

RESULTS FROM TALIS STARTING STRONG 2018

The OECD Starting Strong Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS Starting Strong) is an international large-scale survey of early childhood education and care (ECEC) staff and leaders conducted in nine OECD countries. This note presents the findings from the first volume of results on TALIS Starting Strong 2018, *Providing Quality Early Childhood Education and Care*.

Germany

Key findings

In Germany, larger shares of ECEC staff report using practices that facilitate children's prosocial behaviour and oral language development rather than facilitate children's literacy and numeracy development.

Compared to other participating countries, Germany stands out as having the largest share of staff specifically trained to work with children (97% at pre-primary level and 95% in centres for children under age 3), but the country ranges in the middle regarding the share of ECEC staff with a level of education above secondary.

More than 40% of ECEC centres include 11% or more children whose first language differs from the language(s) spoken in their centre, which is high compared to most other countries. Working with dual/second language learners is a top priority for professional development needs.

Although the vast majority of ECEC staff report being satisfied with their jobs, Germany is among the participating countries with a comparatively lower percentage of pre-primary staff that feel valued in society (36%) and are satisfied with their salary (26%). It is the country where the highest share of ECEC staff report having extra duties due to absent staff as a source of stress.

Leaders in Germany have a high level of responsibility for budget and human resources decisions at the centre-level, but they also often identify too much administrative work as a principal source of stress (79% of pre-primary leaders and 83% in centres for children under age 3). Less than half of leaders indicate receiving inspections on process quality at least once a year.

Highlights and policy implications for Germany

Promote practices that foster children's learning, development and well-being

TALIS Starting Strong data show that staff with more education and training specifically related to working with children report using more practices that can facilitate children's learning and development in a large range of areas. Compared to other participating countries, Germany stands out as having the largest share of pre-primary staff who have been trained specifically to work with children (97%) and is also among the countries with the highest share of staff having received practical training (78%).

Germany ranges in the middle among participating countries regarding the percentage of pre-primary staff with a level of education above secondary level (77%) and is among the countries with a comparatively low share of staff participating in professional development activities (82%) and of leaders with an education equivalent to at least a bachelor's degree (79%). Results are similar in centres for children under age 3.

As in most participating countries, a larger share of staff in Germany report using practices facilitating children's prosocial behaviour and oral language development rather than practices facilitating literacy and numeracy

development. This gap tends to be higher among staff working in centres for children under age 3 as compared to those in pre-primary education. When ranking the importance of skills to prepare children for their life in the future, only about half of pre-primary staff in Germany attribute high importance to children's math skills, but as compared to most other countries staff in Germany give high importance to oral language skills.

In terms of the average group size of children staff are working with, Germany ranks in the middle of participating countries. However, the majority of staff (61% at pre-primary level, 52% in centres for children under age 3) indicate that having too many children in the group is a significant source of stress. Pre-primary staff in Germany who feel more stress related to group size report using more group management strategies (e.g. calming children) compared to staff in Germany who feel less stress from the size of their groups.

Practices that involve engaging parents or guardians (e.g. providing workshops on child-rearing/development or informing parents about daily activities) are relatively common across countries, including Germany, where this is reported by more than half of staff. Germany stands out in having the highest share of ECEC staff that report parents can get in touch easily with staff (98%). Germany also has a high share of pre-primary leaders reporting that their centre communicates with primary school teachers (92%).

Attract and retain a high-quality workforce

Germany is among the participating countries with a comparatively lower percentage of pre-primary staff reporting to be satisfied with their jobs (93%), feel valued in society (36%) and satisfied with their salary (26%). The same findings are relevant for staff in centres for children under age 3 and leaders at both levels of ECEC. Germany has the highest share of staff who report having extra duties due to absent staff as a source of stress. In line with that, staff indicate improved salaries, together with reducing group size, as a top spending priority.

Professional development can foster staff motivation and facilitate career progression. In Germany, compared to other countries, staff are less likely to agree with the barriers to professional development mentioned in the Survey. For instance, despite other indications of staff shortages, ECEC staff are less likely than in any other participating country to report that not having enough staff to compensate for their absence is a barrier to participating in professional development (38%).

