

3. RECONCILIATION OF WORK AND FAMILY LIFE

3.4. Service Provision

Do you have information on existing informal child care systems? Are there any new plans for informal child care systems?

Austria

Regarding informal child care, one has to differentiate between regular child care on the one hand (such as working hours of parents) and more sporadic arrangements (such as in the evenings when parents go out). Regarding regular child care, one has to determine whether the child care is for the whole day or is at the periphery of other times, i.e. is a supplementary measure. This can be paid or unpaid care service.

Informal child care arrangements have no external quality and regulatory guidelines. Because in these cases the care providers are often family members or come out of the proximity, there are hardly any coordination systems. Grandparents or neighbours often render child care services during the day. Even if such services are regularly used, they are mostly of short periods and thus mainly result in part-time employment, rather than full-time employment of women. Parents generally see child care of small children by grandparents or other family members as positive.

There is a wider choice of child care services by for example baby sitters. But even in this area there is no uniform quality control.

Child care is by-and-large unregulated; it at most has very general legal constraints or is subject to rules by the care providers. Therefore, these care provisions generally fall into the informal sector.

Quantitatively, informal child care services generally play a subordinate role.

Flexible forms of group care services, or groups organised by parents that do not fall under other provisions or do not want to adhere to formal requirements, such as regarding the furnishings, also belong to the informal sector. Examples are au pairs, grandmother and grandfather services.

Day mothers and day fathers are not informal services because they require certification. They have exact requirements regarding the size of groups, for instance.

In the year 2005 there were in Austria 12692 children in total who stayed at a day mother or day father. In Lower Austria 5335, in Styria 2252 and in Vienna 1362 children were in care of day parents.

Azerbaijan

N/A

Belgium

Communauté française.

Suivant la recherche du Panel Démographique de Liège, en 2002 en Communauté française, 31 % des enfants de 0 à 2 ans de l'échantillon étaient gardés par leurs parents, 22 % par la famille (grands-parents, famille, amis...) et 46% étaient dans une structure

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d'accueil payante. Parmi les enfants non-gardés par les parents, l'accueil par la famille est estimé à 32%.

Communauté germanophone.

En 2007 : 29% des enfants sont gardés par les grands parents et 3,5% par la famille élargie.

Communauté flamande.

In Flanders (the Flemish Community) child care of young children is done largely by the network of informal care. In 2004, 31% of the children from the age of 0 until 3 years old that use child care frequently, were taken care of by grandparents and 2% by other family members. Another 2,8% of the children in this age group was taken care of by other persons in an informal way in the informal network, such as nannies, babysitters, ... In the same year, more than 42% of the children from the age of 3 until 12 years old that use out of school care are taken care of in the network of informal care: 35,6% by grandparents, 4,6% by other family members and 2,2% by neighbours of acquaintances.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Not mentioned

Bulgaria

Not mentioned

Croatia

Not mentioned

Cyprus

19% of children 0-3 years of age attend some form of formal day-care.

There are no official statistics on existing informal child care systems. However, the family in Cyprus is characterised by strong family ties and it is known empirically that many grandmothers take care of children, usually babies. Working couples also entrust the care of young children to immigrant women.

There are no plans at present for informal child care systems.

Czech Republic

One of the widespread and often used form of looking after the children is the traditional assistance of grandparents. The possibilities of such care are often limited, whether by physical condition of the grandparent or place of their residence. Other forms of looking after the children are not in general much used among the Czech mothers. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is in the process of preparation of introduction of special service based on mutual parental assistance outside of the framework of the Trade Licensing Act and mini-kindergarten for maximum of 4 children at the age of 6 months to pre-school age. Mutual parental

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assistance is currently frequently provided however without any legal framework in the regime of the so-called unauthorized business activities. This mutual parental help would include care for the maximum 4 5 children in a family (household) environment up to the age of six. Parents who would provide such services would be registered in the providers' register, and at the same time they would be given preferential tax treatment in a special form. Mini-kindergarten would be also run outside of the framework of the Trade Licensing Act, mostly operated by employers, municipalities and NGOs. If operated by employers, tax deductions could be asserted. This possibility would partially solve the insufficient capacity of the crèches and kindergartens; however it would not constitute its replacement.

Denmark

No information

Estonia

As municipal child care institutions (mainly crèches) are booked and private child care is too expensive, mothers prefer to stay at home with the child. Informal child care systems are used mostly by lone parents and in cases when the family needs the second earner's income. Mostly grandparents are involved (although this generation is also active on labour market in Estonia), but also neighbours and friends are used. There are no immigrants active in this field.

