

## PF15: Out-of-school-hours care services

### *Definitions and methodology*

Out-of-School-Hours (OSH) care services provide a range of activities to children in pre-schools and primary schools before, between (lunch) and after school hours, as well as during school holidays. These services are frequently, but by no means always, based in school facilities or youth centres, and provide recreational activities and safe care to children, while at the same time helping parents to find a better match between school and working hours.

### *Key findings*

The increasing number of mothers in paid work (LMF2) has led to a growing demand of services providing care and/or leisure services outside regular school hours. In order to address the needs of working parents and their children OSH-type programmes are being rolled out across OECD, but in most countries such schemes are still in the early stages of development and coverage is by no means comprehensive.

Table PF15.1 presents key characteristics of OSH-care services. In some countries, as Estonia and Hungary coverage is extensive with at least 40% of children in primary school using an OSH-care service, and in Denmark and Sweden, coverage is even higher at above 55%. By contrast, while in Austria and Germany coverage is below 10% of children in primary school.

In general, OSH-care coverage varies significantly with the age of children; enrolment rates drop sharply as children get into their teens (Chart PF15.1). For the youngest age group, i.e. 3 to 5 years old, few countries provided information either because it was not available or because such services are not provided to children in pre-school. For the countries for which data is available, coverage is similar (Sweden) or higher (Estonia, Hungary and Portugal) to that of children age 6-8 (some of these children may also be enrolled in day care centres).

The proportion of children attending OSH-care services is highest among children age 6 to 8. In Denmark and Sweden more than 80% of children of this age-group use an OSH-care service; in Estonia and Hungary coverage is above 50%, but in other countries coverage remains low.

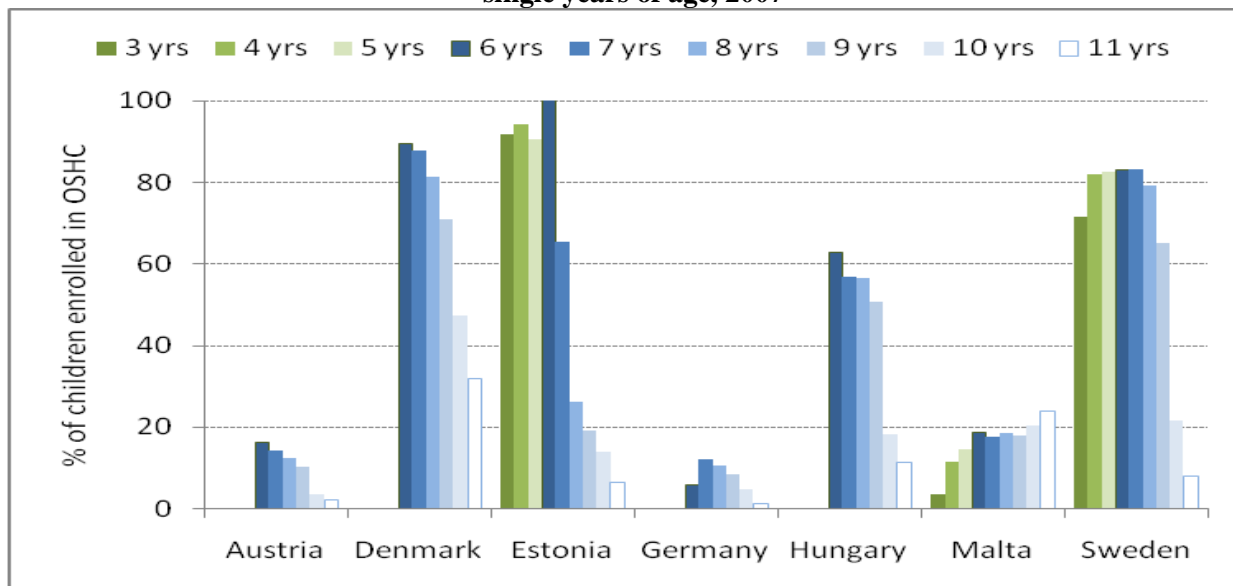
Enrolment rates decline for children of age 9 to 11 (Chart PF15.1). This may be related to insurance issues, children becoming independent and preferring to spend their time (with their peers) outside an organised venue. For example, in Sweden the proportion of children age 9 to 11 in OSH-care services was 28% compared with 80% of children age 6 to 8 and 3 to 5. In countries with low coverage in general, the proportion of children of this age-group in OSH-care programmes can be as low as 5%.

In around half of the countries OSH-care providers offer a combination of services: before school and after school hours as well as during holidays. This broad offer is available in Austria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, New Zealand, Portugal, the Slovak Republic and Sweden. In the other countries out-of-school activities are mainly available during school-term.

*Other relevant indicators:* LMF2: Maternal employment; PF11: Enrolment in day-care and pre-schools; PF12: Childcare support, and PF14: Quality of childcare and early education services.

