

Case study on policies for the Next Generation: Early Childhood Education and Care

Introduction

The measures to be examined for this specific assignment belong to the Policies for the Next Generation pillar and fall into the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) policy area¹. Investing in the *availability, affordability, and quality* of ECEC holds a prominent position in the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). The September 2020 guidance prepared by the Commission invites Member States to explain how their plans will promote policies for the Next Generation EU, in particular on ECEC, and thus implement the objectives of the Child Guarantee, one of which is to “guarantee effective and free access to high-quality childhood education and care [included] for children in need” (Art 4, 2021/1004). This is in line with EU priorities in the field of early childhood education and care. The EU Care Strategy² encourages Member States to increase children’s participation in ECEC, reduce inequalities in access to ECEC services, and improve their quality and affordability, in line with the 2019 Council Recommendation on High-quality ECEC. In 2022, the Council Recommendation on early childhood education and care: The Barcelona target for 2030³ introduced a target of 45%⁴ of children below the age of three participating in ECEC, and the target is 96% at EU level for children between 3 and mandatory school age.

The investments undertaken by Member States under the RRF aim to increase the availability of ECEC services, by expanding coverage (i.e. number of places available), in particular among children in need, or socio-economically disadvantaged hence reducing inequalities. This is intended to enhance participation and promote children’s development as well as parents’ opportunities to access the labour market. Reforms include the review of quality standards, the enhancement of early diagnosis and support for children with disabilities and special needs, the reduction of early childhood education and care fees, lowering the age of compulsory pre-school education, revisiting the recruitment system for ECEC staff, adopting legal frameworks to facilitate access to training and opportunities for further professionalization of staff, as well as the strengthening of models for financing and the financial sustainability of ECEC systems.

¹ ECEC refers to any regulated arrangement that provides education and care for children from birth to compulsory primary school age. <https://education.ec.europa.eu/education-levels/early-childhood-education-and-care/about-early-childhood-education-and-care>).

² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European care strategy, COM (2022) 440 final.

³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European care strategy, COM (2022) 440 final.

³ Council Recommendation of 8 December 2022 on early childhood education and care: the Barcelona targets for 2030, OJ C 484, 20.12.2022, p.1-12.

³ Country specific exceptions apply to Member States that have yet to reach the 2002 goals. It is recommended that Member States increase ECEC participation in relation to their respective current participation rates as follows: (i) by at least 90 % for Member States whose participation rate is lower than 20 %; or (ii) by at least 45 %, or until at least reaching a participation rate of 45 %, for Member States whose participation rate is between 20 % and 33 %. The current participation rate shall be calculated as the average participation rate in ECEC

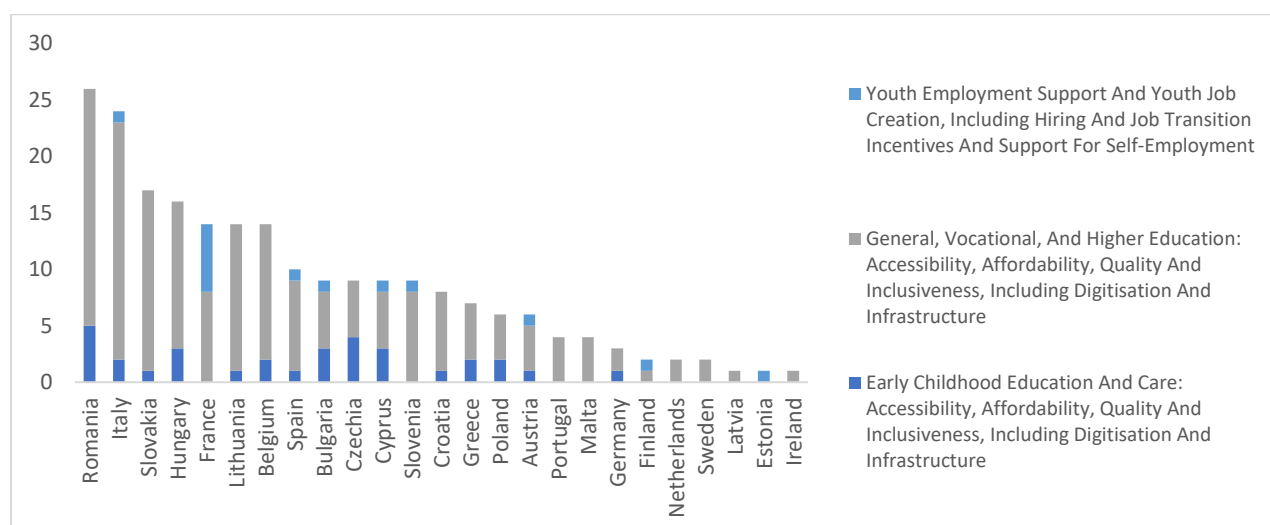
³ Council Recommendation of 8 December 2022 on early childhood education and care: the Barcelona targets for 2030, OJ C 484, 20.12.2022, p.1-12.

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Case study objectives and case selection

Investments in Early Childhood Care and Education are part of the RRF pillar on policies for the next generation. In total, 218 measures have been adopted for this pillar (Figure 1). Of these, the large majority belong to the category of general, vocational and higher education (172), while a smaller number of measures are allocated to the primary policy areas early childhood education and care (32) and youth employment support and youth job creation (14). Looking at the distribution by country, the largest number of measures is found in Romania (26), followed by Italy (24), Hungary (17) and France (16). There is large country variation in the number of measures by country, with a number of countries with only one measure (Latvia, Estonia, Ireland). Among the 25 Member States that are allocated funds under the Next Generation pillar, 15 countries (AT, BE, BG, HR, CY, CZ, DE, EL, HU, IT, LT, PL, RO, SK, ES) have dedicated funds to ECEC policies under their own national plans. Under the ECEC umbrella, we can distinguish among different types of measures, including the creation of new places to increase the availability of the service⁵, increasing the quality of the system (e.g., reforming the funding mechanism).

Figure 1: Measures within the pillar on policies for the next generation



Source: Authors' elaboration. Measure allocation based on the primary policy area

This case study aims to assess the relevance, effectiveness, coherence and added value of the RRF ECEC investments. The analysis will focus, in particular, on whether the RRF funds, in some cases, in synergy with national resources and other EU sources of funding (in particular ESF+), will contribute to increase the number of available ECE places for childcare services (0-3). As a matter of fact, the lack of enough available places is one of the main reasons explaining the low participation rate of children to early childhood education and care. In this respect, we will investigate whether the RRF funds will primarily support the expansion of the coverage rate of public or publicly-funded places in territories where households' per capita income is lower and female unemployment rate is higher⁶. Estimates of the potential results of the measures included in the NRPPs in increasing availability of ECEC services for children below the age of 3 will be complemented by analyses on the actual status of their implementation, also outlining emerging criticalities that might undermine short term feasibility of the plan and long- term effects and relevance of the

⁵ Creation of new places refers to the construction of infrastructures, or refurbishing/restructuring of existing infrastructures, enabling to expand the number of childcare places. This does not include running costs, as a result, expenditures needed to activate and manage the new places created.

⁶ Although cultural and social norms regarding gender roles in caregiving play a crucial role as well, the availability of affordable and high-quality childcare services is a pivotal factor in facilitating equitable participation of both parents in the workforce.

measures in ECEC. Finally, when possible, we will further assess the contribution of the RRF reforms in increasing the quality and affordability of ECEC services.

To this end, our analysis concentrates on five specific countries: Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain and Belgium (Wallonia). The selection of the five case studies has been based on the following criteria:

- geographical heterogeneity (2 Southern European countries, 2 Northern, and 1 Eastern)
- size of the investment
- instances of integration of the RRF funding with national funds and/or ESF+

Methodology and data collection

To meet the case study objectives outlined above, the case study seeks to answer a number of research questions, included in the table below. Table 1 further links each question to the relevant evaluation question in the mid-term evaluation and describes the main methodologies used to answer the questions.

Table 1: Research questions and methodology used

Criterion	Question	Relevant EQ	Data collection
Relevance	To what extent will the RRP measures on ECEC remain relevant and feasible to implement until 2026?	EQ 23.2	Descriptive statistics, semi-structured interviews and desk research.
Effectiveness	What is the current state of play of the implementation of the measures related to ECEC? Which outputs have been achieved?	EQ 2.1	Descriptive statistics, FENIX, and semi-structured interviews.
	Which results have been achieved by the measures so far, or are expected?	EQ 2.1	National official statistics and semi-structured interviews
	What barriers to implementation or facilitating factors can be identified? To what extent have external factors hindered the implementation of investments or reforms?	EQ 5.1:	Desk research, semi-structured interviews.
Coherence	To what extent can complementarities or synergies between the investments and reforms on ECEC contained within the plans be identified?	EQ 19	Semi-structured interviews and desk research.
	To what extent have synergies between the RRP measures on ECEC and other EU funds (e.g., ESF+) and national funds been identified and exploited?	EQ 17	National official statistics and desk research.
	To what extent were the proposed RRP measures guided by the EU's priorities enshrined in the Council Recommendation on High-quality ECEC, Council Recommendation on the Establishment of a European Child Guarantee and the most recent E Council Recommendation on Early Childhood Education and Care: Barcelona Targets for 2030?	EQ 16	Desk research.
EU Added Value	To what extent would the investments and reforms in ECEC still have been implemented in the absence of the RRF?	EQ 22	Semi-structured interviews

Source: Authors' own elaboration

As shown in the table above, the analysis draws on a number of sources: a) a quantitative (descriptive) analysis; b) desk research; and 3) semi-structured interviews with key national and EU stakeholders. We have conducted interviews with 10 national or local stakeholders responsible for ECEC in the 5 Member States selected, along with European Commission officials (see annex 1 for the list)

The quantitative analysis is based on data collected from Eurostat, national official statistics or national governments' websites (Table 2). These sources provide information at different levels of territorial aggregation (NUTS level) on a number of variables used to conduct the analysis, besides the official information about the RRF funding and national financing⁷ of ECEC measures, and implementation status:

- Coverage rates, as a result, the number of places in childcare services per the total number of children aged below 3 years⁸.
- Coverage rates of public or publicly funded/subsidized services. The latter include private or non-profit- led providers receiving substantial public financial contribution to substantially reduce entry fees.
- Female unemployment rates and disposable household income.

These additional data, disaggregated at NUTS level, serves to (See Annex 2):

- i. Assess if the distribution of childcare services across municipalities, provinces and regions is uneven, with some territories lagging substantially behind. Identifying these territories is a prerequisite to targeting the most socio-economically disadvantaged areas in need of intervention.
- ii. Assesses whether the coverage of public or publicly funded/subsidized ECEC services is correlated with the level of income and the female unemployment rate.
- iii. The final analytical step is an estimate of the RRF contribution to an expansion in coverage of childcare services, in particular public or publicly funded/subsidized places, at national level, possibly boosting participation and closing the gap with the new Barcelona targets, along with reducing territorial differences, and benefiting to a larger extent, most socio-economically disadvantaged territories⁹.

Table 2: Data sources and variables, by country and NUTS level.

MS	Source	Variables	Territorial disaggregation
BE	Walstat calculations Taux de couverture en places d'accueil préscolaire (2020) https://walstat.iweeps.be/walstat-catalogue.php?niveau_agre=C&theme_id=8&indicateur_id=243900&sel_niveau_catalogue=T&ordre=0	Coverage rates 0-2.5 (publicly and privately funded, total)	Municipality
	Walstat Calculations Taux de chômage administatif des 15-64 ans (2020) https://walstat.iweeps.be/walstat-catalogue.php?niveau_agre=C&theme_id=4&indicateur_id=213500&sel_niveau_catalogue=C&ordre=2	Female Unemployment rate	

⁷ For Poland ESF+ funds statistics are available as well.

⁸ In the case of Wallonia, we took into account the fact that the official statistics calculates coverage for ages 0 to 2.5 as the legal entitlement to free pre-primary education starts at 2.5, while for all the other countries is 3. . Statistical analyses have been conducted by considering the specific age group and rules applied in the country or region.

⁹ Although a number of reforms have been undertaken, through the/or in connection with RRF, on enhancing quality, it is not possible at this stage, to analyse results in this domain. Effects will be only observable in the middle-long term, and they are determined by factors, such as the adequacy of the financing directed to cover running costs of newly established places (see Section on Coherence)

	<p>Revenu total net imposable et impôts par déclaration et par commune/Revenu moyen par habitant (2020) Statbel https://statbel.fgov.be/fr/themes/menages/revenus-fiscaux#figures</p> <p>Plan Equilibre Wallonie (2023) http://actionsociale.wallonie.be/petite-enfance/plan-equilibre-2021-2026</p>	Average disposable Income per capita	
DE	<p>Bertelsmann Stiftung (2021) https://www.laendermonitor.de/de/system/methodik</p> <p>Arbeitslosenquote von Frauen und Männern nach Ländern Unemployment rates for women and men by lander, BMFSFJ (2021) https://www.daten.bmfsfj.de/daten/daten/arbeitslosenquote-von-frauen-und-maennern-nach-laendern-131948</p>	Coverage rates (sponsored, private, total) Unemployment rate	Länder
IT	<p>Istat (Servizi Socio Educativi per la Prima Infanzia (2021) http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?QueryId=23231</p> <p>Ministero dell'Istruzione e del Merito (2022-2023) https://pnrr.istruzione.it/avviso/asili/</p> <p>ISTAT (Lavoro e Retribuzioni, Tasso di Occupazione per sesso) (2021) http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DCCV_TAXOCCU1</p>	Coverage rates (public and publicly funded services, private, total) Female Unemployment rate	Municipal, provincial, regional.
PL	<p>Ministry of Policy and Social Affairs Maluch + (2022) https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/konsultacje-algorytmu-podzialu-srodkow-dla-gmin-w-programie-maluch-2022-2029</p> <p>Stat Gov Poland Registered unemployed persons and unemployment rate by voivodships and powiats(2023) https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/rynek-pracy/bezrobocie-rejestrowane/bezrobotni-zarejestrowani-i-stopa-bezrobocia-stan-w-koncu-marca-2023-r-2,128.html</p> <p>Stat Gov Poland Average yearly per capita net income in zlotys 2020 (disposable income), Income and living conditions of the Polish population (EU-SILC 2021 survey report) https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/warunki-zycia/dochody-wydatki-i-warunki-zycia-ludnosci/dochody-i-warunki-zycia-ludnosci-polski-raport-z-badania-eu-silc-2021,6,15.html</p>	Coverage rates Female Unemployment rate Average yearly per capita net income	Municipality
ES	<p>Las cifras de la educación en España. Curso (2020-2021). Ministerio de Educación y Formación profesional https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/gl/servicios-al-ciudadano/estadisticas/indicadores/cifras-educacion-espana/2020-2021.html . Estadísticas de educación infantil.</p> <p>Spanish Labour Force Survey INE, Tasa de paro por distintos grupos de edad, sexo y comunidad autónoma (Unemployment rates by age group, sex and autonomous region) (2019 Q4) https://www.ine.es/jaxiT3/Tabla.htm?t=4247&L=0</p> <p>Encuesta de Condiciones de Vida (ECV) (Survey on Living Conditions) Renta anual neta media (Average net income per capita EUR) (2020) https://www.ine.es/jaxiT3/Datos.htm?t=9947</p>	Coverage rates (publicly and privately funded, total) Female Unemployment rate Average net income per capita	Regional

Source: Authors' elaboration

Contextual information

Before outlining the results of the analysis, this section provides an overview of the context and key challenges relating to ECEC in the five Member States before the introduction of the NRRPs.

The status quo in ECEC

Legal entitlements to ECEC and participation rates in the five countries studied. In Wallonia, the legal entitlement to ECEC exists from the age of 2 years and 6 months, and the last year of preschool is obligatory. Pre-primary services are free (apart from some minimal expenditures for food)¹⁰. Similarly, in Spain, a legal entitlement starts at age 3¹¹. In addition, the Royal Decree 95/2022 establishes that pre-primary education, being a legal entitlement, should be free and educational administrations in regions must guarantee a sufficient number of places in public and publicly funded private schools. In Italy pre-primary education (from age 3) is a right, and services are free (apart from parental contributions demanded for feeding). In Poland, children are legally entitled to ECEC from the age of 3, according to the Law on School Education of 2016¹². Finally, in Germany, the legal entitlement to ECEC is most generous, starting at age 1 (since 2013)¹³.

As regards participation in ECEC, Belgium and Spain are the two countries with the highest participation rates in pre-primary education (for children aged 3 or above), at 98.4% and 96,1% respectively (EU-SILC, 2022). In Italy (94.2%), Germany (89,9%) and Poland (76.5%). Early childhood education and care for children under 3 is substantially less developed. participation in ECEC is highest in, Belgium (52,7%), Spain (48,6%) followed by Italy (30,9%), Germany 23,9%, and Poland 15,9% (EU-SILC, 2022).

