



Early Years

SECTOR PROFILE

2015-2016



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Foreword



I am delighted to see the publication of this important and timely report, which provides an overview of over 4,300 facilities providing centre based childcare across Ireland. As you are all aware, we are currently in a period of significant policy development and change in the sector, and it is essential that planning and policy formation is underpinned by accurate and reliable information. I have no doubt that the information contained in this report will help inform the Department's policy development in early years, so that we can meet the goal of providing affordable, quality and accessible childcare for all.

I would also like to reiterate my Department's commitment to ensuring access to high quality and affordable early childhood care and education in Ireland. Recent demonstration of this commitment can be seen through two successive budgets, Budget 2016 and Budget 2017, both provided a 35% increase in funding (a 70% increase in total) to early years. For the first time, total early years spending in Ireland (including spending on infant classes in primary schools as per the OECD definition) will now exceed €1 billion per year. A major policy priority for me is the development of a new Single Affordable Childcare Scheme. This will replace existing childcare subsidisation schemes (excluding the free pre-school scheme) with a single, streamlined scheme from September 2017.

As you all know, my Department works closely with Pobal in the administration of the early years schemes and I am delighted to see that this report now uses data supplied through the online Programmes Implementation Platform (PIP) for analysis of developments in the sector. This data complements the survey responses from more than 3,200 early years providers in providing a comprehensive and robust overview of the early years facilities nationally, as well as highlighting many of the challenges and opportunities facing the sector as a whole.

The Service Profile survey is the outcome of a very positive working relationship between my Department and Pobal. Pobal has been conducting the survey for over a decade. The survey content and design was developed jointly by the officials in my Department and our colleagues in Pobal. This helped to ensure there was an alignment between the information needed for national planning and the questions in the survey.

This report could not have been produced without the inputs from the individuals who completed the survey. I would like to thank all of you who took the time out of their busy days to do so. We know that childcare providers face increased administrative responsibilities in their day to day work, so the fact that 79% of services completed this optional survey is a great testament to the ethic and ethos and hard work of those providers. It also highlights how highly service providers acknowledge the importance of a national data set on the early years sector.

Finally, I would also like to extend my gratitude to the City and County Childcare Committees for their vital contribution, both in assisting with the development of the questionnaire and encouraging the services they support to complete it. Last but not least, I would also like to extend my thanks and congratulations to all those involved in the analysis and write up of this report.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katherine Zappone".

Minister Katherine Zappone

Executive summary

This report presents the findings from and analysis of the data captured through two sources. The first of these is the Early Years Service Profile survey. The Service Profile is a survey, administered by Pobal in conjunction with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs which aims to provide a national picture of services providing early childhood care and education in Ireland. This profile builds on the Annual Sector Survey which has been conducted by Pobal for the past 14 years. The second source is the Programmes Implementation Platform (PIP), which is the online data and reporting system used to support childcare programmes. PIP data provides a depth of information which complements and provides additional validity to the data gathered through the Service Profile survey.

This report is based on two very large datasets, so decisions had to be made on which areas to focus upon. Following discussions with numerous stakeholders, the key issues of staff qualifications, childcare fees and service capacity (specifically in relation to ECCE) were identified as being of particular importance within the current policy context. As such, these topics have been given particular prominence and additional attention within this report.

The following represents some of the key findings from the report:

Programme enrolment

- **Between September 2015 and June 2016 a total of 104,441 children availed of at least one of the three Government early years programmes**, which were delivered by **4,377 early years services**. This represents an 8% increase on the period between September 2014 and June 2015, when 96,508 individual children availed of at least one of the three programmes.
- The number of **children who availed of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) free preschool year in the 2015/2016 programme period¹ was 73,964², at a cost of €178m**. This represents an almost 13% increase in the number of registrations³ on ECCE between the 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 academic years and an increase in cost of 28% (up from €139m).
- Part of the increased cost of ECCE is due to the fact that **the number of children with higher capitation registered on ECCE grew by 16%** between the 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 programme calls.
- The increase in the number of children availing of ECCE can partly be linked to the announcement of the additional ECCE entitlement in the 2016 Budget. This is evidenced by a noticeable growth in the ECCE registrations outside of the August/September period which was observed in 2015, when 9% of registrations were made outside that period compared to 4% in 2014.

¹ Early Years programmes are run on an academic calendar year from September to August, with the exception of TEC, and in the case of ECCE from September to June. This report covers the period starting September 2015.

² Please note the data on ECCE, TEC and CCS programmes was extracted from the PIP system on 17th June 2016 and may vary from figures extracted on other dates.

³ Please note that the number of registrations is higher than the number of individual children availing of the programme, as one child may be registered multiple times.

- Within the context of an expanded Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) programme, **the number of children enrolled on CCS grew by 7%, however the total value approved under this scheme saw a slight decrease.** Overall, the average value of a registration decreased by 8% and well over half (59%) of services delivering CCS both in 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, experienced a decrease in their registrations values. The decrease in registration values is linked to a reduction in the length of time children availed of the programme and the decrease in the number of children on band AJ (with a corresponding increase in the numbers on band B)⁴.
- There has been a small decrease (0.4%) in the number of child registrations across the Training and Employment Childcare (TEC) programmes between 2014/2015 and 2015/2016. The total value of TEC in 2015/2016 was €17,899,477.
- These findings indicate a general trend towards more children availing of ECCE, while the numbers of children registered on CCS remains relatively static. It is likely this trend will continue with the extension of ECCE eligibility in 2016.

Fees

- In relation to fees, **the average cost to parents of a full-time place was €167.03 per week** (slightly down on €167.19 in 2014), **with the average cost of a part-time place standing at €99.18** (up from €95.36 in 2014).
- **Childcare fees are higher in private services than in community services.** They are also higher in urban areas than in rural ones and in affluent areas compared to deprived areas (as defined by the Pobal HP Deprivation index).
- It was found that fees are higher in services with a higher qualified workforce. This would indicate that further professionalisation of the sector will have a knock on effect on the cost of childcare.

Spaces, capacity & waiting lists

- A total of 138,968 children of all ages were reported to be enrolled in early years services in 2015/2016 at the time of the survey. Based on these figures and data from PIP **it is estimated that the total number of children in early years' services in Ireland in 2015⁵ was approximately 171,200 children.** This is a significant increase on the findings from the previous year (130,430 children), however it is likely that some of this increase is observed due to the new methodology used in this survey.
- Almost half of the total number of enrolments (47%, n=65,437) were in the 3 to 4½ years age category, reflecting the wide uptake of the ECCE (free preschool year) programme.
- The majority of ECCE places are for morning sessions (a.m.) rather than afternoon sessions (p.m.). Nationally, there are 6,261⁶ children on a waiting list for sessional a.m., with 6,659 such places also recorded as being vacant and available. This would suggest that supply and demand may be

⁴ For more information on CCS bands see Section 2.2 Community Childcare Subvention programme (CCS and CCSP)

⁵ In the 2015/2016 academic year.

⁶ Please note that a child can be placed on more than one waiting list and, therefore, the actual number of children on waiting lists may be lower.

mismatched in terms of location and that while there is capacity in the current waiting list, this is not necessarily in the right locations or right session times (a.m. or p.m.).

- **There has been a large increase in the number of children from age 1 to 3 years accessing pre-school (children of 13 to 36 months).** The percentage of pre-school places filled by children of this age rose from 13% in 2014 to 20% in 2015/2016. This is likely to have been caused by a number of factors including the improved economic situation in the country as well as the introduction of the additional free preschool year, with anecdotal evidence that this may have prompted parents to enrol children at a younger age to secure a place when they became eligible.

Staff

- **A total of 20,823 staff⁷ were reported to be working across 3,402 early years services.** Of this number 18,906 work directly with children and 1,917 are ancillary staff such as cooks, cleaners or administrators⁸.
- When extrapolated to reflect the national figure, it is estimated that approximately **25,700 staff work in the early years sector**, 23,291 of whom work directly with children.
- **Half of all staff working in the early years sector do so on a part-time basis.** Staff directly employed (i.e. not on schemes such as Community Employment (CE)) are three times more likely to work part-time than an average worker in Ireland⁹. All staff in community services (60%) are more likely to be part-time than those in private services (42%).
- **One in four staff in community services (27%) is on a work placement/ activation programme** such as CE, Tús or the Community Services Programme (CSP).
- Just over half of all staff worked in their service for more than 4 years. The percentage of staff who have been working within their current facility for less than 12 months has grown from 15.6% in 2014 to 18% for this period. This indicates either an increase in the number of new entrants to the sector, as a result of increased staffing, or else an increase in the turnover rate. As the numbers of staff reported are significantly higher than reported in the previous year, it is not possible to determine how much of this increase is driven by real numbers and how much is due to the new methodology for data capture.

Staff qualifications

- **88% of all staff working with children reported having a qualification equal to or higher than NFQ Level 5.** This represents an increase of 1% on 2014. **When looking specifically at those directly employed (i.e. excluding programmes such as CE), 93% of all staff are qualified to Level 5 or higher.**

⁷ This number includes volunteers and staff on job placement schemes.

⁸ A number of services (444) incorrectly classified some of their staff as *Ancillary* (1,065), despite having childcare specific/related job titles. Details of these staff have been included as childcare staff, however some data which was asked specifically of staff who work with children is not available for this cohort.

⁹ The CSO found that in the second quarter of 2016, 86% of those employed were full-time, with 14% part-time. This rate for directly employed staff in the early years sector is 56% full-time and 44% part-time.

Executive summary

- Staff in private services have higher qualification levels, with 82% of staff in community services being qualified to NFQ Level 5 or above compared to 92% in private services. These figures include work activation programmes.
- 4% of staff have signed an agreement to the effect that they will be retiring by 2021 (a grandfathering agreement) which grants an exemption from the requirement to be qualified to NFQ Level 5.
- 2% of staff (247) are not qualified to the level required by the regulations which will take effect at the end of 2016. This figure was arrived at by excluding work activation scheme staff, those with a signed grandfathering agreement, and those who are currently in the process of qualifying.

Other findings

- **Almost half (48%) of services reported having at least one child with a diagnosed disability attending their service.** The most common types of disability were 'Autistic Spectrum Disorder' and 'Learning Difficulties'.
- When compared to 2014, the average number of service types offered by early years facilities across the board has continued to increase. In particular, **the percentage of services providing after school care increased by 20 percentage points, from 34% to 54%.** As the number of children availing of after school has not increased dramatically and there were 4,358 available places and low numbers (n=1,430) on waiting lists, it appears that this is a supply led increase. This points towards an increase and diversification of services offered, likely in order to ensure financial viability and sustainability by providing as many service types as possible.

1 Introduction

This report presents an overview of the early years sector in Ireland in the school year 2015/2016. For the past 14 years Pobal has completed an annual survey of the early years sector (Annual Beneficiary Questionnaire/ Annual Sector Survey), which in 2016 was replaced by the Service Profile; a survey integrated with the Programmes Implementation Platform (PIP) to allow for a linkage with information already held about organisations. This report is based on data from the Service Profile Survey and the data collected directly from PIP (for more details see section 1.1).

The purpose of this report is to support evidence based policy and practice by compiling and analysing the data held and collected from Ireland's early years' service providers. Given the vastness of these data sets, a practical, issue-based approach has been taken to the interrogation and analysis of this information. Following consultation with numerous stakeholders, the key issues of importance identified were staff qualifications, childcare fees and capacity (particularly relating to ECCE). As such, this report places a specific importance and focus on these key issues, which are given greater attention and detail than others.

The report outlines key characteristics of the early years childcare programmes: the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme, Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) and Training and Employment Childcare (TEC), and the early years services delivering these programmes in the 2015/2016 academic year.

The report is divided into the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1** presents the policy context for the early years sector and outlines the methodology used for data collection and analysis.
- **Chapter 2** provides an overview of the three early years programmes – ECCE, CCS and TEC – including statistics on the number of services participating, the number of registrations and the total funding received by providers for the delivery of these programmes.
- In **Chapter 3**, early years services are analysed with regard to their type, geographical location, types of childcare provided, premises ownership, commercial rates, curriculum and other characteristics.
- **Chapter 4** offers an analysis of children in early years settings with regard to their age as well as issues of equality, diversity and inclusion.
- **Chapter 5** provides an analysis of childcare places with regard to the number of enrolments, vacancies and children on waiting lists.
- **Chapter 6** presents a breakdown of childcare fees by type of services offered, geographical location and type of provider.
- In **Chapter 7**, characteristics of staff working in early years services, both working directly and indirectly with children, are provided.
- In **Chapter 8**, issues related to child protection, such as staff training, are presented and described.
- **Chapter 9** provides a summary of the report along with the main conclusions.

1.1 Background and context

The ongoing development of the early years sector in Ireland in recent years has been shaped and influenced by a range of policies, strategies and frameworks. Overall, their focus has been firmly placed on promoting the best outcomes for children through:

- facilitating universal access to early years care and education (free pre-school year);
- improving the quality of early years care and education;
- professionalisation of staff working in the sector; and
- enabling access to early years care and education for children with disabilities, or who may otherwise be excluded due to family background, ethnicity, physical or mental health.

The national policy framework set out under *2014-2020 Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*, recognises the importance of children's early cognitive, social and emotional development. The framework placed an increased focus on children's early years and outlined measures for promoting early years development through, amongst others, the investment in early years care and education, including maintaining the free pre-school year and implementing measures to support and regulate improvements to the quality of early years and childcare services (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2014).

The Early Years Strategy Report *Right from the Start*, published by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in 2013 (DCYA, 2013) identified "enhancing and extending quality early childhood care and education services" as one of its five priorities. The report made a number of recommendations some of which are listed below:

- increase investment in early care and education services, with investment rising incrementally each year to achieve the international benchmark of 1% of GDP by the end of the strategy;
- ensure that income-related subsidies for early care and education services reduce the cost barrier facing families;
- deliver training to all staff in services for young children in meeting the needs of children who have additional needs by virtue of their disability, family background, ethnicity, physical or mental health;
- prioritise the raising of quality standards across all early care and education services;
- directly align public funding for services to the achievement of quality standards in early care and education services;
- extend the entitlement to free pre-school provision, so that a free part-time place is available from every child's 3rd birthday until such time as they enter primary school;
- significantly increase public investment in early care and education services in order to meet the additional cost of higher quality standards;
- introduce a training fund to enable those working in early care and education services to gain additional training and provide for regular, funded non-contact time to ensure staff can engage in continuing professional development;
- support professionalisation through higher wages in early care and education services by requiring adherence to an agreed salary scale as a condition of public funding.

Following the recommendations made in the *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* document, in 2015 the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs established an Inter-Departmental Working Group (IDG) on *Future Investment in Early Years and School-Age Care and Education*. The aim of this Group was to identify and

assess policies and future options for increasing the affordability and quality of supply of early years and school-age care and education services in Ireland (Inter-Departmental Group, 2015). The Group proposed two high-level goals and a range of options to achieve them. The two primary goals were:

- supporting children's outcomes
- supporting families in raising their children to reach their full potential

Amongst the proposals for achieving these goals were:

- extension of pre-school provision (the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme);
- assessing future demand for places and available infrastructure;
- ensuring development of appropriate after-school services for school-age children; and
- embedding quality in the sector.

The childcare costs and quality of childcare provision in Ireland was highlighted by the EU Council in the 2016 Country-specific Recommendations (CSR) for Ireland (Council of the European Union, 2016). The recommendations point to the net childcare costs in Ireland being among the highest in the European Union (as a percentage of wages) and that concerns remain over the quality of childcare provision as the percentage of graduates working in the early childhood education and care sector remains well below the recommended levels. One of the three CSRs for Ireland in 2016 was the improvement of the provision of quality affordable full-time childcare as a measure aiming to expand and accelerate the implementation of activation policies to increase the work intensity of households and address the poverty risk of children.

