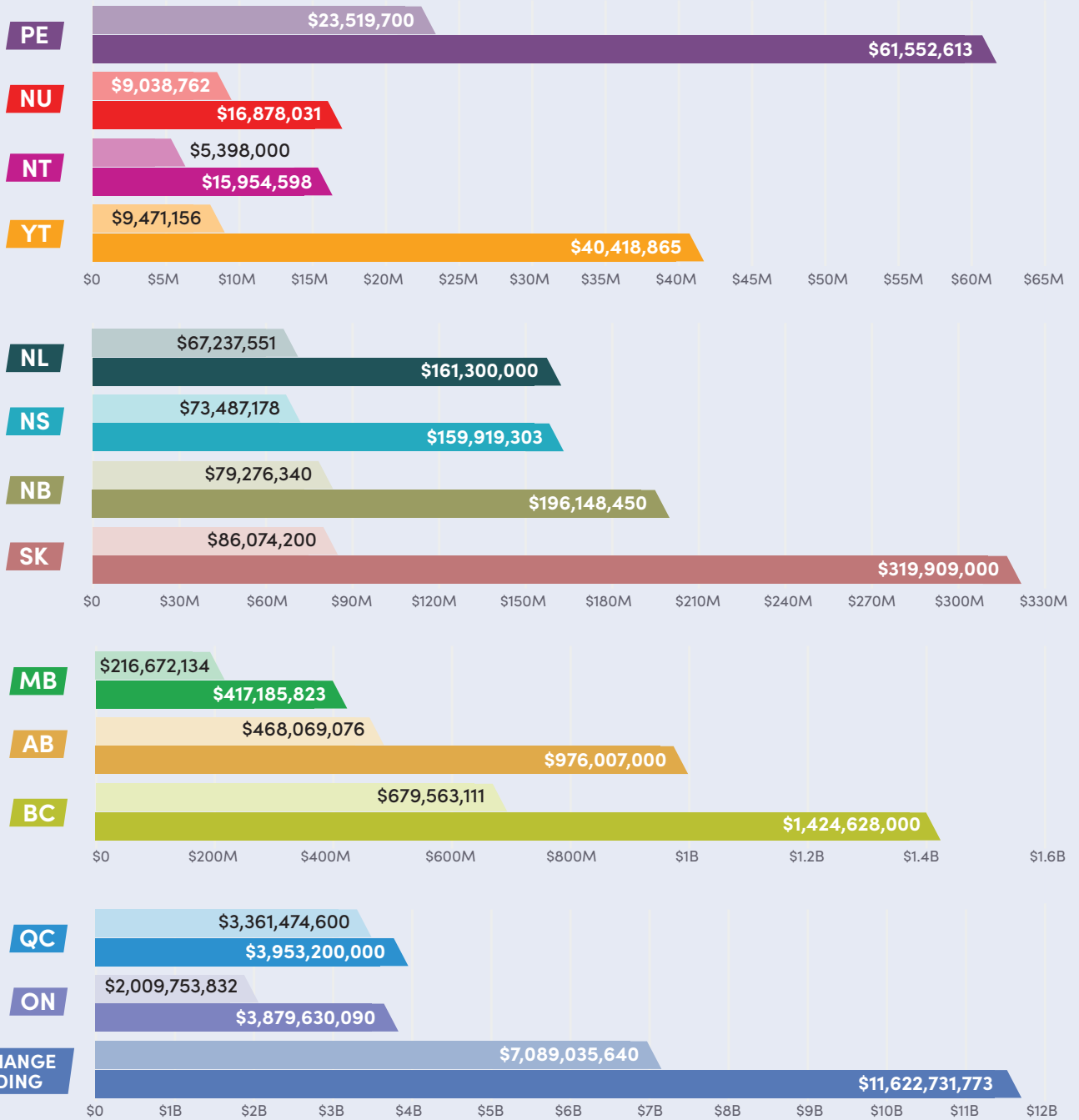
Because child care fee subsidies for low-income parents are tied to parent activity, if circumstances change for any reason (such as losing a job, going on parental leave, or caring for a sick family member), the subsidy is revoked. Research has linked such disruptions in care to worse outcomes for children. It is simply unfair and inequitable that low-income parents are subject to activity requirements in order to receive the level of subsidy they need, while higher income parents—who are also publicly subsidized—are not subject to restrictions.

—Michal Perlman, Professor, Department of Human Development and Applied Psychology, OISE, University of Toronto



## CHANGE IN SPENDING ON REGULATED CHILD CARE BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY 2020 TO 2023

2020 • 2023



Includes federal funding.

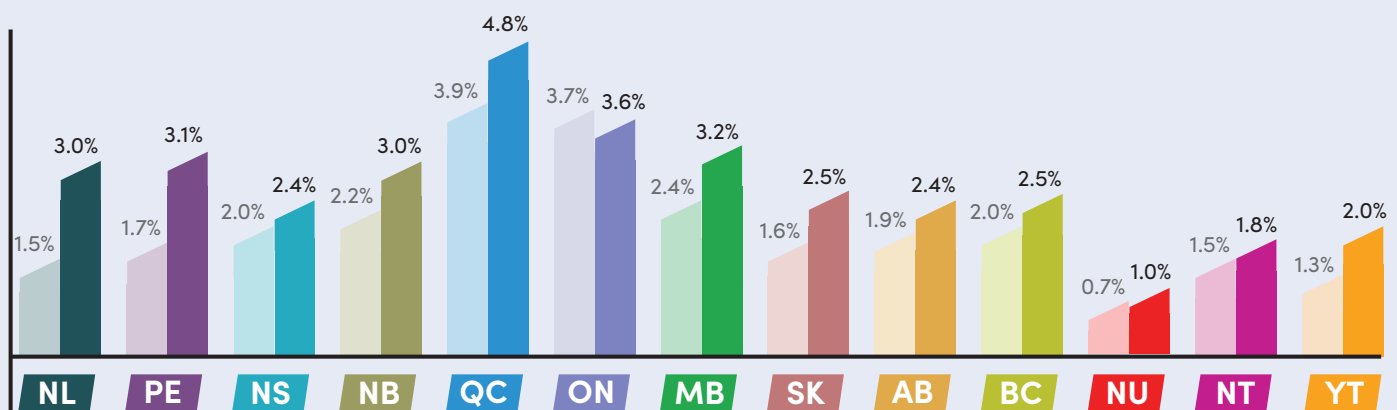


While funding has increased, it is important to identify the percentage of provincial/territorial resources devoted to ECEC services. The benchmark threshold is a minimum of 3 per cent of total annual provincial/territorial budgeted spending. In ECER 2020, Québec and Ontario were the only jurisdictions to exceed the spending threshold. In this edition, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Manitoba join the ranks.

The benchmark is a modest goal for children 6 years of age and under, who make up almost 7 per cent of Canada's population. Indigenous children 6 years and under account for as much as 15 per cent of the Indigenous population. However, funding discrepancies between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children persist. Dedicated funding in the CWELCC agreements with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples makes a clear effort to address these disparities.