Participation rates are primarily driven by the coverage of services¹⁴. Among the countries studied, Spain has the highest coverage rate, at 40,2% (Ministry of Education, 2021¹⁵). In Wallonia (Wallstat, 2020¹⁶), coverage of childcare services is 38%. Coverage rates in Germany are at 34,4% but higher for children above age 1 (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2021¹⁷). Moreover, the reform of 2013 establishing the legal entitlement to ECEC at age 1 has increased coverage 29.4% to 48.5%, for children aged 1 and 2 years old in less than a decade. Legal entitlements, together with policies guaranteeing that services are affordable also for middle-low-income families, might significantly boost participation¹⁸. In Italy, the coverage rate stands at 27% in 2021 (ISTAT, 2021¹⁹). Finally, in Poland, in the last years, investments have increased the coverage rate which reached approximately 20% in 2022 (in 2010, coverage rate was at 2,6%)²⁰. Considering children below age 3 but above age 1, the coverage rate is 25,6% (Eurydice, 2022²¹). While the

¹⁰ Eurydice (2022) <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/belgium-french-community/early-childhood-education-and-care>

¹¹ Eurydice (2022) <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/spain/early-childhood-education-and-care>

¹² Eurydice (2022) <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/poland/early-childhood-education-and-care>

¹³ Eurydice (2022) <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/germany/early-childhood-education-and-care>

¹⁴ Coverage refers to the number of places available as a percentage of the total population of that age group. Participations refers to pupils enrolled as a percentage of the total population for that age group. The term 'coverage' includes both public and private led provision. While public or publicly funded services refer only to those services that receive public subsidies or, as in the case of Germany, from welfare organizations.

¹⁵ Las cifras de la educación en España. Curso (2020-2021). Ministerio de Educación y Formación profesional <https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/gl/servicios-al-ciudadano/estadisticas/indicadores/cifras-educacion-espana/2020-2021.html>. Estadísticas de educación infantil.

¹⁶ Walstat calculations Taux de couverture en places d'accueil préscolaire (2020) https://walstat.iweps.be/walstat-catalogue.php?niveau_agre=C&theme_id=8&indicateur_id=243900&sel_niveau_catalogue=T&ordre=0

¹⁷ Bertelsmann Stiftung (2021) <https://www.laendermonitor.de/de/system/methodik>

¹⁸ OECD 'Financing and delivering early childhood education and childcare across levels of government' (2023) <https://doi.org/10.1787/7bd38503-en>

¹⁹ Istat (Servizi Socio Educativi per la Prima Infanzia (2021) <http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?QueryId=23231>

²⁰ Eurydice (2022) <https://eurydice.eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-education-systems/poland/early-childhood-education-and-care>

²¹ Ibid

majority of childcare services are public or publicly-funded/subsidized or sponsored²² in Germany and Belgium (and 70% of all services in Wallonia), in Italy and Spain, half of the services are private, and in Poland only one-third of providers are public, which may reduce accessibility and affordability.

Territorial inequalities in access to affordable ECEC for children below age 3

The countries under study exhibit **significant regional inequality in the availability** of childcare services. For instance, in Wallonia, the overall coverage of public or publicly funded/subsidized childcare is 28,6% but in 35 *communes*, it does not reach 15%²³. Only 35% of all Wallonian municipalities (262 in total), have reached a minimum target, set by the region, of 33% of public or publicly funded services, while 20 municipalities surpass 50%. In Germany, coverage of sponsored services is 26,6% but differences between regions are significant, coverage being lowest in North Rhine-Westphalia (17,7%) and Bremen (19,7%), and highest 51,2% in Thuringia (51.2%), and Saxony-Anhalt (54.8%) (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2021²⁴). Similarly, in Italy, coverage of public or publicly funded childcare services, is low overall (13,3%), but in regions such as Valle d'Aosta, Emilia-Romagna, Toscana, Umbria, it exceeds 20% , while in Southern regions, such as Campania, Calabria, Puglia Sicilia, is less than 10% (in Calabria, only 3% of children are in affordable childcare services) (ISTAT, 2021²⁵). Moreover, inequalities are not only present between regions, but also within regions. As an example, in the Northern region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, coverage of public or publicly funded services ranges between 8% in the province of Pordenone and 23% in the province of Gorizia (ISTAT, 2021²⁶). In Poland, differences in coverage rates among provinces are substantial, with some displaying rates above 20% (e.g. West Pomeranian, 22,5%; Lower Silesia, 28,7 %) and others where coverage is below 15% (e.g. Warmian-Masurian, 13,7%; Świętokrzyskie, 13,8%)²⁷. Finally, in Spain, coverage rates range between 53,3% in the Basque Countries, 51,1%, in the Madrid Community, to less than 25% in Murcia (20,5%), Canary Islands (22,9%), 23,7% in Castilla y Leon, and 23,5% in Asturias (Ministry of Education, 2021²⁸). The lowest rate is observed in the city of Ceuta (17%). In general, regions with low coverage also have a limited offer of public places, apart from the region of Asturias, where almost all available services are public. The gap in public coverage between the lowest (Ceuta, Murcia and Canary Island 10%) and the highest (Galicia, Extremadura, Basque Country above 25%), is approximately of 15pp.

In addition, the analyses (See Annex 2) we conducted, using national disaggregated statistics (see Table 2) show that, in most of the countries analysed, there is a correlation, at sub-national level (region, province or municipality), between the coverage of public or publicly subsidized/sponsored services, which are usually more affordable and accessible, and socio-economic indicators such as the income level of households or female unemployment. The absence of affordable childcare services might reduce opportunities to work for parents, and therefore also reduce household income. However, in areas where unemployment is higher and income is lower, the offer of childcare services might be limited, in part due to the lack of demand, or because local authorities might have less resources to invest in these services²⁹.

²² Publicly funded/subsidized or sponsored, are those services that, although they are provided by private entities or non-profit organizations, they receive substantially public contributions to keep parental financial contributions low and therefore they are more affordable than totally private. In some case, providers manage services on behalf of public administrations, and therefore costs for running facilities are entirely covered by the public (publicly funded). In other, private or non-profit institutions manage their own facilities, but receive significant financing from local administrations (subsidized) and/or by charity associations or welfare groups (sponsored, as in the case of Germany).

²³ Authors elaboration based on WallStat database, 2020

²⁴ Bertelsmann Stiftung (2021) <https://www.laendermonitor.de/de/system/methodik>

²⁵ Istat (Servizi Socio Educativi per la Prima Infanzia (2021) <http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?QueryId=23231>

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Ministry of Policy and Social Affairs Maluch + (2022) <https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/konsultacje-algorytmu-podzialu-srodkow-dla-gmin-w-programie-maluch-2022-2029>

²⁸ Las cifras de la educación en España. Curso (2020-2021). Ministerio de Educación y Formación profesional <https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/gl/servicios-al-ciudadano/estadisticas/indicadores/cifras-educacion-espana/2020-2021.html> . Estadísticas de educación infantil.

²⁹ Corti F., Morabito, C., Ruiz, T. Luongo P. (2022) 'The role of the Recovery and Resilience Facility in strengthening childcare policies', FEPS Policy Study. Available at: <https://fepe-europe.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/RECOVERY-WATCH-Childcare-Policy-PP.pdf>

In Wallonia, municipalities with shares of female unemployment above 15% on average, also have lower coverage rates of public or publicly childcare services (average 23%) than those with lower female unemployment rates (below 10% in average), where coverage is higher (average 30%). In Italy, provinces where female unemployment is above 20% (all located in the Southern regions of Calabria, Campania, Puglia and Sicilia), the average coverage of public or publicly funded childcare services is 6,5%, while in the provinces where female unemployment is the lowest (6% or below), childcare coverage is 10 percentage points higher (17%). In Poland, coverage is lower in municipalities where income per capita is also lower. Looking at data at provincial level, those provinces with lower unemployment rates (below 5%), have an average coverage of 22%, while provinces with unemployment rates above 7% have a coverage rate of only 16% on average. In Spain, equally, data shows that in some cases, the regions which are more disadvantaged, where for instance, per capita income levels are lower and female unemployment is higher, are also those where the offer of childcare is lagging behind. For example, in Ceuta, Murcia and Canary Islands, the annual per capita income does not surpass EUR 10.000 and female unemployment rates are among the highest in the country (above 20%), while in regions with high coverage levels, such as Basque countries of Madrid community, the per capita income is above EUR 14.500 and unemployment levels at 10% or below³⁰. However, in contrast to the other countries, the correlation is less evident in Germany. Childcare services have historically been more developed in the former Democratic Republic of Germany, and therefore regions situated in Eastern Germany, although they are less economically developed and female unemployment rates are higher, continue to see substantially better coverage of affordable childcare services. Coverage in these regions is 47,6% on average, compared to 24,3% in Western Germany. In the last decade, this difference was even greater at 31.4 percentage points. Since then, the childcare rate in the western states has increased at a faster pace, leading to some convergence over the years.

Description of NRRP Measures on ECEC

This section briefly outlines the key features of the measures in each country under the RRF to strengthen ECEC policies.

The **Italian** NPRR (Ref. M4C1) includes a measure on 'Strengthening the provision of education services: from childcare to universities'. Specifically, the reform aims to increase the supply of childcare and preschool facilities by building new places and/or renovating existing infrastructures, particularly in territories where the offer of services is lacking. A total amount of EUR 4,6 billion is allocated for this purpose, aiming at creating approximately 264.480 new places in both childcare services and preschools, for children up to six years old (by Q42025). EUR 3 billion are targeted at new projects (EUR 2,4 billion for childcare facilities, and 600 million for preschools), EUR 700 million to finance ongoing projects to expand places, and 900 million for temporarily financing the running costs of new places³¹. Two milestones and targets are defined under the measure. First, by the second quarter of 2023, municipalities that have participated in public procurement, and whose projects have been approved, were expected to notify the award of public contracts for initiating the building and/or renovation of facilities. The second target is the activation of all services by the end of 2025. An investment 'plafond' for each region was established based on two criteria³²: i) gap in coverage (75%) at regional level; and ii) prospective regional population (0-2 years old) in 2035 (25%). In addition, 55,29% of resources have been allocated to Southern regions, where coverage, especially of public / publicly funded childcare is extremely low, and in some cases, inexistent, and so is the rate of women employed³³. For preschool education, the criteria used are i) enrolment rate in each region (60%), ii) perspective regional population (3-5 years old) in 2035, iii) number of preschool facilities (10%), again with 40% of resources allocated to Southern regions.

³⁰ Andalusia is among the few exceptions with high childcare coverage rates, lower per capital income and high female unemployment.

³¹ <https://www.italiadomani.gov.it/Interventi/investimenti/piano-asili-nido.html>

³² <https://pnrr.istruzione.it/avviso/asili/>

³³ Ibid

Poland includes interventions for enhancing ECEC in the components 'Resilience and Competitiveness of the Economy. A4 – Increasing structural matching, efficiency and crisis resilience of the labour market. Specifically, A4.2.1 'Support for childcare facilities for children up to three years of age (nurseries, children's clubs) under Maluch+', and A4.2. 'Reform to improve the labour market situation of parents by increasing access to high-quality childcare for children up to the age of three'. The objective of Reform A 4.2., is to amend the existing national legislation on childcare, with the aim 'to improve the labour market situation of parents by increasing access to high-quality childcare for children up to the age of three'³⁴. To that end, three actions are proposed: 1) streamline the management of domestic and external funds for the creation and functioning of the childcare facilities; 2) implement a stable long-term domestic financing of the childcare services for children up to the age of three; as well as 3) implement a set of binding minimum education and quality standards for childcare facilities. The timeframe for the development and implementation of the various actions of the reform is.

- Q22022: Entry into force of a legislative act amending previous Act of 4 February 2011 on the Care of Children up to Three Years of Age, implementing a single coherent financing management system, bringing the management of funds (EU and national) under the so-called the Maluch+ programme, for the creation and functioning of childcare services. The newly established coherent system can ensure easier access to funds to expand childcare services; uniformed allocation model for funds (using a specific algorithm, see below); simplification of procedures to apply for funding by municipalities, and reduction of administrative burdens.
- Q22022: development and implementation of an IT system and an algorithm to allocate resources to municipalities in order to expand the offer of childcare services. The system shall be used by institutions supervising and implementing the reform as well, to monitor effective delivery.
- Q22023: an independent review of existing quality standards for care and education for children up to three years of age, following guidelines established by the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2019 on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems (2019/C 189/02). The review shall be presented in the form of a report to be published by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. On the basis of the review, a framework for quality standards for childcare, including educational guidelines shall be prepared, by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, also including public consultations with the national stakeholders. An amendment of the 2011's Act shall make the newly established framework, binding for all childcare providers.
- Q22024: entry into force, through a further amendment of the 2011's Act, of a stable long-term financing from national resources, for creation and functioning of the childcare services for children up to the age of three.
- Q22026: Creation of at least 47500 new childcare places (creches and kids' clubs), through the construction of infrastructures and/or purchase of real estate (lands or premises).

The Reform is implemented by integrating different financial resources, from the EU - the Recovery and Resilience Facility and European Social Fund + - and the national budget. An investment of 380 million euros (first action - A 4.2.1.), has been planned, aiming in particular at increasing places in creches and kids clubs, by subsidising the costs of construction of infrastructures. This investment will be complemented by approximately 704 million euros, from ESF+, in order to create around 55.000 new childcare places (in addition to the 47500 created via the RFF) in creches, kids' clubs but also homecare settings (childminding,). In total, integrated RRF, ESF+ funds and National funds, aim at creating 102.577 new childcare places and increasing the coverage from 20% to 33% nationally³⁵, while also reducing territorial and socio-economic inequalities. The RRF-financed funding can only be used for the construction,

³⁴ ANNEX to the Proposal for a Council Implementing Decision on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Poland
<https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-9728-2022-ADD-1/en/pdf>

³⁵ <https://www.gov.pl/web/rownetraktowanie/krajowy-program-dzialan-na-rzecz-rownego-traktowania>

reconstruction, extension or renovation of a building, and for the purchase of equipment. The funds are distributed to municipalities based on an algorithm which takes into account:

- a) The share of children up to three years of age not covered by childcare over the total number of children not covered in the country, and
- b) the inversed ratio between income per capita in a given commune and the average local government unit income per capita in Poland.
- c) a minimum allocation of 10 places to each municipality without any care places

The **Spanish** plan includes an investment in childcare as part of the component 21 of 'Modernisation and digitisation of the education system, including a reform of the Law on Education'. Specifically, a reform C21.R1 'New organic law on education' and an investment 'C21.I1 Promoting early childhood education and care (ECEC). It incorporates a EUR 677 million investment in childcare as part of component 21 of 'Modernisation and digitisation of the education system, including early education for 0-3 years of age'. The former measure was already adopted in the first quarter of 2021, i.e. before the submission of the RRF plan. The main changes implied by the approval of this law for early childhood education include the progressive implementation of the first cycle of ECEC through the public provision of services, and the extension of free education to the extent possible. Moreover, it focuses on pupils at risk of poverty or social exclusion, with the aim of 'gradually implementing the tendency to extend ECEC free access, prioritising the access of pupils at risk of poverty and social exclusion and the situation of low schooling rates'(third additional provision). Finally, it is the first time in Spanish history that the first cycle of ECEC has been recognised as an educational stage, since it is provided that the government will regulate the curriculum and the minimum requirements of the two cycles of ECEC that refer to the qualifications of all workers, the pupil-teacher ratio and the number of places available.

EUR 519 million has been allocated to cover the infrastructure costs to create 65 382 new publicly owned places for children below three years. In addition, EUR 147 million has been allocated to cover the running costs of 40 000 of the newly created public places until the end of 2022. By the fourth quarter of 2023, the whole budget of the investment should have been awarded to the regional or local authorities, and the fourth quarter of 2024, all places should have been created. The Sectoral Conference on Education (*Conferencia Sectorial de Educación*) established the criteria for the distribution of the investment from the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to the autonomous communities (ACs), and approved the first tranche (EUR 200.79 million). Each community is free to allocate funds to nursery schools and has complete autonomy. The criteria for distribution are the following ³⁶:

- 40% weight: level of education of the population aged 25 to 64 years, in each region, according to consolidated data from the year 2020.
- 40% weight: net schooling rates of children up to the age of two years.
- 20% weight: population dispersion, according to the official population figures from the National Statistics Institute as of 1 January 2020.