Extension of free pre-school provision

Budget 2016 announced the expansion of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme by expanding children's entitlement to benefit from the free pre-school from age 3 until they start primary school or reach 5½ years. Starting in September 2016, children may now avail of up to 76 weeks of ECCE depending on their date of birth. Up to September 2016, eligible children (aged between 3 years 2 months and 4 years and 7 months) were entitled to participate in the ECCE programme for up to 38 weeks. This means that children will be able to start in free pre-school when they reach age 3 and to remain in free pre-school until they transfer to primary school (provided that they are not older than 5 years and six months at the end of the pre-school year). While this extension has been welcomed by many, some concerns have been raised around the availability of childcare places to facilitate this expansion. A round of capital investment was administered in 2016 to facilitate this expansion.

The 2016 Budget also included provisions for the expansion of the Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) programme, which has been closed to new applications from community / not-for-profit early years services since the announcement of the 2012 Budget. The expansion has been rolled out in three phases. In October 2015, the FTE Caps¹⁰ within existing CCS services were lifted, while in November 2015 new community childcare services could apply to participate in the CCS programme. Finally, in February 2016, the CCS programme was extended to private childcare services.

¹⁰ Services participating in CCS were allocated a maximum number of Full Time Equivalent places, which they could not increase. Lifting the FTE Caps allowed services already participating in the programme to enrol more children.

Childcare staff qualifications

The *Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016* and ECCE contract require a registered provider to ensure that each employee working directly with pre-school children who are attending the service holds at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Framework for Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to meet the regulatory qualification requirements. To facilitate the upskilling of staff in the early years services, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs launched the Learner Fund in 2014 totalling €3m over two years. Learner Fund is a subsidy towards the cost of training to support existing early years practitioners to attain the appropriate qualification required under the revised Childcare Regulations¹¹. To date, four rounds of Learner Fund have been rolled out with a total of €5 million funding being committed to this initiative. In the Learner Fund rounds 1 and 2, 3,558 applications were received and 3,184¹² applicants were approved for funding. The deadline for applications for Round 3 was closed on 29th July 2016 and at the time of publication 577 applications had been approved. Round 4 is currently open with 549 applications approved to date.

Quality of childcare education

The quality of early years education and care has been high on the Government agenda in recent years. In 2013, the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs outlined the agenda for improving quality in pre-school services, which included the following steps:

- enhancing the supports available to individual pre-school services in implementing *Síolta* and *Aistear*;
- adapting the existing pre-school inspection system to provide an early education inspection and assessment system, similar to that in place for primary schools; and
- reviewing the arrangements for the provision of training for early education practitioners to ensure that it has the capability to deliver accessible and affordable training of appropriate quality at the required standards.

Subsequently, *Better Start* - the National Early Years Quality Development Service was launched by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in May 2015 to establish a single, cohesive approach to quality across the early childhood education and care sector in Ireland. The primary focus of the initiative is to provide quality early years mentoring support to childcare providers through the work of early years specialists who work directly with early years services to build their capacity to deliver high quality early childhood education and care.

¹¹ The “Pre-School Quality Agenda”, launched by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs in 2013 introduced minimum qualification requirements for all staff in pre-school services. As a result, by September 2015 all staff working with children in early years services were required to have a minimum Level 5 qualification in early years care and education on the National Framework Qualifications (NFQ), or an equivalent qualification. This date has now been revised to 31st December 2016.

¹² Please note that not all applicants approved for funding availed of it, therefore the number of people trained is likely to be lower.

Introduction

Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)

An Inter-Departmental Group (IDG) was established in June 2015 to agree a model that would support access to the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme for children with a disability. The model (see Figure 1.1) is based on seven levels of supports that the IDG recommended to enable the full inclusion and meaningful participation of children with disabilities in the ECCE programme.

Figure 1.1 Access and Inclusion Model (AIM)



The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs launched AIM in June 2016 allowing parents and service providers to submit applications for AIM supports in order to plan for enrolments in September 2016 and thereafter. There are seven levels of support under AIM, including universal supports for all services, and targeted supports that providers and parents apply for. The following initiatives are part of AIM:

- Publication of a new *Inclusion Charter* for the early years sector, alongside updated *Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education*.
- A new higher education programme for early years practitioners - *Leadership for Inclusion in Early Years (LINC)*, which commenced in September 2016. This programme is part of a broader package of education and training supports to upskill the early years workforce in relation to inclusion and disability.
- A new national specialist service was established in June 2016 (based in the Better Start National Early Years Quality Development Service), which provides advice, mentoring and support to childcare providers.
- A new national scheme commenced in June 2016 providing specialised equipment, appliances and minor alterations necessary to support a child's participation in the ECCE programme.
- Also, in June 2016 another new national scheme was launched providing additional capitation to childcare providers for funding an extra support in the classroom.

1.2 Methodology

1.2.1 Data sources

The information provided in this report has been extracted from two data sources. The Programmes Implementation Platform (PIP) (sections 3.1 – 3.3) and the Service Profile survey (sections 3.4- 3.7 and chapters 4, 5, 7 and 8).

Services reported on within this report relate to individual services rather than organisations. So for example, if an organisation operates three different services, the three services will be regarded separately in this report.

Service Profile survey

A total of 4,323 services with an active contract for the 2015/2016 academic year, were asked to complete the Service Profile survey. A link to the survey was posted on the PIP Portal on 29th March 2016 and services were given until 8th April 2016 to complete. This deadline was subsequently pushed out to 25th April 2016 to allow services more time to complete. A total of 3,429 services completed the Service Profile survey, giving a response rate of 79% of which 987 were community services and 2,442 were private.

PIP

As PIP is a live system which is updated daily, data had to be extracted in bulk on a specific date to ensure consistency across the different areas covered. The data from PIP was extracted on 17th June 2016 for the 2015-2016 Programme Call. Please note that the figures included in Chapter 2 provide information about the three programmes on this snapshot date and are not the final figures for the 2015/2016 academic year. Additional data from PIP was extracted for the 2014-2015 Programme Call on the 26th August 2016.

1.2.2 Fees data collection

Unlike other information in this report, the data used for this section was not gathered from either PIP or the Service Profile survey. Given that providers had completed the annual Fee Payment Policies in late 2015, it was decided more appropriate to utilise this data, rather than ask early years services to provide it again.

Fee payment policies were included in the analysis only where they had been marked as approved, thereby providing fee information for a total of 4,069 services. Fee payment policies templates varied slightly depending on the programmes delivered by the facility. Where possible, these figures have been aligned in the data analysis although not all information is comparable for all services.

1.2.3 Extrapolation methodology

For extrapolation purposes, a more advanced technique was employed than in previous years. In prior reports, the number of children was extrapolated based on the response rate of the survey. So for example,

if 70% of services responded and reported 700 children, this would be extrapolated to a national estimate of 1,000 children. The problem with this method is that it assumes services are all the same size, or at least that those who completed the survey have the same average amount of children as those who did not complete the survey. There is a difficulty with this assumption however, as it is likely the case that *larger services are more likely to complete the Service Profile survey than smaller ones*.

To test this assumption and provide a more robust statistical metric upon which to extrapolate figures for non-responders, the following procedure was applied - utilising the vast and reliable data held on the Programmes Implementation Platform (PIP), the authors were able to determine the relative size of services who completed the profile as compared with all services nationally. Using data on child registrations across the three DCYA programmes, it was determined that while 79% of services responded, this represented services working with 81% of children in early years services. While this figure is relatively minor, it is a more accurate method for extrapolating national figures, and provides far more robust estimates at county level. For example, some counties may have had a response rate of 70% but if all their larger services completed the Service Profile survey, this would have represented almost 80% of children in pre-school in the county.

This figure has also been used for the extrapolation of staff figures, as it is likely that the correlation between the number of staff and the number of children will provide a more accurate basis upon which to make estimates than by using the response rate.

1.2.4 Urban/ rural methodology

In previous years, the anonymous survey asked early years services to describe themselves as being situated in either a rural or urban area. This survey was not anonymous, so it was not necessary to ask as it was possible to link the survey response with the address held on PIP. The Central Statistics Office categorise each electoral district in the country as being on a scale of 1 to 9 in terms of how urban or rural they are. Six of these categories are urban and three are rural. Using this data, it was possible to attribute an urban or rural value to each early years facility, based on the electoral district within which their address is situated.

Interestingly, the results obtained by using this methodology varied significantly from how the services would have categorised themselves in previous years. Traditionally almost 60% of services described themselves as being in rural areas, however using this methodology based on CSO data it was found that just 40% of early years services are in areas defined as rural.

1.2.5 County methodology

The term county is used to describe county divisions or local authority areas. Using the local authority areas as the main geographical unit allows for comparisons of services within large urban centres, i.e. Dublin, as well as within counties that include both large urban centres and rural areas, i.e. Cork. It is also aligned to the county classification of the County Childcare Committees (CCCs).

2 Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

- **104,441** unique children availed of at least one of the three Government early years programmes.
- **73,964** unique children availed of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) leads the effort to improve the outcomes for children and young people. These five national outcomes are described in the national Children's strategy *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2014). Pobal provides a range of services to and on behalf of DCYA in the area of early education and childcare and manages or supports the the distribution of funds for:

- Better Start
- Free Pre-school Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)
- Community Childcare Subvention (CCS)
- Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)
- Early Years Capital Programmes
- City and County Childcare Committees (CCCs)
- Voluntary Childcare Organisations (VCOs)
- Learner Fund
- Area-based Childhood Programme (ABC)

This report focuses on three early years programme, namely ECCE, CCS and TEC. These programmes are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

2.1 Free Pre-school Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

The Free Preschool Year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is a programme administered by the DCYA with the support of the local City & County Childcare Committees (CCCs). ECCE is available to all children in the State, who on 1st September each year are in the qualifying age range of between 3 years 2 months and 4 years 7 months¹³. Until September 2015, ECCE provided free pre-school for 15 hours per week for 38 weeks per year. The DCYA pays providers directly for eligible children based on online registrations. Details of services offering ECCE locally can be found on [Pobal Maps](#).

In 2015/2016, 4,178¹⁴ early years service providers were contracted to offer the ECCE programme nationally, 75% (n=3,126) of which were private and 25% (n=1,052) were community. 73,964 unique children benefitted from the programme, with 77,149¹⁵ approved registrations recorded during this

¹³ The ECCE programme is being extended from 1st September 2016. For further details go to: <http://www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=%2Fdocuments%2FECCE-Scheme%2Fintro.htm&mn=chio&nID=2>.

¹⁴ This figure includes all organisations that were contracted to provide ECCE at any point between 1st September 2015 and 31st August 2016.

¹⁵ The data on registrations was extracted from the PIP system on 17th June 2016.

Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

period¹⁶. Approximately 95% of eligible children participate in ECCE and have done so from the outset (DCYA, 2016). The number of ECCE registrations increased by 13% compared to the previous year's Programme Call (2014/2015) (n=68,333), while the number of unique children availing of ECCE increased by 11%. In 2014/2015, 66,762 unique children participated in ECCE.

Figure 2.1 presents a breakdown of ECCE registrations on the 2015/2016 Programme Call by county¹⁷ and type of provider. The highest number of children registered on ECCE were in Cork County (10% of all registrations), Dublin City (8%), Dublin - Fingal (7%) and South Dublin, Kildare and Galway (6% each). The lowest number of registrations were in counties Leitrim, Longford, Carlow, Roscommon, Monaghan and Sligo (1% each). When compared to population distribution in 2011 (people aged 0-10), the number of registrations in most counties is proportional to the number of children in these counties.

The highest proportion of child registrations in community services were in Dublin City (10%), Cork County (9%), Galway (7%) and Donegal (6%), while the lowest were in Fingal, Leitrim, Louth and Longford. The highest proportion of children registrations in private services were in Cork County (10%), Dublin - Fingal (9%), Dublin City, Kildare and South Dublin (7%), while the lowest were in Leitrim, Longford and Monaghan (below 1%).

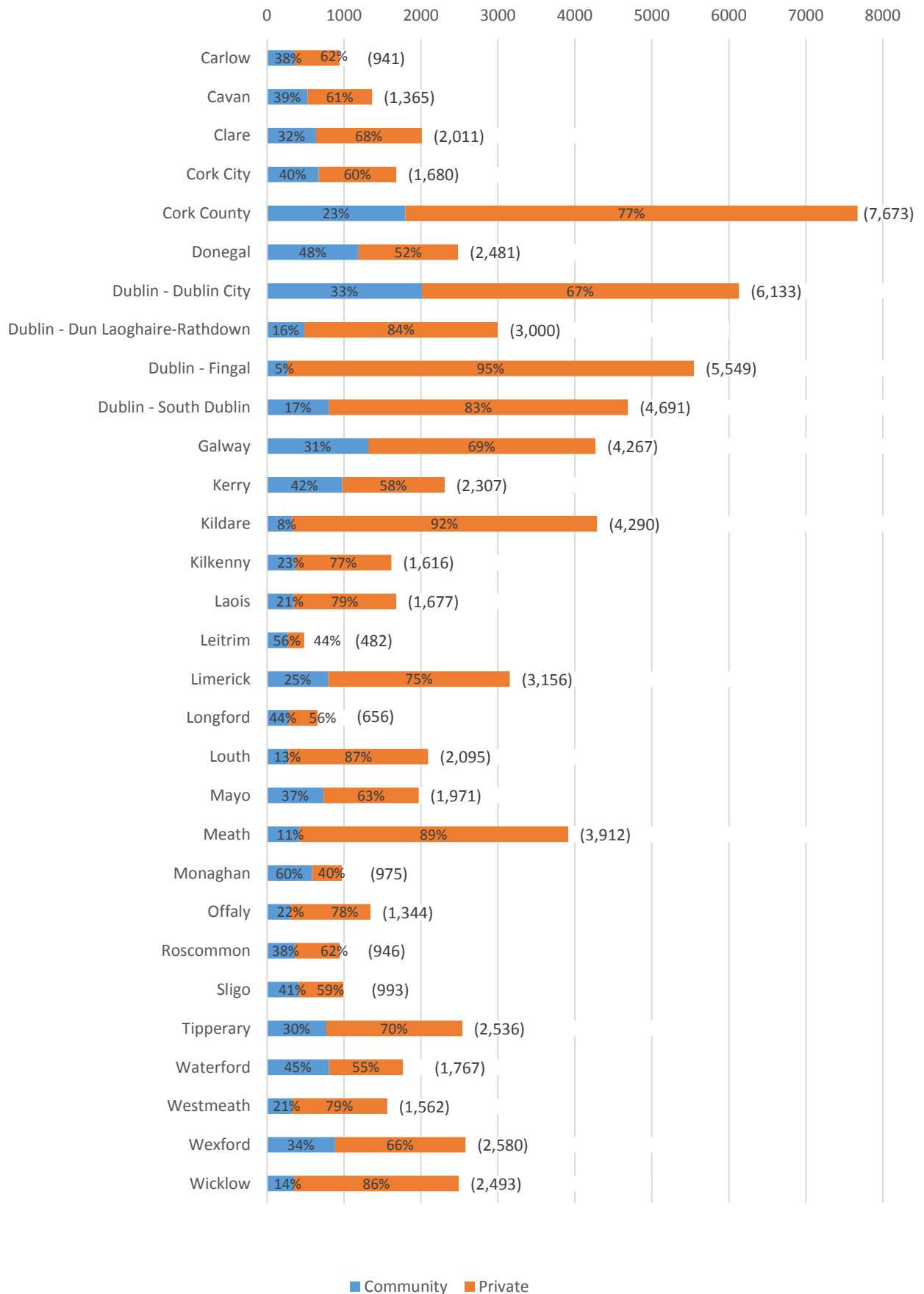
¹⁶ Some children could have been registered on the programme more than once as a new registration is created when a child moves from one service to another during their free preschool year. In exceptional circumstances, a child can also be registered in two different services at the same time – for more details go to <http://www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=/documents/earlyyears/20160307DCYAProgsInfoandFAQS.PDF>.

