

30/2018 - 20 February 2018

Access to social services

Almost 4 in 10 children in the EU receive formal childcare services

7 out of 10 EU households with one or more children are satisfied with the access to these services

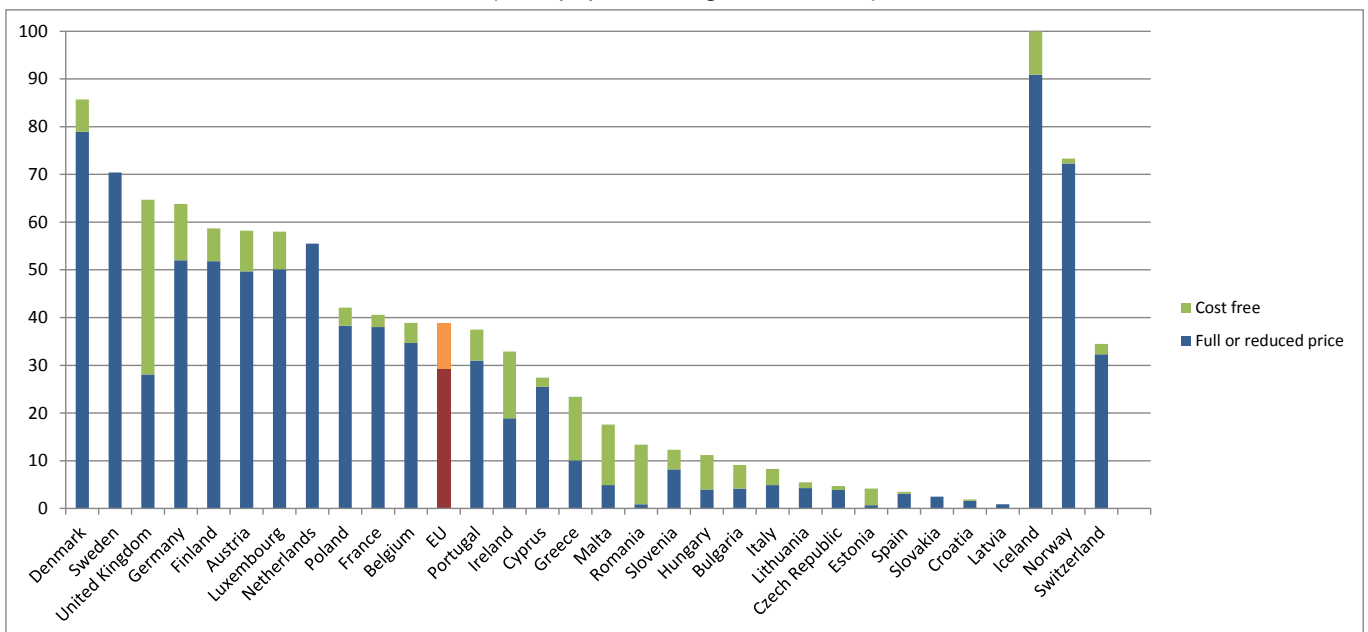
In 2016, 39% of children aged 12 or below in the **European Union** (EU) received formal childcare services, with 29% paying full or reduced price and 10% using cost free services. The uptake of paid services is similar in urban, suburban and rural areas (about one third of children received paid full or reduced price childcare services in all areas). There is a slight difference with regards to usage of cost free services: 11% for cities, 10% for towns and suburbs and only 6% for rural areas.

68% of EU households with at least one child aged 12 or less are satisfied with the access to formal childcare services. As the main reasons for not making (more) use of these services, EU households report finances (16%), no places available (4%), not suitable opening hours (3%), distance (2%) and unsatisfactory quality of services (1%).