The **German** government incorporates the measure 'Childcare-financing 2020/21: special fund Child Day-care Expansion' in the Component 4.1 'Strengthening of social inclusion', providing EUR 500 million from the RRF and EUR 500 million from the national budget in financial support to the Länder (regions), with the aim of creating new childcare

³⁶ BOE (2021), *Resolución de 23 de diciembre de 2021, de la Secretaría de Estado de Educación, por la que se publica el Acuerdo de la Conferencia Sectorial de Educación de 25 de noviembre de 2021, por el que se aprueba la propuesta de distribución territorial de los créditos destinados al Programa de impulso de escolarización en el primer ciclo de Educación Infantil, en el marco del componente 21 del Mecanismo de Recuperación y Resiliencia*, No 312, p. 166415, <https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2021/12/29/pdfs/BOE-A-2021-21761.pdf>

facilities and refurbishing existing ones. The investment will lead to the creation of 90 000 additional places. The measure was already included in the German amendment of the Childcare Financing Act and in the Federal Financial Assistance Act adopted at the end of 2020 (which constituted the first milestone included in the NRRP). In addition, by the fourth quarter of 2023, an interim report is expected to be published on approved and newly created childcare places and investments in equipment, while by the fourth quarter of 2025 the Länder shall submit their final report confirming the creation of 90 000 places in child day care facilities (Kindertageseinrichtungen) and child day care services (Kindertagespflege). With respect to the distribution of funds, according to Section 27 of the Law on federal financial aid for the expansion of day care for children (KitaFinHG)³⁷ the only criterion used was the number of children in each Land. Like in Spain, once the funds have been allocated to the Länder, they have responsibility for the implementation of the federal financial assistance, as they have to produce specific funding guidelines that regulate the application, approval and use of the funds.

Finally, the **Belgian** NRPP plan includes, in the component 4.3 'Social infrastructure', the investment I-4.13: 'Creation and renovation of early childcare infrastructure' of the Walloon Region. The investment aims to improve the coverage of early childcare services in Wallonia through the construction and/or renovation of childcare facilities. A total amount of EUR 61.40 million, was invested to create 1700 new places. The investment included in the NRRP is part of a broader investment scheme, the '[Plan Cigogne +5200](#)'³⁸, which aims to create more than 5200 new childcare places in both Wallonia and Bruxelles regions, through both RFF and additional regional funds, and allowing to reach the minimum target set by the region of 33% coverage of public or publicly funded services, while also reducing territorial differences and based on socio-economic status of households. Considering Wallonia only, a total of 3100 childcare places will be created, approximately 1700 through RRF funds, and the remaining using funds allocated by the region.. Financial support is provided directly to the *communes* (municipalities).

Looking at the administrative acts already published by Wallonia, and more precisely at Article 13 of the [ONE management contract for 2021-2025](#)³⁹, we see that the main criterion used to distribute the funds is the coverage rate⁴⁰. Article 15 includes other criteria that have been mentioned in the plan approved by the Council, but these are treated as supplementary criteria, as specified in paragraph 1 of the same article, as an example accessibility of the infrastructures, or their energy efficiency⁴¹. Two targets are to be achieved under the measure: 1) by the third quarter of 2023, work contracts should be granted for 15% of planned childcare places. 2) by the third quarter of 2026, all new childcare places should be available in Wallonia.

Results

The results of the case study are presented by specific evaluation questions under each of the evaluation criteria. Below we summarise the main findings.

³⁷ https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/kitafinanzg/_27.html

³⁸ <https://www.one.be/professionnel/milieux-daccueil/plan-cigogne-5200/>

³⁹ https://www.galilex.cfwb.be/document/pdf/49398_002.pdf

⁴⁰ Article 13 states that: 'Eligible projects whose implementation is planned in one of the municipalities targeted by Walloon strand 1 are ranked by municipality on the basis of the subsidised coverage rate, with priority given to the lowest rates'.

⁴¹ The article reads as follows: 'If the criteria referred to in Articles 13 and 14 prove to be insufficient, the projects shall be ranked according to a composite index considering the following criteria according to the following weightings: 1° the overall coverage rate, 10 points; 2° the coverage rate of subsidised places, 35 points; 3° the socio-economic situation of the geographical entity, measured by the average or median income, the single-parenthood rate and the employment rate of the female population, each of these three criteria being worth 5 points; 5° accessibility to meet the reception needs resulting from particular social situations, 10 points; 6° accessibility and location of the infrastructure, 10 points; 7° infrastructure, the energy objectives pursued and the quality of the building, 20 points. The composite index referred to in paragraph 1 is expressed in percent. If the project does not apply for an infrastructure subsidy, this composite index is calculated on the basis of the first six criteria'.

Implementation Progress Across Member States:

- Italy's milestone for awarding public contracts for facility projects by Q2 2023 and active services by Q4 2025 has been delayed compared to the indicative timeline in the CID Annex, and a request to the European Commission for a timeline adjustment has been submitted.
- Poland has reported to have completed two milestones set for Q2 2022, which are still to be assessed by the Commission. One milestone set for Q2 2023 has not yet been completed.
- Belgium should have granted works contracts for 15% of the planned childcare places, by Q3 2023, but the milestone has been delayed compared to the initial indicative timeline.
- Germany has completed the first milestone but envisions a longer timeline for achieving other milestones and targets.
- In Spain, there are no milestones or targets prior to Q4 2023 (the milestone for Q12021 has been completed).

(Expected) impact on Coverage of Affordable Childcare Services:

The RRF investments in the five countries under study are expected to significantly increase the coverage of childcare services (i.e. number of places available for children under 3). In particular, the following results are expected:

- Italy will create an estimated 237,500 to 244,300 new places for childcare and pre-primary schools. This could increase the coverage of public or publicly funded childcare availability from 13.3% to 27.6%.
- Spain will strengthen its supply of public/subsidized services, creating 65,382 new places, increasing coverage to 26.5%.
- Belgium (Wallonia) will create about 3,200 new places (1700 through RFF and the rest with regional funds), increasing the total coverage to 32.5%.
- Poland will create 102,577 new childcare places, increasing total coverage to 29.9%.
- Germany's total coverage will increase to 38.1% (30.3% will be sponsored/subsidized) with 90,000 additional places.

Reduction of Territorial Gaps:

In addition, RRF measures are expected to reduce existing territorial gaps in childcare service coverage.

- In Poland, areas with coverage below the national average will see a 61% increase, compared to 39% in areas above the average.
- In Italy, new childcare places will benefit regions with low coverage, contributing to partially reduce the gap between Southern and Northern provinces.
- In Belgium (Wallonia), the variance in coverage between municipalities will partially decrease.
- In Germany, Western Länder with lower coverage will see a larger expansion (15% to 21.5%).
- In Spain, regions with the lowest public coverage will benefit the most, with an estimated increase of 40% to 85%.

Potential impact on Women's Employment Opportunities:

Larger expansion of childcare services might happen, although in not all five selected member states, in more socio-economically disadvantaged territories, increasing opportunities for low-income children below age 3 to participate in ECEC, and women to access labour market.

- In Poland, provinces with high female unemployment will see a 75% increase in childcare places.
- In Italy, provinces with high female unemployment will reach new coverage rates between 25% and 40%.
- In Belgium, Spain, and Germany, public coverage will remain higher in areas with higher female employment.

Barriers and Challenges:

Even though implementation of RRF measures in the area of ECEC, in the five member States selected, is at its initial phases, a number of criticalities have emerged that might hinder feasibility of the NRPPs, and, in the long term, also undermine their relevance in tackling structural challenges facing ECEC systems in these countries.

- Tight timetables for project development might have discouraged some local authorities, to apply for funding and provoked in some cases delays in implementation of the plan.
- Increasing costs for infrastructural works due to inflation burdened municipalities and might reduce the number of places that can be created or generate delays in implementation of the projects.
- Complex procedures, lack of technical assistance, and limited coordination among ministries made process of application particularly complicated for municipalities.
- Uncertainty about sustaining running costs of new services and lack of fiscal equalization mechanisms in most countries may affect socio-economically disadvantaged municipalities and their capacities, in the future to maintain new places created in childcare facilities and or/ reducing affordability or quality.
- Labour shortages further represent an obstacle to the actual activation of the places created with the RRF. In particular, the lack of qualified educators in some countries – in part linked to the not-attractive working conditions of the sector – might risk endangering not only the quality of the service provided (e.g. increase of child/staff ratio to compensate shortages) but the availability of the service itself (lack of personnel in some areas).

Coherence

- EU priorities partially guided the measures included in the plans. In the case of Italy, Spain, the RRF investments in ECEC is explicitly linked to the Child Guarantee (CG) action plans. In the case of Poland, no direct link is made with the CG action plans. Yet, the reform of the childcare system refers to the Council Recommendation on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems. By contrast, in Germany, there is no link between the RRF investments and neither the CG action plan nor the 2019 Recommendation on High-quality ECEC.
- Complementary reforms and investments have been included in the Spanish and Polish plan. In the case of Italy and Belgium, the RRF investments explicitly contributes to the implementation of reforms adopted at the national level before the RRF. No explicitly link is found in Germany.
- Poland stands out for its integrated EU funding approach with reforms. Other countries, such as Germany and Belgium have combined RRF funds with national resources in order to increase impact of the investments and expand further the coverage of childcare services. In the case of Italy, national resources have been allocated to cover the recurrent costs of the investments in infrastructure financed with the RRF.

Added value of the interventions

- The primary contribution of the RRF has been to infuse fresh financial resources to support the expansion of childcare facilities. In Italy and Spain, the RRF resources are completely additional, namely without the RRF these investments would have not taken place. In the case of Belgium, the RRF funds are additional and top up already existing national fundings. In Poland, RRF funding are additional and integrate other EU funding – notably from the ESF + and national funding. The exception is Germany, where all funding under the RRF was already previously budgeted for, and thus there is no EU added value as such.

Relevance over time

- RRF will certainly contribute to tackle structural problems facing ECEC systems in country selected, notably the lack of available services, territorial inequalities in coverage with socio-economically disadvantaged areas lagging behind. However, the relevance of the interventions in the future, might depend upon a number of criticalities, several challenges undermining the feasibility of the measures, have arisen during in the initial phases of implementation of the National Reform and Resilience Plans (NRPPs).

Effectiveness

What is the current state of play of the implementation of the measures related to ECEC? Which outputs (M&Ts) have been achieved?

Summary

The implementation progress of measures varies across member states. In Italy, the planned milestone of awarding all public contracts for facility projects by Q22023 (and then active services by Q42025) is delayed, and a request to the European Commission to adjust the timeline is submitted. In Poland two milestones set for Q22022 have been reported as completed by the government but they have not been assessed by the European Commission. In Belgium, works contracts granted for 15% of planned childcare places have been postponed. In Germany, the first milestone has been completed, while a longer timeline has been envisioned for the other milestones and targets. In Spain, the New Organic Law on Education has been adopted and the targets linked to the investment are on track.

In Italy, at this stage, not all municipalities have been able to respect the target of awarding all public contracts for projects, and the Government has requested the European Commission to modify the timeline. Overall, delays started to be cumulated already in 2022. The RRP resource allocation system, via public call, has in fact shown a series of critical issues which have negatively influenced the achievement of the 2023 target. As underlined in an analysis released in November 2022 by the [Italian Parliamentary Budget Office](#)⁴², these critical issues had already emerged in the first half of 2022, with the decision to reopen the public call for projects three times to allow greater participation by local authorities, in particular from the South. Despite these interventions, the ranking of projects to be financed approved at the end of 2022, six months later compared to the initial objective of March 2022, already showed how many of the municipalities with low coverage of childcare service did not participate in the call or decided to present projects' proposal – especially in the South – to finance pre-primary schools rather than nursery.

In Poland, the reform to improve the labour market situation of parents is on track. The [amendment](#)⁴³ to the [Act of 4 February 2011](#)⁴⁴ was adopted in the first half of 2022 and creates a single management system under the Maluch+ programme, bringing together domestic financing, the ESF+ and the RRF under the same umbrella. A second amendment to the 2011 Act is also expected to introduce a framework for quality standards for childcare, including binding educational guidelines and standards of care services for children under three years of age, which will then be publicly consulted and agreed upon by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy and stakeholders. With respect to the investments, the IT system and algorithm for resource allocation have been developed, as well as the independent analysis of quality standards⁴⁵.

In Spain, the new Organic Law on Education⁴⁶ has been adopted already in the first quarter of 2021, i.e. before the submission of the RRF plan. The main changes implied by the approval of this law for early childhood education include the progressive implementation of the first cycle of ECEC through the public provision of services, and the

⁴² <https://www.upbilancio.it/focus-tematico-n-9-25-novembre-2022/>

⁴³ <https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20220001324>

⁴⁴ <https://www.inforlex.pl/dok/tresc,DZU.2022.174.0001324,o-opiece-nad-dziecmi-w-wieku-do-lat-3.html>

⁴⁵ <https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/konsultacje-publiczne-dotyczace-standardow-opieki-nad-dziecmi-w-wieku-do-lat-3>

⁴⁶ <https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2020-17264>

extension of free education to the extent possible. Moreover, it focuses on pupils at risk of poverty or social exclusion, with the aim of ‘gradually implementing the tendency to extend ECEC free access, prioritising the access of pupils at risk of poverty and social exclusion and the situation of low schooling rates’. Finally, it is the first time in Spanish history that the first cycle of ECEC has been recognised as an educational stage, since it is provided that the government will regulate the curriculum and the minimum requirements of the two cycles of ECEC that refer to the qualifications of all workers, the pupil-teacher ratio and the number of places available.

For Germany, the first milestone, the entry into force of the Childcare Financing Act and Federal Financial Assistance Act, is completed⁴⁷. Other milestones and targets have a longer timeline, with the interim on approved and newly created childcare places and investments in equipment to be published by end of 2023. Regions are required to report to the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women, and Youth on the number of approved and additionally created childcare places in daycare facilities and childminding services at the end of the year, differentiated by places for children under three years and places for children from three years until school entry. The report of 2022 is currently being evaluated⁴⁸. The preliminary findings indicate that approximately 145,000 places have been approved in daycare facilities, of which approximately 40,000 are newly established places, indicating that Germany might be on track to create at the end of 2023, 90.000 expected new places. Finally, for Spain, no milestones or targets were envisioned prior to Q22023.

For Belgium, the first milestone, work contracts being granted to 15% of planned childcare places, supposed to be achieved by Q32023, has been delayed in respect of the indicative timeline included in the CID Annex⁴⁹.

The table below summarises the status of the milestones and targets implementation.

Country	Measure	Milestones (M) and Targets (T)	Status
Belgium	Creation and renovation of early childcare infrastructure of the Walloon region	3Q2023 (M) Award of works contracts by operators (crèches) for 15% of newly created childcare places, i.e. 255.	Delayed
		3Q2026 (T) 1 700 new childcare places created as part of the early childcare infrastructure in Wallonia.	On track
Germany	Investment programme Childcare financing 2020-2021: special fund for child day care expansion	4Q2020 (M) Amendments to the Childcare Financing Act and the Federal Financial Assistance Act (<i>KitaFinHG</i>) for the extension of day-care for children have entered into force. The <i>Länder</i> have adopted the federal rules and made them more specific in their <i>Länder</i> regulations.	Completed
		4Q2023 (M) Publication of interim report on approved and created childcare places and investments in equipment (§ 30 (2) and (3) <i>KitaFinHG</i>). The relevant <i>Länder</i> have reported to the federal government on the state of implementation, including on funding, number of childcare places and amount of subsidised equipment, in accordance with monitoring and guidance obligations.	On track
		4Q2025 (T) Submission of final report by the <i>Länder</i> on implementation, after completion of checks on the use of funds. The report confirms that 90 000 newly funded childcare places for children prior to school entry have been created in child day care facilities (<i>Kindertageseinrichtungen</i>) and child day care services (<i>Kindertagespflege</i>) throughout Germany.	On track
Italy	Plan for nurseries, preschools and ECEC services	2Q2023 (M) Award of contract and territorial distribution for nursery, preschool and ECEC services.	Postponed
		4Q2025 (T) Creation of at least 264 480 new places for ECEC services (from birth to six years). With the plan for the construction and redevelopment of kindergartens, the goal is to increase available places, enhancing the educational service for children up to six years old.	On track
Poland	Support for childcare facilities for children up to	2Q2022 (M) Creation and deployment of an operational IT system (or the expansion of an existing system) to support projects of the final recipients of the	Reported as completed by member state but

⁴⁷ FENIX, retrieved 08-09-23

⁴⁸ Interview with Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women

⁴⁹ <https://nextgenbelgium.be/nl/project/plannen-voor-de-oprichting-en-renovatie-van-voorzieningen-voor-kinderopvang>

Country	Measure	Milestones (M) and Targets (T)	Status
	three years of age (nurseries and children's clubs) under Maluch+	financial support, namely entities creating and running childcare institutions, at every stage of their implementation.	not yet assessed by the EC
		2Q2026 (T) Creation and development of infrastructure in the field of childcare for children up to three years of age, consisting of: i) construction or renovation of nurseries and children's clubs (in accordance with the principles of universal design); and ii) purchase of real estate and infrastructure (purchase of land or premises). The target applies to the construction of new facilities, as well as to the renovation and adaptation of existing facilities, for at least 47 500 new childcare places.	On track
	Reform to improve the labour market situation of parents by increasing access to high-quality childcare for children up to the age of three	2Q2022 (M) Entry into force of an act amending the Act of 4 February 2011 on the care of children up to three years of age. This will streamline the management of the financing by: i) implementing a single coherent financing management system for the creation and functioning of childcare services for children up to the age of three; and ii) bringing the management of funds coming from various financing sources together under the Maluch+ programme.	Reported as completed by member state but not yet assessed by the EC
		2Q2023 (M) Independent analysis of the extent to which existing standards of care and education for children up to three years of age allow access to high-quality ECEC systems. The analysis shall take into account the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2019 on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems (2019/C 189/02), and shall be presented in a report to be published by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy. On the basis of the analysis, a framework for quality standards for childcare, including educational guidelines and standards of care services for children under three years of age, shall be prepared and then publicly consulted and agreed upon by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy and stakeholders. Entry into force of an amendment of the Act of 4 February 2011 on the care of children up to three years of age shall make the framework binding for childcare providers, following the outcome of consultations and agreement of the Ministry of Family and Social Policy and stakeholders.	On track
Spain	Promoting early childhood education and care	4Q2023 (T) Budget award to regional/local entities of EUR 670.990 million to promote the first cycle of early childhood education through the creation of new publicly owned places	On track
		4Q2024 (T) Promotion of the first cycle of early childhood education through the completed creation of new publicly owned places (new construction and/or reform/rehabilitation and equipment for at least 60 000 places compared with the end of 2020, and of these operating expenditure for up to 40 000 places until 2024).	On track
	New Organic Law on Education	1Q2021 (M) The objective of the Organic Law on Education is to establish a renewed legal system that, under the principles of quality, equity and inclusion, increases educational and training opportunities and contributes to the improvement of educational outcomes	Fulfilled

Source: own elaboration based on FENIX.