### CHANGE IN ECEC SPENDING AS A PER CENT OF TOTAL PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL BUDGET

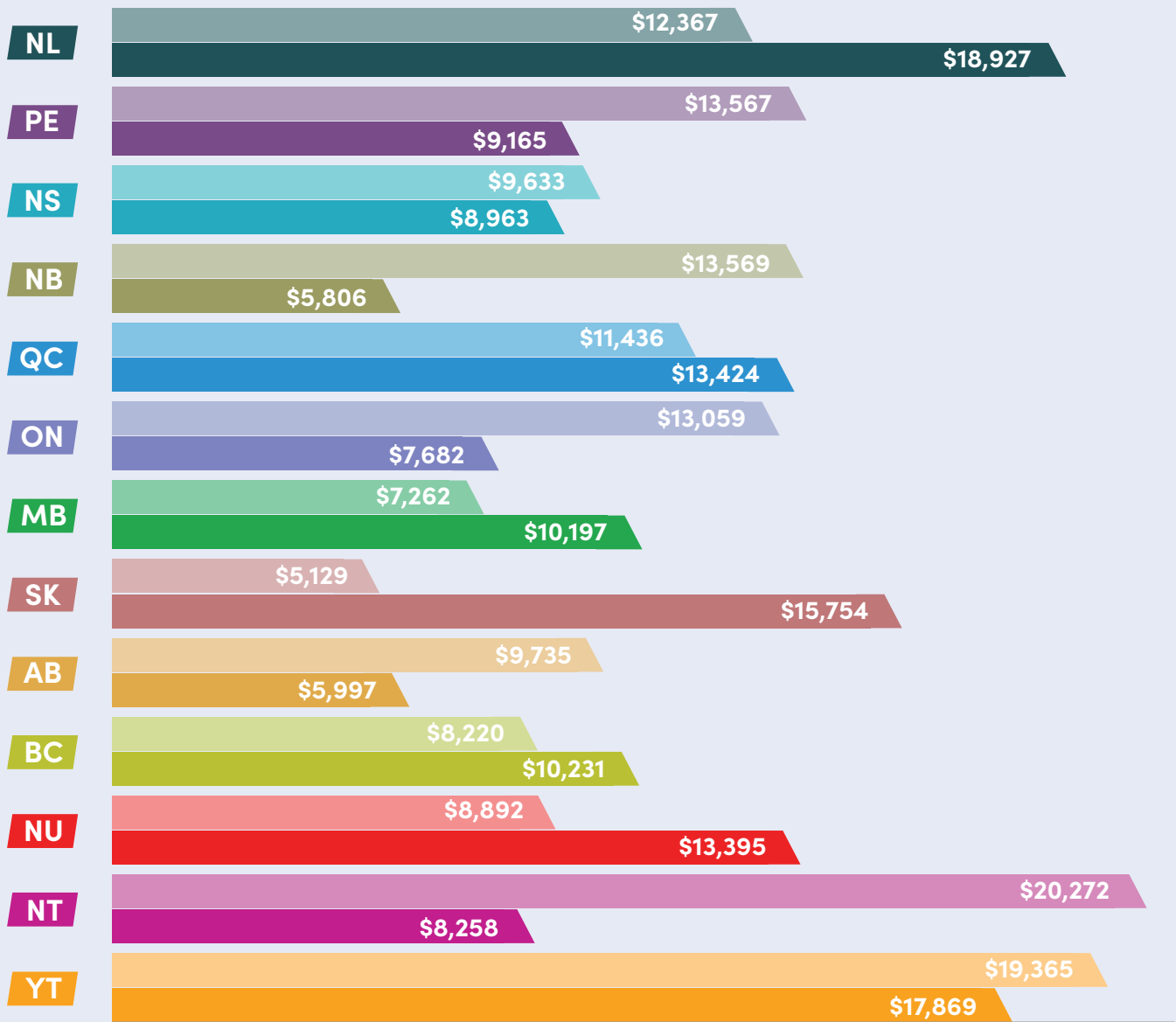
2020 · 2023



Unlike past reports that showed funding inequities between regulated child care and school-based programs, public spending on child care has largely caught up, or in some jurisdictions surpassed allocations for Kindergarten.

### EXPENDITURES PER CHILD IN SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND PER CHILD CARE SPACE BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY

AVERAGE PUBLIC SPENDING PER PUPIL IN KINDERGARTEN • AVERAGE PUBLIC SPENDING PER CHILD CARE SPACE



QC child care includes children 0 to 4 years old only.  
 ON calculations do not include family child care.  
 BC spending includes StrongStart BC, and Ready, Set, Learn programs.



In its 2004 report, the OECD noted that Canada's market-determined fee structure for child care resulted in high parent fees and inefficient subsidy systems with varying and complex eligibility criteria. The flat fee structure of the CWELCC adds a new layer of complexity. Lower parental fees have certainly opened regulated child care for more modest-income families, but families that relied on fee subsidies are disadvantaged in a service with high demand and scarce availability. While some jurisdictions have increased parent-earning thresholds for subsidies, work requirements and other such restrictions largely remain in place. (The Yukon is considering removing employment and related criteria).

Jurisdictions don't keep demographic information on the families attending child care, so it's difficult to determine if there have been any changes in how low-income families are being served. Subsidy budgets, where reported, have not increased since 2020. Funding reviews indicate that operators show a preference for families with higher earnings. These families are also less likely to object when surcharged for supplies or activities beyond basic care.

Funding levels are important, but how programs are funded also makes a difference. Direct funding for program operations has a positive

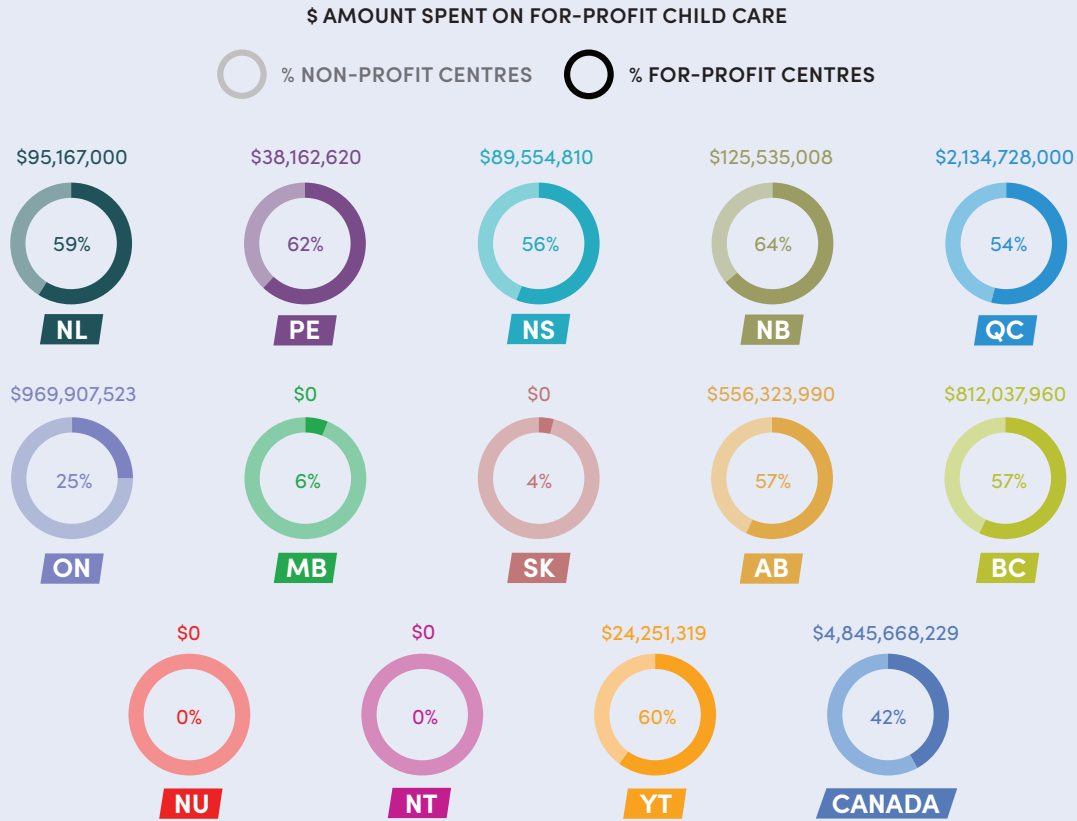
impact on staff wages and program stability, whereas funding through parent fee subsidies or tax measures has little impact. Since fee subsidies to parents seldom reflect the actual cost of child care, subsidies tend to hold down staff wages when they are a main source of centre revenue.

The benchmark of two-thirds of funding directed to program operations was chosen because it is associated with greater service stability. Although all jurisdictions attained this benchmark in 2023, it will be reviewed for the 2026 report considering the CWELCC's funding mechanisms.

The majority of CWELCC funding has been targeted to reducing parent fees. Eight jurisdictions are ahead of schedule with parent fees already at \$10 per day or less. Lowering fees is relatively straightforward: public funding replaces revenue from parents. While fees are capped, operating costs, particularly in an inflationary environment, are not. More funding will be needed to retain low fees, possibly at the expense of quality improvements and expansion efforts.