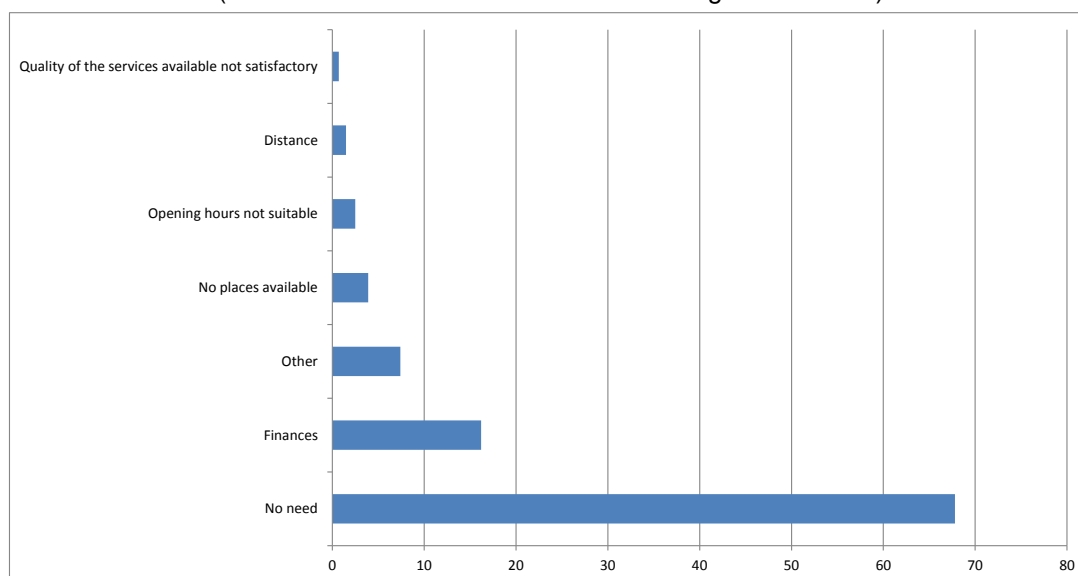
Childcare and support to children is one of the 20 key principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

These selected findings, extracted from a special data collection of 2016 on access to social services, such as affordability of formal education, participation in training related to professional activities or hobbies, or use of health care services, are issued by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**.

Children receiving formal childcare services, 2016
(% of population aged 12 or less)



Main reasons for not making (more) use of formal childcare services, EU, 2016 (% of households with at least one child aged 12 or less)



Almost 9 out of 10 children receive formal childcare in Denmark

In eight EU Member States, more than half of the children aged 12 or below received formal childcare services. The highest share was registered in **Denmark**, where almost 86% of the children received such services. High shares for formal childcare services were also observed in **Sweden** (70%), the **United Kingdom** (65%), **Germany** (64%), followed by **Finland** (59%), **Austria** and **Luxembourg** (both 58%) and the **Netherlands** (56%). At the opposite end of the scale, the share was below 10% in nine countries: **Latvia** (1%), **Croatia** (2%), **Slovakia** (3%), **Estonia** and **Spain** (both 4%), the **Czech Republic** (5%), **Lithuania** (6%), **Italy** (8%) and **Bulgaria** (9%).

Only 1 in 10 children use paid formal childcare in Estonia, Latvia and Romania

Eleven countries are above the **EU** average (29%) for paid formal childcare, and five of them have more than half of the child population receiving such services: **Denmark** (79%), **Sweden** (70%), the **Netherlands** (56%), **Germany** and **Finland** (both 52%). The lowest shares are observed in **Estonia**, **Latvia** and **Romania** (all 1%).

In half of the Member States, children in urban areas receive more paid formal childcare than in suburban and rural areas. In urban areas the highest share is noted for **Sweden** (almost 76%) and **Denmark** (almost 74%) and the lowest for **Latvia** and **Estonia** (both close to 1%). Children in rural areas receive more paid formal childcare than in urban and suburban areas in **Denmark**, **Germany**, **France**, the **United Kingdom**, the **Czech Republic** and **Slovakia**. Children in towns and suburban areas receive more paid formal childcare than in urban and rural areas in **Greece**, **Italy**, **Malta**, **Hungary**, **Spain**, **Latvia** and **Estonia**.

In the majority of Member States, the uptake for paid services is bigger than cost free, apart from the **United Kingdom** (28% paid, 37% cost free), **Greece** (10% paid, 13% cost free), **Malta** (5% paid, 13% cost free), **Romania** (1% paid, 13% cost free) and **Estonia** (1% paid, 4% cost free).