For these reasons the number of registrations will always be slightly higher than the number of unique individuals.

¹⁷ Please note that the term county is used to describe county divisions or local authority areas.

Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

Figure 2.1 ECCE children registrations by county and community/ private service



Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

When compared to the 2014/2015 academic year, the pattern of ECCE registrations made throughout the year varied significantly in 2015/2016. Table 2.1 shows that 5% less children were registered at the start of the academic year compared to the previous year and the levels of registrations for the period between October – June more than doubled. This change is likely to be related to the announcement of the extension of the ECCE programme in Budget 2016 on 13th October 2015 as parents who may otherwise have availed of the scheme in the next academic year, opted to enrol their children a year earlier.

Table 2.1 Distribution of ECCE registrations throughout the academic year in 2014/2015 and 2015/2016

	2014/2015	%	2015/2016	%
August - September	65,893	96%	69,903	91%
October - December	761	1%	2,645	3%
January-June	1,679	3%	4,601	6%
Total	68,333	100%	77,149	100%

The total approved value of ECCE contracts in 2015/2016 was €177,770,017. Services participating in ECCE receive one of two capitation rates¹⁸: the standard rate of €62.50 or the higher rate of €73 per week per child. Between 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, the number of children registrations with higher capitation grew by 16%.

2.2 Community Childcare Subvention programme (CCS and CCSP)

The Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Programme is targeted to help children from low-income households access quality early education and childcare services. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs subvents the childcare costs of eligible children, with the parent paying the balance of the cost. The eligibility of children for the programme is based on the social welfare status of their parents and the DCYA assesses the eligibility of applicants under this programme. The PPSNs from CCS registrations taken from the 'snapshot week' are forwarded to DSP. They inform DCYA what allowance is awarded to these PPSNs and this information is passed to Pobal to assign the correct bands. DCYA also advises Pobal regarding the

¹⁸ The standard capitation rate is paid when all staff working with children in the service are qualified to meet the minimum requirements for the purposes of the Regulations, and when the pre-school leader is qualified, as recognised by the DCYA in the DCYA Early Years Recognised Qualifications list. The higher capitation rate is paid when all pre-school assistants in the service are qualified to meet the minimum requirements for the purposes of the Regulations and the pre-school leader is qualified to at least NFQ Level 7 (or equivalent) as recognised by the DCYA in the DCYA Early Years Recognised Qualifications list. The standard capitation rate must be fully transferred to the parent while it is the service provider who retains the difference between the standard and higher capitation rate (DCYA, 2016).

Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

HSE medical card/GP visit card for 6+ eligibility. The level of fees paid by parents depends on the eligibility band the child is assigned to, with three eligibility bands (A, AJ, and B) available under CCS. Table 2.2 presents the bands along with the weekly subvention rates based on the type of service.

Up until early 2016, CCS was only available through participating community not-for-profit early years services. In February 2016, the programme was extended to private services (CCSP). Details of all services participating in CCS(P) are marked on [Pobal Maps](#).

Table 2.2 Eligibility bands and weekly subventions rates under CCS by service type

Service type	Band A	Band AJ	Band B
Full day payment (5 hours +)	€95	€50 ¹⁹	€50
Part-time payment (3:31-5:00 hours)	€47.50	€47.50	€25
Sessional payment (2:16-3:30 hours)	€31.35	€31.35	€17
Half session payment (1:00-2:15 hours)	€15.20	€15.20	€8.50

During 2015/2016 a total of 1,424²⁰ services were contracted to provide CCS(P), of which 65% (n=923) were community (CCS) and 35% (n=501) were private (CCSP). 25,010 individual children were registered to receive subvention with 25,374²¹ registrations approved in this period on the programme²². This represents just under a 7% increase on the number of registrations under CCS in the previous Programme Call period (23,775). In total, 20,085 individual parents/guardians benefited from the programme.

Table 2.3 presents a breakdown of CCS(P) registrations on 2015/2016 Programme Call by county and type of service. The uptake of CCSP varied across the country. In five counties there were no registrations in

¹⁹ Parents who qualify for Band AJ (with medical card) e.g., a parent in receipt of Jobseekers Benefit/Allowance (JB / JA) and with a medical card qualify for subvented childcare to a maximum of €50 subvention for full day-care per week (Band AJ). This cap applies where a child attends from 3 full days to 5 full days per week. Parents in receipt of JB / JA and do not have a medical card qualify for subvented childcare under Band B.

²⁰ Please note the data on ECCE, TEC and CCS programmes was extracted from the PIP system on 17th June 2016 and may vary from figures extracted on other dates.

²¹ The data on registrations was extracted from the PIP system on 17th June 2016.

²² A child may be registered multiple times if they moved from one service to another during the year. For this reason the number of registrations and the number of unique individuals are presented separately within this report.

Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

private services under CCSP: Cork City, Meath, Leitrim, and Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown. The uptake of CCSP was the highest in Kildare (27%), Donegal (16%), Cavan (12%) and Wexford (10%).

Table 2.3 CCS(P) children registrations by county and by community/ private

County	Community (CCS)	Community (CCS) (%)	Private (CCSP)	Private (CCSP) (%)	Total
Carlow	655	97%	20	3%	675
Cavan	554	88%	72	12%	626
Clare	739	98%	18	2%	757
Cork City	961	100%	0	0%	961
Cork County	1,111	99%	6	1%	1,117
Donegal	815	84%	157	16%	972
Dublin - Dublin City	3,631	99%	20	1%	3,651
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	220	100%	0	0%	220
Dublin - Fingal	218	96%	8	4%	226
Dublin - South Dublin	1,088	99%	15	1%	1,103
Galway	1,166	97%	40	3%	1,206
Kerry	1,269	96%	52	4%	1,321
Kildare	248	73%	93	27%	341
Kilkenny	732	96%	29	4%	761
Laois	712	95%	39	5%	751
Leitrim	390	100%	0	0%	390
Limerick	1,366	96%	63	4%	1,429
Longford	462	98%	11	2%	473
Louth	622	98%	15	2%	637
Mayo	920	98%	20	2%	940
Meath	526	100%	0	0%	526

Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

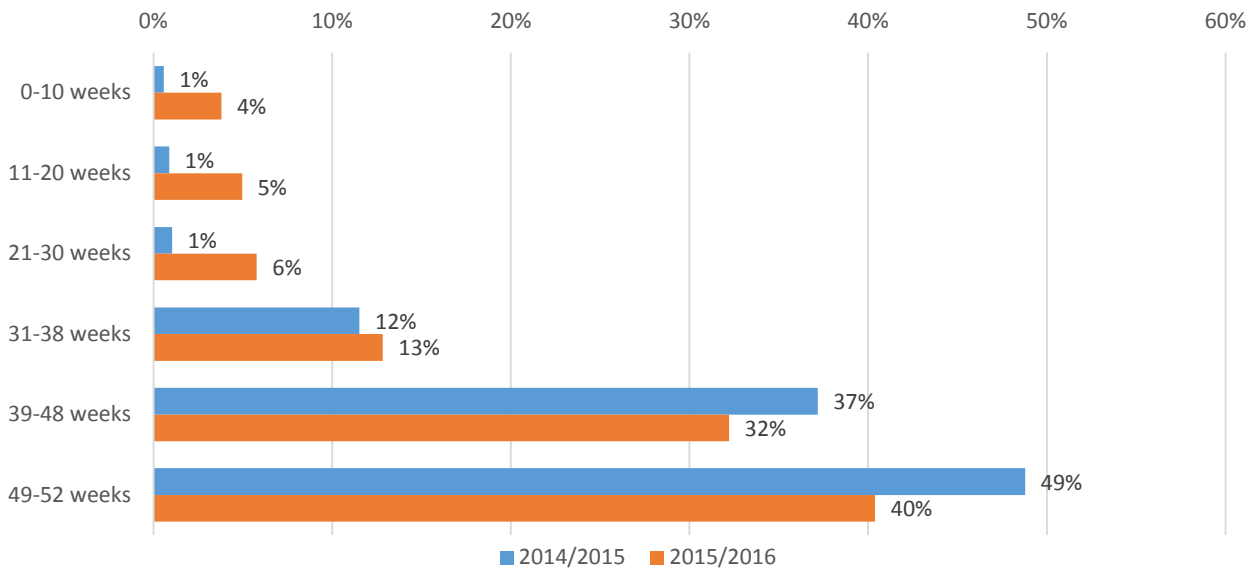
County	Community (CCS)	Community (CCS) (%)	Private (CCSP)	Private (CCSP) (%)	Total
Monaghan	1,140	99%	8	1%	1,148
Offaly	190	98%	3	2%	193
Roscommon	368	100%	1	0%	369
Sligo	723	98%	14	2%	737
Tipperary	751	99%	7	1%	758
Waterford	856	99%	13	1%	869
Westmeath	663	99%	7	1%	670
Wexford	982	90%	107	10%	1,089
Wicklow	448	98%	10	2%	458
Total	24,526	97%	848	3%	25,374

The total approved value of CCS contracts in 2015/2016 was €38,903,707, with 98% of this amount approved for community-based services. This represents a 2% decrease in the amount of funding under CCS since the previous Programme Call period (€39,700,820). Combined with the increase in the number of registrations, **this indicates an 8% decrease in the average value of a child registration**. The decrease in the registration values can be linked to two main factors: the reduction in the number of weeks children avail of the programme and the decrease in the number of children on band AJ in favour of band B.

Figure 2.2 compares the duration of registrations on the CCS Programme in the 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 Programme Calls. The number of registrations for 39 weeks and over decreased by 14% while the number of registrations for 30 weeks and less increased by 12%. The significant rise in registrations March 2016, as children registered with private services could have been only registered for 24 weeks or less. Another potential reason for the decrease in the number of children registered for 39 weeks or more could be a reduction in the time that services stay open during the year. This in turn could indicate further alignment of services to ECCE opening periods.

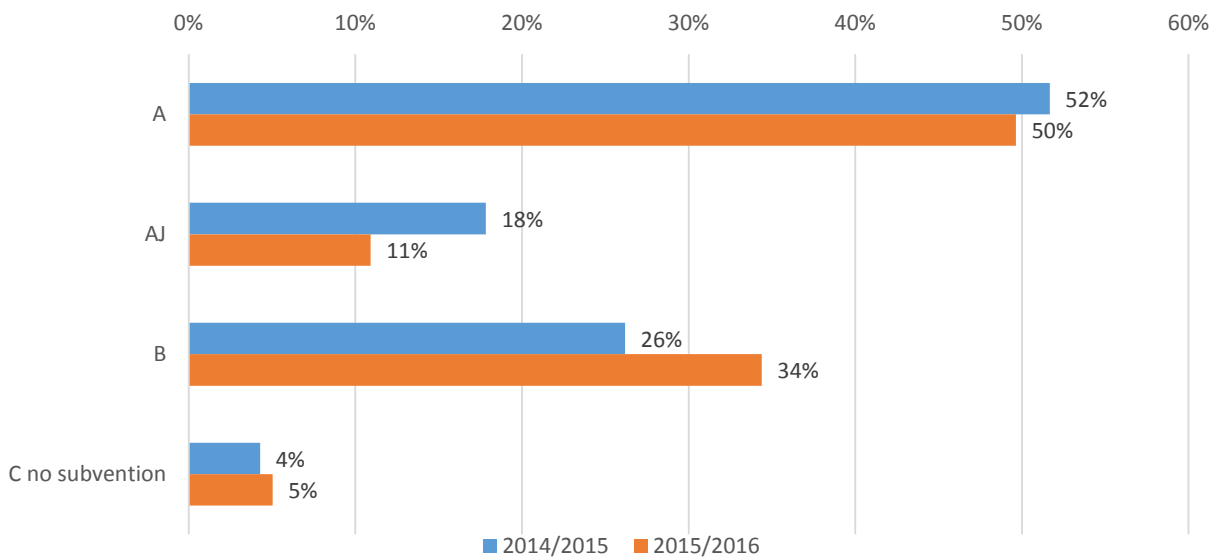
Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

Figure 2.2 Registrations on the CCS programme by duration



The changes in the eligibility bands between the 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 Programme Calls are presented in Figure 2.3. While the percentage of children with a band A allocation decreased only slightly (2%), a more significant drop (7%) in the number of registrations with band AJ was observed. At the same time the share of registrations with band B increased by around the same amount (8%).

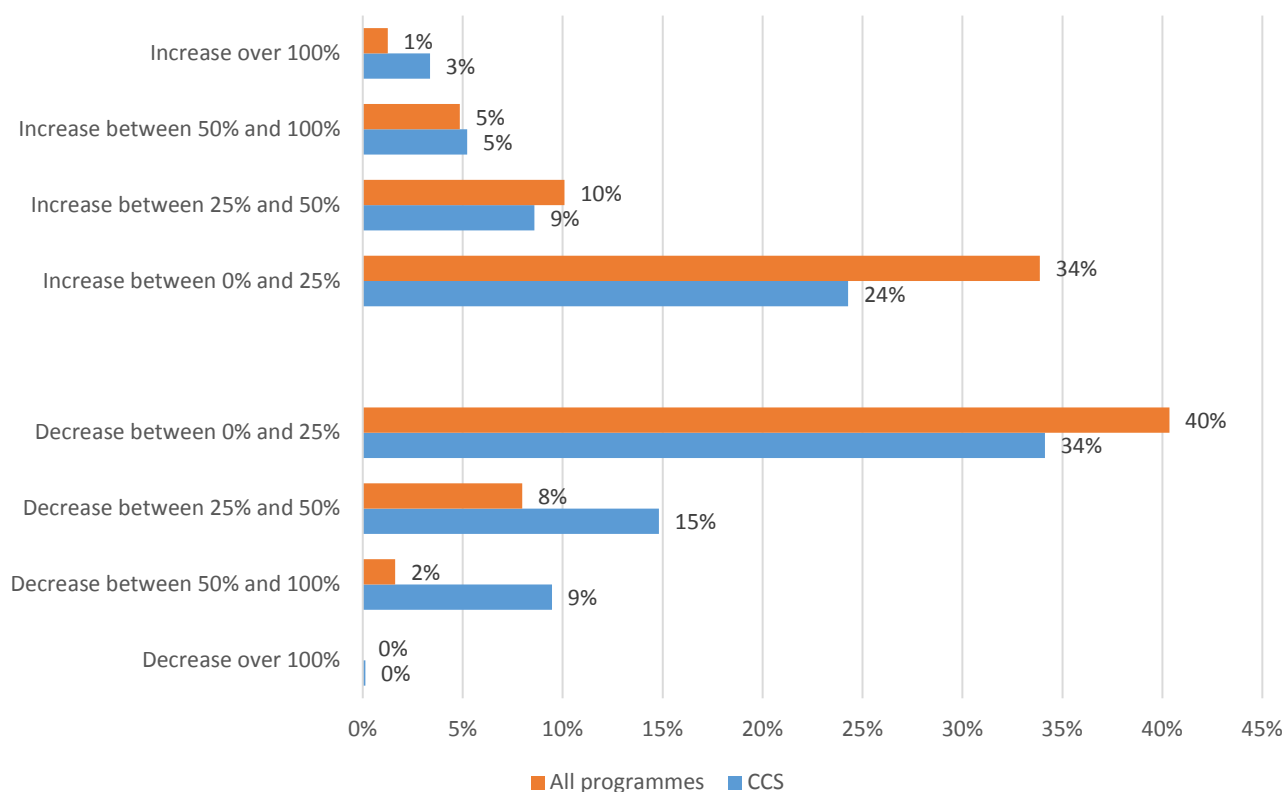
Figure 2.3 Registrations on CCS programme by band



The decrease in the CCS funding led to a reduction of funding for community services. Out of 803 community services which participated in the CCS programme in 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, 58% recorded a decrease in the approved contract values and almost a quarter of services (24%) recorded a decrease above 25%. Figure 2.4 shows the breakdown of community services (n=803) in regard to the change in the level of funding for CCS and all programmes these services participated in between 2014/2015 and 2015/2016. When the funding from all three programmes is taken into account, the number of services that experienced a decrease is slightly smaller at 50%.

Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

Figure 2.4 Percentage of community services and change in their approved contract values between 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 for CCS only and total funding for the three programmes (CCS, TEC and ECCE)



2.3 Training and Employment Childcare (TEC)

The Training and Employment Childcare (TEC) Programmes are administered by the Department of Children & Youth Affairs (DCYA) on behalf of the Education & Training Boards (ETB)/Solas and the Department of Social Protection (DSP). The objective of the TEC Programmes is to support parents on eligible training courses and eligible categories of parents returning to work, by providing subsidised childcare places. The allocation of places under the programme is managed by the DCYA, via the City and County Childcare Committees (CCCs).

TEC comprises of three strands:

- (1) **Childcare Education and Training Support Programme (CETS)** provides childcare for children of eligible parents taking part in ETB/Solas (formerly VEC/Fás) training courses.
- (2) **After School Childcare Programme (ASCC)** provides afterschool care for primary school children for eligible working parents and parents on DSP employment programmes (excluding Community Employment) – parents are informed by their local Intreo Centre or Social Welfare Office that they are eligible for ASCC places.
- (3) **Community Employment Childcare Programme (CEC)** provides childcare for children of eligible parents taking part in Community Employment schemes. CEC is split into two streams: CEC Pre-School (PS) and CEC After-School (AS).

Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

In 2015/2016, 1,596 service providers were contracted to offer at least one strand of the TEC Programme, of which two thirds (67%, n=1,072) were private services with the remaining one third being (33%, n=524) community services. A breakdown of providers by TEC strands and type of service is presented in Table 2.4. The highest number of service providers offered CETS (1,564 or 98%), followed by CEC (AS) offered by 86% of providers and CEC (PS) by 84%. ASCC was a programme strand with the least amount of services offering it (81%) but have the highest share of private services contracted to offer it (70%).

Table 2.4 Early years services contracted to offer TEC by community/ private and programme strand

Programme strand	Number of community services	% of community services	Number of private services	% of private services	Total number of services
ASCC	381	30%	909	70%	1,290
CEC (AS)	478	35%	888	65%	1,366
CEC (PS)	473	35%	873	65%	1,346
CETS	507	32%	1,057	68%	1,564

4,498 individual parents/guardians benefited from the programme. 6,581 individual children availed of TEC with 8,141²³ registrations on the programme²⁴. The number of registrations decreased by 0.4% on 2014/2015. Table 2.5 presents a breakdown of TEC registrations in 2015/2016 by TEC strand, county and type of provider. The highest number of TEC registrations were in Dublin City and Dublin - Fingal (7% each), while the lowest number of registrations were in Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown and Cork City (1% each).

Table 2.5 TEC registrations by county, programme strand and community (comm.)/private (priv.)

County	ASCC 2015		CEC 2015 (AS)		CEC 2015 (PS)		CETS 2015		Grand Total	
	Comm.	Priv.	Comm.	Priv.	Comm.	Priv.	Comm.	Priv.	No.	%
Carlow	7	12	22	6	25	13	52	34	171	2%
Cavan	4	6	14	8	14	19	19	87	171	2%
Clare	7	42	20	28	21	14	54	96	282	3%
Cork City	0	3	6	1	31	4	22	45	112	1%

²³ The data on registrations was extracted from the PIP system on 17th June 2016.

²⁴ Some children could have been registered on the programme more than once, as they may participate in more than one TEC strand. For example, a parent can be eligible for CEC and CETS.

Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

County	ASCC 2015		CEC 2015 (AS)		CEC 2015 (PS)		CETS 2015		Grand Total	
	Comm.	Priv.	Comm.	Priv.	Comm.	Priv.	Comm.	Priv.	No.	%
Cork County	2	23	16	21	24	30	45	145	306	4%
Donegal	19	8	24	19	35	21	81	82	289	3%
Dublin - Dublin City	8	26	9	14	127	55	130	205	574	7%
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	2	10	0	0	3	8	15	52	90	1%
Dublin - Fingal	0	48	0	49	1	50	22	400	570	7%
Dublin - South Dublin	4	44	12	15	18	29	46	244	412	5%
Galway	17	40	11	30	20	28	57	199	402	5%
Kerry	5	15	57	19	51	33	44	85	309	4%
Kildare	0	56	2	120	3	58	2	262	503	6%
Kilkenny	1	11	5	12	17	15	24	88	173	2%
Laois	0	2	1	24	13	33	11	155	239	3%
Leitrim	5	5	14	6	16	7	47	28	128	2%
Limerick	6	17	22	32	54	22	39	124	316	4%
Longford	3	10	31	17	40	22	40	60	223	3%
Louth	0	23	46	42	58	53	22	67	311	4%
Mayo	6	7	29	10	22	37	16	81	208	3%
Meath	1	22	23	40	19	31	32	105	273	3%
Monaghan	14	10	91	10	69	19	45	46	304	4%
Offaly	1	5	17	12	11	27	19	45	137	2%
Roscommon	8	11	33	18	11	13	21	62	177	2%
Sligo	10	9	12	6	13	11	41	35	137	2%
Tipperary	4	9	24	28	47	24	45	112	293	4%

Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

County	ASCC 2015		CEC 2015 (AS)		CEC 2015 (PS)		CETS 2015		Grand Total	
	Comm.	Priv.	Comm.	Priv.	Comm.	Priv.	Comm.	Priv.	No.	%
Waterford	9	16	22	54	37	24	66	110	338	4%
Westmeath	0	8	44	33	35	39	22	55	236	3%
Wexford	6	21	46	16	43	22	24	111	289	3%
Wicklow	3	16	8	16	8	17	0	100	168	2%
Total	152	535	661	706	886	778	1,103	3,320	8,141	100%

The total approved value of TEC contracts in 2015/2016 was €17,899,477, of which €11,883,931 or 66% was spent on CETS funding, €1,371,402 or 8% on ASCC, €3,469,540 or 19% on CEC pre-school and €1,174,601 or 7% on CEC after-school. The value of approved registrations for TEC Programmes decreased between the 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 Programme Calls by 2.8%.

2.4 Programmes summary

In 2015/2016, a total 4,377 of services were contracted to offer at least one of the three programmes. Of this, 19% (n=840) services offered all three programmes (ECCE, CCS, and TEC)²⁵.

In total, 104,441 individual children availed of at least one of the programmes, with 477 individual children availing of ECCE and TEC at the same time²⁶.

The total number of child registrations across all programmes was 110,664, of which 58% of registrations were in private services and 42% in community services. The highest share of all registered children was in Dublin City (9%) and Cork County (8%), while the lowest was in Leitrim, Longford and Roscommon (1% each).

The combined approved value of all three programmes was €234,573,201.

Table 2.6 presents a comparison of registrations and approved registration values for the three programmes between 2014/2015 and 2015/2016. The 2015/2016 academic year saw a 13% increase in the number of registrations for ECCE, along with a 28% increase in the amount funded through this programme. The higher increase in the ECCE registration values compared to the number of registrations is linked to the growth in the number of children higher capitation allocation, while in 2015/2016 that

²⁵ Please note this figure differs slightly from that used for calculating the survey response rate, as not all services who were contracted during 2015/2016 were still operating or still in contract during the survey period.

²⁶ Children were eligible to be registered on ECCE and TEC simultaneously provided that TEC eligibility was for outside ECCE hours.

Overview of DCYA early years funding programmes

number grew by 16% to 33,008. While CCS registrations rose by 7%, the approved funding amount decreased slightly, by 2%. This demonstrates that the average value of CCS registrations has decreased, and further analysis found that 59% of services who operated CCS in 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 saw a decrease in the amount funded through CCS.

The TEC programmes saw a minor decrease both in terms of numbers registered and funding amount approved within this period.

Table 2.6 National number of registrations and registration values for ECCE, CCS and TEC

	Programme	2014/2015	2015/2016	Annual difference	% difference
Registrations	ECCE	68,333	77,149	8,816	13%
	CCS	23,775	25,374	1,599	7%
	TEC	8,173	8,141	-32	-0.4%
Approved registration values	ECCE	€ 138,959,130	€177,770,017	€38,810,887	28%
	CCS(P) ²⁷	€ 39,700,820	€38,903,707	- €797,113	-2%
	TEC	€ 18,416,268	€17,899,477	- €516,791	-3%

Note: An updated version of this table is included in Appendix I, with updated figures extracted from the PIP system on 3rd October 2016.

²⁷ The registration values for CCS include special allocation.

3 Profile of services

- 4,377 early years services delivered the early years programmes.
- 73% of the services were **private** and 27% were community.
- 61% of services were located in **urban areas** and 39% in rural areas.
- **ECCE** was offered by 95% of services, **TEC** by 36% and **CCS** by 33%.

In 2015, a total of 4,377 early years services were contracted to offer at least one of three types of early years programmes: ECCE, CCS or TEC. This represents a slight decrease from 4,403 services contracted in 2014/2015. These 4,377 services are operated by 3,858 separate legal entities.

This section provides an overview of key characteristics of these services, including type of service, geographical distribution, types of childcare provided, premises ownership, commercial rates paid, curriculum and services provided. Please note that general information about services, such as their type (community or private), geographical details and funding schemes they participated in (included in sections 3.1 – 3.2) is provided for all 4,377 services registered on the PIP system, while the characteristics included in the remaining sections (3.3 – 3.7) are provided for all the services who completed the Service Profile Survey (n=3,429).

3.1 Type of services and geographical distribution

The majority of early years services contracted to offer at least one programme in 2015 were private services (73%, n=3,177). Community services made up just over a quarter of all services (27%, n=1,200). The proportion of community services to private services was the same as in 2014/2015. Almost three quarters of all early years services (73%) were located in the Southern and Eastern Region. In comparison, CSO estimated that 74% of people aged 0-19 years lived in the Southern and Eastern Region in 2015 (CSO, 2016), which indicates that the number of services does tend to reflect the population share.

The majority of early years services (61%) were located in urban areas²⁸ with the remaining 39% in areas defined by the CSO as rural. This is also broken down by private and community services in Table 3.1. A much higher percentage of community services are located in rural areas (48%), while just 36% of private services are located in rural settings.

Table 3.1 Breakdown of services by urban/ rural and private/ community

	Urban	Rural
All services	61%	39%
Private	64%	36%
Community	52%	48%

²⁸ For a detailed description of how services were defined as being either urban or rural, please see section 1.2.4.

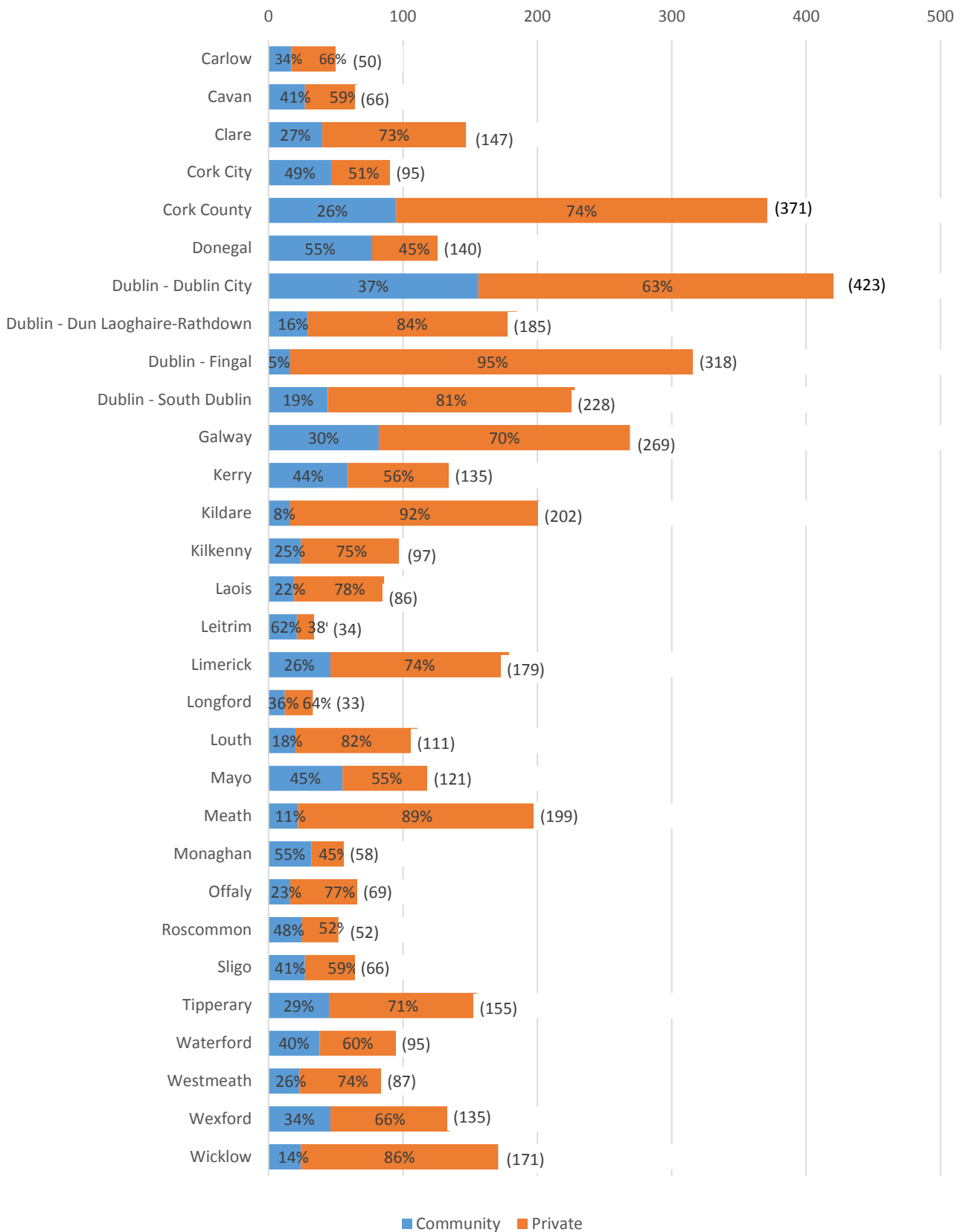
Profile of Services

Comparisons cannot be drawn with previous years, as in previous years the survey respondents chose their urban/rural designation and in this report a different methodology based on CSO classification was used (for more details please see Section 1.2.4). Figure 3.1 presents a detailed breakdown of early years services by type and county (a table version of this figure can be found in Appendix II). The ratio of community services to private services varies significantly between counties. In Dublin - Fingal and Kildare less than 10% of services are community, while in Leitrim, Monaghan and Donegal, they represent more than 50%. The differences are also visible at regional level – the Border, Midland and Western Region has a much higher proportion of community services (37%) compared to the Southern and Eastern Region (24%). The vast majority of early years services in the Dublin region, with the exception of Dublin City, are offered by private services, with 88% of providers in these seven regions²⁹ being private.