There are no new plans regarding informal child care systems.

Finland

The municipal day care facilities cover very well the need of day care services, so the informal care system is modest and completes the municipal day care facilities.

France

In 2002, 3.24 million children aged under 7 were catered for at least once through informal assistance from their family or circle of acquaintance, whether regularly or occasionally. Informal help is sought during the week for about 1/3 of children and chiefly concerns those attending school. It is generally provided by the family, in over 60% of cases by grandparents. Other family members seldom take a hand in looking after young children. Conversely, friends or neighbours are in greater demand during the week and also in unforeseen circumstances, especially when they themselves have children in care or in school at the same location. (DREES, June 2004)

Germany

Not mentioned

Greece

Not mentioned

Hungary

Not mentioned

Iceland

(8) Research shows that the Icelandic parents used various solutions in order to bridge the gap between the relatively short paid parental leave and public day-care such as irregular working hours, private solutions including care from grandparents.

Ireland

Under the Child Care Act 1991 any person minding 3 or less pre-school children from different families, or is a relative of a child or children is not required to notify the Health Service Executive that they are carrying out a childminding service. Such individuals are therefore outside of the scope of the Child Care (Pre-School Services) Regulations 2006.

However, a Voluntary Notification System is in place for such Childminders. They can notify their service to their local County Childcare Committee and can avail of benefits such as training, networks, apply for a Childminding Development Grant and are also eligible to claim a tax exemption for their income from childminding. The tax exemption which was introduced in 2006 at €10,000 p.a. and increased in 2007 to €15,000 p.a.

Funding is available for Parent and Toddler Groups under the National Childcare Investment Programme (NCIP). In 2007 414 groups availed of this funding.

A Pilot Parent Survey was undertaken in 2005 by the Office of the Minister for Children. In this sample 37% of pre school children in a childcare setting were minded on an informal basis and 71% of school age children in a childcare setting were minded on an informal basis.

Italy

According to a recent survey of the National Statistical Institute, around 50% of children aged 0-3 whose mothers are employed are entrusted to the care of their grandparents. In 12% of cases, the child is looked after by a baby-sitter, care giver or relative at home. More than 90% of children aged 3-6 go to a public pre-school.



Latvia

None

Lithuania

Two projects supported by EU initiative EQUAL Šiauliai University and Women's Issues information centre) have developed and tested model of flexible child care services. One for cities, one for rural areas.

Luxembourg

On sait selon certaines enquêtes et études (CEPS, Audrey Boussein, La garde au quotidien des jeunes enfants à Esch-sur-Alzette, Population & Emploi, n° 31 février 2008) que pour les enfants non scolarisés 25% ou 32 heures/semaines sont pris en charge par les grands-parents, 31 heures ou 9% par un autre membre de la famille et 30 heures ou 8% par des amis, voisins, 29 heures (17%) par une gardienne. Les autres pourcents se répartissent sur les structures d'accueil ou autres modes de garde.

Les grands-parents restent également les champions pour la garde de l'enfant scolarisés avec 26% ou 17 heures par semaines contre 10% pour les autres membres de la famille (13h) ou 13 % pour les amis ou voisins (14 heures) et les gardiennes 13% ou 24 heures. Par ailleurs, les premiers assistants parentaux ont été agréés en 2003 par le Ministère de la Famille. Fin 2003, ils étaient au nombre de 18 et, en 2008, ils étaient 298. L'entrée en vigueur de la loi de novembre 2007 a incité un grand nombre d'assistants parentaux à introduire une demande d'agrément auprès du Ministère de la Famille et de l'Intégration. Actuellement les assistants parentaux accueillent 1296 enfants.

Voir : loi du 30 novembre 2007 réglementant l'activité d'assistance parentale et règlement grand-ducal relatif à la formation aux fonctions d'assistance parentale qui est entré en vigueur le 6 octobre 2008.

Malta

Many parents send their children to their grandparents while they are at work, but there is no actual system.