Summary

According to our estimates, these are the following expected results by country:

- Italy: Creation of 237,500-244,300 ECEC places, enhancing coverage. This could elevate public or publicly funded childcare availability from 13.3% to 27.6%.
- Poland: RRF and ESF+ will establish 102,577 new childcare places, taking coverage from 20.2% to 29.9%, progressing towards the national 33% target by 2030⁵⁰.

⁵⁰ <https://www.gov.pl/web/rownetraktowanie/krajowy-program-dzialan-na-rzecz-rownego-traktowania>

- Belgium (Wallonia): The RRF expansion will boost regional coverage from 28.2% to 32.5%, nearly reaching the 33% regional target.
- Germany: The RRF investment aims to elevate childcare coverage to 38.3%, increasing affordability for 30.3% of the population.
- Spain: The Spanish RRF plans foresee an increase in childcare coverage from 40.2% to 46%, possibly exceeding the 50% target in the Child Guarantee National Action Plan⁵¹ and expanding coverage of affordable services to 26,5%.

There will be a significant reduction in existing territorial gaps in the offer of affordable childcare services in Poland (among provinces), Germany and Spain (among regions)⁵². Decreases will be moderate in Italy (among provinces) and less significant in Belgium (among municipalities). In Poland, Spain and Italy, socio-economically disadvantaged territories will increase coverage to a larger extent.

The analysis shows that the RRF investment is expected to significantly increase the coverage of childcare services in all five Member States selected for the case study. Among the countries analysed, Italy stands out as having a very limited availability of public or subsidized – i.e., more affordable, and accessible - services (13.3%) As a result of the RRF investment, Italy will create an estimated 237.500 to 244.300 new places in both childcare and pre-primary schools, 185.629 of which will be for children below age 3. This will increase overall coverage (public and private provision) from 27,2% to 41,6%, possibly increasing participation to close to the 2030 Barcelona target of 45% for the participation of children under 3 years old in early childhood education and care and closing the gap with the target established in the national child guarantee action plan, of 50%⁵³. Availability of accessible places will increase from 13,3% to 27,6%. Similarly, Spain has used the RRF funds to strengthen its supply of public/subsidized services. The creation of 65,382 new places is estimated to result in an increase in coverage of public/subsidized places, currently at 20,9%, to 26,5%, and an increase in total coverage (public and private) to 45.7%. In Belgium (Wallonia), where public or subsidized childcare is provided to 28,6% of children below age 3, the RRF, in combination with regional funds, will create approximately 3.200 new places. This should increase coverage of public/subsidized places to 32,5% and total coverage to 41,9%. Poland will create - through a combination of RRF and ESF+ investments - 102.577 new childcare places, increasing total coverage from 20,2% to 29,9%. Finally, in Germany, total coverage will increase from 34.4% to 38,1% (30,3% will be sponsored/subsidized) through the creation of 90 000 additional places.

Table 8 3: Summary statistics of the impact of RRF investments on the availability of childcare places

Country	Coverage (%) (subsidized /accessible)	Number of subsidized/ accessible places	Investment RRF (EUR mln)	Estimated total number of subsidized /accessible places reached	Estimated Coverage % (subsidized)	Estimated Coverage % (total subsid.+private)
Germany	26.6	626.121	1,000*	716.121	30,3	38,1%
Italy	13.3	172.201	2,519	357.830	27,6	41,6%
Poland	20,2**	212.377	1,703*	314.954	29,9	29,9%
Spain	20.9	244.319	667	309.033	26,5	45,7%
Belgium (Wallonia)	28,6	26.160	61,4*	29.728	32,5	41,9%

Source: Own elaboration.

* National funds and/or ESF+ have been added to RRF investments

** In Poland, disaggregated statistics at sub-national level about public vs. private are not available. It is important to note that RRF will create also private services, but subsidized by public financing, in order to lower the parental fees, and therefore make services more affordable.

⁵¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/ajax/countries.jsp?langId=en&intPagId=5538>

⁵² For ES and DE data on places to be created are available only at regional level. For BE, IT and PL data are available at municipal level. However, for IT and PL the large number of municipalities involved (more than 2.000), make reporting at this sub-national level complicated and potentially not explicative. As a result, we decided to aggregate results at the NUTS-3 level (provinces).

⁵³ <https://ec.europa.eu/social/ajax/countries.jsp?langId=en&intPagId=5527>

The measures included in the NRRPs will also contribute to the reduction of existing territorial gaps in the offer of affordable childcare services. This is particularly the case in Poland, where coverage will increase to a larger extent in provinces and municipalities that are currently lagging behind. Specifically, municipalities with coverage below the national average (20%) will see a growth in coverage of 61%, compared to 39% for the provinces where coverage is above the national average. In Italy, according to our estimates, the distribution of new childcare places will largely benefit a number of provinces where coverage of public or publicly funded childcare services is low or basically not existing (between 1% and 5%). This is mostly the case in Southern regions and should enable the closing of the gap with Northern provinces in some cases. However, the increase is not equally distributed between Southern provinces. For instance, the provinces of Reggio Calabria (2%), Napoli (3,2%), Palermo (4,9%), Catania (5,2%) or Caltanissetta (5,7%) will increase their coverage of public or subsidized services by a limited amount, to reach approximately 10-15%. Similarly, in Belgium (Wallonia), the variance in coverage between municipalities will only partially decrease. This is because around 20% of communes selected to receive RRF funding or regional financing already had a coverage well above 33%, while 61 municipalities with an actual coverage of public or subsidized services below 30% (23% of the total number of municipalities in Wallonia) were not selected to receive any funding. This is because the selection criteria for municipalities to receive RRF funds have been made based on data on coverage of 2019, while in the meantime, some municipalities have increased their offer. This also includes medium-size municipalities. In Germany, the expansion of childcare services will be larger in the Western Länder, such as Saarland, Schleswig-Holstein, Bavaria, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Baden-Württemberg, Bremen and North Rhine-Westphalia, which are typically lagging behind, and will increase the number of places between 15% and 21,5%. In comparison, in Eastern regions, which have the highest coverage rates, growth in places will not exceed 10%. Nevertheless, regional gaps will remain significant. Finally, in Spain, gaps among regions will be moderately reduced. The plan, according to our estimates, is expected to benefit regions that currently have the lowest public coverage, such as Murcia, the Canary Islands, Ceuta, Castilla y Leon, and the Balearic Islands, to a larger extent. There will be an estimated increase in new public places between 40% and 85%. In contrast, regions such as Galicia, Catalonia, Madrid Community and Basque Country, which already have a high presence of childcare services, will see a limited expansion (no more than 25% increase in the coverage of public places).

Table 94: Correlation table of current and projected new ECEC places and other social variables, by country and NUTS level.

	Belgium	Spain	Poland	Germany	Italy
Correlation old coverage vs. Increase % (new places) (subid.)	-0.39	-0.84	-0.94	-0.96	-0.54
Correlation old coverage (subsid.) vs. AVG income	0.07	0.52	0.15	N/A	N/A
Correlation new coverage (subsid.) vs. AVG income	0.08	0.36	0.033	N/A	N/A
Correlation old coverage (subsid.) vs. Female unempl.	-0.11	-0.47	-0.55	0.06	-0.52
Correlation new coverage (subsid.) vs. Female unempl.	-0.07	-0.44	-0.46	0.06	-0.10
NUTS level	Municipalities	Regions	Municipal. (1) Provinces (2)	Regions	Provinces

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Another important effect of the expansion of childcare services, is the increase in access to employment opportunities for women. In some Member States, stronger growth in public/subsidized places will happen in territories where female unemployment is higher, potentially contributing to reduced gender disparities in the labour market. In Poland, for instance, there is an existing negative correlation between coverage and female unemployment, which will be reduced after the RRF interventions. As an example, the 4 regions with female unemployment rates above 8% (Warmian-Mazurian, Subcarpathian, Lubelskie and Świętokrzyskie) will see an increase in the number of childcare places of 75% on average. In contrast, for those with unemployment rates below 5%, growth will be equivalent to 45%.

Equally, in Italy, major growth in the offer of childcare services will be observed in provinces where female unemployment is higher, especially in Southern regions. It is important to underline that the average of Italian employment rate for women in the 35-44 age group is 62.4% and varies significantly in the north (74.5%) and in the South (42.1%)⁵⁴ As an example, the provinces Vibo Valentia, Cosenza and Crotone are characterized by coverage rates below 5%, while female unemployment rates are among the highest in Italy (between 24% and 37% while the national average is 18%). These regions will reach new coverage rates between 25% and 40% as a result of RRF funding. In Belgium, Spain and Germany, public coverage will remain substantially higher in those territories where the share of working women is also higher. For Germany, this is mainly due to the fact that Eastern Länder, although they are socio-economically disadvantaged have, historically, more developed ECEC systems.

What barriers to implementation or facilitating factors can be identified? To what extent have external factors hindered the implementation of investments or reforms?

Summary

In all analysed countries, there have been some delays in the implementation of the investments to expand ECEC services. The main implementation challenges were faced in terms of participation of municipalities in tenders, either because of funding mechanisms (municipalities need to anticipate costs), the lack of local capacity, or due to higher costs linked to rising inflation.

Although we are in a preliminary phase of the RRP's implementation, barriers are already emerging.

In Italy, the first concerns emerged with the award of contracts for projects. Funds are disbursed directly to municipalities, following their participation in a public call. A regional ceiling has been established at the national level and a specific target for childcare facilities has been identified, aiming at avoiding the overconcentration of resources in certain regions. Municipalities have to advance the funding, which will later be reimbursed by the government upon certification of the completion of works and the creation of and activation of the services. This funding mechanism discouraged a large number of municipalities from applying for funding due to a lack of certainty over financial resources⁵⁵. The first public call for tender was published on 2 December 2021 (no. 343), with the aim of allocating EUR 2.4 billion for the building or renovation of facilities to increase the number of childcare places. EUR 0.6 billion were allocated for the creation or renovation of infrastructures destined to children aged three to five years old. As a result of the difficulties already mentioned, the call had to be relaunched three times in 2022 due to a low response, especially for projects to expand childcare facilities, which was mainly observed in the Southern territories. The final results of the public call, which include projects approved, admitted with reserve (of further verification for final approval) or rejected, were published in December 2022⁵⁶. The ranking of the projects to be funded, approved at the end of 2022, showed that many municipalities with low coverage did not participate in the call or focused their projects - especially in the South - on pre-schools instead of childcare services. The main reasons for this low response were:

- the tight timing for the presentation of projects and then for awarding public contracts to start work;
- the complexity of application procedures, for which local administrations very often lack capacity; and
- the limited information and technical assistance provided to them by the government. Focusing on the latter, the profiles of the technicians employed by the Ministry in charge are too generic, and they generally have little knowledge of administrative procedures⁵⁷.
- The lack of financial resources – especially in smaller municipalities in the South – to cover the running costs accompanied to infrastructural investments

In Poland, the implementation of the NRPP is still at an early stage. Information about the effective intake of municipalities of the funds allocated to the Maluch+ programme are not yet available. Yet, similar criticalities observed

⁵⁴ Data provided by the Italian representative of the Ministry of Education and Merit during the Roundtable of the 19th of September.

⁵⁵ Interviews with representative of Italian local authorities (municipalities)

⁵⁶ <https://www.miur.gov.it/-/decreto-direttoriale-n-110-del-29-dicembre-2022>

⁵⁷ Ibidem. Administrators indicated that a system similar to that used for EU structural funds would have been more helpful.

in Italy, might also emerge in Poland. Despite the RRF reform aims to create a stable financing system for municipalities to finance future running costs of creches, municipalities remain uncertain about the future financing of costs for running the new places, and so might renounce to apply for funding⁵⁸. In Belgium (Wallonia), the allocation per commune was established based on both coverage and socio-economic conditions⁵⁹. The selected municipalities then needed to express interest and apply for funding, with actual financing granted through a call for projects. Initially, 35 municipalities were identified to receive RRF funds. However, some of them did not apply. As a result, the Wallonia has decreased the number of *communes* beneficiaries to 31. In addition, six projects were abandoned, accounting for 90 new places. The region is planning to assign funds to other projects. Delays in the implementation (award of contracts for 15% of newly created childcare places, has been postponed) are mainly due the complexity of regulations and public procurement procedures for these types of projects, along with increase in prices due to inflation. The Walloon regional government had to provide additional funds as well as ease regulations for municipalities in order to ensure effective implementation of the plan⁶⁰.

In Spain while the criteria for the distribution of the second tranche⁶¹ (EUR 331.03 million)⁶² remain the same, the allocation for Basque Country is not included because the region decided to opt out of the funds for the second tranche (i.e., for the year 2022). In addition, as per the case of Italy, increasing costs due to inflation might have a negative impact on projects⁶³, and therefore force either a reduction in the number of places or the identification of additional resources (that might be challenging for municipalities in socio-economically disadvantaged areas). Some areas (e.g. Castilla y León) have decided to convert empty primary school places into childcare centres. This might be a very agile solution because refurbishing spaces already used for education purposes require less construction work⁶⁴. Yet, some barriers remain. In particular, due to the tight timing for project implementation, applications from local authorities were paralysed because of the lack of knowledge or reluctance to implement the DNSH. In addition, the low administrative capacities of municipalities, especially of small ones, might have undermined applications for funds, and could in future hinder implementation of projects⁶⁵.

Finally, in Germany, both the states and the local authorities had challenges due to increased costs for construction, and delays in supply of building material⁶⁶. These challenges have led to delays in the implementation of construction projects under the program. Consequently, the Act on Federal Financial Assistance for the Expansion of Daycare for Children (KitaFinHG) has been amended to extend the completion of subsidized measures until December 31, 2023, and the allocation of federal funds by the states until June 30, 2024.

⁵⁸ Interviews with Polish local authorities

⁵⁹ According to the representative of the Wallonia region, other criteria have been also considered to select projects, based on the accessibility of the service, as an example, whether a public transport is available in the surroundings or bicycle track, a parking lots, a school, or a training center or social services. Information provided during the Roundtable of the 19th of October 2023?

⁶⁰ Information provided by the representative of the región of Wallonia during the Roundtable of the 19th of October 2023.

⁶¹ BOE (2022), *Resolución de 28 de diciembre de 2022, de la Secretaría de Estado de Educación, por la que se publica el Acuerdo de la Conferencia Sectorial de Educación de 13 de diciembre de 2022, por el que se aprueba la propuesta de distribución territorial y los criterios de reparto de los créditos gestionados por Comunidades Autónomas destinados al Programa de impulso de escolarización en el primer ciclo de educación infantil, prioritariamente para niñas y niños de 1 y 2 años, con nuevas plazas de titularidad pública, en el ejercicio presupuestario 2022, en el marco del componente 21 "modernización y digitalización del sistema educativo, incluida la educación temprana de 0-3 años" del Mecanismo de Recuperación y Resiliencia*, No 5, pp. 2869-2875, <https://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2023/01/06/pdfs/BOE-A-2023-444.pdf>

⁶² Of which EUR 323.34 million are to be distributed.

⁶³ Interview with representatives of Spanish local authorities.

⁶⁴ Interview with the Representative of the Ministry of Educational and Vocational Training.

⁶⁵ Interviews with representative of Spanish local authorities and Ministry of Education and Vocational Training.

⁶⁶ Interview with the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth of German.

Coherence

To what extent can complementarities or synergies between the investments and reforms on ECEC contained within the plans be identified?

Summary

Complementary reforms and investments have been included in the Spanish and Polish plan. In the case of Italy and Belgium, the RRF investments explicitly contribute to the implementation of reforms adopted at the national level before the RRF. No explicit link is found in Germany.

