

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*.

Israel

Key findings

In Israel, compared to other countries participating in the Survey, a smaller share of pre-primary staff report using practices that facilitate children's socio-emotional development rather than practices that facilitate children's language, literacy and numeracy skills.

Compared to other participating countries, Israel has a small share of highly educated ECEC staff (both in pre-primary and in centres for children under age 3), and the smallest share of pre-primary staff participating in professional development activities (79%).

Staff in pre-primary centres work with relatively large groups of children (on average 29 children per group). The top spending priority indicated by pre-primary staff in Israel is reducing group size. In centres for children under age 3, the average number of children per group is 26.

Relatively high percentages of staff report using practices on diversity (such as playing with toys and artefacts from cultures other than the ethnic majority) compared to other participating countries (49% in pre-primary centres and 38% in centres for children under age 3).

Israel has one of the lowest shares of pre-primary staff whose formal education or training programme included facilitating transitions to primary education (57%) and one of the lowest shares of pre-primary leaders reporting that their centre is in communication with primary school teachers (39%).

A majority of pre-primary staff are satisfied with their jobs (98%). The percentage of pre-primary staff who feel valued in society (75%) and who are satisfied with their salary (33%) is higher than in several other countries.

A relatively low percentage of leaders of pre-primary centres indicate having responsibilities over the appointment and recruitment of staff. Leaders in these centres indicate as their main source of stress the lack of ECEC staff to carry out work, and staff shortages as the main barrier to their effectiveness.

Highlights and policy implications for Israel

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

TALIS Starting Strong data show that staff with more education and training specifically to work 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, in Israel the share of pre-primary staff with a level of education

above secondary level is relatively low (61%), reflecting the relatively large share of assistants among staff. Israel ranges in the middle among participating countries regarding the share of pre-primary staff who received practical training (74%) and have been trained specifically to work with children (77%). In centres for children under age 3, 63% of staff have a level of education above secondary level, while 81% received practical training and 71% have been trained specifically to work with children. The share of staff participating in professional development activities is the smallest among participating countries (79% for both pre-primary centres and centres for children under age 3).

Most pre-primary leaders (95%) have a relatively high level of education (a bachelor's degree or higher). In centres for children under age 3, 65% of leaders have a bachelor's degree or higher.

In most participating countries, larger shares of staff report using practices that facilitate children's socio-emotional development rather than practices that facilitate children's language and literacy development. Israel has a relatively small gap between pre-primary staff indicating that "encourage children to talk to each other" and "play number games" practices apply "a lot". Related to this, when ranking the importance of abilities or skills to prepare children for their life in the future, pre-primary staff in Israel attribute more importance to children's numeracy and science skills compared to staff in other countries.

Staff in Israel work with large groups of children on average at the pre-primary level (29 children per group). Reducing group size is indicated as a top spending priority by pre-primary staff and having too many children in the group is an important source of stress for 53% of them. Pre-primary staff in Israel who do feel more stress related to the size of their groups report using fewer practices to adapt to children's individual needs and interests compared to staff in Israel who feel less stress from the size of their groups. In centres for children under age 3, the average number of children per group is 26, and 40% of staff indicate that having too many children in the group is an important source of stress.

A large share of staff in pre-primary centres and in centres for children under age 3 report that parents can get in touch easily with ECEC staff. Nevertheless, Israel has the lowest share of pre-primary staff reporting that parents or guardians are informed about daily activities on a regular basis (76%).

A low percentage of pre-primary staff (57%) have received a training on facilitating transitions to primary education as part of their formal education. A low percentage of leaders (39%) report that their centre is in communication with primary school teachers. In centres for children under age 3, 60% of staff reported that their formal education or training programme included facilitating transitions to pre-primary education.

Attract and retain a high-quality workforce

A large majority of pre-primary staff are satisfied with their jobs (98%) and report feeling valued in society (75%). Most pre-primary staff (80%) have permanent contracts. A higher percentage of staff than in other participating countries are satisfied with their salary (33%). However, improving ECEC staff salaries is still indicated among the three top spending priorities by pre-primary staff. In centres for children under age 3, 96% of staff are satisfied with their jobs, 56% report feeling valued by society and 16% are satisfied with their salaries. Improving ECEC staff salaries is the top spending priority for staff in this level.

Professional development opportunities can help staff remain motivated at their job while also facilitating career progression. In pre-primary centres in Israel, less educated staff report lower participation in professional development than highly educated staff. Lack of staff to compensate for absences is the main barrier to participation in professional development both in pre-primary centres and in centres for children under age 3.

Give a strong start to all children

In Israel, a moderate percentage of leaders report that their centre includes large shares of children from socio-economically disadvantaged homes (14% in pre-primary centres and 22% in centres for children under age 3) or whose first language is different from the language(s) used in the centre (16% of pre-primary centres and 10% of centres for children under age 3). However, compared to other countries, a relatively high percentage of pre-primary staff (49%) report using practices on diversity (such as through the use of books and toys).

A moderate percentage of leaders (10%) indicate that their pre-primary centre includes 11% or more children with special needs. A relatively low percentage of staff report that working with children with special needs was included in their formal training programme. Training in working with children with special needs is ranked as the most important priority for professional development by staff.

Ensure smart spending in view of complex governance and service provision

A relatively high percentage of leaders indicate having responsibilities over the budget allocation within pre-primary centres (66%). The share of leaders indicating having responsibilities over the appointment and recruitment of staff in these centres is relatively low (10%). A high percentage of pre-primary leaders indicate receiving inspections regarding process quality at least once every year (78%).