Highest satisfaction with the access to formal childcare services in Denmark, lowest in Spain

94% of households with at least one child aged 12 or less in **Denmark** are satisfied with the access to formal childcare services, followed by **Croatia** (92%), **Bulgaria** and **Sweden** (both 89%). Financial concerns as the main reason for not making (more) use of formal childcare services were mentioned by households in **Spain** (52%), ahead of **Cyprus** (40%) and **Ireland** (38%). Only 1% of households in **Sweden** and **Denmark** report finances as the reason. Lack of places was most frequently reported in **Latvia** (16%), far ahead of **France** and **Finland** (both 9%). This reason was least frequently reported in **Denmark**, the **Netherlands** and **Cyprus** (all below 1%). The highest share of households reporting not suitable opening hours was registered in **France** (5%), followed by **Finland**, **Italy**, **Spain** and **Greece** (all 4%). Quality of services was an issue in **Latvia** (3%), **Cyprus**, **Italy** and **Greece** (all 2%).

Children receiving formal childcare services, 2016
(% of population aged 12 or less)

	Formal childcare (paid and cost free)	Full or reduced price				Cost free			
		Total	Cities	Towns and suburbs	Rural areas	Total	Cities	Towns and suburbs	Rural areas
EU	38.8	29.3	29.2	29.9	28.7	9.5	11.1	9.9	6.4
Belgium	38.9	34.7	40.5	32.8	29.5	4.2	2.7	4.7	5.8
Bulgaria	9.1	4.2	5.5	4.2	2.5	4.9	4.7	7.0	3.9
Czech Republic	4.7	3.9	4.2	3.0	4.4	0.8	0.2	0.9	1.4
Denmark	85.7	78.9	73.5	80.2	84.7	6.8	7.3	6.4	6.5
Germany	63.8	52.0	47.0	52.1	58.9	11.8	12.0	11.6	12.0
Estonia	4.2	0.7	0.9	1.6	0.2	3.5	2.9	3.5	4.2
Ireland	32.9	18.9	22.6	13.7	18.4	14.0	15.1	15.5	10.2
Greece	23.4	10.1	10.2	12.1	7.4	13.3	12.8	14.6	12.7
Spain	3.5	3.1	3.0	5.0	1.6	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.1
France	40.6	38.0	36.1	33.3	43.1	2.6	3.5	1.8	1.8
Croatia	1.9	1.6	5.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	1.0	0.0	0.0
Italy	8.3	4.9	5.3	5.6	3.3	3.4	4.2	3.5	2.2
Cyprus	27.4	25.5	28.3	25.9	20.5	1.9	2.9	1.1	1.0
Latvia	0.9	0.9	0.8	1.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lithuania	5.5	4.3	7.3	:	1.7	1.2	0.9	:	1.4
Luxembourg	58.0	50.1	56.5	54.0	44.3	7.9	7.1	9.0	7.3
Hungary	11.2	4.0	3.7	5.3	3.4	7.2	10.2	7.7	4.8
Malta	17.6	4.9	4.8	5.5	:	12.7	13.3	5.9	:
Netherlands	55.5	55.5	56.9	55.5	48.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Austria	58.2	49.7	59.5	47.4	44.2	8.5	6.5	13.3	6.4
Poland	42.1	38.3	47.5	44.1	27.9	3.8	3.1	3.9	4.2
Portugal	37.5	31.0	33.3	28.9	29.6	6.5	6.4	6.8	6.5
Romania	13.4	0.9	1.6	1.6	0.0	12.5	10.5	21.4	8.8
Slovenia	12.3	8.2	9.9	7.2	8.1	4.1	1.8	4.3	5.0
Slovakia	2.5	2.5	2.5	1.3	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Finland	58.7	51.8	54.8	49.4	50.7	6.9	8.4	5.3	6.9
Sweden	70.4	70.4	75.6	68.0	66.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
United Kingdom	64.7	28.1	27.1	28.5	32.7	36.6	34.7	39.9	39.8
Iceland	100.0	90.9	91.5	87.1	93.9	9.1	8.5	12.9	6.1
Norway	73.3	72.3	68.0	76.7	74.0	1.0	0.9	1.3	0.9
Switzerland	34.5	32.3	36.4	30.4	31.2	2.2	4.3	1.9	0.2
Serbia	18.0	14.9	28.6	10.0	4.5	3.1	3.6	6.1	0.2