Moldova

Not mentioned

Monaco

Indisponibles – Non

Netherlands

Data from 2002 reveal that over half of children aged 0-12 receive some type of non-parental care, whether formal or informal. Childminding services are the most popular. Childminders can either look after children in the children's home or in their own homes. Combining the two is common. The policy that formalised informal childcare arrangements (grandparents, childminders) has resulted in substantial growth of this type of care. Many parents have taken advantage of the scope for registering grandparents or a childminder with a host family agency (thus formalising previously informal arrangements), because this resulted in a government contribution in the costs. This has caused a deficit in the national budget for childcare in 2008. The government may decide to reverse this measure, but a decision had not yet been made in August 2008. There are other reasons for the deficit, too: the large increase in the uptake of out-of-school provision, and possibly also an increase in the number of low-income families who use day-care services.

Norway

Regulated day care institutions are preferred by parents. Informal care has been reduced with the growing regulated day care sector. There are some tax reductions for persons taking care of children (for pay) in their home.

Poland

On the basis of the results of ad-hoc module LFS "Reconciliation of work and family life" in 2005: 16.4% of employed persons with children up to 14 years old left their children in formal child care services, 34.2% left children with their spouse or cohabiting partner; 17.8% left children with folks living jointly, 14.2% with folks living apart, 0.5% neighbours, friends.

Portugal

Data from a recent national survey on families with children showed that day care solutions, including informal child care systems, have been changing strongly over the last few decades (Wall, 2005). As mentioned above, child care arrangements for babies aged 1-2 in the 1970s were very different from those existing in the 1990s. Care of 2 babies in the 70s was predominantly informal mother-at-home based: nearly half of all mothers (44%) stayed at home with the baby. Leaving the baby with close kin (34%, mostly grandmothers) was the next most important child care solution whereas informal paid childminders (11%) and crèches (7%) were clearly minority solutions. In the 1990s, in contrast, care solutions for this age group became more diverse: only one in four mothers stayed at home and formal day care increased from 7% to 18%; however, it is interesting to find that the other informal care solutions have maintained their relative importance: 36% of babies were cared for by close kin (mostly grandmothers) and 12% by unlicensed paid childminders.

Immigrant women are sometimes employed as childminders but their participation in this labour market "care" niche has been growing predominantly in the area of home-based care for highly dependent elderly persons. In Portuguese society, it is Brazilian immigrant women who are often employed in this sector (Wall, Nunes, Matias, 2006).

Romania

In present exist in Romania an informal care system that is based, in principal, on family members (aunts, grandparents, big brothers so on). The young families, especially in big cities, hire different persons such as "nannies" or "baby sitter" in order to take care of



the child during the period when the parents are working.

The draft Ordinance concerning the education and care services during the day regulates a performing and qualitative system of services for children up to 10 years (at the age when they graduate the primary school).

Russian Federation

There are informal child care systems. First of all this is the widespread grandparents' care for children in rural areas or in small cities. Also there exist a number of cases establishing kindergarten and supervision groups in religious parishes. However there is no statistical estimation of these care systems. Also there elaborates no program on informal child care systems.

Serbia

Not mentioned

Slovakia

Not mentioned

Slovenia

On the basis of the research "Parents between employment and family«" - carry out by Prof. PhD. Aleksandra Kanjuo Mrčela and Prof., PhD in Psychology Nevenka Černigoj Sadar (year 2004) we can conclude, that almost half of the (46%) interviewed parents have enrolled their children in public kindergarten. The second most common form of regular day care is grandparent's day care (17%) and day care by interviewed persons (16%). Following the research for children from 1 to 3 the following regular day care services are most common: public kindergartens (46%), private kindergartens (0%), care by the interviewed person herself/himself (16%), care by the other parent or partner (3%), both parents (3%), grandparents (both) (17%), other relative (0) and child minder (1%).

Spain

There is no official information on informal care systems. The plans of the Ministry of Education are oriented to promote enlarging the net of children public resources.
Some Communities support informal care system in small projects.



Switzerland

Non

Turkey

Not mentioned

Ukraine

Not mentioned

United Kingdom

In a survey carried out in 2004/05, a greater proportion of families had used informal care within the last year (67 per cent) than formal care (57 per cent). Of all providers, families were most likely to have used grandparents. Half of families (49 per cent) had done so at some point in the last year, and 26 per cent during the past week. As well as grandparents, around a fifth of families had used other relatives (19 per cent) and friends or neighbours (23 per cent) in the past year. Parents often use informal carers to fill the gaps around formal childcare. They may also choose grandparents' care as they trust them more than paid carers to look after and care for their children.

Bryson, C., Kazimirski, A. and Southwood, H. (2006) *Childcare and Early Years Provision: A Study of Parents' Use, Views and Experience*. Department for Education and Skills.