Only Poland and Spain have coupled investments in childcare with a reform of the institutional setting. In the cases of Italy and Belgium, the reforms are formally included in the action plans for the Child Guarantee and the RRF investments are explicitly linked to these reforms. In contrast, in the case of Germany, we have no indication of any intervention.

In Spain, the RRF investment contributes to the application of the new Organic Law on Education, aiming at increasing the offer of quality and affordable public or publicly-funded places for children below age 3, in particular most vulnerable ones. Poland will also develop an integrated reform programme integrating EU funds and national resources. The purpose is to increase the accessibility of childcare facilities for children aged up to three, while ensuring a high level of education and quality standards in the provision of services. As detailed above, the reform is fully integrated with the investment since it aims to streamline the management of domestic and external funds for the creation and functioning of childcare facilities, implementing stable, long-term domestic financing of childcare services for children up to the age of three, and introducing a set of binding minimum education and quality standards for childcare facilities.

In Wallonia, the 2019 reform of childcare services has the objective of increasing the quality, offer and affordability of services. The investment included in the NRRP has been incorporated as part of an investment strategy called 'Plan Equilibre 2021-2026'⁶⁷, more precisely within the 'Plan Cigogne +5200'⁶⁸, which aims to create more than 5 200 new childcare places. Four additional *communes*⁶⁹ have been added to the 35 identified in the plan, thus making 39 *communes* that will benefit from the plan's intervention. The Plan Cigogne has also set up mechanisms to provide higher funding to municipalities and reduce parental contributions for low-income families to strengthen further affordability. Furthermore, in April 2023 the government of the French-speaking Community introduced an emergency measure to support childcare centres facing financial difficulties, to ensure continued access for families as part of further . With respect to Italy, the explicit link between the RRF plan and the CG is completely in line with the strategic approach to childcare policies that the country has been engaged in since 2015. Sabatinelli and Pavolini (2021)⁷⁰ provide a good explanation of the politics behind family policies, especially after COVID-19 and the adoption of the RRF plan. In this respect, Italy's RRF investment is largely coherent with the ongoing reform of the childcare institutional setting, including the decision to allocate a structural budget for the hiring of qualified personnel to work in childcare facilities.

To what extent have synergies between the RRF measures on ECEC and other EU funds (e.g., ESF+) and national funds been identified and exploited?

Summary

⁶⁷ <http://actionsociale.wallonie.be/petite-enfance/plan-equilibre-2021-2026>

⁶⁸ <https://www.one.be/professionnel/milieux-daccueil/plan-cigogne-5200/>

⁶⁹ Amay, Dour, Liège and Merbes-le-Château.

⁷⁰ Sabatinelli, S., and Pavolini, E. (2021), 'Le politiche familiari fra servizi all'infanzia e conciliazione famiglia-lavoro ai tempi del Covid-19', *Social Policies*, No 2, pp. 305-326. Available at: <https://www.rivisteweb.it/doi/10.7389/101682>

Poland stands out for its integrated EU funding approach with the reforms. Other countries, such as Germany and Belgium have combined RRF funds with national resources in order to increase impact of the investments and expand further the coverage of childcare services. In the case of Italy, national resources have been allocated to cover the recurrent costs of the investments in infrastructure under the RRF.

Poland is the only case where an integrated EU funding approach has been adopted. In addition to the above mentioned the amendment to the 2011 Act that creates a single management system under the Maluch+ Programme, bringing together domestic financing, the ESF+ and the RRF under the same umbrella, a second amendment to the 2011 Act is also expected to introduce a framework for quality standards for childcare, including binding educational guidelines and standards of care services for children under three years of age, which will then be publicly consulted and agreed upon by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy and stakeholders. Finally, by the second quarter of 2024, the reform plans an additional amending act to the Act of 4 February 2011 to ensure stable long-term funding from national resources for the establishment and operation of childcare services for children up to the age of three.

In the case of Belgium and Germany, the RRF financing is combined with national and regional funds, in order to ensure adequate resources to expand services and reform the ECEC system. In the case of Belgium, the RRF fundings completes the already existing line of funding to implement the 2021-2025 programme of the Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance. In the case of Germany, the RRF investment completes an already budgeted investment of EUR 1 billion. In the case of Italy, the government initially allocated EUR 900 million to support the running costs related to the infrastructure investment financed via the RRF. In addition, while an integrated strategy to coordinate RRF and ESF+ funding has not been adopted at national level, still some regions, in particular the Emilia Romagna region, put in place a system to guarantee access to financing for municipalities under the RRF and the ESF+ and thus exploit synergies.

To what extent were the proposed RRP measures guided by the EU's priorities enshrined in the Council Recommendation on High-quality ECEC, Council Recommendation on the Establishment of a European Child Guarantee and the most recent Council Recommendation on Early Childhood Education and Care: Barcelona Targets for 2030?

Summary

The European Union provides guidance to member states in the field of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) through key documents, including the 2019 Council Recommendation on High-quality ECEC, the 2021 Council Recommendation on the European Child Guarantee, and the 2022 Council Recommendation on Early Childhood Education and Care, establishing the new "Barcelona Targets" for 2030. The national recovery and resilience plans of Belgium, Italy, Poland, and Spain align with some of these priorities. For instance, Italy's plan connects its ECEC investment to the Italian Child Guarantee action plan, aiming to expand childcare services and accessibility, with a focus on reducing fees. Spain and Belgium also integrate ECEC measures into their respective Child Guarantee action plans. Poland instead refers to the 2019 High-quality ECEC recommendations, while Germany's plan refers only to the Country Specific Recommendations 2019.

In the ECEC domain there are the main EU documents that could be used by the member states in preparing their plans: the 2019 Council Recommendation on High-quality ECEC⁷¹, the 2021 Council Recommendation on the European Child Guarantee⁷² and the most recent 2022 Council Recommendation on Early Childhood Education and

⁷¹ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019H0605\(01\)&rid=4](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019H0605(01)&rid=4)

⁷² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021H1004>

Care: Barcelona Targets for 2030⁷³. In the five Member States studied, we find that EU priorities partially guided the measures included in the plans.

In the case of Italy, the RRF investment in ECEC is explicitly linked to the Italian Child Guarantee (CG) action plan. The latter defines the Italian strategy for children in need, including the provision of childcare policies. The objective of the CG action includes extending the coverage of full-time places in early childhood education services to over 33%. The RRF investment is thus expected to be accompanied by a series of legislative actions to be adopted in the CG framework.

The first action consists of: i) the definition by 2030 of homogeneous criteria for access to public and private certified childcare services that benefit from public funding; ii) the coordinated development of Equivalent Economic Situation Indicator (ISEE)-based scale fee systems; and iii) the establishment of maximum levels of financial contribution by families to the operating costs of the services, with a view to gradually extending free access to childcare services up to the ISEE amount of EUR 26 000.

Second, the CG plan promotes the development of region-municipality guidance by 2026 for awareness raising, promotion and family outreach activities for children's education services. To this end, the RRF investment is accompanied by additional national funding, including the National Fund for the integrated system 0-6 (Decree No 65, 2017), the Municipal Solidarity Fund (Law No 178, 30 December 2020), the Fund for nurseries and preschools at the Ministry of Interior (Article 1, paragraph 59 et seq., Law No 160, 27 December 2019) and the ESF+.

Similarly, the measures introduced in the Spanish plan are presented together with the CG action plan, and in particular with the objective to expand the coverage of the childcare through an increase in publicly owned places by 2030, prioritising access for pupils at risk of poverty or social exclusion, with an extension to rural areas.

Also in Belgium, the RRF investment is linked to the CG action plan. The latter includes a new strategy to improve childcare accessibility that is based on the 2021-2025 programme of the Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance (ONE) and includes seven actions, the first one of which is creating and subsidising new childcare places (in part financed via the RRF), giving priority to disadvantaged areas where coverage is often the lowest. Both the CG and the RRF are explicitly linked to the 2019 new legal framework regarding free education, which aims at enhancing free access to education by limiting the perimeter of school costs that can be claimed for pupils in nursery education and making additional resources available to schools in return.

In the case of Poland, no direct link is made with the CG action plans. Yet, the reform of the childcare system explicitly refers by the Council Recommendation on High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Systems and aims to put in place a framework for quality standards for childcare, including educational guidelines and standards of care services for children under three years of age.

The German plan, instead makes a specific reference only to addressing the Country Specific Recommendations of 2019 which refers to the indeed to invest in education, including Early Childcare Education and Care (see recital 8).

⁷³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022H1220%2801%29>

EU Added Value

To what extent would the investments and reforms in ECEC still have been implemented in the absence of the RRF?

Summary

The primary contribution of the RRF has been to infuse fresh financial resources to support the expansion of childcare facilities. In Italy and Spain, the RRF resources are completely additional, namely without the RRF these investments would have not taken place. In the case of Belgium, the RRF funds are additional and top up already existing national fundings. In Poland, RRF funding are additional and integrate other EU funding – notably from the ESF + and national funding. The exception is Germany, where all funding under the RRF was already previously budgeted for, and thus there is no EU added value as such.

The extent of EU added value varies across countries. In the German case, all of the measures financed through the RRF had already been included in the national recovery plan and were fully budgeted for, meaning that the refinancing through the RRF added no specific value. However, in the other countries, available resources for childcare expansion were significantly increased through the RRF. In these countries, as confirmed by all interviewees, the RRF thus added significantly to efforts to improve the coverage of childcare services, and measures would likely not have been implemented in its absence⁷⁴.

Relevance

To what extent will the RRF measures on ECEC remain relevant and feasible to implement until 2026?

Summary

RRF will certainly contribute to tackle structural problems facing ECEC systems in country selected, notably the lack of available services, territorial inequalities in coverage with socio-economically disadvantaged areas lagging behind. However, the relevance of the interventions in the future, might depend upon a number of criticalities, several challenges undermining the feasibility of the measures. These challenges include tight project timelines, a lack of prioritization for funding in disadvantaged areas, rising infrastructure costs due to inflation, complex procedures, inadequate technical assistance, and uncertainty regarding sustaining operational costs. The potential insufficiency of budget allocations for covering costs of running of new services, and the absence of fiscal equalization mechanisms is also a major concern for municipalities. These factors may deter local authorities from applying for funding and/or in the future, force some to privatize services, reducing affordability, or quality, undermining the potential impact of childcare on both children's development and parents' opportunities to access labour market and increase households' income. At the same time, staff shortages might affect the implementation of the measures adopted under the RRF with the risk that the new places created are not activated.

⁷⁴ Information have been collected through interviews.

The extent to which the measures included in the RRP will remain relevant in the future depend on how well they respond to key structural challenges in the provision of childcare services. In the case of the countries under study, two structural challenges regard the low availability of the service, especially in socio-economic disadvantaged areas, as well as the low affordability of the service, largely due to the low coverage of public or publicly funded services. Since the RRF intervenes to increase the availability of public and publicly funded services, with a specific focus on territories with lower coverage, we expect the measures to remain relevant until 2026. This notwithstanding, the relevance could be hampered by persisting implementation challenges.

In Poland, a key challenge limiting access to childcare is represented by the low affordability of the service, in large part provided by privates, and in part also due the lack of resources for municipality to cover running costs. The latter in particular has been indicated by municipalities as a problem that might hamper the effective implementation of the RRF and so the relevance of the measures put in place⁷⁵. To address this challenge, the Ministry of Family and Social Policy has put in place resources to subsidize childcare institutions to cover running costs. Such resources are available for three years, and amount to PLN 837 per month per place. The conditions to access to these resources is to cap parental financial contributions. Moreover, parents are entitled to obtain a subsidy of PLN 500 per month for 2 years (or PLN 1,000 per month for one year, or a reduction of the monthly fee for an amount of PLN 400 per month) under the Family Care Capital scheme, financed by the national budget.

The problem of covering running costs emerge as well in Italy. In this case, the Italian Government has planned to use part of RRF allocation (900 million) to finance running costs of new places. In addition, regular transfers from central government to municipalities, channelled through the 'Municipal Solidarity Fund', have been incremented, to cover the costs of additional places created. The objective of the Solidarity Fund is to ensure for each municipality or group of municipalities to cover the running costs and guarantee access to childcare services for at least 33% of children below age 3 (*Livelli Essenziali delle Prestazioni* - LEP). However, according to our interviewees, the quota of funds assigned to cover running costs is not adequate and, secondly, there is very limited financial equalisation mechanisms to provide higher resources to municipalities with less financial means (the criteria to allocate this quota has not been established yet). Lack of appropriate information, along with uncertainties in relation to the accessibility and durability of the regular financial contribution from the Central Government might have already discouraged a number of municipalities from applying for RRF funds, and in the future⁷⁶, undermine activation of services, or alternatively push local authorities to privatize provision or reducing costs by lowering quality. It is important to underline, in this respect, that quality costs are mostly determined by personnel's salaries and working conditions. However, a specific law has been adopted established the minimum requirement for accessing childcare workforce, equivalent to ISCED 6⁷⁷ qualification⁷⁸, with a specific specialization on early learning and care for young children (a similar dynamic can be observed also in Belgium-Wallonia Poland, and Spain). Therefore, the contrast between increase in qualifications' requirements, and decrease in working conditions, might fuel staff shortage, which is already acute in most of EU members states.

In Spain, many regions decided to allocate resources following only the demand from municipalities⁷⁹. This might persist or even increase inequalities within regions. In addition, as per the case of Italy, allocation of funds from RRF to cover running costs is temporary and will be phased out soon. Among the main preoccupation of municipalities there is precisely the uncertainty about the capability of ensuring, through local resources, adequate financing for

⁷⁵ According to the information provided by Polish experts during the Roundtable of the 19th of September, some municipalities may also not be interested in investing in childcare, due to demographic changes, as well as because home care is preferred over childcare especially for very young children, as a result of cultural norms. This might reduce efficacy of the plan in areas, for instance rural, where these dynamics are more present.

⁷⁶ Interviews with representative of Italian municipalities

⁷⁷ In the International Standard Classification of Education, level 6 corresponds to bachelors' degree or equivalent tertiary education level.

⁷⁸ In the International Standard Classification of Education, level 6 corresponds to bachelors' degree or equivalent tertiary education level.

⁷⁹ Interview with Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and Spanish local authorities

running costs. This might also increase inequalities between municipalities with greater and lower spending capacities⁸⁰. Finally, data about coverage (and expansion of services) at sub-regional level are not available at central level, unless regions are willing to communicate these data to the Ministry (but they are not obliged to). This lack of communication might affect the transparency of the programme, in the future. Similarly in Germany, the responsibility for implementing the use of financial assistance lies with each respective state, which has issued a specific administrative regulation for local implementation. The applications and approvals are also processed by the state⁸¹.

⁸⁰ Information provided by the Spanish expert during the Roundtable of the 19th of September.

⁸¹ Ibidem

Annex 1: Interviewees

Stakeholder category	Country	Date of the interview
Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth	Germany	07-07
Municipality of Bologna	Italy	18-07
Municipality of Firenze	Italy	07-08
Sec. General Association of Italian Municipalities	Italy	01-08
Municipality of Warsaw	Poland	19-07
Municipality in the Western Border	Poland	05-08
Ministry of Family and Social Policy	Poland	28-04
Municipality of Barcelona	Spain	26-07
Murcia Regio	Spain	20-04
Ministry of Education and Vocational Training	Spain	28-06
DG EAC	EU	07-06

Annex 2: Methodology to produce estimates.

The Methodology used to estimate the number of places created in each of the five selected MS through RRF funds (combined with national funds and ESF+):

Belgium

We calculated the number of places created in each municipality of Wallonia, taking list of projects approved by the Office Nationale de l'Enfance, under the Plan Cigogne +5300 (<http://actionsociale.wallonie.be/petite-enfance/plan-equilibre-2021-2026>), which also indicate the amount received per each project, and the number of places created. We aggregated data at municipal level, in order to estimate the increase in the number of places, and in coverage. We also calculate the percentage increase in each municipality and the correlation between coverage of childcare places, female unemployment rates, average disposable income per capita, ex ante (before RRF – funded intervention) and ex post. We consider all new places public or publicly funded, because the NRPP for Wallonia, explicitly indicate that funds must be destined to create places in these types of facilities.

Germany.

Since there is no indication of the number of places that is intended to be create per each Land, we estimate this number based on the investment allocation to each of the Lands as established in the government delegated legislation (German government, [2020](#)) and on the infrastructures' costs (average cost per one new place built) obtained by dividing the total allocation and the total estimated places created. It is important to outline that the RRF contribution can cover a maximum of 54% of the investment costs. As a result, the cost per place is higher than just the ratio $1000000000/90000$ ^[1]. The cost per place is estimated at which is equivalent to 20.576 Euro. We kept this cost as standard, because we did not have costs per land, materials, for each Land. In addition, we assumed that the new places will be sponsored. We therefore calculate the number of places created through the RRF combine with the regular budget allocated by the Federal Government, in each Land, the increase in the number of places, and in coverage. We assume that new places will be public or sponsored, since in the last decade, the tendency has been to expand childcare through this provision's modality. We also calculate the percentage increase in each province, and the correlation between coverage of childcare places and unemployment rates, ex ante (before RRF – funded intervention) and ex post.