The CWELCC's preference is to expand child care through public and non-profit child care providers. There has been a slight decrease in spending on for-profit child care. In 2020, 43 per cent of all spending on regulated child care went to for-profit operators. In 2023, it was 41.7 per cent.

## CHILD CARE SPENDING ON FOR-PROFIT FACILITIES BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY (2023)



Note: Spending includes family child care, which some jurisdictions classify as for-profit.  
 MB and SK license for-profit centres, but they are not eligible for funding.  
 NU and NT only license and fund non-profit and public centres.



The rapid expansion of child care can prioritize quantity over quality. Behind this concern lies the decision to expand public funding to for-profit programs. This decision ignores 20 years of Québec research that has shown better quality care in non-profit settings. Following the same logic of growth at all costs, in Québec staff shortages were addressed by lowering staff qualifications and accepting “qualified temporary replacements” who can be considered part of the qualified personnel ratio. Future assessments are needed to measure the impact of this investing.

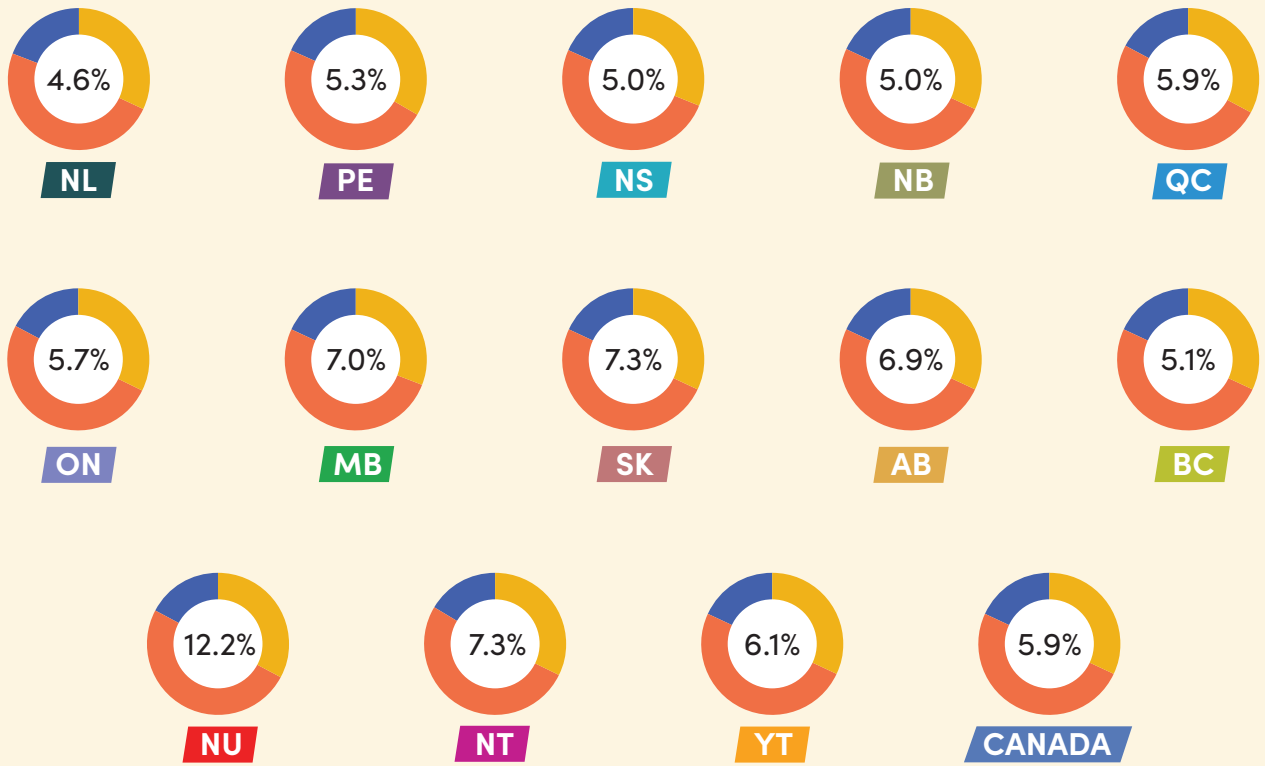
—Isabelle Vinet, Executive Director, Abilio—Childhood Knowledge Dissemination Centre

# ACCESS

## CHILD POPULATION UNDER AGE 6 BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY

○ % 0 TO <24 MONTHS   
 ○ % 24 MONTHS TO <5 YEARS   
 ○ % 5 YEARS TO <6

**% CHILDREN 0 TO 6 YEARS AS % TOTAL OF POPULATION**



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0005-01—Population estimates on July 1st 2022, by age and sex (accessed on January 10, 2023). <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1710000501>

## INDIGENOUS POPULATION BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY 2021

INDIGENOUS POPULATION · NON-INDIGENOUS POPULATION

 % CHANGE FROM 2016



Source: Statistics Canada. 2021 Census of Population key indicators by geography (accessed on March 20, 2023). <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/stats/statgeo2021.cfm?Lang=E&Dguid=2021A000011124&tid=9>

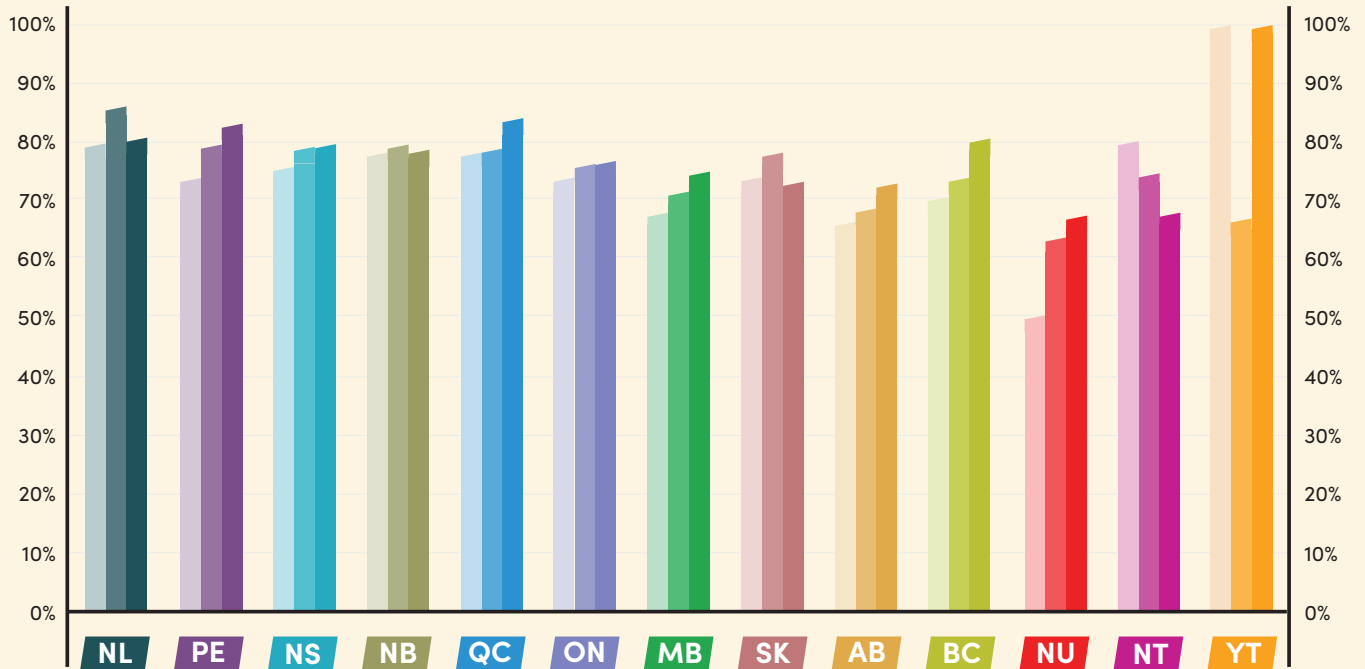


While the CWELCC is a wonderful and welcomed investment in child care, access is highly competitive. Waitlists are getting longer and families are at risk of not being able to benefit from the long-term outcomes that child care provides. We need an equitable and inclusive system to increase access, particularly for those children who greatly benefit from child care as an early intervention.