²⁹ Dublin - South Dublin; Louth; Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown; Wicklow; Meath; Kildare; and Dublin – Fingal.

Profile of Services

Figure 3.1 Breakdown of early years services by county and community/private



3.2 Funding programmes

Early years services can be contracted to offer up to three funding programmes in a given academic year. The decision of services to participate in a programme is likely to be influenced by programme specific terms and conditions, such as times and weeks of service and staff qualification requirements. In 2015/2016, of the 4,377 services contracted to offer at least one programme, the vast majority of services (95%) offered ECCE, while 36% participated in TEC and 33% in CCS. There were no significant changes in the share of services offering ECCE and TEC between 2014/2015 and 2015/2016. The percentage of services offering CCS increased from 20% to 33% as a result of the CCS extension of the scheme to private services and new community services.

Table 3.2 shows the number and percentage of services offering the three programmes, broken down by community and private. A higher percentage of private services (98%) than community services (88%) offer ECCE. However a far greater percentage of community services offer CCS (77%) and TEC (44%) compared to private services (16% and 34%, respectively). It should be noted that historically, CCS was only offered by community services and private services have only been able to participate in this programme since March 2016. In 2015/2016, 19% (n=840) of services participated in all 3 programmes. This number almost doubled from 2014/2015, when 448 services (10%) offered all 3 services. This is likely due to extension of CCS.

Table 3.2 Breakdown of services by community/ private and funding programme in 2015/2016

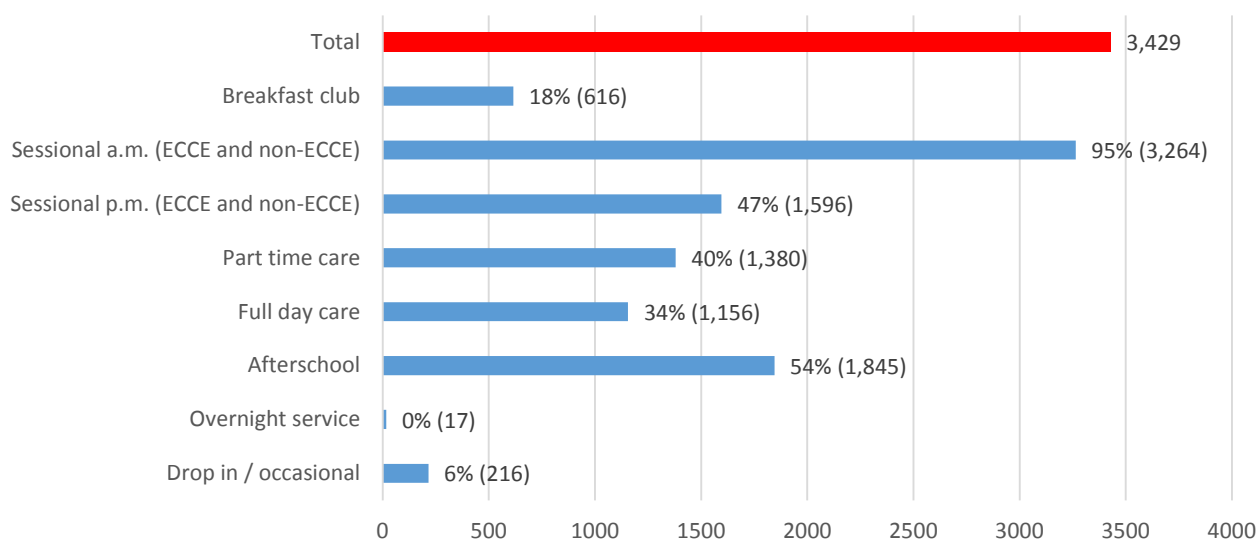
Funding programme	Community	Community % (n=1,200)	Private	Private % (n=3,177)	Total number of services	% of all services participating (n=4,377)
ECCE	1,052	88%	3,126	98%	4,178	95%
CCS	923	77%	501	16%	1,424	33%
TEC	524	44%	1,072	34%	1,596	36%

3.3 Types of childcare and details of services provided

Early years services offer different types of childcare services. Information on the types of childcare offered was collected from the Service Profile survey. Figure 3.2 shows the number of services with children enrolled by service type. The vast majority of services (95%) offer sessional a.m. care (ECCE and non-ECCE) – over twice as many as those offering sessional p.m. care (ECCE and non-ECCE). Over half of all services provide afterschool care (54%, n=1,845), however, only one third of services (34%) offer full day care.

Profile of Services

Figure 3.2 Number of services with children enrolled by service type



When compared to the results of the 2014 Annual Early Years Sector Survey, it can be seen that there has been an increase in the number of services offered by early years facilities across the board (see Table 3.3). **In particular, the percentage of services providing after-school services increased by 20 percentage points, from 34% of services to 54%.** There has been a year-on-year increase for all the years this data is available, however the past 12 months show a much higher increase.

Table 3.3 Number of services with children enrolled by service type between 2011 and 2015

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015/ 2016
Full day care	no data	no data	30%	31%	34%
Breakfast club	6%	7%	12%	14%	18%
Afterschool	27%	28%	30%	34%	54%
Sessional service	57%	54%	99.7%	97%	96%
Part-time care	no data	no data	31%	32%	40%
Drop-in/ occasional	no data	no data	3%	3%	6%

This across the board increase in the number of service types provided by facilities shows a trend towards a diversification of services and a move away from providing just one or two service types. Led by the increase in the numbers providing afterschool services, it is likely that a key driver in this is the need for services to remain financially sustainable by offering a range of services. It may also be possible that in some cases, staff without the minimum qualification levels required for working in rooms funded by the ECCE programme may be redeployed to work with afterschool children.

3.4 Premises ownership

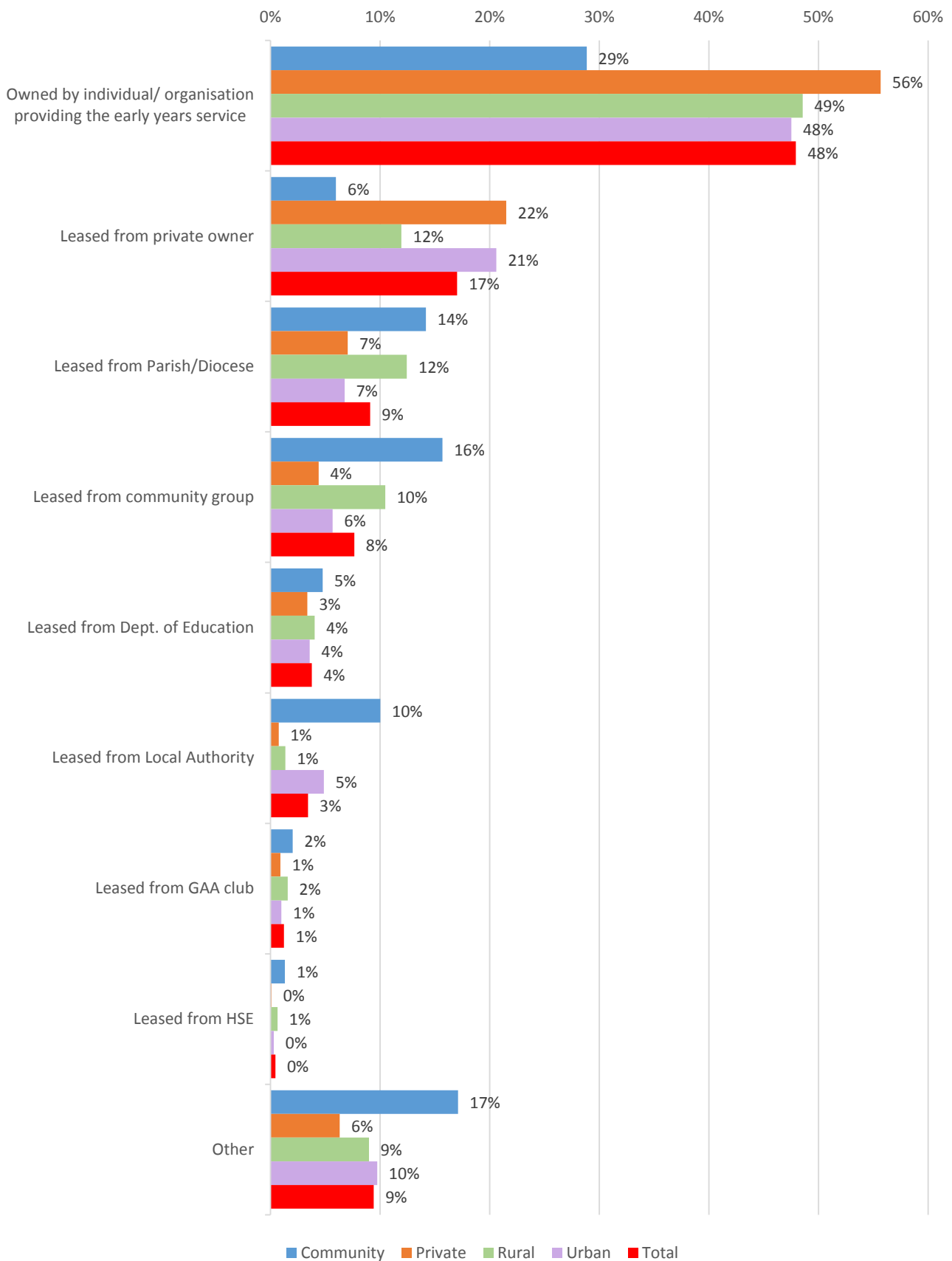
The information on the premises ownership was collected from the Service Profile survey. Almost half of all services (48%) operated from a premises owned by individuals or organisations providing early years services, with 17% leasing their premises from a private owner.

Figure 3.3 presents the breakdown of premises ownership by the type of service and urban/rural location. The type of ownership varies significantly between community and private. **Almost twice as many private services own their own premises compared with community services** and over three times as many lease their premises from private owners.

Premises ownership differs when we look at services located in urban and rural areas. For instance, more premises in urban areas are leased from private owners and local authorities when compared to rural areas, whereas almost double the amount of premises are leased from parish/diocese and community in rural areas compared to urban locations.

Profile of Services

Figure 3.3 Premises ownership by community/ private, rural/ urban and all services



3.5 Commercial rates

The information on whether the services were charged commercial rates was also collected from the Service Profile survey. Out of 3,429 services that completed the survey, one third of respondents (32%, n= 1,086) indicated that their services were billed for commercial rates by the local authority. Compared to 2014, the share of services paying commercial rates decreased by 3%, however, it was still higher than in 2013 when 26% of all services were billed for rates (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Percentage of services billed for rates between 2013, 2014 and 2015/2016

	2013	2014	2015/2016
% of services billed for rates	26%	35%	32%

Table 3.5 shows the percentages of services billed for commercial rates by type of service and their urban/rural location. Private services (39%) are more likely to pay commercial rates compared to community services (14%). Also, there is a higher share of services in urban areas (37%) being billed for commercial rates as compared to their rural counterparts (25%).

Table 3.5 Services billed for commercial rates by community/ private, urban/rural and all services in 2015/2016

	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	All
Yes	14%	39%	37%	25%	32%
No	86%	61%	63%	75%	68%
Total	N=988	N=2,441	N=2,014	N=1,415	N=3,429

The level of rates paid by services varied between type of providers and their locations. Half of the services billed for rates paid between €1,000 and €5,000 and 27% paid annual rates of €1,000 or less. A total of 88 services paid rates over €10,000, with the highest amount paid being almost €22,000. Overall, rates billed to community services were lower than those paid by private services. It also appears that the rates paid by community services decreased between 2014 and 2015. In 2014 just 27% of community services who paid rates, paid less than €1,000. This figure for 2015/2016 increased to 45%. For a detailed breakdown please see Table 3.6.

Profile of Services

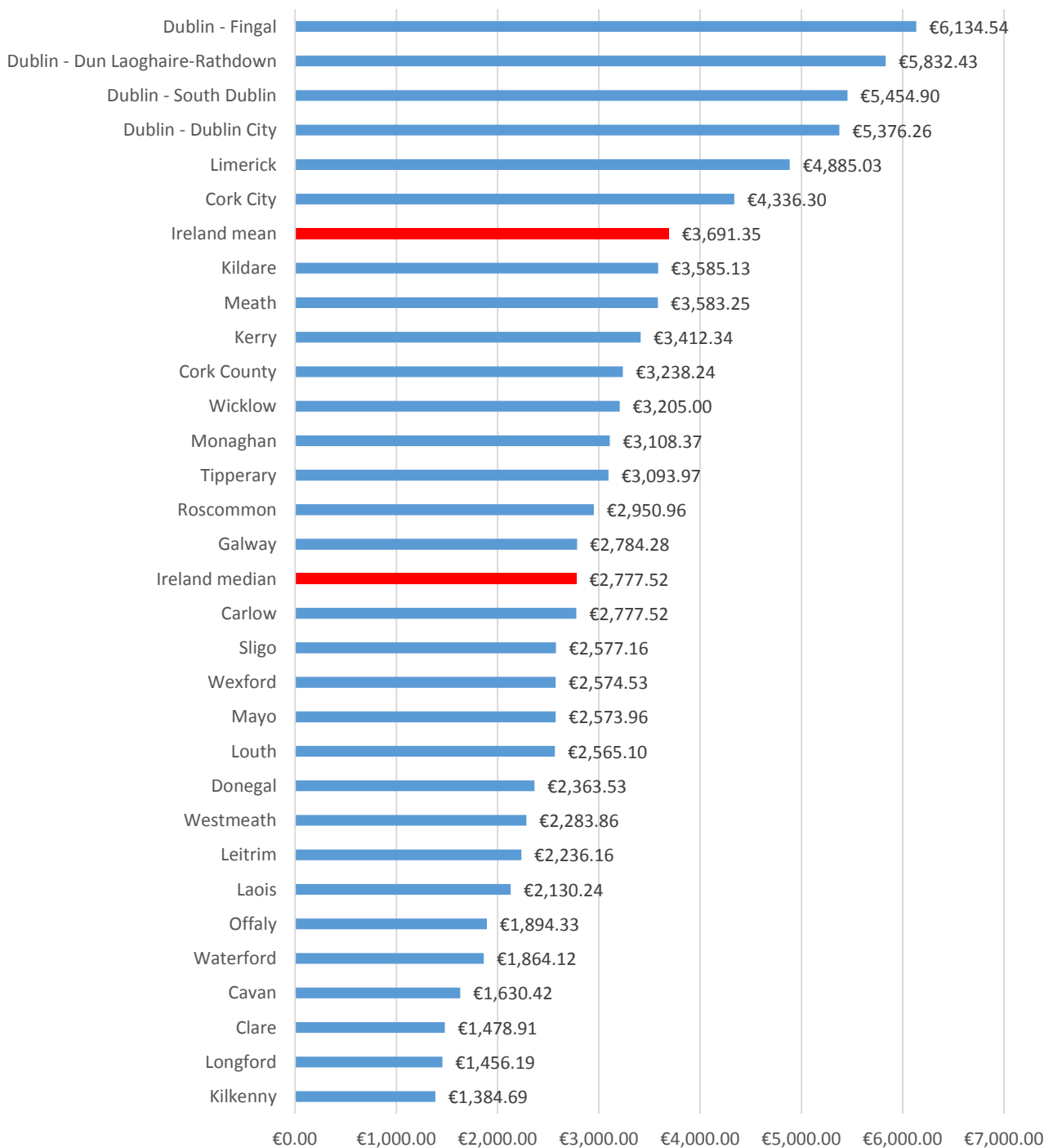
Table 3.6 Most recent annual rates paid by providers by community/ private and all services in 2014 and 2015

	Community		Private		All	
	2014	2015/ 2016	2014	2015/ 2016	2014	2015/ 2016
Under €1,000	27%	45%	25%	24%	25%	27%
€1,000-€5,000	44%	35%	50%	52%	49%	50%
€5,001-€10,000	10%	13%	13%	14%	13%	14%
Over €10,000	5%	5%	5%	9%	5%	8%
Didn't Specify	14%	2%	7%	1%	8%	1%

Figure 3.4 presents the most recent annual rates paid by service by county average. The highest rates were paid by services in all four Dublin local authority areas (above €5,000 on average), while the lowest were in Kilkenny, Longford and Clare (below €1,500). Nationally, the rates averaged at €3,691, however this figure is artificially high as an average due to a small number of very high rates. A more reliable measure of average rates for average services is to use the median, which was €2,777.