^[1] This ratio is calculated by dividing the total envelope of the investment programme (i.e., EUR 1 bn. EUR 0.5 billion from the RRP and EUR 0.5 billion from the national budget) by the total number of places to be created (i.e., 90,000).

Italy.

We used the same methodology adopted by the Parliamentary Office of Budget, illustrated in the *Focus Tematico* n° 9 / 25 novembre 2022. The calculation starts from the total financed amount under RRF and the distribution of funds to each municipality (<https://pnrr.istruzione.it/awiso/asili/>). We consider the cost of works/infrastructures development, to be equivalent to the 70% of the overall funding amount. The gross area is then estimated, considering the cost of works/infrastructures and divided by a minimum of 1,300 euros/sqm and a maximum of 2,400 euros/sqm (as indicated in Public Notice No. 48047), with an average value of 1,850 euros/sqm for interventions related to demolition and reconstruction, new construction, and building extensions. For redevelopment, conversion, and safety improvement interventions, the range varies between 500 and 1,300 euros/sqm, with an average value of 900 euros/sqm. The number of places created is then estimated by dividing the value of gross areas by the number of children per square meter, based on regional regulations for childcare and national regulations for preschools. Since

many regions do not define a fixed number of children per square meter but rather a range between a minimum and a maximum value, we have considered two scenarios: Scenario 1, applying the minimum square meters per child value in each region, resulting in a higher number of places; and Scenario 2, applying the maximum square meters per child value in each region, resulting in a lower number of places. For each of the two scenarios, we have calculated three different values related to the number of positions created based on the maximum gross area (minimum cost per sqm), minimum gross area (maximum cost per sqm), and central gross area (average cost per sqm). We therefore aggregated municipal data at provincial level, in order to calculate the number of places created through the RRF in each Italian Province, the increase in the number of places (considering the estimate Scenario 1, average value), and in coverage. We assume that new places will be public or publicly funded. Although there is no indication pertaining the final provider of services, the fact that funds for running costs of new places created have been allocated to municipalities indicates the intention of keep services public or managed by private, but publicly funded. We also calculate the percentage increase in each province, and the correlation between coverage of childcare places and female unemployment rates, ex ante (before RRF – funded intervention) and ex post.

Poland.

We used available public database of the Maluch+ programme (<https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina/konsultacje-algorytmu-podzialu-srodkow-dla-gmin-w-programie-maluch-2022-2029>), containing the actual number of childcare places in each municipality, the allocation of RRF, ESF+ and national funds to each local authority in order to expand the offer, the perspective coverage. We aggregate these data at provincial level, and calculate the percentage increase in each province, and the correlation between coverage of childcare places, female unemployment rates, average yearly per capita net income, ex ante (before RRF – funded intervention) and ex post. Although funds will be also disbursed to private entities, public subsidies will be available to private providers to substantially lower costs for families, and increase affordability.

Spain.

The Spanish NRRP indicates that the envelope dedicated to ECEC will create 65,382 new places. For 40.000 of those places the RRF will cover both the costs of infrastructure and the running costs, while for 25.382 the RRF funds cover only costs of infrastructure. We calculated the total costs for infrastructures which is 519 million Euro, and for running costs 146 million c.a., considering the average infrastructure cost per place that is 7.952 Euro, and the average cost for running one place equivalent to 3.666 Euro (Spanish Government, [2021](#)). We consider the first two tranches of distribution per region (ibid, 2021; [2022](#)), and this ratio equal for the third tranche, to calculate the total amount allocated to each region under RRF. We then subtracted the amount for operating costs and calculate the number of places created. The estimate coincides with that provided by the agreement of the Spanish national government and the autonomous communities in the Sectoral Conference of Education (BOE, [2021](#)). We then calculate the percentage increase of places in each region, and the correlation between coverage of childcare places, female unemployment rates, and per capita net income, ex ante (before RRF – funded intervention) and ex post. In the case of Spain, NRPPs explicitly indicate that funds must be destined to create places in public or publicly funded facilities.

Annex 3: Tables with estimates (five selected MS)

Key statistics on the impact of Wallonia RRF investments on the availability of childcare places

Commune	Coverage (total)	Coverage (subsidies)	Financing RRF (EUR)	Financing Nat. Budget (EUR)	New % coverage (sub).	New % coverage (tot).	Increase coverage (subsidies) %	Distance to reach 33% Wallonia Target (subsidies)	Women Unemployment	AVG income per capita
Aiseau-Presles	22,5	22,5	0,0	0,0	22,5	22,5	0%	10,5	14,5	17132
Amay	28,0	11,3	652860,8	0,0	17,2	33,9	53%	15,8	14	17991
Amblève	26,1	13,6	0,0	0,0	13,6	26,1	0%	19,4	3,2	18717
Andenne	33,7	31,0	279797,5	0,0	32,3	34,9	4%	0,7	12,2	18191
Anderlues	19,1	19,1	652860,8	0,0	25,6	25,6	34%	7,4	15,6	16443
Anhée	29,5	23,0	0,0	611676,1	30,6	37,2	33%	2,4	8,4	18949
Ans	31,2	18,5	1430076,1	0,0	24,8	37,5	34%	8,2	15,9	17151
Anthisnes	24,9	24,9	0,0	0,0	24,9	24,9	0%	8,1	9,8	21268
Antoing	41,4	41,4	0,0	0,0	41,4	41,4	0%		9,3	17270
Arlon	40,8	36,9	0,0	1179661,1	40,3	44,2	9%		10,2	22910
Assesse	65,5	28,5	0,0	0,0	28,5	65,5	0%	4,5	6,8	22135
Ath	44,8	30,6	0,0	0,0	30,6	44,8	0%	2,4	9,3	20025
Attert	40,0	20,0	0,0	0,0	20,0	40,0	0%	13,0	5,6	26226
Aubange	35,2	22,3	0,0	0,0	22,3	35,2	0%	10,7	10,3	17793
Aubel	62,6	20,5	0,0	0,0	20,5	62,6	0%	12,5	7,5	20611
Awans	25,4	23,3	0,0	0,0	23,3	25,4	0%	9,7	9,5	20729

Aywaille	29,7	25,7	0,0	0,0	25,7	29,7	0%	7,3	10,5	19498
Baelen	21,4	21,4	0,0	611676,1	35,7	35,7	67%		9,2	20157
Bassenge	29,4	23,4	0,0	0,0	23,4	29,4	0%	9,6	10,5	19470
Bastogne	39,1	39,1	0,0	0,0	39,1	39,1	0%		10,1	18404
Beaumont	49,3	49,3	0,0	0,0	49,3	49,3	0%		10,9	18239
Beauraing	31,5	31,5	0,0	262146,9	34,1	34,1	8%		13,2	17155
Beauvechain	56,3	21,7	0,0	2140866,4	50,4	85,0	132%		8,7	23108
Belœil	31,7	31,7	0,0	0,0	31,7	31,7	0%	1,3	9,6	18375
Berloz	75,3	54,8	0,0	0,0	54,8	75,3	0%		5,8	21172
Bernissart	21,5	19,8	435240,5	0,0	24,6	26,3	24%	8,4	13,2	17993
Bertogne	41,6	38,7	0,0	0,0	38,7	41,6	0%		7,1	18327
Bertrix	51,9	43,8	0,0	0,0	43,8	51,9	0%		10,2	17619
Beyne-Heusay	41,6	35,6	870481,1	0,0	46,0	52,0	29%		13,9	17442
Bièvre	41,0	41,0	0,0	0,0	41,0	41,0	0%		9,2	16676
Binche	19,1	15,3	715038,0	0,0	18,2	22,1	19%	14,8	14,8	17430
Blegny	57,8	34,4	0,0	1223352,2	43,7	67,1	27%		8,3	21014
Bouillon	27,8	27,8	0,0	436911,5	34,4	34,4	24%		11,6	17457
Boussu	36,1	36,1	0,0	0,0	36,1	36,1	0%		18,7	15092
Braine-l'Alleud	48,8	30,1	0,0	131073,5	30,4	49,1	1%	2,6	9,3	22612
Braine-le-Château	52,7	21,1	0,0	262146,9	23,5	55,2	12%	9,5	9,4	22693
Braine-Le-Comte	37,0	26,6	0,0	0,0	26,6	37,0	0%	6,4	10,7	19629
Braives	57,1	49,7	0,0	305838,1	54,4	61,9	10%		7,8	21085
Bruglette	45,0	16,0	0,0	0,0	16,0	45,0	0%	17,0	7,2	18273
Brunehaut	37,8	37,8	0,0	0,0	37,8	37,8	0%		7,1	18291
Bullange	36,1	10,2	0,0	0,0	10,2	36,1	0%	22,8	4,1	18646
Burdinne	41,7	25,7	0,0	1223352,2	55,6	71,7	117%		7,6	22275
Burg-Reuland	26,6	26,6	0,0	0,0	26,6	26,6	0%	6,4	2,9	18664
Butgenbach	51,9	33,3	0,0	0,0	33,3	51,9	0%		3,9	18409
Celles	44,7	38,8	0,0	0,0	38,8	44,7	0%		6,4	18649
Cerfontaine	21,6	21,6	839392,5	0,0	44,0	44,0	104%		10	18141

Chapelle-lez-Herlaimont	26,5	20,4	652860,8	0,0	26,3	32,4	29%	6,7	15,6	16949
Charleroi	26,0	24,7	6715139,8	0,0	28,4	29,7	15%	4,6	22,5	14140
Chastre	56,7	26,7	0,0	0,0	26,7	56,7	0%	6,3	8,2	23406
Châtelet	19,7	17,1	2611443,2	0,0	26,4	29,0	54%	6,6	19,7	14859
Chaufontaine	46,3	27,1	217620,3	2752542,5	44,3	63,6	64%		9,6	25362
Chaumont-Gistoux	52,5	31,2	0,0	0,0	31,2	52,5	0%	1,8	9,9	25854
Chièvres	29,7	9,1	0,0	0,0	9,1	29,7	0%	23,9	6,5	18929
Chimay	70,7	70,7	0,0	0,0	70,7	70,7	0%		14,2	16472
Chiny	57,5	37,1	0,0	0,0	37,1	57,5	0%		8,2	18452
Ciney	41,9	27,9	0,0	524293,8	30,8	44,8	10%	2,2	12	18660
Clavier	39,1	39,1	0,0	0,0	39,1	39,1	0%		7,4	19671
Colfontaine	22,8	12,3	217620,3	0,0	13,5	24,0	10%	19,5	20,6	14197
Comblain-au-Pont	38,2	23,2	0,0	0,0	23,2	38,2	0%	9,8	12,2	17727
Comines-Warneton	37,3	32,5	0,0	611676,1	35,7	40,4	10%		10,3	16073
Courcelles	26,6	22,8	652860,8	0,0	25,5	29,3	12%	7,5	16,3	16427
Court-Saint-Étienne	42,1	32,1	0,0	0,0	32,1	42,1	0%	0,9	9,8	21610
Couvin	43,5	29,0	652860,8	0,0	35,3	49,8	22%		15,7	16437
Crisnée	30,5	30,5	0,0	262146,9	38,4	38,4	26%		8	22040
Dalhem	20,6	16,1	0,0	1092278,8	27,4	31,8	69%	5,6	7,1	21544
Daverdisse	44,4	44,4	0,0	0,0	44,4	44,4	0%		11,1	17442
Dinant	63,0	36,6	0,0	0,0	36,6	63,0	0%		15,1	17148
Dison	14,9	14,9	3015595,2	0,0	35,0	35,0	135%		22,5	13163
Doische	12,9	12,9	0,0	917514,2	46,8	46,8	263%		9,5	17052
Donceel	60,6	35,2	0,0	0,0	35,2	60,6	0%		6,1	22651
Dour	31,7	31,7	0,0	0,0	31,7	31,7	0%	1,3	15,4	16193
Durbuy	38,2	34,6	0,0	305838,1	37,1	40,8	7%		11,4	17900
Écaussinnes	45,6	36,3	0,0	0,0	36,3	45,6	0%		8,9	19122
Éghezée	39,7	26,7	0,0	699058,4	30,3	43,3	14%	2,7	6,6	21700
Ellezelles	22,6	22,6	0,0	742749,6	35,5	35,5	57%		6,5	20065

Enghien	49,5	32,4	0,0	305838,1	34,3	51,4	6%		9,2	20583
Engis	33,0	25,5	435240,5	0,0	33,0	40,4	29%		15,1	17055
Érezée	29,5	24,2	0,0	0,0	24,2	29,5	0%	8,8	10,6	18819
Erquelines	20,8	20,8	0,0	0,0	20,8	20,8	0%	12,2	16,2	16260
Esneux	34,8	24,9	0,0	1092278,8	34,1	44,0	37%		8,8	23095
Estaimpuis	24,8	24,8	0,0	567985,0	30,0	30,0	21%	3,0	8,1	18151
Estinnes	28,4	28,4	0,0	262146,9	31,8	31,8	12%	1,2	10,7	19180
Étalle	30,1	16,7	0,0	917514,2	30,8	44,1	84%	2,2	7	23278
Eupen	42,1	29,6	0,0	0,0	29,6	42,1	0%	3,4	12,3	18966
Faimes	29,1	24,2	0,0	0,0	24,2	29,1	0%	8,8	5,5	22782
Farciennes	13,2	13,2	1305721,6	0,0	27,1	27,1	105%	5,9	25,6	12821
Fauvillers	48,5	30,9	0,0	0,0	30,9	48,5	0%	2,1	7	19664
Fernelmont	73,1	23,7	0,0	917514,2	33,3	82,6	40%		6,6	21983
Ferrières	41,0	34,2	0,0	917514,2	52,1	59,0	53%		9,4	20539
Fexhe-le-Haut-Clocher	62,4	10,2	0,0	0,0	10,2	62,4	0%	22,8	7,9	21212
Flémalle	30,4	19,5	1305721,6	0,0	25,4	36,3	30%	7,6	15,1	17285
Fléron	46,9	28,4	0,0	2140866,4	44,3	62,7	56%		13,8	18387
Fleurus	41,7	33,4	1492253,3	0,0	41,5	49,8	24%		14	17258
Flobecq	39,7	39,7	0,0	0,0	39,7	39,7	0%		7,6	20387
Floreffe	62,1	48,5	0,0	0,0	48,5	62,1	0%		7,8	20824
Florennes	38,0	21,4	0,0	0,0	21,4	38,0	0%	11,6	11,7	18046
Florenville	29,8	29,8	0,0	0,0	29,8	29,8	0%	3,2	13,4	17590
Fontaine-l'Évêque	32,9	23,1	652860,8	0,0	27,9	37,7	21%	5,1	15,8	16542
Fosses-la-Ville	30,6	25,9	0,0	786440,7	33,6	38,4	30%		10,9	19089
Frameries	45,4	45,4	0,0	480602,7	47,4	47,4	4%		16	16348
Frasnes-lez-Anvaing	41,8	31,6	0,0	0,0	31,6	41,8	0%	1,4	6,9	19654
Froidchapelle	17,3	17,3	0,0	873823,0	38,9	38,9	125%		13,4	16728
Gedinne	42,2	42,2	0,0	0,0	42,2	42,2	0%		13,5	17248
Geer	62,2	28,4	0,0	0,0	28,4	62,2	0%	4,6	7	21901
Gembloux	55,2	34,5	0,0	0,0	34,5	55,2	0%		8,8	21638