Give a strong start to all children

Among participating countries, Germany stands out in having the highest share of centres with 11% or more children whose first language is different from the language(s) used in the centre. There are also many centres with 11% or more of children from socio-economically disadvantaged homes. In line with that, a comparatively large percentage of ECEC staff in Germany report having received formal training to work with children from diverse backgrounds (64% in pre-primary education and 62% in centre for children under age 3) or with dual/second language learners (45% in pre-primary education and 43% in centre for children under age 3).

However, Germany is one of the countries with the smallest share of staff reporting the use of practices that support diversity in their centres, for example, using books and toys showing people from different ethnic and cultural groups. Working with dual/second language learners is also the second most frequently cited area of a high level of professional development need.

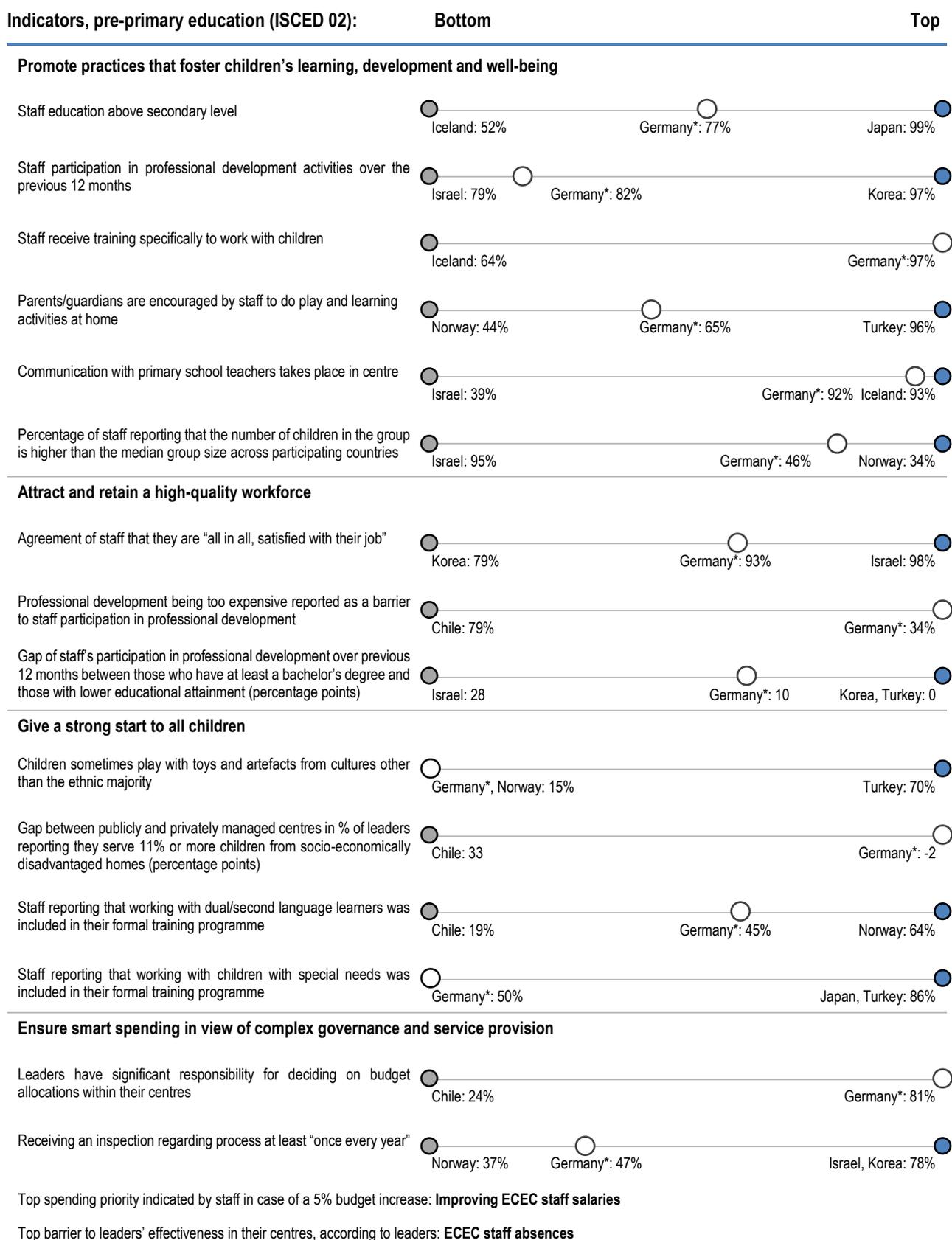
A moderate share of centres include 11% or more of children with special needs. However, in Germany and almost all other participating countries, staff consider training in working with children with special needs as a top priority for professional development.