—Stefany Hanson, Manager, Service Planning and Policy Development, City of Toronto

## MATERNAL LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY AND BY AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD (2022)

AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD: 1-2 YEARS • 2-4 YEARS • 5 YEARS



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Source: Labour Force Survey (LFS) 0620\_13 Table 3 – estimates of mothers by age of youngest child, Canada, provinces, territories, annual average, 2022. Custom Tabulation.





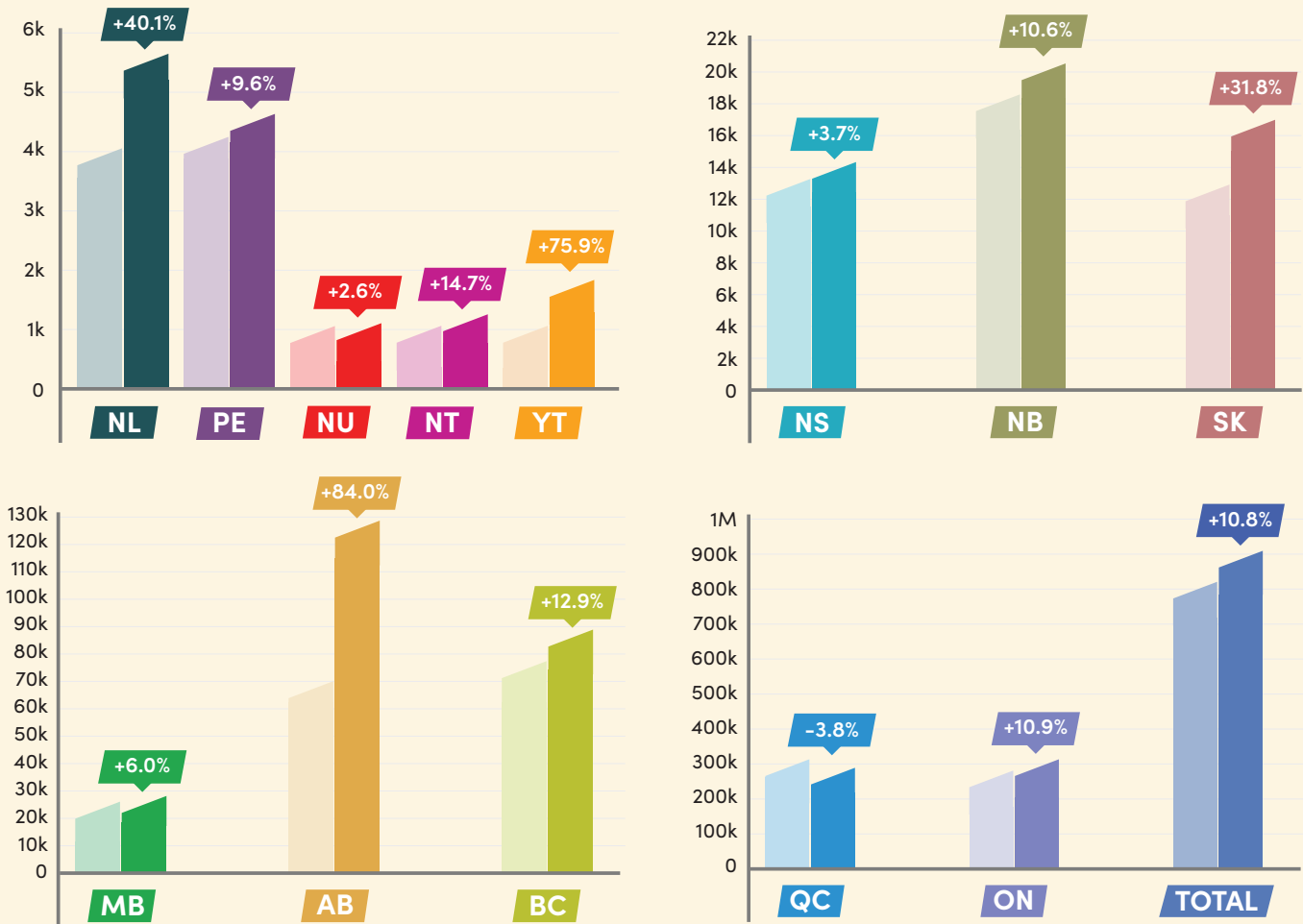
Early learning and child care are essential parts of the social infrastructure. Just as roads and transit support economic growth, early education is an artery for our social and economic systems.

Investment in high-quality early learning and child care is a multiplier: it creates jobs, the majority filled by women; it enables parental workforce participation, particularly that of mothers; and it creates supportive learning environments for children.

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in program closures and space reductions. Despite the new spaces added in the last two years for children from birth to 5 years of age, some provinces have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. Nationally, there was a 97,859 net gain in spaces for the under 5 age group since 2020, a 12% increase. For children from birth to 12 years, the supply has increased by 7.1 per cent.

### CHANGES IN THE NUMBER OF CHILD CARE SPACES (0 TO 5 YEARS) BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY 2020 TO 2023

2020 • 2023



Please read highest point of bar for accurate data reading.

Numbers include family child care except for ON, and NT (in 2023), which do not report family child care spaces.

QC licensed child care includes children 0 to 4 years only.

## PERCENTAGE OF NEW CHILD CARE SPACES (0 TO 5 YEARS) CREATED AGAINST 2026 GWELCC NEW SPACES TARGET BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY

SPACES ADDED/LOST 2020-2023 • 2026 GWELCC NEW SPACES TARGET

○ = % ACHIEVED



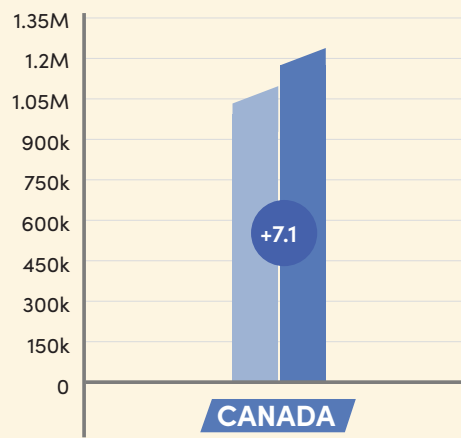
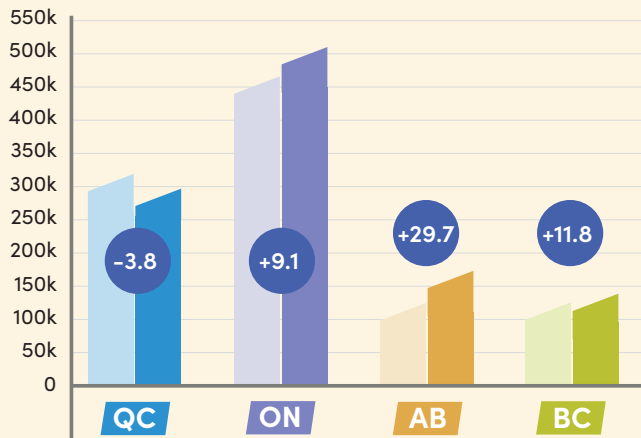
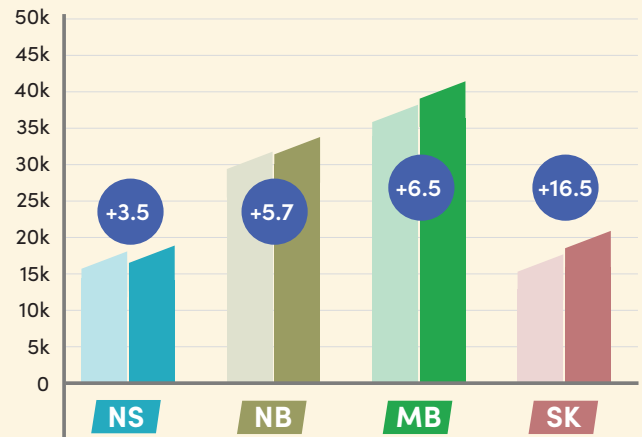
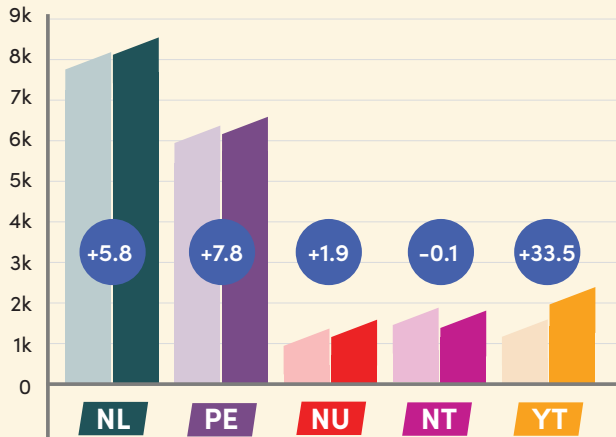
Please read highest point of bar for accurate data reading.