: Data not available

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Main reasons for not making (more) use of formal childcare services, 2016

(% of households with at least one child aged 12 or less)

	No need (satisfied)	Finances	Distance	No places available	Opening hours	Services quality	Other
EU	67.8	16.2	1.5	3.9	2.5	0.7	7.4
Belgium	81.6	7.9	0.0	2.1	1.1	0.4	6.9
Bulgaria	89.3	6.3	0.3	2.3	0.3	0.3	1.2
Czech Republic	80.7	6.3	0.5	4.6	1.1	0.4	6.5
Denmark	93.9	0.7	0.4	0.4	1.6	0.2	2.9
Germany	85.8	4.9	0.2	3.2	2.5	1.1	2.3
Estonia	47.9	20.4	2.1	7.4	0.3	1.2	20.7
Ireland	53.0	37.6	2.1	1.4	0.2	0.1	5.6
Greece	61.3	23.7	2.4	6.8	3.7	1.9	0.1
Spain	12.3	51.8	1.3	2.1	3.9	0.2	28.4
France	61.4	13.6	2.0	8.7	5.3	0.6	8.5
Croatia	92.3	4.4	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	1.6
Italy	48.4	22.8	4.4	3.4	4.2	1.9	14.9
Cyprus	53.1	39.9	2.4	0.7	0.8	2.0	1.1
Latvia	39.4	24.8	5.4	15.6	2.9	2.9	9.0
Lithuania	45.1	29.6	9.0	2.3	0.9	0.4	12.6
Luxembourg	77.7	9.1	1.7	4.7	1.7	0.9	4.3
Hungary	68.3	18.7	1.4	1.7	2.0	0.7	7.1
Malta	45.9	10.6	0.4	3.5	2.2	0.7	36.6
Netherlands	69.4	18.5	0.0	0.7	1.6	0.5	9.2
Austria	75.6	11.7	0.5	3.9	1.1	1.1	6.1
Poland	73.8	4.6	4.2	4.7	2.5	1.1	9.1
Portugal	75.8	14.2	1.8	2.5	1.9	0.4	3.4
Romania	51.7	30.9	6.7	2.6	0.3	0.0	7.8
Slovenia	77.3	7.7	1.8	4.7	1.3	0.3	6.8
Slovakia	41.1	29.5	6.2	3.7	3.4	1.3	14.8
Finland	69.4	6.6	2.1	8.6	4.3	0.2	8.8
Sweden	89.1	0.7	0.3	1.2	1.8	0.1	6.8
United Kingdom	63.5	25.9	0.6	2.6	1.3	0.4	5.7
Iceland	87.6	4.2	0.2	3.5	1.3	0.3	2.8
Norway	84.3	3.3	1.0	1.5	0.2	0.1	9.6
Switzerland	71.1	10.3	2.4	4.5	1.4	1.4	8.9
Serbia	24.9	38.9	4.6	13.6	0.2	0.5	17.3

The source dataset can be found [here](#).

Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU) includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Methods and definitions

This News Release is based on the EU-Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) ad hoc module 2016. The EU-SILC survey is the EU reference source for comparative statistics on income distribution, poverty and living conditions. More information can be found [here](#).

The reference population is all private households and their current members residing in the territory of a given Member State at the time of data collection. Persons living in collective households and in institutions are generally excluded from the target population as well as small and remote parts of the national territory amounting to no more than 2% of the national population.

Formal childcare is defined as all kinds of care organised/controlled by a structure (public, private). This means that the parents and the carer are not the only persons involved in the care, that there are no direct arrangements between the carer and the parents in the sense that there is an organised structure between them (which is often the carer's employers). For example, a centred-base day care, organised family day care, a crèche. The place of the care can be a centre or the carer's home (e.g. organised family care). This should also include the qualified childminders organised and controlled by a structure, even if they are directly paid by the parents. Centre based services outside (pre-) school hours are also a form of formal childcare.

For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) on income, social inclusion and living conditions.

Eurostat [database](#) on income and living conditions.

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