Profile of Services

Figure 3.4 Most recent annual rates paid by service providers by county average in 2015



3.6 Curriculum and quality standards

Early years services follow a number of different curricula approaches and quality standards. Aistear, the national Early Childhood Curriculum Framework, was reported as being implemented by 81% of all early years services, with the Síolta standards used in over two thirds (68%) of services nationally.

Profile of Services

The Montessori curriculum is used by almost half of all services (46%). Only 2% of respondents indicated that they do not use a curriculum approach.

Table 3.7 presents the curricula and quality standards used by providers by type of service and their urban/rural location. For the majority of approaches no significant differences in the uptake level can be detected between community and private services or between those located in urban and rural areas. The largest differences were observed for the Montessori approach, which is primarily adopted by private services (60%) in urban locations (51%).

Table 3.7 Curriculum approaches used by early years services by community/ private, urban/rural and all services

	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	All
Aistear	82%	80%	79%	83%	81%
Síolta	71%	67%	66%	71%	68%
Montessori	12%	60%	51%	38%	46%
Play based curriculum	45%	42%	42%	44%	43%
High/Scope	20%	6%	10%	11%	10%
Other	10%	4%	5%	6%	6%
None	5%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Early Start	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Steiner	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Froebel	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
ABA (ASD children)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
REDI	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	N=988	N=2,441	N=2,014	N=1,415	N=3,429

3.7 Details of services provided

Operating hours

Early years services differ with regard to their opening hours and the number of weeks they stay open throughout the year. Early years services which replied to the Service Profile survey on average **open for 30.9 hours per week, a slight increase on the 2014 average of 30.6 hours**. On average, services in urban areas stay open longer by almost three hours (32 hours) when compared to those located in rural areas (29.3 hours). Also, community services have slightly longer opening hours compared to private services.

Profile of Services

However the difference in average opening hours between community and private services decreased significantly from 3.1 hours in 2014 to 0.7 hours in 2015/2016.

Table 3.8 presents the breakdown of services' opening hours by their type and urban or rural location. Overall, the largest proportion of services (44%) opened between 15 and 24 hours a week, while the smallest share were open for fewer than 15 hours a week (5%). When compared to 2014, the proportion of services that open for over 40 hours rose by almost 5% from 29.1% in 2014 to 34% in 2015/2016. This is consistent with the finding that more services are offering afterschool services.

Table 3.8 Hours of operation per week by community/ private, urban/rural and all services

	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	All
Fewer than 15 hours	5%	4%	5%	4%	5%
15 to 24 hours	38%	47%	40%	49%	44%
25 to 40 hours	24%	14%	19%	15%	17%
Over 40 hours	33%	35%	36%	32%	34%
Average	31.4	30.7	32.0	29.3	30.9

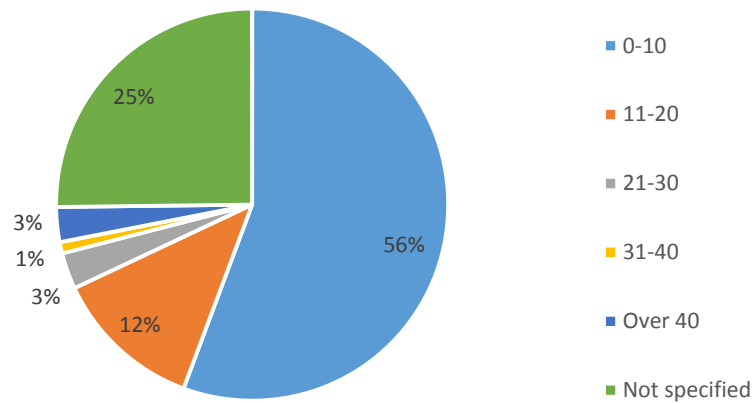
The community services are spread more evenly over the shorter, medium and longer hours of opening, while private services are more likely to be open for shorter time (less than 25 hours a week) or longer time (over 40 hours). This is consistent with previous years.

Number of non-contact hours per week

In the Service Profile survey, services were asked about the number of non-contact hours that their staff worked per week. On average, staff worked 9.9 non-contact hours per week, with staff in community services contributing 2.4 non-contact hours less compared to staff in private services. More than half of services (56%) indicated that their staff worked less than 10 non-contact hours, and one quarter did not specify the number of hours at all. For a detailed breakdown of services by the number of non-contact hours please see Figure 3.5.

Profile of Services

Figure 3.5 Non-contact hours per week



Other services

Some early years services offer pick-up and drop-off transport services. Almost a quarter of the Service Profile survey respondents (23%) indicated that they offered pick-up services, while 17% provided drop-off transport. Private services were much more likely to offer transport services overall – 26% and 21% of all private services offered pick-up and drop-off transport, respectively. Only 15% of community services offered pick-up transport and even fewer community services offered drop-off transport (9%).

There were no major differences in the proportion of respondents offering transport services with regard to their urban or rural location – only 2% more services located in urban areas offered pick-up transport compared to those located in rural areas, while rural services were just 1% more likely to provide drop-off transport.

Table 3.9 Share of services offering transport services by community/ private, urban/ rural and all services

	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	All
Pick up	15%	26%	24%	22%	23%
Drop off	9%	21%	17%	18%	17%

4 Children in early years setting

This section profiles some of the children and families that avail of early years services who fall into the category of minority groups such as lone parents, Travellers, Roma, children for whom English or Irish is not their first language as well as children with a disability (as diagnosed by the HSE).

4.1 Equality/diversity and inclusion

Respondents to the Service Profile survey were asked to detail, to the best of their knowledge the number of children/families who avail of their services from the target groups mentioned above. *Table 4.1* shows 75% of services (2,561) provided childcare to at least one child from a **one parent family**. In total, **16,608 one parent families** were reported to be availing of childcare from these services. This figure is perhaps not surprising given that the OECD (2011)³⁰ reported that Ireland has the second highest rate of lone parent families in the OECD at 24.3% compared to the OECD average of 14.9%. This figure equates to being an average of 6.5 one parent families per service across the 75% of services who reported having this group access their facility. This is an increase on the 4.5 one parent families reported in 2014.

It is notable that three-fifths of children of one parent families attend community services, although the community services account for only one quarter of services nationally.

Table 4.1 Numbers of one parent families attending early years services by community/ private and urban/ rural

	All	Community	Private	Urban	Rural
Number of one parent families that use your service	16,608	10,047	6,561	12,416	4,192
Number of services with any one parent families availing of facility	2,561	871	1,690	1,561	1,000
% of Services with any one parent families availing of facility	75%	88%	69%	78%	71%

Respondents were asked to detail the number of children for whom English or Irish was not a first language. This target group made up the second highest portion of respondents with a total of 2,300 (67%) services reporting to have at least one child attending with an overall total of **16,728 children who have neither English nor Irish as their first language**. See *Table 4.2*.

This represents 12% of all children enrolled by age across all services. This figure has decreased slightly from the 12.3% reported in 2014. When examining the spread of children in attendance whose first language is neither English nor Irish, as a percentage of overall numbers of children enrolled by age, there

³⁰ OECD (2011) Doing Better for Families. Paris: OECD

Children in early years setting

is no observable difference (12% attending community services and 12% of children enrolled in private services).

Table 4.2 Numbers of children attending early years services whose first language is neither English nor Irish by community/ private and urban/ rural

	All	Communi	Private	Urban	Rural
Number of children attending where first language is neither English nor	16,728	5,777	10,951	13,758	2,970
Number of services with any children attending	2,300	676	1,624	1,586	714
% of services with any children attending	67%	68%	67%	79%	50%

Respondents were also asked to report if they had any children attending from **the Traveller and/or Roma community**. This survey marks the first time that services were asked to provide information on the numbers of Roma children attending (if any).

Table 4.3 shows that a total of **480 (or 14% of all services)** had one or more children from the **Traveller community attending** while only **6% (197)** of services had at least one child from the **Roma community attending**. In terms of the numbers of Traveller children attending as a proportion of all children attending early years services is (1.1%), a slight decrease on the 2014 percentage of (1.8%). The total number of Traveller children reported as attending has increased from 1,467 in 2014 to 1,899 in 2015/2016, although it should be noted that this is in the context of an increased response rate. The spread of Traveller children attending is greater amongst community and urban based services. This is not true however for Roma children. Table 4.3 shows that from **a total of 475 Roma children attending across 197 services**, almost two-thirds (64%) are based in private services.

Children in early years setting

Table 4.3 Numbers of Traveller and Roma children attending early years services by community/ private and urban/rural

	Traveller children			Roma children		
	Number of children attending	Number of services with any children attending	% of services with any children attending	Number of children attending	Number of services with any children attending	% of services with any children attending
All	1,899	480	14%	475	197	6%
Community	1,545	283	29%	173	72	7%
Private	354	197	8%	302	125	5%
Urban	1,452	341	17%	385	160	8%
Rural	447	139	10%	65	36	3%

4.2 Disability

Respondents to the Service Profile survey were asked to specify whether or not they have any children attending with special needs (as diagnosed by the HSE). **A total of 1,644 or 48% of total respondents answered 'yes' in response to this question.** These services were then asked to detail the number of children attending against a prescribed list of disability categories (as diagnosed by the HSE). Table 4.4 shows this list and the number of children attending across the various categories of disability. Please note that a child may be recorded under more than one disability category so these numbers cannot be added to give a total.

Table 4.4 Numbers of children with disabilities attending early years services by community/ private and by type of disability

	All		Community		Private	
	Number of services	Number of children	Number of services	Number of children	Number of services	Number of children
Services with at least one child with a disability	1,644		573		1,091	
% Services with at least one child with a disability	48%		58%		45%	
Number of services and children with:						

Children in early years setting

	All		Community		Private	
	Number of services	Number of children	Number of services	Number of children	Number of services	Number of children
Physical disability	431	593	162	267	269	326
Sensory impairment (hearing/sight)	388	652	148	313	240	339
Autistic Spectrum Disorder (Asperger Syndrome, Autism)	995	1,679	360	682	635	997
Down Syndrome	364	439	130	164	234	275
Learning difficulties	660	1,626	251	924	393	702
Other	244	653	111	382	133	271

Table 4.4 shows that the disability category with the most children reported is ‘Autistic Spectrum Disorder’ (1,679). **A total of 995 services who completed the survey reported having at least one child attending under ‘Autism Spectrum Disorder’.** This trend remains unchanged from 2014, where this category also accounted for the greatest number of children diagnosed with a disability. The second largest category of children reported was ‘Learning difficulties’ with (1,626 children from 660 services).

Community services were, on average more likely to report having at least one child with a disability than private services. This is likely to be, in the first instance, that community services are known to take many referrals of children by Túsla and public health practitioners. Another reason may be attributed to the fact that community services are on average, larger than private services.

5 Childcare places

- 171,200 children are estimated to be enrolled across Ireland's early years services in 2015.
- Almost half of the total number of enrolments (47%, N=65,437) were in the 3 to 4½ years age category.

While the Programmes Implementation Platform (PIP) provides a record of all child registrations under the three DCYA early years programmes (ECCE, CCS & TEC), it does not hold information on childcare places which are not subsidised by these programmes. A section was included within the Service Profile survey to provide a more accurate overview of childcare places in services participating in the survey. Respondents to the Service Profile survey were asked to report on the number of children enrolled, on waiting lists and also the number of available (vacant) places their service had by age and also by service type.

Table 5.1 shows the total number of children enrolled, on a waiting list and places available by both age range and service type

Table 5.1 Total numbers enrolled, on a waiting list and places available by age and service type

	Enrolled	Waiting list	Places available
By age range			
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	2,717	1,149	742
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	9,289	1,649	1,133
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	18,492	2,831	2,184
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)	65,437	5,446	6,858
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72 months)	22,538	1,105	2,795
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	12,216	516	1,807
8 years+	8,279	320	1,109
Grand Total	138,968	13,016	16,628
By service type			
Drop in / occasional	1,012	41	241
Overnight service	19	0	0
Afterschool	28,004	1,430	4,358
Full day care	24,688	3,445	3,832
Part-time care	21,843	3,262	3,669

	Enrolled	Waiting list	Places available
Sessional p.m. (ECCE and non-ECCE)	8,913	936	5,032
Sessional a.m. (ECCE and non-ECCE)	64,041	6,261	6,659
Breakfast club	5,259	203	2,072
Grand total	153,779	15,578	25,863

5.1 Enrolments

As described above, respondents were asked to provide details on current enrolments (as of the day they completed the Service Profile survey) by both age band and service type. Both data sets are important for different reasons, with service type enrolments allowing for analysis of potential capacity for a particular service type e.g., sessional a.m. The data on children by age allows for an analysis of the total number of unique children. Given that a child can be enrolled in more than one service type, for example breakfast club and afterschool, this section of the report will focus mainly on those reported by age as this represents unique children, however, some sections will look at both (places by age and service type), when required, for analysis.

Respondents reported a total of **138,968³¹ children enrolled by age**. Based on extrapolation, **it can therefore be estimated that approximately 171,200 children³² are enrolled across all services**. This is a significant increase (31%, n=40,770) on the numbers reported in previous years, with the extrapolated national figure provided in the 2014 Annual Sector Survey being 130,430. While this increase appears high, this is likely to be due to the changed methodology used in this survey. A number of factors may account for this increase:

- Given that the survey changes from anonymous to non-anonymous, it may be that services have provided a fuller picture of the actual number of children across all age ranges.
- The upper age limit of children was changed from 6-14 years to 8+ years. It is possible that a small number of children over 14 years may be included who were not previously.
- Some services in the past may not have included all children due to the way in which questions were asked. Previously respondents were asked the number of 1-2 and 3-5 year olds and may not have included those aged between two and three years.
- It is possible that there has been an increase in certain age groups attending afterschool services, such as those under three and those over six. This increase may be linked with national economic

³¹ A total of 122 respondents reported no children enrolled in their service.

³² Based on the calculation that 81% of children were reported on through the Service Profile survey. For more information on the methodology behind this refer to Section 1.2.3.

factors such as increasing employment rates, as well as early years facilities offering more services and longer hours³³.