Genappe	47,1	24,6	0,0	0,0	24,6	47,1	0%	8,4	9,7	22564
Gerpennes	64,4	54,1	0,0	0,0	54,1	64,4	0%		9,6	22526
Gesves	46,9	42,4	0,0	0,0	42,4	46,9	0%		8,4	21734
Gouvy	38,1	29,9	0,0	0,0	29,9	38,1	0%	3,1	10,6	17021
Grâce-Hollogne	18,2	16,9	2797974,9	0,0	31,0	32,3	83%	2,0	14,6	16388
Grez-Doiceau	38,2	22,9	0,0	1529190,3	32,5	47,8	42%	0,5	8,6	23851
Habay	53,1	20,4	0,0	1529190,3	37,0	69,7	81%		6,4	22158
Hamoir	15,4	15,4	0,0	0,0	15,4	15,4	0%	17,6	11,5	18932
Hamois	52,7	33,9	0,0	0,0	33,9	52,7	0%		8,5	19806
Ham-sur-Heure-Nalinnes	26,7	25,1	0,0	262146,9	27,4	29,0	9%	5,6	7,2	23358
Hannut	42,7	27,0	0,0	567985,0	30,3	46,0	12%	2,7	8,5	21199
Hastière	38,3	25,8	0,0	0,0	25,8	38,3	0%	7,2	19,4	16126
Havelange	38,6	38,6	0,0	0,0	38,6	38,6	0%		7,8	18525
Hélécine	29,8	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	29,8	0%	33,0	7,3	20040
Hensies	47,3	47,3	0,0	0,0	47,3	47,3	0%		13,6	16994
Herbeumont	8,4	8,4	0,0	0,0	8,4	8,4	0%	24,6	9,9	18164
Héron	45,7	43,3	0,0	0,0	43,3	45,7	0%		7,1	21255
Herstal	29,6	20,8	0,0	0,0	20,8	29,6	0%	12,2	17,1	15476
Herve	44,7	35,1	0,0	436911,5	37,6	47,2	7%		8,6	20377
Honnelles	33,0	33,0	0,0	0,0	33,0	33,0	0%		9,3	19739
Hotton	36,3	27,4	0,0	0,0	27,4	36,3	0%	5,6	9,7	17375
Houffalize	44,0	44,0	0,0	0,0	44,0	44,0	0%		9	18556
Houyet	9,3	9,3	0,0	611676,1	20,2	20,2	117%	12,8	11,3	17642
Huy	48,6	42,3	0,0	0,0	42,3	48,6	0%		18,6	18148
Incourt	47,8	19,9	0,0	2097175,2	51,8	79,7	160%		7,5	22438
Ittre	44,6	34,4	0,0	0,0	34,4	44,6	0%		8,2	22200
Jalhay	47,8	29,7	0,0	436911,5	35,0	53,1	18%		7,5	22095
Jemeppe-sur-Sambre	34,7	27,1	0,0	1485499,1	34,0	41,6	26%		11	18787
Jodoigne	34,9	15,9	0,0	2752542,5	33,5	52,4	111%		10,3	21312

Juprelle	35,7	18,8	0,0	0,0	18,8	35,7	0%	14,2	8,3	21182
Jurbise	57,1	51,0	0,0	0,0	51,0	57,1	0%		6,8	21521
La Bruyère	55,7	32,9	0,0	0,0	32,9	55,7	0%	0,1	6,1	23193
La Calamine	23,0	23,0	0,0	0,0	23,0	23,0	0%	10,0	12,4	17580
La Hulpe	100,3	47,1	0,0	0,0	47,1	100,3	0%		8,9	24011
La Louvière	25,2	23,8	4352405,4	0,0	30,6	31,9	28%	2,4	20	15590
La Roche-en-Ardenne	37,1	37,1	0,0	262146,9	44,3	44,3	19%		10,8	17899
Lasne	92,9	37,4	0,0	0,0	37,4	92,9	0%		10,2	27917
Le Rœulx	29,3	27,4	0,0	0,0	27,4	29,3	0%	5,6	10,5	19993
Léglise	20,6	14,4	0,0	611676,1	21,7	27,8	50%	11,3	5	19795
Lens	19,1	19,1	0,0	917514,2	35,7	35,7	88%		6	19162
Les Bons Villers	48,3	32,5	0,0	1835028,3	51,5	67,3	58%		8,5	21475
Lessines	23,1	16,9	0,0	0,0	16,9	23,1	0%	16,1	12,2	18038
Leuze-en-Hainaut	43,5	40,8	0,0	0,0	40,8	43,5	0%		9,2	18624
Libin	23,4	23,4	0,0	917514,2	38,8	38,8	66%		6,5	19005
Libramont-Chevigny	61,8	56,5	0,0	0,0	56,5	61,8	0%		7,4	19042
Liège	36,4	29,1	5627038,4	0,0	32,4	39,7	11%	0,6	22,4	15882
Lierneux	41,3	36,1	0,0	0,0	36,1	41,3	0%		8	18977
Limbourg	40,1	40,1	0,0	0,0	40,1	40,1	0%		10,4	18813
Lincet	45,8	45,8	0,0	0,0	45,8	45,8	0%		6,6	21339
Lobbès	59,5	59,5	0,0	0,0	59,5	59,5	0%		9,5	20433
Lontzen	20,4	20,4	0,0	0,0	20,4	20,4	0%	12,6	8,7	19771
Malmedy	36,4	26,9	0,0	917514,2	34,0	43,5	27%	0,0	9,8	18624
Manage	10,4	4,5	528506,4	0,0	7,2	13,2	61%	25,8	18	16007
Manhay	28,3	21,9	0,0	611676,1	34,7	41,1	58%		8,2	19028
Marche-en-Famenne	74,1	59,4	0,0	0,0	59,4	74,1	0%		11,6	18401
Marchin	39,2	39,2	0,0	0,0	39,2	39,2	0%		8,7	20102
Martelange	53,6	53,6	0,0	524293,8	75,0	75,0	40%		9,3	18525
Meix-devant-Virton	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0%		7,7	18375
Merbes-le-Château	11,6	11,6	0,0	0,0	11,6	11,6	0%	21,4	11,4	17126

Messancy	37,2	19,0	0,0	0,0	19,0	37,2	0%	14,0	7,8	23446
Mettet	32,2	27,1	0,0	0,0	27,1	32,2	0%	5,9	8,9	19574
Modave	20,3	8,1	0,0	0,0	8,1	20,3	0%	24,9	8,8	21654
Momignies	31,7	31,7	0,0	262146,9	35,9	35,9	13%		13,9	14885
Mons	36,4	26,5	6963848,6	0,0	36,2	46,2	37%		16,4	17077
Mont-de-l'Enclus	8,0	8,0	0,0	0,0	8,0	8,0	0%	25,0	5,1	19696
Montigny-le-Tilleul	71,1	71,1	0,0	305838,1	74,9	74,9	5%		10,6	22441
Mont-Saint-Guibert	62,0	46,0	0,0	0,0	46,0	62,0	0%		8,9	22914
Morlanwelz	18,0	15,5	2580354,6	0,0	32,8	35,3	112%	0,2	14,8	17125
Mouscron	39,0	37,9	0,0	0,0	37,9	39,0	0%		12,3	16214
Musson	24,1	5,4	0,0	0,0	5,4	24,1	0%	27,6	7,7	19537
Namur	52,3	40,2	0,0	0,0	40,2	52,3	0%		14,7	19265
Nandrin	67,0	12,2	0,0	0,0	12,2	67,0	0%	20,8	7	25057
Nassogne	59,8	59,8	0,0	0,0	59,8	59,8	0%		7,9	18402
Neufchâteau	47,1	38,8	0,0	0,0	38,8	47,1	0%		8,1	18547
Neupré	59,4	21,9	0,0	0,0	21,9	59,4	0%	11,1	7,1	25933
Nivelles	66,3	53,5	0,0	0,0	53,5	66,3	0%		10,9	22221
Ohey	35,5	23,2	0,0	0,0	23,2	35,5	0%	9,8	9,2	19708
Olne	45,4	27,9	0,0	131073,5	31,4	48,8	13%	1,6	7,2	22801
Onhaye	49,0	12,5	0,0	1223352,2	41,7	78,1	233%		10,6	18427
Oreye	32,4	32,4	0,0	0,0	32,4	32,4	0%	0,6	10,1	20479
Orp-Jauche	30,7	7,1	0,0	0,0	7,1	30,7	0%	25,9	7,8	21052
Ottignies-Louvain-la-Neuve	96,6	62,7	0,0	0,0	62,7	96,6	0%		11,9	20948
Ouffet	57,9	57,9	0,0	0,0	57,9	57,9	0%		10,3	19677
Oupeye	30,9	18,0	0,0	305838,1	19,2	32,1	7%	13,8	11,9	18479
Paliseul	45,2	34,3	0,0	0,0	34,3	45,2	0%		8,6	17686
Pecq	32,9	32,9	0,0	0,0	32,9	32,9	0%	0,1	7,8	18688
Pepinster	31,8	13,0	0,0	393220,4	16,7	35,6	29%	16,3	11,2	17955
Péruwelz	38,9	38,9	0,0	0,0	38,9	38,9	0%		13,2	17083

Perwez	61,1	14,1	0,0	0,0	14,1	61,1	0%	18,9	8	21740
Philippeville	31,0	29,3	0,0	873823,0	38,0	39,7	30%		12,1	17787
Plombières	36,4	32,3	0,0	0,0	32,3	36,4	0%	0,7	9,3	17978
Pont-à-Celles	33,1	20,4	0,0	0,0	20,4	33,1	0%	12,6	8,7	20614
Profondeville	37,2	27,6	0,0	0,0	27,6	37,2	0%	5,4	8,4	21601
Quaregnon	15,7	13,9	1025924,1	0,0	20,5	22,3	47%	12,5	19,1	14786
Quévy	49,3	38,5	0,0	0,0	38,5	49,3	0%		8,1	20454
Quiévrain	34,0	34,0	0,0	0,0	34,0	34,0	0%		19,3	15827
Raeren	50,5	21,7	0,0	0,0	21,7	50,5	0%	11,3	8,7	21327
Ramillies	45,3	24,9	0,0	0,0	24,9	45,3	0%	8,1	8,3	21290
Rebecq	39,8	32,6	0,0	0,0	32,6	39,8	0%	0,4	9,5	19905
Remicourt	44,1	37,8	0,0	0,0	37,8	44,1	0%		7,4	21634
Rendoux	39,1	23,2	0,0	262146,9	31,9	47,8	38%	1,1	9,7	17945
Rixensart	60,7	22,9	0,0	0,0	22,9	60,7	0%	10,1	10,2	24058
Rochefort	42,1	36,8	0,0	131073,5	37,7	43,0	3%		12,1	18110
Rouvroy	36,4	36,4	0,0	0,0	36,4	36,4	0%		8,8	18061
Rumes	39,7	39,7	0,0	0,0	39,7	39,7	0%		6,6	18248
Sainte-Ode	48,8	43,8	0,0	262146,9	51,3	56,3	17%		10,4	17221
Saint-Georges-sur-Meuse	32,1	8,1	0,0	305838,1	11,7	35,6	44%	21,3	11,4	19253
Saint-Ghislain	25,9	25,9	0,0	1223352,2	31,4	31,4	21%	1,6	12,5	18500
Saint-Hubert	37,7	37,7	0,0	262146,9	42,0	42,0	11%		9,2	17958
Saint-Léger	53,3	32,2	0,0	0,0	32,2	53,3	0%	0,8	6,3	22116
Saint-Nicolas	30,2	19,3	0,0	0,0	19,3	30,2	0%	13,7	20,3	14461
Saint-Vith	33,1	27,1	0,0	0,0	27,1	33,1	0%	5,9	4,2	19942
Sambreville	34,1	20,5	4196962,4	0,0	39,4	52,9	92%		13,4	17238
Seneffe	70,5	47,8	0,0	0,0	47,8	70,5	0%		10,6	21137
Seraing	17,0	14,4	2953418,0	0,0	19,6	22,2	36%	13,4	20,9	15004
Silly	48,0	27,5	0,0	742749,6	36,7	57,1	33%		7,7	22053
Sivry-Rance	49,2	49,2	0,0	436911,5	57,3	57,3	16%		11,4	17391

Soignies	42,8	36,8	0,0	524293,8	38,6	44,5	5%		10,8	18703
Sombreffe	59,9	30,2	0,0	0,0	30,2	59,9	0%	2,8	8,4	20490
Somme-Leuze	19,5	19,5	0,0	524293,8	26,7	26,7	38%	6,3	8,8	19427
Soumagne	33,5	20,2	0,0	305838,1	22,1	35,4	9%	10,9	9,2	19344
Spa	51,3	51,3	0,0	611676,1	58,1	58,1	13%		13,2	18829
Sprimont	73,4	37,8	0,0	1441808,0	47,5	83,0	25%		8,3	22545
Stavelot	66,5	32,4	0,0	0,0	32,4	66,5	0%	0,6	9,9	18584
Stoumont	10,2	10,2	0,0	873823,0	35,7	35,7	250%		8,1	20892
Tellin	49,1	49,1	0,0	0,0	49,1	49,1	0%		9,8	18720
Tenneville	45,8	45,8	0,0	524293,8	61,4	61,4	34%		7,5	19467
Theux	46,5	20,4	0,0	0,0	20,4	46,5	0%	12,6	9	21217
Thimister-Clermont	63,6	63,6	0,0	131073,5	65,9	65,9	4%		7,2	21738
Thuin	28,2	19,5	0,0	0,0	19,5	28,2	0%	13,5	10,2	20204
Tinlot	64,5	64,5	0,0	0,0	64,5	64,5	0%		6,8	21250
Tintigny	52,0	7,8	0,0	0,0	7,8	52,0	0%	25,2	7,7	19862
Tournai	56,7	47,1	0,0	0,0	47,1	56,7	0%		11,6	18600
Trois-Ponts	56,3	56,3	0,0	0,0	56,3	56,3	0%		9,5	18249
Trooz	15,9	8,4	0,0	611676,1	14,2	21,7	70%	18,8	11,8	19539
Tubize	26,9	13,2	0,0	2883615,9	22,4	36,1	70%	10,6	11,1	17867
Vaux-sur-Sûre	42,2	40,1	0,0	611676,1	47,5	49,6	18%		6	18795
Verlaine	20,0	12,0	0,0	873823,0	32,0	40,0	167%	1,0	7,2	22558
Verviers	25,4	20,8	4352405,4	0,0	29,3	33,8	40%	3,7	21,9	15091
Vielsalm	39,8	39,8	0,0	0,0	39,8	39,8	0%		11	17573
Villers-la-Ville	31,1	22,3	0,0	3058380,5	46,8	55,5	109%		8,8	22819
Villers-le-Bouillet	30,6	5,1	0,0	917514,2	18,5	43,9	263%	14,5	9,7	20806
Viroinval	16,0	16,0	217620,3	0,0	21,6	21,6	35%	11,4	18	16648
Virton	46,5	25,3	0,0	611676,1	30,6	51,8	21%	2,4	10,2	18743
Visé	48,1	43,4	0,0	0,0	43,4	48,1	0%		13,4	18563
Vresse-sur-Semois	41,7	41,7	0,0	0,0	41,7	41,7	0%		9,8	16960
Waimes	38,8	21,3	0,0	305838,1	25,0	42,6	18%	8,0	7,1	18623

Walcourt	31,5	19,4	0,0	611676,1	22,7	34,7	17%	10,3	9,4	20113
Walhain	20,0	8,6	0,0	2577777,9	36,6	48,0	328%		7,7	23928
Wanze	39,1	27,7	0,0	0,0	27,7	39,1	0%	5,3	10,3	20496
Wareme	47,2	41,5	0,0	39540490,8	46,0	51,7	11%		11,2	20190
Wasseiges	64,6	64,6	0,0	0,0	64,6	64,6	0%		7,6	20406
Waterloo	62,3	33,5	0,0	611676,1	33,5	62,3	0%		10,8	24572
Wavre	58,9	47,2	0,0	0,0	47,2	58,9	0%		11,2	22191
Welkenraedt	57,4	51,0	0,0	0,0	51,0	57,4	0%		9,3	18796
Wellin	59,4	59,4	0,0	0,0	59,4	59,4	0%		9,7	18079
Yvoir	67,9	48,8	0,0	0,0	48,8	67,9	0%		9,6	21097
Wallonie	Wallonie	38,0	28,6	6140004,8	109140492,7	32,5	41,9	14%	0,5	13

Source: Authors' calculations based on the *Arrêté du Gouvernement de la Communauté française portant approbation du contrat de gestion de l'Office de la Naissance et de l'Enfance 2021-2025* and [WalStat](#) statistics. Assumption is that all new places will be public or publicly-funded, according to the Plan Cigogne +5200.

Key statistics on the impact of German RRF investments on the availability of childcare places

Land	Coverage (total)	Coverage (subsidies)	N places created with RRF (subsidies)	New coverage (subsidies)	New Coverage (total)	Increase (subsidies) %	Women Unemployment
Baden-Württemberg	28,7	22,1%	12283	25,9%	32,5%	16,9%	3,8
Bavaria	29,3	24,0%	14383	27,7%	33,0%	15,5%	3,3
Berlin	45,4	39,1%	4397	43,0%	49,2%	9,8%	9,1
Brandenburg	56,6	49,0%	2519	53,1%	60,7%	8,4%	5,3
Bremen	29,4	19,7%	763	23,4%	33,1%	18,8%	10,1
Hamburg	47,2	34,6%	2250	38,4%	50,9%	10,9%	7,1
Hesse	31,3	24,1%	6924	28,0%	35,1%	15,9%	5
Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania	57,9	47,0%	1579	51,1%	62,0%	8,8%	6,8
Lower Saxony	31,9	23,4%	8496	27,2%	35,7%	16,1%	5,3
North Rhine-Westphalia	29,6	17,7%	19612	21,5%	33,4%	21,5%	7,1
Rhineland-Palatinate	29,2	26,0%	4338	29,8%	33,0%	14,5%	4,7
Saarland	29,8	26,2%	934	30,0%	33,6%	14,6%	6,2
Saxony	52,5	44,6%	4318	48,7%	56,6%	9,3%	5,4
Saxony-Anhalt	56,9	54,8%	2109	59,0%	61,1%	7,6%	6,7
Schleswig-Holstein	35,2	25,7%	2955	29,6%	39,1%	15,1%	5,2
Thuringia	53,8	51,2%	2140	55,5%	58,1%	8,3%	5,2
Germany	34,4	26,6%	90000	30,3%	38,1%	13,7%	5,4

Source: Authors' calculations based on *KitaFinHG* (2020), data from the Federal Statistical Office (2022).