There are considerable differences in child-to-staff ratios across countries. In many countries regulations vary with the age of children and whether or not services are provided on-site (of the school). In general, child-to-staff ratios increase with children's age: the number of children per staffer varies from 5 to 1 in Sweden for children age 3 to 5 to 25 to 1 in Greece irrespective of children's age (in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany and Portugal there are no official guidelines on the group size of the group size). As child-to-staff ratios are high compared to childcare for young children (PF14), OSH-care services are often relatively inexpensive.

**Chart PF15.1: Percentage of children aged 3 to 11 enrolled in Out-of-School-Hours care services by single years of age, 2007<sup>1</sup>**



Note: 1 Data refer to 2006 for Germany and to 2005 for Austria, Denmark and Sweden.  
 Source: National Authorities.

Total public spending on OSH-care varies widely across countries. The available data (not included here) are difficult to compare as it is unclear as to what is included in the amounts. For example, in Sweden spending is about 4 billion Euros and this must include the costs of supervisors and facilities, but in other countries (including Denmark) spending amounts to less than one million Euro, and the Danish system is similarly comprehensive, pointing to data comparability issues.

#### *Comparability and data issues*

Out-of-school-hours data has been taken from a questionnaire sent to national authorities, except for Australia where data was taken from the Australian Social Trends 4102.0, 2007. The data here concerns programmes that were operating in 2007, except for Austria (2005), Denmark (2005), Germany (2006), New Zealand (2005), Portugal (2006) and Sweden (2005).

For many countries data is not available, which in part is related to the fact that OSH-programmes are quite new. Countries that were able to provide data, often reported data on the number of children enrolled and the types of services offered, but were less likely to report on public spending on the services at hand. Information on coverage of OSH-care services by one-year age-groups is also not available for many countries. Coverage rates should be interpreted with care, as children can be counted twice since they may attend more than one service-provider. For example, the Czech Republic has a wide variety of OSH services for children 6 to 11, but the underlying data do not allow for separate identification of services

used, which lead to double counting when all data would simply be added up. Data also hold no information on the intensity with which services are being used in terms of hours and/or days per week.

**Table PF15.1 Key characteristics of Out-of-School-Hours Care**

Country	Year	Ages	Enrolment rate	Types of OSHC services offered	Child-to-staff ratio (official guideline)	Public spending in '000 Euros	Public spending as % of GDP
Australia	2005	3-4	n.a.	Combination	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		5-8	15				
		9-12	17				
Austria	2007	3-5	n.a.	Combination	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		6-8	13.7				
		9-11	5.3				
Belgium	2007	0-6	22.1	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Cyprus <sup>1,2</sup>	2007	3-12	2.4	After school	25:1	1,165	1,165
Czech Rep	2007	3-5	11.0	Combination	No official guideline	156	156
		6-11	-				
Denmark	2005	3-5	-	Combination	No official guideline	870	870
		6-8	86.2				
		9-11	49.8				
Estonia	2007	3-5	92.1	After school	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		6-8	64.0				
		9-11	13.1				
Finland	2007	3-6	n.a.	-	-	-	-
		7-9	24.7	Before and after school	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		10-11	n.a.	-	-	-	-
France	2007	3-6	20.8	Before and after school	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		7-11	n.a.	-	-	-	-
Germany	2006	3-4	n.a.	Before and after school	Each Bundesland has own guidelines	n.a.	n.a.
		5-8	7.4				
		9-11	4.9				
Greece	2007	4-5	40.8	Before and after school	25:1	n.a.	n.a.
		6-11	22.9				
Hungary	2007	3-5	100.0	Combination	11:1	727	727
		6-8	58.8				
		9-11	26.3				
Japan	2007	3-5	n.a.	After school and during holidays	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		6-11	10.5				
Malta	2007	3-5	5.1	Combination	No official guideline	452	452
		6-8	8.9				
		9-11	10.0				
Mexico	2007	6-14	2.3	Combination	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Netherlands	2007	4-12	43.7	Before and after school	10:1	2,064	2,064
New Zealand	2005	3-4	not offered	Combination	10:1 on-site, 8:1 off-site	n.a.	n.a.
		5-8	n.a.				
		9-11	n.a.				
Poland	2006	3-5	40.3	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		6-11	3.8				
Portugal	2006	3-5	74.2	Combination	Each service has own guidelines	n.a.	n.a.
		6-11	15.1				
Romania	2007	3-11	n.a.	Combination	3:1 for 4-6 yr olds, 4:1 for 7-11 yr olds	n.a.	n.a.
Slovak Rep	2007	3-5	n.a.	Combination	30:1	n.a.	n.a.
		6-14	21.3				
Spain	2006	3-5	7.4	Mainly before school	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
		6-11	3.7				
Sweden	2005	3-5	80.7	Combination	5:1	4,020	4,020
		6-8	80.2				
		9-11	28.2				

Notes: " Combination includes activities before and after school hours, and during holidays; n.a. is not available.

1) Footnote by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to « Cyprus » relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".

2) Footnote by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Commission: The Republic of Cyprus is recognized by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.  
*Source:* National Authorities and Australian Social Trends 2007.

*Further reading: OECD Babies and Bosses (various issues)*