With little or no change in the number of services providing early years care, the **average number of children enrolled per service has increased to 42, marking a significant increase on the figure of 33 reported in 2014**. This points towards an expanding sector, with services working with an increasing amount of children, predominantly led by an increase in the number of 12 to 36 month old children enrolled in these services. This is also evident in the growth of registrations for ECCE, with a 13% increase recorded between 2014 and 2015/2016.

Figure 5.1 shows the spread of children enrolled across the different age cohorts. Almost half of all children enrolled (47%) fall into the pre-school age category (3-4½ years). Children aged over 4½ years represent 31% of total children enrolled whilst babies (up to 1 year) make up the lowest proportion of children attending with only 2%.

Figure 5.1 Numbers and percentages of total children enrolled by age band

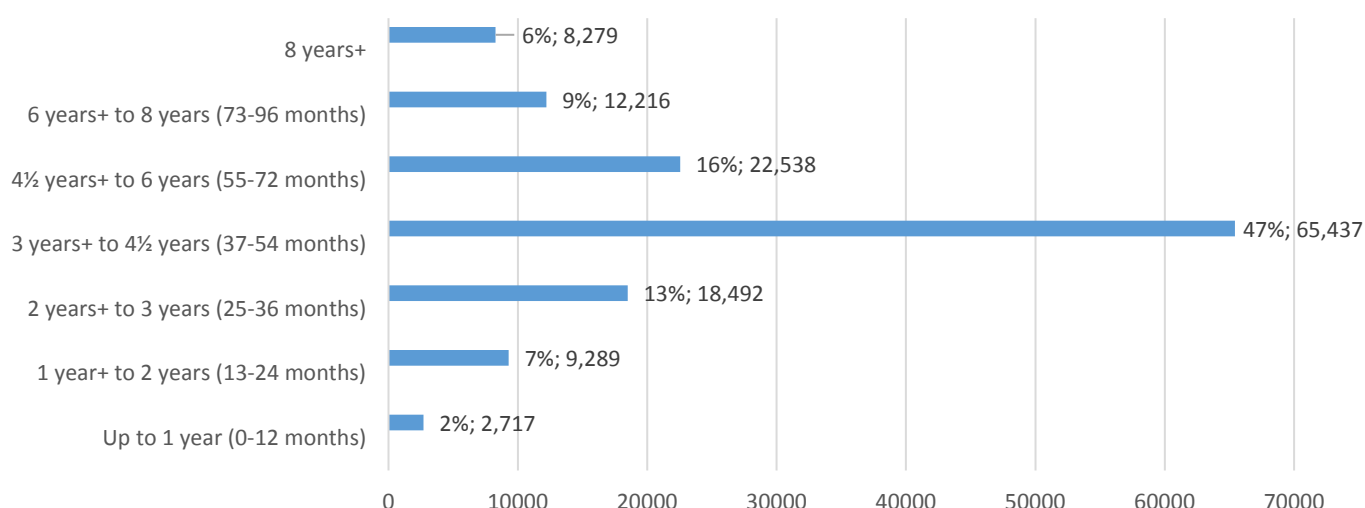


Table 5.2 shows the numbers and percentages of children enrolled in 2015/2016 compared with 2014, 2013 and 2012. This shows that children of pre-school³⁴ age continue to represent the highest proportion of total children enrolled. However, this figure has dropped from 66% in 2014 to 63% in 2015/2016. Despite the decrease of the share of pre-school children in the total number of children attending early years services, their actual number increased, indicating even higher increases in the share of children in other bands, in particular toddlers (age 1 year+ to 3 years).

³³ This point is made in Section 3.3 in relation to the increased number of early years facilities providing afterschool services.

³⁴ In 2014, pre-schoolers comprised of children that fell within the age range of 3-5 years which covers a broader age range than the 3+ years to 4½ years captured in the 2015/2016 survey.

Childcare places

For the first time (since this data is available) school age children have dropped from representing the second most represented age cohort in early years services to the third. School age children represented just 15% (n=20,495) of enrolled children, down from 18% in the previous year. That said, this does not represent a drop in the number of afterschool children or places, but rather a disproportionate increase in the number of younger children.

Babies (up to 1 year) continue to represent the lowest portion of children enrolled with 2% in 2015/2016, a decrease of 1% on 2014. A small decrease was also recorded in actual numbers for this age cohort. .

The largest increase was recorded in the number of toddlers (age 1 year+ to 3 years) attending pre-school between 2014 and 2015/2016. While all figures for 2015/2016 are higher, likely due to the updated methodology, the percentage of children attending from this age cohort increased from 13% in 2014 to 20% in 2015/2016. Anecdotal evidence from practitioners and those supporting them suggest this may in part be driven by the effect of ECCE expansion where parents are enrolling younger children for one or two days per week, in order to ensure the child is registered and will be able to avail of an ECCE place once they become eligible. It is also likely that the decrease in the unemployment rate and economic recovery may have had an impact on the number of younger children attending pre-school. This factor would not have had a corresponding increase on the older age cohort, for whom an enrolment saturation point has been reached (i.e. 95% of eligible children avail of ECCE).

Table 5.2 Attendance by childcare type (2012 to 2015/2016)

	Age range	2012		2013		2014		2015/2016	
Babies	Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	3%	3,144	3%	2,619	3%	2,760	2%	2,717
Toddlers	1 year+ to 3 years (13-36 months)	14%	14,135	14%	11,425	13%	10,996	20%	27,781
Pre-schoolers	3 years+ to 6 years (37-72 months)	66%	65,854	70%	59,131	66%	54,481	63%	87,975
School age	6 years+ to 8+ years	16%	16,087	14%	11,702	18%	14,719	15%	20,495
	Totals overall	100%	99,220	100%	84,877	100%	82,956	100%	138,968

Childcare places

Of all the children attending services who responded to the Service Profile survey, 36% (n=49,350) are attending community services and 64% (n=89,618) are attending private services. This is somewhat disproportional to the breakdown of services - 25% of services are community and 75% are private and therefore indicates that on average community services are significantly larger than private services.

Almost two-thirds of children attending are enrolled in urban based services (62%:86,094) with the remainder enrolled in rural based services (38%:52,874). A breakdown of attendance by age group and provider type can be found in *Table 5.3*. While private services usually have almost twice as many enrolments as community services, community services have a bigger market share of older after schoolers with 26% more children over 8 years of age being enrolled in community services. Anecdotal evidence suggests that community services cater more adequately for this age cohort through stand-alone afterschool services which include the school completion programme.

Table 5.3 Attendance by age band with breakdown by community/ private and urban/ rural

Age band	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	Overall total
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	833	1,884	1,842	875	2,717
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	3,158	6,131	6,343	2,946	9,289
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	6,802	11,690	12,373	6,119	18,492
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)	20,669	44,768	40,219	25,218	65,437
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72 months)	8,191	14,347	13,166	9,372	22,538
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	5,083	7,133	7,177	5,039	12,216
8 years+	4,614	3,665	4,974	3,305	8,279
Total	49,350	89,618	86,094	52,874	138,968

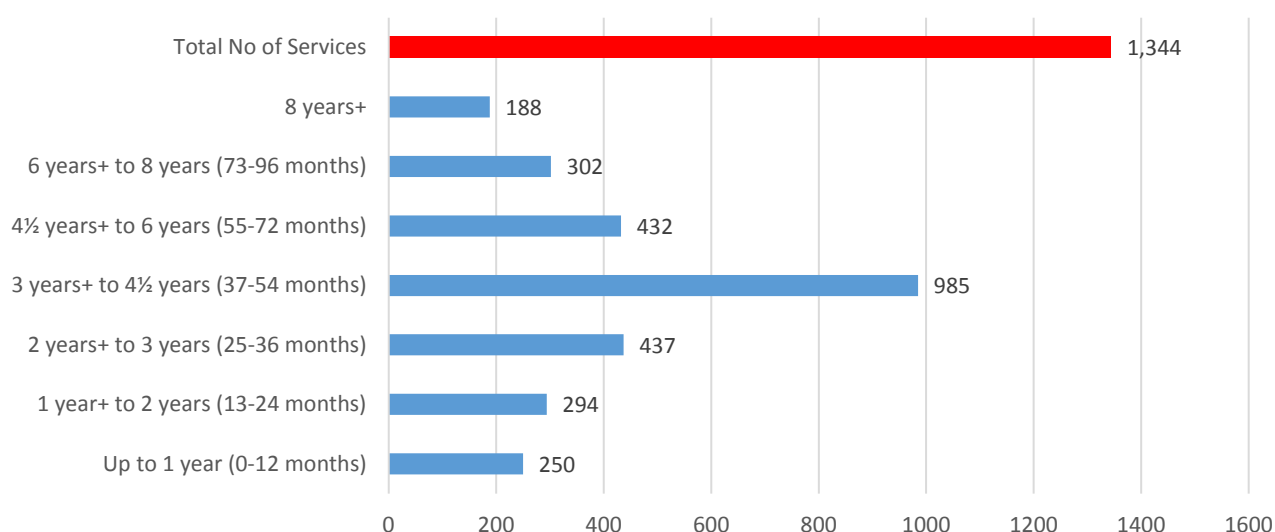
For a county breakdown of numbers of children attending, including a breakdown by community versus private services, see Appendix III. This table also provides the number of children attending nationally based on extrapolation, providing an estimation of the total number of children enrolled per county. The number of enrolled children in a given county is proportional to the number of services in this county. Cork County and Dublin City reported the highest number of children enrolled with 12,631 and 12,370, respectively. Both counties also account for the highest number of services with 307 in Cork County and 286 in Dublin City. Leitrim and Longford both reported the lowest number of children with 949 and 1,396 children enrolled, respectively.

Childcare places

The average number of children per facility is 42 with 51 in community services and 38 in private services. At county level, Monaghan has the highest occupancy with an average of 63 children per facility while Clare has the lowest average with 32 children enrolled per facility. On average, rural services had an average of 39 children while urban services had an average of 44 children. For a county breakdown of numbers of children attending with average enrolled by county and type of service, please refer to Appendix IV.

A total of 1,344 (39%) services reported having at least one vacancy within their service. This is a decrease from the 1,769 (64%) services that reported vacancies in 2014³⁵. Figure 5.2 shows the number of services with a vacancy across the different age ranges. For example, there are 985 early years services which have at least one vacancy for a 3-4½ year old.

Figure 5.2 Number of services with (1 or more) vacancies by age band



As presented in Table 5.4, **services reported a total of 16,628 vacant childcare places across 1,769 services (52%).**

Table 5.4 Vacancies by age band with community/ private and urban/ rural breakdown

Age band	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	Total
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	211	531	424	318	742
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	332	801	709	424	1,133
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	733	1,451	1,339	845	2,184
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)	2,347	4,511	3,513	3,345	6,858

³⁵ In the 2014 survey, only services that reported being “not full” were asked to provide numbers (if any) of vacancies they had.

Childcare places

Age band	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	Total
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72 months)	850	1,945		1,357	2,795
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	602	1,205		906	1,807
8 years+	481	628		512	1,109
Grand total	5,556	11,072		7,707	16,628

With 65,437 children enrolled in the 3-4½ year old category, and 6,858 places available for this age group, there is approximately a 10% vacancy level nationally. Table 5.5 presents a county breakdown of the number of children enrolled and places available. There is a national level of 10% availability for this age group, however, at a county level there is a high degree of variance, with Longford having just 3% availability level and Mayo having 19%. Data in this table allows for identification of counties with comparatively high or low levels of availability for this age group.

It should be noted that this metric does not provide a definitive picture of availability within a specific county. Rather it is useful for comparative purposes to demonstrate that counties with similar levels of 3-4½ yr olds enrolled, such as Kilkenny (1,423 enrolled, 70 available) and Westmeath (1,470 enrolled, 201 available) have different levels of availability compared to the national average.

Table 5.5 Availability by county as a percentage of numbers enrolled for age cohort 3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)

County	Enrolled	Available	% availability
Longford	592	16	3%
Sligo	950	42	4%
Kilkenny	1,423	70	5%
Carlow	869	47	5%
Cavan	782	44	6%
Dublin - South Dublin	3,641	216	6%
Dublin - Fingal	4,329	262	6%
Dublin - Dublin City	5,444	357	7%
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	2,781	183	7%
Cork City	1,445	102	7%
Kildare	3,272	309	9%

Childcare places

County	Enrolled	Available	% availability
Cork County	6,231	637	10%
Waterford	1,601	164	10%
Roscommon	936	97	10%
Wexford	2,300	247	11%
Galway	3,587	386	11%
Monaghan	1,019	118	12%
Wicklow	1,870	218	12%
Limerick	2,520	312	12%
Clare	1,884	236	13%
Laois	1,489	189	13%
Louth	2,158	280	13%
Westmeath	1,470	201	14%
Tipperary	2,210	311	14%
Meath	2,951	442	15%
Leitrim	405	62	15%
Offaly	1,252	202	16%
Kerry	2,012	344	17%
Donegal	2,432	459	19%
Mayo	1,582	305	19%
Grand Total	65,437	6,858	10%

Data was also provided on availability by service type and age. Table 5.6 presents the vacancies by the service type and rural/urban breakdown. A total of 25,863 vacancies were reported nationally. This figure is higher than the number reported by age band, due to children being able to avail of multiple session types on any given day. This shows that there are pockets of over-supply of childcare places within the sector despite demand shown in other places.

Childcare places

Table 5.6 Vacancies by service type, community/ private and urban/ rural breakdown

Service type offered	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	All
Drop in / occasional	143	98	88	153	241
Overnight service	0	0	0	0	0
Afterschool	1,480	2,878	2,243	2,115	4,358
Full day care	946	2,886	2,166	1,666	3,832
Part-time care	1,460	2,209	2,073	1,596	3,669
Sessional p.m. (ECCE and non-ECCE)	1,445	3,587	2,977	2,055	5,032
Sessional a.m. (ECCE and non-ECCE)	2,235	4,424	3,100	3,559	6,659
Breakfast club	588	1,484	944	1,128	2,072
Grand total	8,297	17,566	13,591	12,272	25,863

An extrapolation based on the response rate of 81% would suggest that nationally there could be over 20,485 vacant childcare places (see Table 5.7). This marks a decrease on the corresponding extrapolated figure of 31,146 reported in 2014 and is in line with the overall growth in the number of enrolments. On average, there are 5 vacant places per service, down from 7.2 in 2014. Two-thirds of all vacancies are in private services compared with only one-third (33%, n=5,556) in community services. This is proportional to the number of children attending both types of services.

Table 5.7 Vacancies by childcare age band by number, percentage and extrapolation nationally

Age band	Number of vacant childcare places	% of all vacancies	Extrapolated number of vacancies nationally ³⁶
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	742	4%	914
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	1,133	7%	1,396
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	2,184	13%	2,691

³⁶ These figures are based on dividing the numbers reported by age band by the overall response rate (0.81) to estimate what the number of vacancies might be across all early years services.