Key statistics on the impact of Italian RRF investments on the availability of childcare places

Province	Coverage (total)	Coverage (public)	Coverage N (total)	Coverage N (public)	Funds allocated RRF (EUR)	New coverage (public)	New coverage (total)	Increase coverage (public) %	Gaps to reach 50% national target established in the CG Action Plan (total)	Women Unemployment
Agrigento	15,5	7,2	1465	679	17043676	19,7	28,0	174%	22,0	26,2
Alessandria	26,0	16,9	1905	1239	6395069	24,0	33,1	42%	16,9	11,6
Ancona	35,5	20,1	3272	1851	18015667	31,6	47,0	57%	3,0	10,1
Aosta	40,6	29,6	1039	759	2408405	36,6	47,7	24%	2,3	5,5
Arezzo	33,2	21,8	2230	1465	27501210	54,4	65,8	149%	-15,8	8,0
Ascoli Piceno	28,5	16,8	1106	651	10994311	34,1	45,7	103%	4,3	12,3
Asti	28,9	14,3	1176	582	13577852	44,8	59,5	214%	-9,5	7,9
Avellino	11,5	7,0	965	585	49056574	52,6	56,9	651%	-6,9	15,9
Bari	18,9	6,3	5150	1717	60719332	19,2	31,8	205%	18,2	12,9
Barletta-Andria-Trani	14,9	5,6	1305	488	20308989	20,2	29,4	260%	20,6	19,4
Belluno	25,4	9,1	946	337	9411118	29,2	45,4	221%	4,6	5,2
Benevento	11,5	4,7	661	270	41833420	64,4	71,2	1270%	-21,2	13,4
Bergamo	32,9	10,2	8319	2579	46049879	23,8	46,5	134%	3,5	3,8
Biella	39,5	23,1	1116	653	3679900	32,1	48,5	39%	1,5	7,2
Bologna	46,5	35,6	10325	7904	41782757	46,7	57,6	31%	-7,6	5,2
Bolzano	23,2	12,5	3682	1993	22428525	25,5	36,3	104%	13,7	4,5
Brescia	26,7	7,3	7686	2108	29670294	15,3	34,7	109%	15,3	7,0
Brindisi	21,6	10,6	1639	802	21804784	28,7	39,6	170%	10,4	13,1
Cagliari	34,5	7,6	2427	533	12239358	22,1	48,9	190%	1,1	12,6
Caltanissetta	8,9	5,7	501	323	3284617	10,3	13,5	81%	36,5	21,4
Campobasso	22,4	16,4	900	658	28837833	56,7	62,6	246%	-12,6	11,2
Caserta	8,9	1,1	2054	266	68902546	21,9	30,7	1891%	19,3	19,1
Catania	10,0	5,2	2798	1464	43434447	16,0	20,8	207%	29,2	17,2
Catanzaro	12,7	3,2	993	249	40340288	36,0	45,3	1025%	4,7	19,6
Chieti	28,6	17,2	2123	1278	37804102	68,1	79,6	296%	-29,6	16,6
Como	26,4	9,2	3407	1195	12306653	18,5	35,8	101%	14,2	7,1
Cosenza	8,9	3,9	1356	597	84798383	37,7	42,8	865%	7,2	26,1

Cremona	28,8	13,0	2156	971	15319890	29,6	45,4	128%	4,6	7,1
Crotone	13,8	2,2	585	92	16507925	24,9	36,2	1030%	13,8	37,4
Cuneo	22,4	8,7	2978	1162	27173463	23,4	37,2	169%	12,8	5,8
Enna	15,2	9,8	500	322	12213396	39,6	44,9	304%	5,1	21,2
Fermo	29,8	15,2	996	508	13092173	37,8	52,4	149%	-2,4	6,8
Ferrara	45,5	32,0	2705	1902	16858522	48,6	62,1	52%	-12,1	8,8
Firenze	42,0	24,0	8497	4848	34100201	40,0	58,0	67%	-8,0	6,3
Foggia	16,9	5,0	2262	667	27873955	17,6	29,5	252%	20,5	28,0
Forlì-Cesena	40,2	21,9	3315	1808	9566650	28,7	47,0	31%	3,0	6,7
Frosinone	18,9	13,1	1868	1293	46887520	44,5	50,2	239%	-0,2	14,5
Genova	35,5	17,9	5206	2619	21175516	32,7	50,3	83%	-0,3	9,9
Gorizia	34,5	23,3	935	629	639000	26,4	37,6	13%	12,4	11,6
Grosseto	35,1	19,5	1343	747	5737439	34,9	50,5	79%	-0,5	6,8
Imperia	20,8	11,3	798	435	14256979	34,7	44,2	207%	5,8	10,8
Isernia	19,8	13,8	324	227	19574113	98,2	104,7	612%	-54,7	12,0
La Spezia	30,2	15,3	1240	628	3642545	25,4	40,3	66%	9,7	13,5
L'Aquila	22,7	7,3	1332	431	34268938	58,9	74,6	706%	-24,6	9,5
Latina	21,4	8,5	2775	1104	27647906	23,4	36,3	175%	13,7	16,3
LECEC	24,9	10,2	3847	1575	82835878	43,7	58,4	329%	-8,4	21,1
Lecco	30,2	8,7	2148	622	9027670	19,5	41,1	125%	8,9	7,4
Livorno	40,0	20,3	2438	1237	9863750	35,4	55,1	74%	-5,1	7,8
Lodi	26,1	7,5	1369	396	8428138	20,1	38,8	168%	11,2	5,9
Lucca	32,3	23,5	2301	1672	6817750	30,8	39,5	31%	10,5	7,0
Macerata	27,6	11,7	1777	755	25594850	35,5	51,5	204%	-1,5	7,9
Mantova	28,5	14,7	2502	1295	12069982	25,5	39,3	73%	10,7	4,9
Massa-Carrara	30,1	22,4	963	718	9672014	52,6	60,4	135%	-10,4	11,3
Matera	20,4	8,2	818	329	14552667	32,9	45,1	301%	4,9	8,7
Messina	18,9	11,5	2461	1494	32177920	32,2	39,5	180%	10,5	26,9
Milano	31,8	19,5	23703	14516	36928028	23,5	35,8	20%	14,2	6,0

Modena	39,4	30,5	6280	4853	14628542	36,1	45,0	18%	5,0	7,1
Monza e della Brianza	33,4	10,5	6591	2076	6482515	13,8	36,7	31%	13,3	6,4
Napoli	10,3	3,7	8095	2928	111761718	15,4	22,0	315%	28,0	26,4
Novara	32,9	18,3	2551	1414	14433016	35,6	50,1	95%	-0,1	9,0
Nuoro	28,3	14,3	1044	528	13765563	48,6	62,6	240%	-12,6	9,3
Oristano	25,6	14,9	612	356	7254353	47,2	57,9	217%	-7,9	16,7
Padova	34,5	14,8	6766	2898	23193054	23,7	43,4	60%	6,6	8,0
Palermo	11,5	4,9	3569	1536	25942036	10,8	17,5	121%	32,5	17,0
Parma	36,5	26,2	3818	2742	13721443	33,6	43,9	28%	6,1	6,4
Pavia	32,8	14,4	3616	1587	13531137	23,9	42,3	66%	7,7	6,5
Perugia	44,8	20,7	5828	2695	33172795	32,8	56,9	59%	-6,9	10,2
Pesaro e Urbino	30,4	23,9	2142	1683	25153120	44,8	51,3	87%	-1,3	8,6
Pescara	21,5	7,5	1429	496	37782508	53,5	67,2	613%	-17,2	13,4
Piacenza	26,0	16,5	1625	1033	17105250	38,1	47,6	131%	2,4	7,3
Pisa	39,8	20,4	3454	1770	23464291	42,9	62,3	110%	-12,3	8,2
Pistoia	31,5	18,0	1842	1052	5522600	29,4	42,9	64%	7,1	11,0
Pordenone	32,5	8,0	2162	529	12272229	20,4	44,8	155%	5,2	5,0
Potenza	22,1	13,1	1540	911	28929459	46,1	55,0	252%	-5,0	12,2
Prato	37,6	11,6	2103	647	3816000	18,9	44,9	63%	5,1	9,8
Ragusa	9,9	5,4	798	433	23150617	23,3	27,7	332%	22,3	18,7
Ravenna	48,6	29,3	3835	2312	17321600	42,6	61,9	45%	-11,9	9,5
Reggio di Calabria	14,3	2,0	1848	264	26479117	15,3	27,9	664%	22,1	16,3
Reggio nell'Emilia	41,0	29,9	4930	3593	16639115	41,0	52,1	37%	-2,1	6,5
Rieti	24,0	14,3	664	394	12140542	54,3	63,9	280%	-13,9	8,3
Rimini	31,4	23,6	2177	1634	11345604	33,3	41,1	41%	8,9	11,2
Roma	39,9	17,7	36609	16200	75603317	23,4	45,6	32%	4,4	9,1
Rovigo	39,2	17,9	1529	697	5894054	27,4	48,7	53%	1,3	11,2
Salerno	14,9	9,5	3745	2376	73059261	33,3	38,6	251%	11,4	13,7
Sassari	33,4	14,5	2899	1261	30497225	41,6	60,6	187%	-10,6	17,0

Savona	29,7	18,4	1328	822	18376544	51,3	62,6	179%	-12,6	6,0
Siena	40,9	24,0	2162	1269	10493262	46,6	63,6	94%	-13,6	9,9
Siracusa	14,7	8,4	1322	757	17361190	20,8	27,1	147%	22,9	32,4
Sondrio	23,8	7,9	944	315	14563256	37,1	53,2	370%	-3,2	7,5
Sud Sardegna	25,4	10,3	1373	555	26043754	52,6	67,6	411%	-17,6	9,9
Taranto	19,8	9,9	2281	1139	19266726	20,4	30,3	106%	19,7	12,9
Teramo	28,2	17,1	1759	1064	21432637	44,4	55,4	159%	-5,4	11,7
Terni	41,4	16,8	1625	659	12164916	33,4	58,0	99%	-8,0	8,2
Torino	33,8	17,6	15256	7954	38676804	24,9	41,2	42%	8,8	9,6
Trapani	13,0	8,2	1226	770	17952110	21,3	26,1	160%	23,9	20,1
Trento	37,9	28,8	4925	3742	31955475	40,2	49,3	40%	0,7	6,0
Treviso	29,7	5,5	5790	1062	18130257	12,5	36,7	128%	13,3	8,4
Trieste	44,1	22,3	1864	942	5299320	30,2	52,0	35%	-2,0	5,2
Udine	32,4	11,0	3121	1061	18496673	27,0	48,4	145%	1,6	9,3
Varese	30,8	11,7	5912	2241	9212624	16,5	35,6	41%	14,4	6,1
Venezia	28,0	12,8	4652	2122	17170320	20,2	35,3	57%	14,7	7,1
Verbano-Cusio-Ossola	25,5	16,1	660	416	10683259	46,1	55,4	186%	-5,4	7,8
Vercelli	29,5	17,6	937	561	8801285	42,1	54,0	139%	-4,0	9,6
Verona	32,6	11,9	7089	2601	31340708	23,3	44,1	96%	5,9	5,9
Vibo Valentia	12,2	2,1	429	74	22007911	40,6	50,8	1835%	-0,8	24,4
Vicenza	29,7	11,3	5607	2126	32048954	24,0	42,4	112%	7,6	9,1
Viterbo	27,4	13,9	1619	824	24624983	43,1	56,7	210%	-6,7	10,8
ITALY	27,2	13,3	350670	172201	2519299818	27,6	41,6	108%	8,4	11,6

Source: Authors' calculations based on Pnrr Istruzione and ISTAT, 2021.

Key statistics on the impact of Polish RRF investments on the availability of childcare places

Province	Coverage (total)	RRF Investment (PLN)	ESF+ Investment (PLN)	Total Investment	New coverage total+public	Total places increase	Gaps to reach 33% national target	Unemployment	AVG income per capita (PLN)
Warmian-Masurian	13,7%	65304702	144488399,8	209793101,8	25,0%	83%	8,0pp	9,2	22995
Subcarpathian	16,8%	108195654	234455310,8	342650964,8	27,9%	66%	5,1pp	9	22895
Lublin	16,5%	90802584	211914325,3	302716909,3	27,4%	66%	5,6pp	8,2	22742
Świętokrzyskie	13,8%	52537830	121110161,9	173647991,9	25,5%	85%	7,5pp	8	23606
Kuyavian-Pomeranian	18,3%	92380512	198743695,3	291124207,3	28,4%	56%	4,6pp	7,6	24262
Podlaskie	18,0%	49381974	118214256,8	167596230,8	28,5%	58%	4,5pp	7,5	23226
West Pomeranian	22,5%	62722638	142405387,6	205128025,6	32,1%	42%	0,9pp	7	28107
Opole	23,4%	41707506	93747961,9	135455467,9	34,3%	46%	-1,3pp	6,4	26818
Lodz	17,4%	107012208	231900318,3	338912526,3	27,8%	59%	5,2pp	5,7	25955
Pomeranian	19,2%	114041160	250065448,2	364106608,2	28,5%	48%	4,5pp	4,9	26631
Lesser Poland	19,8%	171025878	374084141,6	545110019,6	29,4%	49%	3,6pp	4,8	25867
Lower Silesia	28,7%	106940484	237284752,2	344225236,2	37,1%	29,4%	-4,1pp	4,7	29557
Lubuskie	22,6%	40954404	91570585,9	132524989,9	32,6%	44%	0,4pp	4,6	25015
Masovian	24,3%	231309900	507504621,5	738814521,5	32,4%	33%	0,6pp	4,3	22517
Silesian	19,0%	184223094	404193803,7	588416897,7	28,8%	51%	4,2pp	3,9	28398
Greater Poland	18,0%	184904472	401639448,0	586543920	28,3%	57%	4,7pp	3,1	23650
POLAND	20,2%	1703445000	3763322619,0	5466767619	29,9%	48%	3,1pp	5,4	26245

Source: Data retrieved from Polish government (Statistics Poland, 2022 [website](#))

Table 6 Key statistics on the impact of Spanish RRF investments on the availability of childcare places

Region	Coverage (total)	Coverage (public)	Additional places RRF	New coverage (public)	New coverage (total)	Increase % (public)	Women Unemployment	AVG income per capita
Region of Murcia	20,5%	10,0%	393900,0%	18,7%	29,2%	87%	19,98	9850
Canary Islands	22,9%	10,4%	387900,0%	18,9%	31,4%	82%	20,27	9935
Ceuta	17,0%	10,3%	17200,0%	16,1%	22,8%	57%	30,96	9853
Castile and Leon	23,7%	16,5%	376500,0%	24,6%	31,8%	49%	12,96	12697
Balearic Islands	28,3%	18,1%	241800,0%	25,9%	36,1%	43%	10,47	12658
Principality of Asturias	23,5%	20,8%	131400,0%	28,1%	30,8%	35%	13,59	12786
Valencian Community	37,6%	16,7%	683700,0%	22,3%	43,2%	34%	16,81	11332
Castile-La Mancha	35,8%	23,4%	371700,0%	30,8%	43,1%	32%	21,92	10485
Melilla	25,8%	14,1%	17200,0%	18,5%	30,2%	31%	33,2	11427
Andalusia	47,8%	18,1%	1206900,0%	23,6%	53,3%	30%	24,4	9990
Extremadura	31,6%	28,3%	205200,0%	36,6%	39,9%	30%	28,68	9147
Cantabria	30,1%	24,1%	86100,0%	31,1%	37,1%	29%	12,13	12748
Rioja, La	43,3%	21,5%	46200,0%	27,4%	49,3%	28%	9,33	13504
Navarre, Community of	29,9%	24,8%	117300,0%	31,5%	36,6%	27%	10,02	15094
Aragon	35,5%	21,9%	181800,0%	27,6%	41,2%	26%	11,38	13097
Galicia	46,8%	27,3%	341700,0%	33,6%	53,0%	23%	13,29	11469
Catalonia	38,9%	24,6%	1088400,0%	30,0%	44,3%	22%	10,97	14170
Madrid Community	51,1%	23,7%	525900,0%	26,6%	54,0%	12%	10,6	14580
Basque Country	53,3%	28,8%	50600,0%	29,8%	54,2%	3%	9,62	15813
SPAIN	40,2%	20,9%	6471400,0%	26,5%	45,7%	26%	15,55	12292

Source: Authors' calculations based on [Sectoral Conference Agreement](#) of 25 November 2021, [Sectoral Conference Agreement](#) of 28 December 2022, [figures on education in Spain](#) for the academic year 2019-2020 (Edition 2022), [Spanish NRRP](#), and INE (2019, 2020)