QC does not have GWELCC targets. New spaces are an election commitment.

## CHANGE IN REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACES (0 TO 12 YEARS) BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY 2020 AND 2023

2020 • 2023

● = % CHANGE



**Please read highest point of bar for accurate data reading.**

Includes centre and family child care spaces for children 0 to 12 years.

ON and NT (in 2023) do not report the number of regulated family child care spaces.

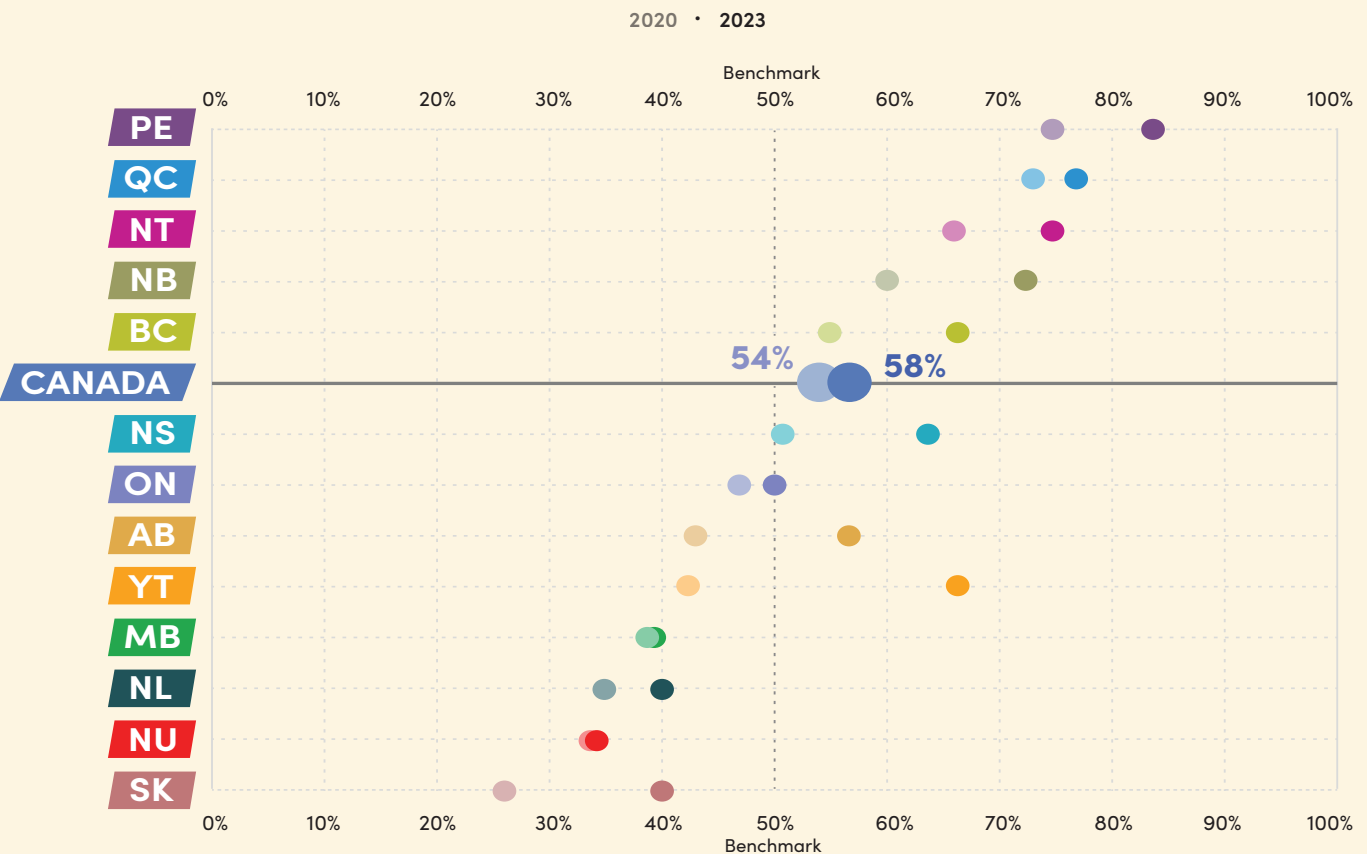
QC licensed child care includes children 0 to 4 years only.

With a primary focus on affordability for parents and space expansion, the CWELCC has largely ignored the brewing workforce crisis. With desultory attention to staffing in some jurisdictions, many new licensed spaces are not operational. Filling current staff vacancies needs to occur alongside finding an additional 32,000 educators plus support workers needed to staff the 250,000 new spaces promised by the CWELCC.

The ECER benchmark assesses access at a minimum of 50 per cent of 2- to 4-year-old children attending regulated child care and/or

school-operated programs. Parental leaves somewhat address the first years of life, and Kindergarten covers 5-year-olds—making 2- to 4-year-olds the most underserved cohorts. Ontario, Alberta, and the Yukon are new to reaching the 50 per cent threshold for this age group in 2023. Prince Edward Island continues to lead, with licensed capacity for 83 per cent of 2- to 4-year-olds. Nationally, access by this measure has slightly increased from 54 per cent in 2020 to 58 per cent in 2023. These figures exclude family child care.

**CHANGE IN ECEC CAPACITY TO PERCENTAGE OF 2- TO 4-YEAR OLDS BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY 2020 AND 2023**



Kindergarten is often the only early education many children receive. Two years of attendance in preschool programming is associated with improved literacy and numeracy skills, as well as increased self-regulation competencies. When preschool operates for the full school day, it also supports maternal labour force participation.

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds is available across the country. Nine jurisdictions offer full-day Kindergarten. Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Nunavut offer part-day programs. Nunavut

is piloting full-day Kindergarten with the intention of expanding it across the territory.

Other jurisdictions have used their education platform to expand learning opportunities for younger children. Nova Scotia, Ontario, and the Northwest Territories offer universal full-day preschool for 4-year-olds, with Québec and the Yukon moving toward universal access. Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta have part-day preschool programs targeted to children with specific needs.

### ENROLMENT IN SCHOOL-OPERATED ECEC PROGRAMS BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY (2023)

Province/ Territory	Stats Can		4-year-old programs		Stats Can		5-year-old programs	
	4-year-old Population	Per Cent Attending Pre-Kindergarten		5-year-old Population	Per Cent Attending Kindergarten			
		Full Day	Part Day		Full Day	Part Day		
NL				4,494	98%			
PE				1,649	89%			
NS	8,819	78%		9,211	96%			
NB				7,401	95%			
QC	85,919	22%		87,550	98%			
ON	148,144	84%		150,457	88%			
MB	17,523		12%	17,522		83%		
SK	29,780		17%	15,623		87%		
AB	132,256		8.7%	56,272		99%		
BC				48,668	99%			
NU				822		99%		
NT	582	90%		550	100%			
YT	462	15%		484	96%			

Does not include children in private schools.

Not all provinces count children attending First Nations schools.

SK PreKindergarten includes 3- and 4-year-olds.

AB Early Childhood Services includes children 2.5 to 4 years old.

Children with disabilities are entitled to attend school, but with some exceptions, child care is not an entitlement. All jurisdictions offer grants and other supports to accommodate children with special needs, but operators are not required to use them. Only Manitoba makes its child care funding conditional on including children with

special needs. Prince Edward Island requires inclusive enrolment in its publicly managed Designated Early Years Centres, as do Early Childhood Services in Alberta and, more recently, Designated Early Learning and Child Care Centres in New Brunswick.