Ensure smart spending in view of complex governance and service provision

ECEC centre leaders in Germany indicate more than in any other participating country that they or other centre staff have responsibilities for the budget allocation within the centre and it is also relatively common that they are in charge of the appointment and recruitment of staff. Less than half of ECEC centre leaders in Germany indicate receiving inspections regarding process quality at least once a year.

More than in any other country, administrative work (e.g. filling out forms) is considered an important source of work-related stress (by 79% of pre-primary leaders and 83% in centres for children under age 3). This is closely followed by stress linked to extra duties due to absent staff. In line with that, staff absences and shortages are also the two most frequently cited barriers to ECEC leaders' effectiveness in Germany.

How does Germany compare?



Note: * Estimates for sub-groups and estimated differences between sub-groups in the TALIS Starting Strong 2018 data need to be interpreted with care.
Source: TALIS Starting Strong 2018 database.

Policy pointers for Germany

- Address staff shortages and absences by raising the status of the profession, improving working conditions and reviewing ECEC staff financial packages to attract and retain a high-quality workforce.
- Ensure that pre-service and in-service education and training programmes meet staff needs, for instance to prepare them to fully support the development of the diverse group of children in ECEC.
- Empower leaders in ECEC by providing sufficient support, including time and human resources, to fulfil their extensive responsibilities in the centre and avoid an excessive administrative burden.
- Consider the role monitoring can play in developing and ensuring the quality of interactions between staff and children in ECEC centres.

What is TALIS Starting Strong and how does it apply in Germany?

TALIS Starting Strong is an international, large-scale survey of staff and leaders in ECEC. TALIS Starting Strong uses questionnaires administered to staff and leaders to gather data. Its main goal is to generate robust international information relevant to developing and implementing policies focused on ECEC staff and leaders and their pedagogical and professional practices, with an emphasis on those aspects that promote conditions for children's learning, development and well-being. TALIS Starting Strong data are based exclusively on self-reports from ECEC staff and leaders and, therefore, represent their opinions, perceptions, beliefs and accounts of their activities.

TALIS Starting Strong 2018 includes nine countries: Chile, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Korea, Norway and Turkey. All of these countries collected data from staff and leaders in pre-primary education (ISCED level 02) settings typically serving children aged 3 to 5. In addition, four of the nine countries (Denmark, Germany, Israel and Norway) collected data from staff and leaders in settings serving children under age 3. Only data on centre-based provision are reported in the first report volume and this country note.

The Survey aims to obtain a representative sample in each participating country of staff and leaders for each level of ECEC in which the country participated. In Germany, 1 401 staff members and 247 leaders in pre-primary education (ISCED level 02) centres and 1 171 staff and 273 leaders in centres for children under age 3 completed the TALIS Starting Strong questionnaires.

TALIS Starting Strong data analysed in the first international report covers the following ECEC settings in Germany: ECEC centres for all age groups (0-6) (*Kindertageseinrichtungen für Kinder aller Altersgruppen*), ECEC centres for children under age 3 (*Krippen*), ECEC centres for children aged 3-6 (*Kindergarten*) as well as pre-primary classes (*Vorklasse*).

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Note regarding data from Israel: The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law.

References

OECD (2019), *Providing Quality Early Childhood Education and Care: Results from the Starting Strong Survey 2018*, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/301005d1-en>.

For more information on TALIS Starting Strong 2018 visit <http://www.oecd.org/education/school/oecd-starting-strong-teaching-and-learning-international-survey.htm>.

Data can be found also on line by following the **StatLinks**  under the tables and charts in the publication.

Explore, compare and visualise more data and analysis using: <http://gpseducation.oecd.org/>.

Questions can be directed to: TALIS Starting Strong team, Directorate for Education and Skills,
StartingStrongSurvey@oecd.org