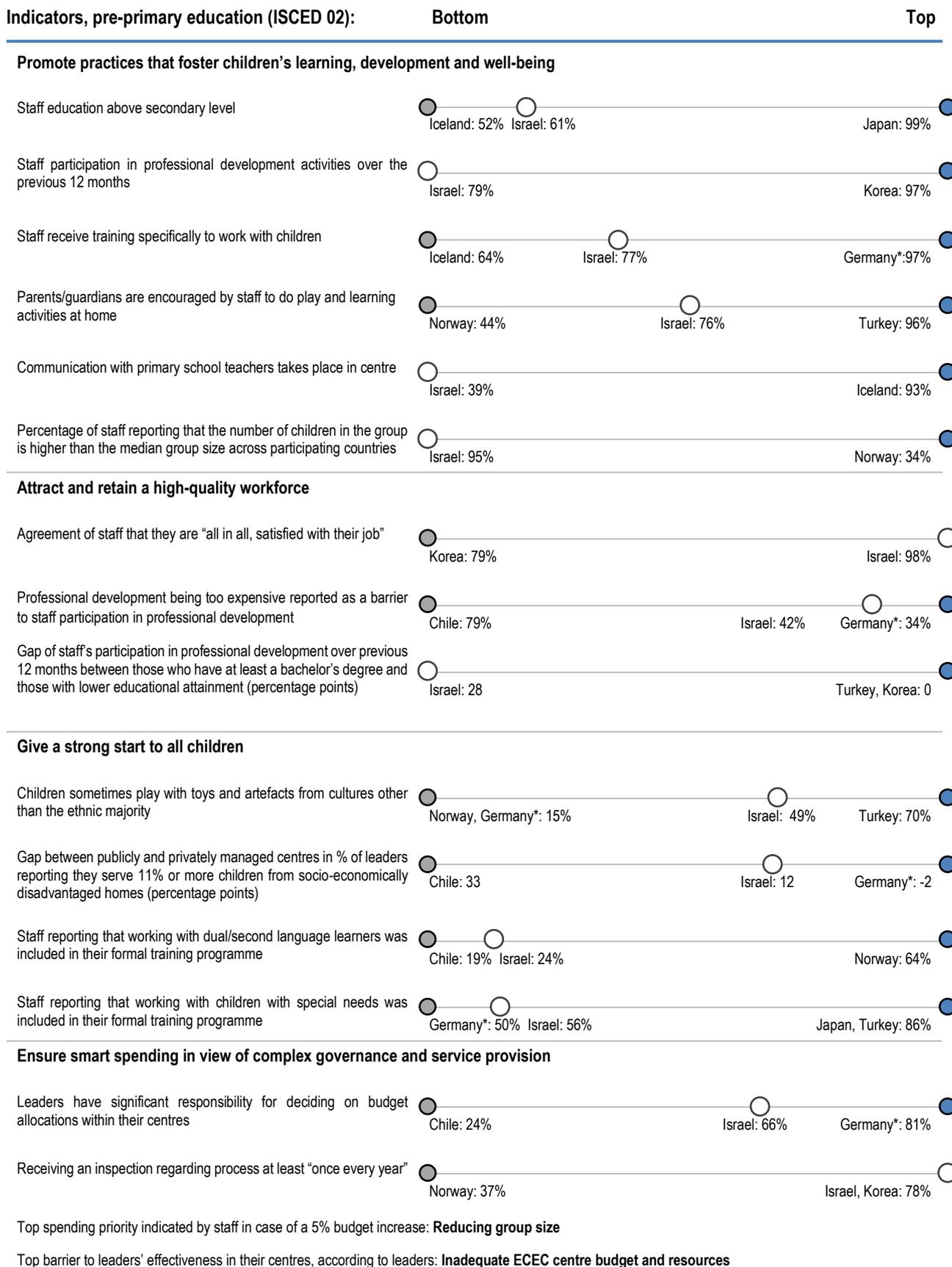
In centres for children under age 3, 56% of leaders report having responsibilities over budget allocation and 79% over the appointment and recruitment of staff. In these centres, 83% of leaders indicate receiving inspections regarding process quality at least once every year.

Administrative work (e.g. filling out forms) and changing requirements are the most important sources of work-related stress for leaders. Inadequate ECEC centre budget and resources is the top barrier to their effectiveness according to leaders in pre-primary centres. In centres for children under age 3, the main source of stress for leaders is a lack of ECEC staff to carry out work, and the main barrier to their effectiveness is staff shortages.

Policy pointers for Israel

- Ensure that pre-service and in-service education and training programmes for staff lead to a common understanding of good practices.
- Investigate options to foster interactions between staff and children as part of small groups and ensure that larger groups benefit from well-trained staff.
- Engage in dialogue with staff and leaders to identify and agree on the needs for high-quality professional development.
- Compensate for staff absence to allow time to participate in professional development and encourage flexible forms of training.
- Ensure that policies and regulations do not create an excessive burden to leaders that prevent them from exerting the various aspects of leadership (in pre-primary centres).
- Investigate options to address the difficulties leaders face in recruiting temporary or permanent staff (in centres for children under age 3).

How does Israel 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.

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

TALIS Starting Strong is an international, large-scale survey of staff and leaders in early childhood education and care (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 Israel, 1 987 staff members and 416 leaders in pre-primary education (ISCED level 02) centres and 1 113 staff and 226 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 Israel: publicly managed (formal) kindergartens and privately managed (unofficial) kindergartens for children aged 3-5, and day-care centres for children aged 0-2. Data from ultra-orthodox kindergartens (ISCED 02 level), which are part of privately managed (unofficial) kindergartens, are not analysed for this report.

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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/>.

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