## JURISDICTIONS WHERE PUBLIC FUNDING FOR CHILD CARE IS CONDITIONAL ON INCLUDING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



### Prince Edward Island

In Designated Early Years Centres only

### New Brunswick

In Designated Early Learning and Child Care centres only

### Manitoba

In all publicly funded child care programs

### Alberta

In Early Childhood Services programs only



Those with the least access to early learning and care are children with complex needs, racialized children (especially new Canadians), and the economically marginalized. Expansion alone does not result in inclusion for vulnerable groups. Engaging these children requires intentional planning and action, including the location and design of facilities, appropriate curriculum, outreach, staffing, and staff training to ensure the environment is able to effectively respond to individualized needs.

—Dr. David Philpott Researcher—Consultant—Advocate



## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The foundation of quality early learning is a well-trained and valued workforce. The CWELCC action plans take various paths to respond to workforce needs, with varying results.

Regions introducing wage grids have seen large increases in ECE salaries and are closing the wage gap between ECEs and teachers in the K to 12 system. Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Nunavut have developed wage grids, resulting in a 25 per cent increase in wages since ECER 2020. The Northwest Territories' wage grid is in development. Alberta's wage supplement has increased annual wages for ECEs by 62 per cent over 2020. The Yukon's wage supplements, introduced prior to the CWELCC, made Yukon educators the best paid in the country. Least improved since 2020 is Ontario. With only a 3 per cent change in wages over the last three years, Ontario continues to see unprecedented workforce shortages.

Prince Edward Island (Designated Early Years Centres), Nova Scotia, Québec (Centres de la petite enfance), Nunavut, New Brunswick (Designated Early Learning and Child Care Centres), and Newfoundland and Labrador have wage grids reflecting different qualification

levels and experience. All but Québec and New Brunswick recognize the extra responsibilities of directors. Nova Scotia's wage grid acknowledges assistant directors, as does Manitoba's wage guidelines that also compensate directors based on the number of children in their care. Newfoundland and Labrador, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories provide bonuses to ECEs working in remote regions. Québec's (Centres de la petite enfance) wage grid covers all staff, including cooks, and administrative and custodial positions. New Brunswick includes school-age staff in its compensation system.

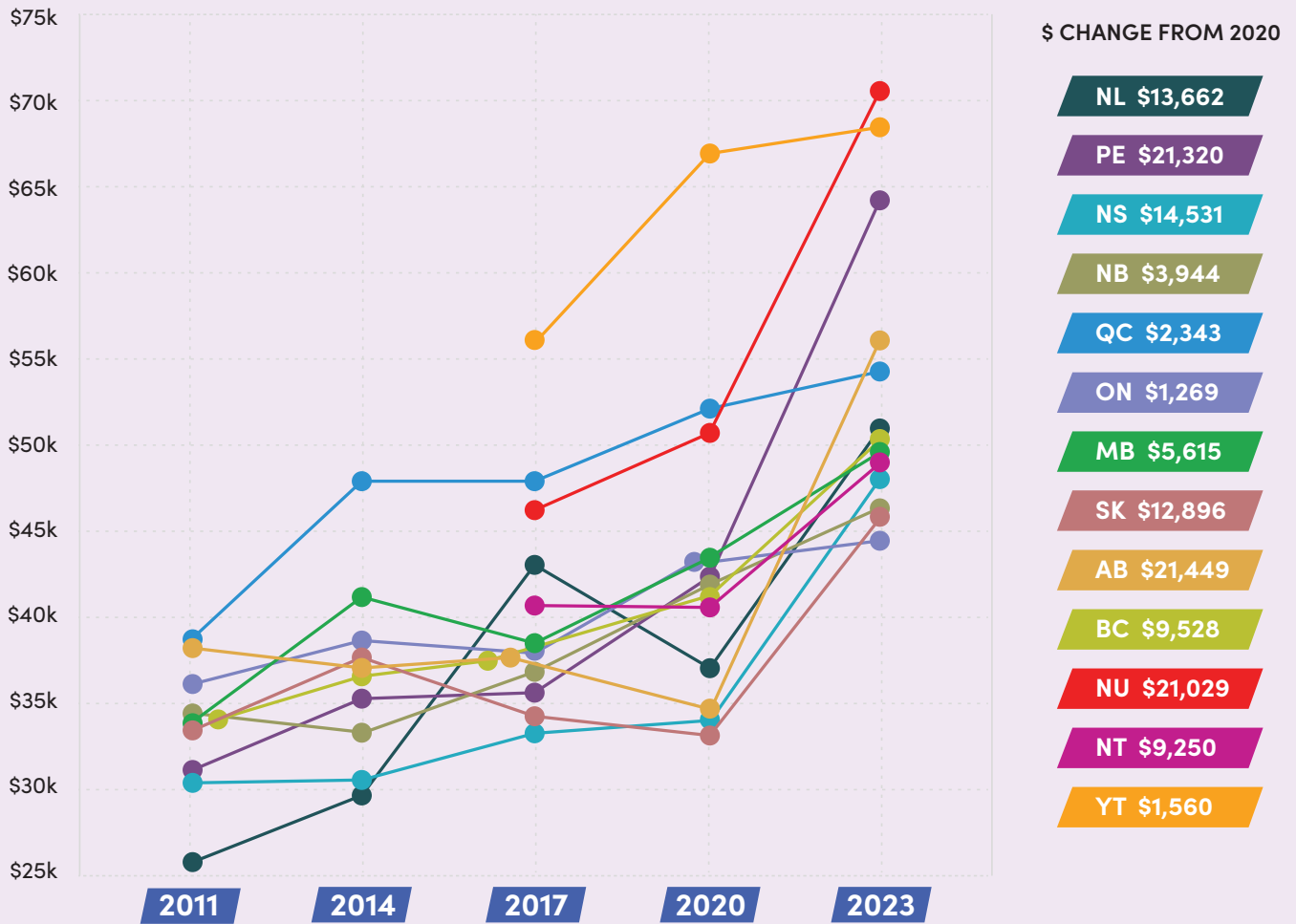
The benchmark for educator wages is ECEs earning two-thirds of elementary school teachers' wages. This accounts for the educational differentials. In 2020, only Québec reached this benchmark. The CWELCC has had an impact on educator compensation. In 2023, eight jurisdictions reached or surpassed the threshold.

While all approaches raise the bar for educator compensation, wage caps penalize operators who pay a living wage to their staff. In these scenarios, the top payers receive little or no support for their staff, while those who pay the least, receive the most.





### CHANGE IN ECE WAGES BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY (2011-2023)



NU, NT, and YT data not available for 2011 and 2014.

Source: Early Childhood Education Report 2011, 2014, 2017, 2020, 2023.

No jurisdiction in Canada requires all those working with young children in regulated child care settings to hold post-secondary level credentials. Two-thirds of staff trained in child development and working directly with children is considered the international minimum. Meeting this standard is one indication of the value placed on early education. New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, Alberta, the Yukon, and the

Northwest Territories have not yet reached this benchmark. British Columbia and Ontario meet the threshold in specific groupings only. To deal with staffing shortages during the pandemic, Québec lowered requirements for qualified staff ratios to 1:3, with plans to return to a 2:3 ratio on April 1, 2024. ECE qualifications are not required in regulated child care in Nunavut.

## KINDERGARTEN/PRE-KINDERGARTEN TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY

### KINDERGARTEN

B.Ed. or equivalent	BA + primary speciality	BA + speciality	B.Ed.	BA with EC speciality	B.Ed. + ECE with diploma	BA + education speciality	BA	BA + 2 years experience	BA + education speciality	B.Ed. or ECE Diploma	B.Ed.	B.Ed. or equivalent
NL	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	NU	NT	YT

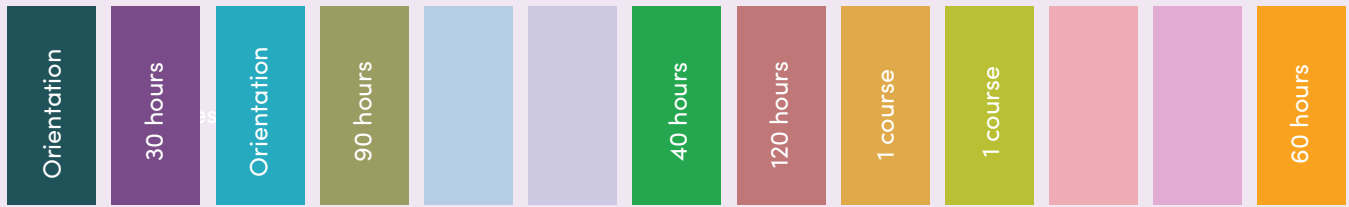
ECE degree or Kindergarten experience	ECE diploma	ECE-BA or ECE diploma		BA with EC speciality + ECE diploma	B.Ed. + ECE with diploma	BA with ECE speciality	BA with ECE speciality	BA + 2 years EC experience	Teacher + ECE with diploma		B.Ed. or ECE diploma	B.Ed. or equivalent
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### PRE-KINDERGARTEN

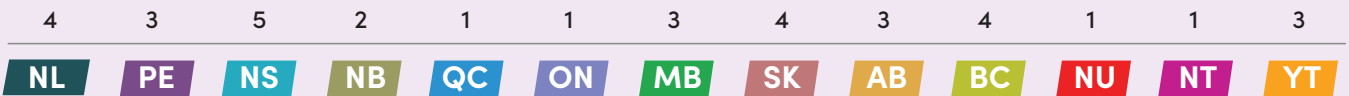
Blanks indicate no Pre-Kindergarten programming provided.  
 BC, NS, QC have educator teams in Pre-Kindergarten.  
 ON has educator teams in Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten.

## QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED IN LICENSED CHILD CARE BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY

### ENTRY LEVEL



### NUMBER OF LEVELS OF QUALIFICATION



### QUALIFIED

Blanks indicate no post-secondary training required.

BC: Additional certificate required when working with children under 36 months and those with special needs.

SK: First Nations Certificate required when working in First Nations programs.

MB: Recognizes degree level training in wage guidelines.

QC: Degrees recognized but not considered in wage grid. First Nations: 3 year diploma + experience.

NL: Recognizes degree level training in wage grid.

NS: School-age approval is required that includes orientation training and a Bachelor degree. Recognizes degree level training in wage grid.

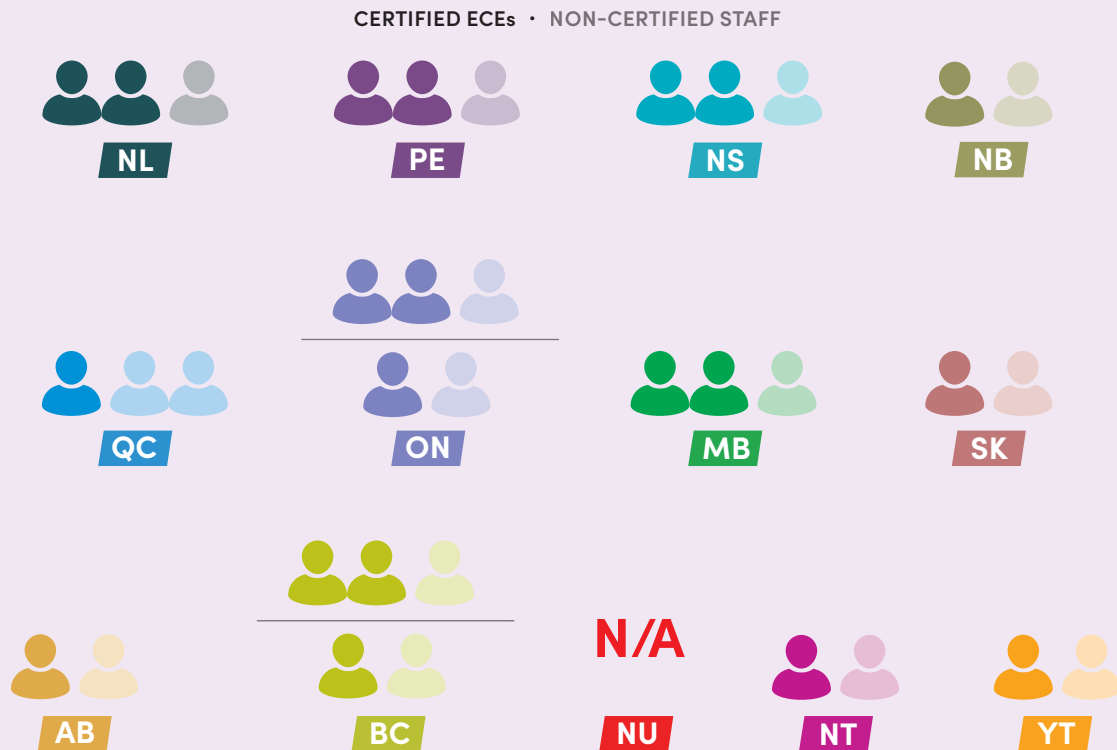
PE: Recognizes degree level training in wage grid. Degrees encouraged for EYC directors.



Early childhood educators are the foundation of a high-quality early learning and child care system. Adequately funded, common provincial salary scales, benefit packages, and supported working conditions will encourage qualified staff to remain in the field, improve job satisfaction and morale, and attract new educators to the sector.

—Jodie Kehl, Executive Director, Manitoba Child Care Association

## RATIO OF CERTIFIED ECEs TO NON-CERTIFIED STAFF IN PRESCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE BY PROVINCE/TERRITORY



PE in Designated Early Years Centres.

QC reduced ratio due to staff shortages from July 22, 2021 to March 1, 2023.

ON 2:1 for groups of 24. 1:1 for groups of 16.

BC 2:1 in groups serving children 0 to <36 months. 1:1 in groups serving children 36 months to age 5.

NU does not require ECE qualifications.

Benchmark 2 certified staff out of 3.

Ongoing professional learning is critical to ensure educators remain up to date with curriculum, pedagogical approaches, current issues, and policy and legislative changes. Except for Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, most jurisdictions have minimum requirements for professional development to maintain certification or employment.

Many jurisdictions have dedicated their federal workforce strategy funding to improving professional opportunities for educators. Newfoundland and Labrador and Prince Edward Island have increased the number of seats in their training institutions—building a sustainable platform to grow the workforce. Most other jurisdictions have provided tuition bursaries. However, bursaries for students, like direct

subsidies to parents, do not build the training institutions needed to create a sustainable infrastructure for workforce development.

All provinces and territories have a curriculum framework in place. Their use is mandated in Newfoundland and Labrador (Designated Early Years Centres), Nova Scotia (Pre-primary and child care centres receiving public funding), New Brunswick (Designated Early Learning and Child Care programs), Ontario (EarlyON Centres), Manitoba (funded programs), British Columbia (StrongStart Programs), the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. Québec mandates use of its curriculum in all programs, including licensed home child care. All jurisdictions have aligned their ECE curricula with Kindergarten.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Data collection, monitoring, and reporting are integral parts of democratic accountability. They are essential for informed decision-making and ensure that societal resources are implemented productively and efficiently, with often scarce resources distributed equitably.

But monitoring on its own does not deliver results, although it is a crucial part of a larger system designed to achieve them and remain accountable to Canadians.

The CWELCC agreements require jurisdictions to report publicly, no later than October 1 of each year of the agreement, on results and expenditures for the previous fiscal year. Rather than mandatory public reporting, this now appears to be an internal process between the two levels of government. Most provinces/territories have continued their regular reporting mechanisms, not all of which meet the requirements in the agreements.

Ontario is the lone province to post its report following the CWELCC template. Québec is not a signatory to the CWELCC but has its own extensive reporting structures.

Benchmark 20 requires facility standards for school-operated Kindergarten. For example, this includes the need for ready access to washrooms and outdoor areas, and space to allow for experiential learning. Prince Edward Island and Nunavut do not have specific standards for Kindergarten.

All regions use population health-monitoring tools to assess how children are doing, but there are wide variations in the tools used, making comparisons difficult. Current monitoring tools do not meet the needs of Nunavut's low population regions and are therefore not applicable due to data suppression.



Transformational change is promised in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care plan of an affordable, accessible, high-quality, and inclusive early learning system. To achieve these goals, leadership at all levels of government is essential within and across systems. Long-term investment must be viewed through an equity lens at the forefront of changes to ensure early learning and child care are responsive and reflective of the diverse needs of children, families, and educators in every community.

—*Jessie-Lee McIsaac, PhD, Canada Research Chair in Early Childhood: Diversity and Transitions Associate Professor, Faculty of Education and Department of Child and Youth Study, Mount Saint Vincent University*

## NEXT PHASE

The CWELCC is delivering results in many jurisdictions. Parents are benefiting from more affordable child care rates, while educators are guaranteed better earnings. At this phase of the national program's development, its foundations should be sturdy and its benefits sufficiently widespread to make its undoing politically distasteful.

The CWELCC has not met this threshold in every jurisdiction simply because not enough families have suitable care for their children. Regions with 70 per cent or more of the eligible child population participating in ECEC can probably generate the political will to protect the gains achieved. Where one in every two children or more are excluded, it would be easier to create schisms and abandon child care provision for "universal" vouchers.

The CWELCC can be undermined by stealth. We are already witnessing operator revolts over parent fee replacement levels that haven't budged since the start of the program two years ago. Wage increases can be kept below inflation or red circled, eating away at any compensation gains. Funding pegged to legislated minimums

for staffing and operations cuts quality and eats away at educator morale.

Funding formulas based on parent fee replacement and wage top-ups can penalize providers. Those that charged the highest fees going into the CWELCC get more than those who worked to keep fees low. The stingiest operators increase their staff wages using public funds, while those who always prioritized fair wages may receive nothing.

For some jurisdictions, these are the glitches—what happens in the messy transition from a market arrangement to a public service. In others, it's hard not to question whether underfunding and lack of transparency are designed to ensure the status quo.

Governments complain that the CWELCC isn't providing enough funding to achieve its goals. It isn't, yet provinces are not spending the money they have been allocated. For three years in a row, they are carrying forward unspent funds. Child care budgets are growing, but any increases are driven almost entirely by federal money.



All jurisdictions acknowledge that access is the biggest challenge, but some have failed to release their expansion plans. A few jurisdictions don't have capital budgets. Among those that do, the level of start-up funding is so low that only commercial operators or the most established organizations can finance the shortfall.

The federal government isn't without blame. It signed deals that allow the proliferation of commercial child care, opening the door to corporate chains. The one accountability tool announced—the detailed province-by-province reporting of spending, coverage, and achievements—hasn't been maintained.

One-off funding to address workforce shortages encourages provinces/territories to take the same approach—spending on short-term initiatives rather than strategic change. By discouraging the use of federal funds to grow ECEC within schools, the CWELCC closed off the only established infrastructure able to scale up quickly. Those looking to use federal funds to expand ECEC by “educating down,” that is, by expanding access to progressively younger children through their schools, face barriers.

Uneven implementation of a new social program isn't new. The hope is that some jurisdictions will use this opportunity to do child care very well, becoming models to envy and emulate.

Getting it right requires a focus on children and their outcomes. With children at the centre, we should also see the greater economic participation of women, along with a reduction in family poverty, and racial and cultural inequities.

A robust ECEC system depends on the people who deliver it. Educators need the range of supports attributed to a professional workforce, including sound management, professional representation, career opportunities, trained colleagues, and public validation. The CWELCC should raise the bar for the workforce, not drag everyone down to legislated minimum standards.

Affordability measures must address outdated welfare mechanisms that tie child care subsidy eligibility to parental workforce attachment. This particularly penalizes the most vulnerable children who are denied enrolment or cycle in and out of ECEC programs in tandem with their parents' precarious employment.

Federal efforts are being made to rectify the historic underfunding of early childhood programs for Indigenous children and to address traditionally underserved groups, including children with special needs, minority language speakers, and children living in remote communities. Without prioritizing equity, universal child care will remain a distant goal.

The results of ECER 2023 may come as a surprise. But keep in mind that the scores are not a measure of success. Limited by the data availability across all jurisdictions, they are a crude measure of progress toward meeting minimum standards. In discussions with officials, the benchmarks will be updated for ECER 2026 to better reflect the potential of the CWELCC agreements.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION REPORT 2023

BENCHMARK	Pts	NL	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	NU	NT	YT
<b>GOVERNANCE</b>														
ECEC under common department/ministry	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Common ECEC supervisory unit	0.5	0	0	0	0.5	0.5	0	0	0.5	0	0	0	0	0
Common ECEC policy framework	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1
Common local authority for ECE administration and delivery	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>FUNDING</b>														
At least 2/3 of child care funding goes to program operations	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Managed salary and fee scale in licensed child care	1	1	1	1	1	1 <sup>f</sup>	0	1 <sup>k</sup>	0	0	0	1	1 <sup>o</sup>	1
At least 3% of overall budget devoted to ECEC	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>ACCESS</b>														
Full-day Kindergarten	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1 <sup>r</sup>	1	1
Licensed capacity for at least 50% of 2- to-4-year olds in ECEC programs	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	1
Funding conditional on including children with special needs in regulated child care	1	0	1 <sup>b</sup>	0	1 <sup>b</sup>	0	0	1	0	1 <sup>n</sup>	0	0	0	0
<b>LEARNING ENVIRONMENT</b>														
ECEC curriculum framework in regulated child care	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
ECEC curriculum framework use is mandatory in regulated child care or preschool programs	0.25	0.25	0.25 <sup>c</sup>	0.25 <sup>d</sup>	0.25 <sup>b</sup>	0.25	0.25 <sup>i</sup>	0.25 <sup>l</sup>	0	0	0.25 <sup>p</sup>	0.25	0.25	0
Alignment of ECEC curriculum with Kindergarten	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
At least 2/3 of staff in regulated child care for 2- to 4-year-olds are qualified	0.5	0.5	0.5 <sup>b</sup>	0.5	0	0	0.5 <sup>j</sup>	0.5	0	0	0.5 <sup>q</sup>	0	0	0
Kindergarten educators require ECE qualifications	0.5	0.5	0	0.5 <sup>e</sup>	0	0.5	0.5	0	0.5 <sup>m</sup>	0	0	0.5 <sup>s</sup>	0.5 <sup>s</sup>	0.5
Wages of ECEs at least 2/3 of teachers	0.5	0.5	0.5 <sup>b</sup>	0.5	0	0.5	0	0	0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0.5
ECE professional recognition required	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0	0	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0	0.25 <sup>o</sup>	0.25
ECE professional development required	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25 <sup>g</sup>	0.25	0	0	0	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25
<b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b>														
Annual progress reports	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Standards for ECEC programs include Kindergarten	1	1	0	1	1	1 <sup>h</sup>	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Population measures for preschool collected and reported <sup>a</sup>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1 <sup>o</sup>	1	n/a <sup>l</sup>	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>13.25</b>	<b>11.75</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9.25</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6.75</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>10.75</b>
	Pts	NL	PE	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	NU	NT	YT

<sup>a</sup>Due to the pandemic, this benchmark is considered reached if data is collected within the last three years, regardless of public reporting.

<sup>b</sup>In designated centres.

<sup>c</sup>In Designated Early Years Programs and publicly funded Pre-Kindergarten.

<sup>d</sup>In Pre-primary and child care centres that receive public funding.

<sup>e</sup>In Pre-primary only.

<sup>f</sup>In CPEs only.

<sup>g</sup>Home child care providers only.

<sup>h</sup>In 4-year-old Kindergarten only.

<sup>i</sup>In EarlyON centres only.

<sup>j</sup>In groups of 24.

<sup>k</sup>Wage guidelines.

<sup>l</sup>Required in funded programs.

<sup>m</sup>In Pre-Kindergarten.

<sup>n</sup>In Early Childhood Services.

<sup>o</sup>In development.

<sup>p</sup>In StrongStart BC Programs.

<sup>q</sup>In groups of children 0 to 36 months.

<sup>r</sup>In pilot.

<sup>s</sup>Bachelor of Education or 2-year ECE Diploma.

<sup>t</sup>Not available due to data suppression.