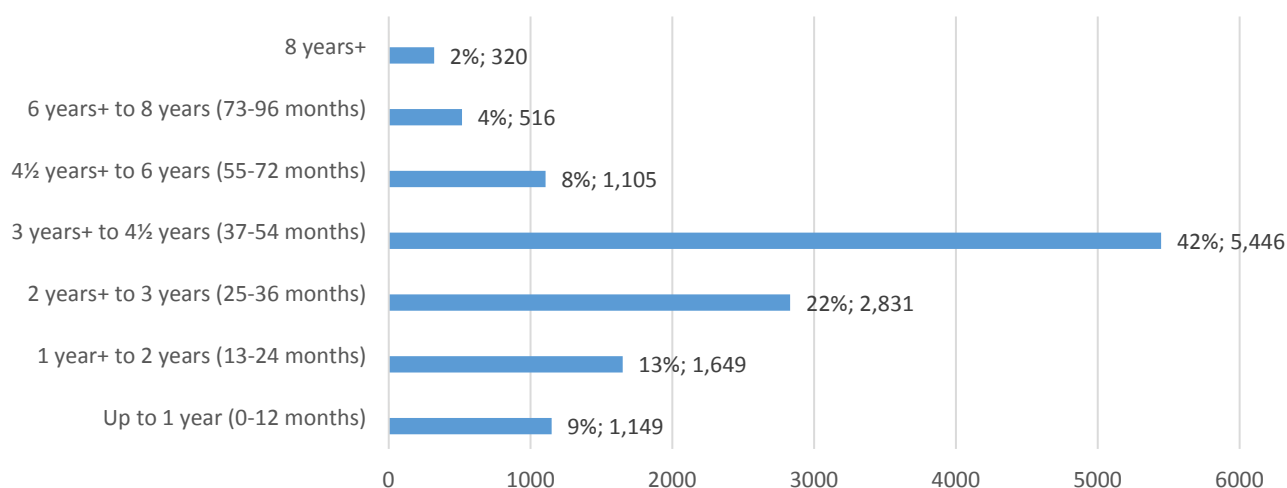
Age band	Number of vacant childcare places	% of all vacancies	Extrapolated number of vacancies nationally ³⁶
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)	6,858	41%	8,449
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72 months)	2,795	17%	3,443
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	1,807	11%	2,226
8 years+	1,109	7%	1,366
Grand Total	16,628	100%	20,485

5.2 Waiting lists

Services were asked to provide details on the number of children on a waiting list by age and service type. A **total of 13,016 children were reported to be on waiting lists** (by age), as shown in Figure 5.3. This is a significant increase on the 4,396 children reported on a waiting list in 2014. However, it should be noted that in previous years, only services who reported being “full” were asked how many (if any) children were on waiting lists. Therefore, the figures are not fully comparable.

It should also be noted that at any given time, a parent may have placed their child on the waiting list of more than one service. Therefore, it is likely that the number of individual children on waiting lists is lower.

Figure 5.3 Number and percentage of children on a waiting list for places by age band



Of the total number on a waiting list, 42% (n=5,446) fall within the preschool age category 3 years+ to 4½ years. The second highest age cohort of those children on a waiting list is the 2+ to 3 years age cohort with 22% (n= 2,831). This may be related to the introduction of a second free preschool year (extension of the

ECCE programme), where parents may be enrolling their children at this age to increase their likelihood of securing a place on the scheme. Babies (up to one year) account for almost one tenth of overall places on a waiting list (9%) perhaps reflecting a shortage of baby places while children aged 8 years+ account for the lowest percentage overall of waiting list places at 2% (n=320). The latter suggests that demand for afterschool services decreased for children aged 8 years+ or may highlight that parents/ children do not opt for centre-based care for this age cohort.

Looking at the same figure by service type, the total is higher with 15,578 waiting list places reported. The latter can be explained by the fact that a child can be on a waiting list for more than one service type, for example, a child of school age may be on a waiting list for a breakfast club place and also for an afterschool place in the same service.

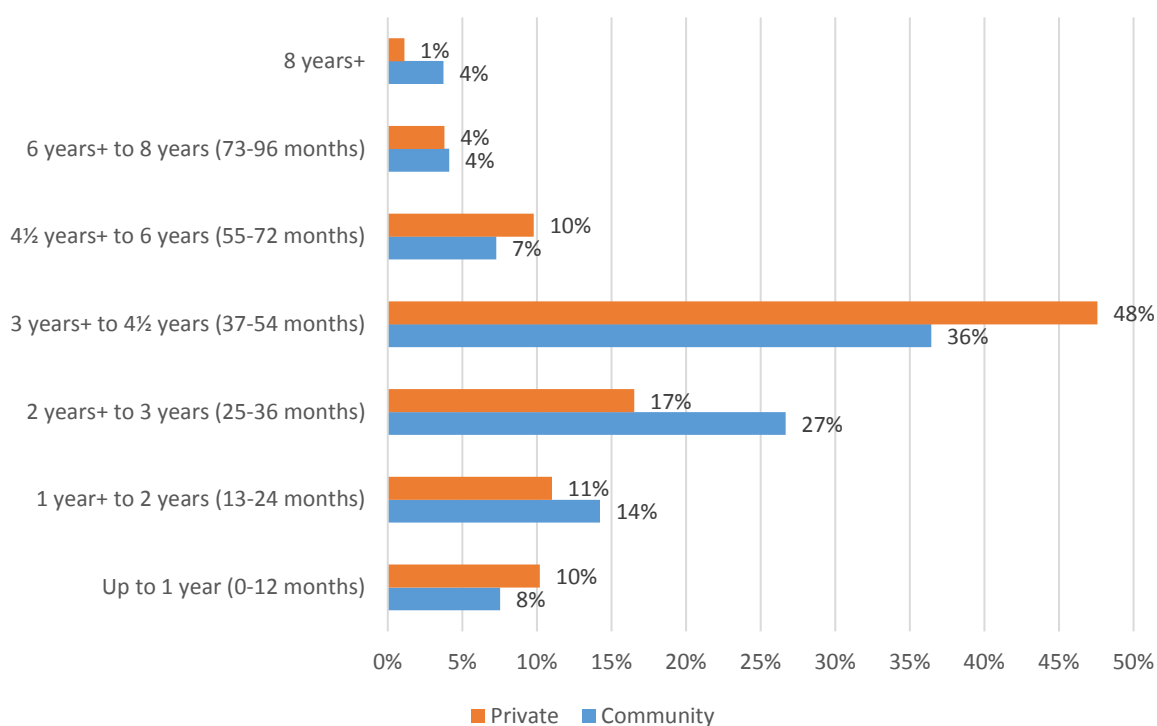
As Table 5.8 shows, over three quarters of those on a waiting list (77%,n=10,008) are waiting for a place in an urban-based early years service. When examining waiting lists in terms of the community/ private distribution, the spread is almost equal with community services having 51% (n=6,700) of overall numbers on a waiting list and private services accounting for 49% (n=6,316).

Table 5.8 Numbers on waiting list by age band and % with community/ private and urban/ rural breakdown

Age band	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	Overall total	%
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	505	644	857	292	1,149	9%
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	954	695	1,322	327	1,649	13%
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	1,787	1,044	2,301	530	2,831	22%
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)	2,441	3,005	4,005	1,441	5,446	42%
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72 months)	487	618	884	221	1,105	8%
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	276	240	383	133	516	4%
8 years+	250	70	256	64	320	2%
Total	6,700	6,316	10,008	3,008	13,016	100%

Figure 5.4 shows that the distribution for places across the age ranges varies between different types of services. There is a higher demand for places for children of pre-school age (3 years+ to 4½ years) in private services than community services. The same can also be seen for children aged up to 1 year. However, for children who fall between the ages of 1 year+ to 3 years, waiting lists are higher in community services.

Figure 5.4 Numbers on a waiting list by community/ private breakdown



A further breakdown of the numbers on waiting lists as a percentage of children attending (by community/private, urban/rural) by age is available in Appendix V.

5.3 Capacity

Respondents were asked to state the number of children enrolled by age, the number of vacancies and numbers on a waiting list. Availability within the sector may be determined, to some extent, by adding the numbers enrolled to the numbers of vacancies. This marks a change from previous years when respondents were asked simply to state the number of places available.

Asking services for data on the numbers of children enrolled, vacancies and numbers on waiting lists by both age and service type allows for a more detailed assessment of the availability of places. This can show how availability can vary depending on the age of the child for example, a vacant place for one child up to 1 year could equate to two vacant places for a sessional a.m. and sessional p.m. place for two children of pre-school age.

Table 5.9 shows capacity along with the average number of places available per facility across the various age ranges. The capacity is highest amongst the preschool cohort (3 years+ to 4½ years) with 72,295 places available, compared with availability for babies (up to 1 year) who have the lowest availability with 3,459 places available.

Childcare places

Table 5.9 Capacity by age band with average per facility

Age range	Total places available	Average places available per facility	Number of services
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	3,459	4.4	793
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	10,422	9.8	1,063
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	20,676	10.4	1,986
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)	72,295	21.8	3,318
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72 months)	25,333	10.2	2,474
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	14,023	11.1	1,266
8 years+	9,388	8.7	1,078

Table 5.10 shows the capacity by age band and type of service. The availability is highest across all age ranges within private services, except for children of afterschool age (8 years+), where community services have more capacity for this age cohort (5,095 places available in community services compared with 4,293 places in private services). However, it should be noted that this difference could be attributed to the fact that 73% of survey respondents were private services when compared to 27% of community services. Capacity was also greater across all age ranges in urban services when compared with their rural counterparts.

Table 5.10 Capacity by age band with average per facility by community/private

Age range	Community			Private		
	Total places available	Average places available per facility	Number of services	Total places available	Average places available per facility	Number of services
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	1,044	4.4	238	2,415	4.4	555
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	3,490	10.4	335	6,932	9.5	728
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	7,535	12.5	603	13,141	9.5	1,383

Childcare places

Age range	Community			Private		
	Total places available	Average places available per facility	Number of services	Total places available	Average places available per facility	Number of services
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)	23,016	25.2	915	49,279	20.5	2,403
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72 months)	9,041	12.3	733	16,292	9.4	1,741
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	5,685	12.9	439	8,338	10.1	827
8 years+	5,095	12.4	410	4,293	6.4	668

Table 5.11 presents a county breakdown of total places available (numbers enrolled plus number of vacancies) and shows that capacity is highest in Cork County and Dublin City with 14,178 and 13,153, respectively. Counties which show the lowest capacity are Leitrim and Longford with 1,108 and 1,489 each. While these totals are inflated due to the fact that children reported on waiting lists may include double counting, the counties mentioned above also represent the highest and lowest number of services per county.

Table 5.11 County breakdown of capacity including community/private breakdown

County	All		Community		Private	
	Number of services	Number of places available	Number of services	Number of places available	Number of services	Number of places available
Carlow	40	2,148	14	1,181	26	967
Cavan	38	1,943	18	1,033	20	910
Clare	123	4,357	29	1,635	94	2,722
Cork City	65	3,079	39	1,680	26	1,399
Cork County	316	14,178	82	4,289	235	9,889
Donegal	117	5,800	65	2,953	52	2,847

Childcare places

County	All		Community		Private	
	Number of services	Number of places available	Number of services	Number of places available	Number of services	Number of places available
Dublin - Dublin City	294	13,153	117	6,111	177	7,042
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	147	6,914	25	1,742	122	5,172
Dublin - Fingal	238	9,724	11	610	227	9,114
Dublin - South Dublin	166	7,556	33	1,801	133	5,755
Galway	204	9,195	70	3,509	134	5,686
Kerry	115	5,237	53	2,957	62	2,280
Kildare	154	7,587	10	512	144	7,075
Kilkenny	80	3,268	22	1,140	58	2,128
Laois	73	3,870	16	1,354	57	2,516
Leitrim	26	1,108	17	842	9	266
Limerick	130	6,421	35	2,166	95	4,255
Longford	25	1,489	11	931	14	558
Louth	99	4,976	18	1,095	81	3,881
Mayo	100	4,107	47	2,096	53	2,011
Meath	155	6,875	19	1,514	136	5,361
Monaghan	50	3,368	28	2,388	22	980
Offaly	60	2,514	14	821	46	1,693
Roscommon	48	2,617	23	1,246	25	1,371
Sligo	51	2,373	21	1,190	30	1,183
Tipperary	126	5,175	36	1,885	90	3,290
Waterford	74	3,670	29	1,799	45	1,871
Westmeath	69	3,407	15	1,031	54	2,376
Wexford	116	5,450	43	2,506	73	2,944

Childcare places

County	All		Community		Private	
	Number of services	Number of places available	Number of services	Number of places available	Number of services	Number of places available
Wicklow	116	4,037	23	889	93	3,148
Grand total	3,416	155,596	983	54,906	2,433	100,690

Considering capacity in terms of vacancies and waiting lists can serve as an indicator of supply and demand. Table 5.12 shows the total numbers reported on waiting list by age, alongside numbers of vacancies reported. Overall, there is a difference of (22%) between the numbers on waiting lists when compared with the number of vacancies. However, when compared to the overall number of places in early years services (155,596), this represents 2%. The difference between community and private services is more obvious. For example, in private services there are almost twice as many vacant places than waiting lists places - 11,072 and 6,316, respectively; whereas the numbers are more evenly distributed when looking at community services - 5,556 and 6,700, respectively.

Table 5.12 Waiting lists and vacancies by age range including community (comm.)/ private (priv.) services breakdown

Age band	Waiting lists			Vacancies		
	Overall total	Comm.	Priv.	Overall total	Comm.	Priv.
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	1,149	505	644	742	211	531
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	1,649	954	695	1,133	332	801
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	2,831	1,787	1,044	2,184	733	1,451
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54)	5,446	2,441	3,005	6,858	2,347	4,511
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72)	1,105	487	618	2,795	850	1,945
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	516	276	240	1,807	602	1,205
8 years+	320	250	70	1,109	481	628
Total	13,016	6,700	6,316	16,628	5,556	11,072

A county level breakdown of waiting lists and vacancies provides a better indication of the distribution of supply and demand around the country (see Table 5.14). As seen in previous years, it is not uncommon to see pockets of unmet demand and areas of over-supply within counties. Response rates to the Service

Childcare places

Profile survey can also affect figures, as they only account for 79% of all services and the response rates differed between counties.

An extrapolation of places on waiting lists and vacancies was conducted to estimate these numbers at county level. It should be noted that this was based on the assumption that those services that did not complete the Service Profile survey would report similar numbers of vacancies and waiting lists. At a national level, this is estimated at approximately 16,000 children on waiting lists and circa 21,000 vacancies.

On closer examination, the geographical spread of waiting lists and vacancies, figures can vary considerably. For example, County Offaly has the lowest number of children on waiting lists with 65 compared to Dublin City that has the highest with 2,813 children. Dublin - Fingal (790), Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown (789) and Cork County (838) also have high numbers on waiting lists while Leitrim reported the second lowest numbers on waiting lists with 85 children.

Following a pattern evident in previous years (2012-2014), all counties show a level of over-supply with some more significant than others. Again, similarly to what was reported in 2014, the counties with the highest levels of over-supply are Cork County and Donegal with 1,547 and 1,064 vacant places, respectively. Galway and Meath also reported high levels of unoccupied places with 990 and 945 each. The counties reporting the lowest levels of vacancies were Longford with 93 vacant places and Carlow with 108 vacancies.

When comparing the numbers on waiting lists against numbers of vacancies by age band at county level, further insights can be drawn regarding the distribution of capacity. Take County Carlow as an example - vacancies (108) are based on a response rate of 84%, while it shows (288) numbers on waiting lists. Closer inspection of these figures by age-range (see Table 5.13) make it possible to drill-down into demand and over-supply. For example, there are 70 children aged between (3 years+ to 4½ years) waiting for places in community services but only 9 vacancies. Yet, there are 52 on waiting lists in the same age bracket in private services, but 38 vacancies. This shows that where over-supply and demand exist within counties, depending on the type of service and/or the age range catered for, these patterns continue to exist.

Table 5.13 Waiting list and vacancies by age band for County Carlow (including community/ private services breakdown)

County Carlow	All		Community		Private	
	Waiting list	Vacancy	Waiting list	Vacancy	Waiting list	Vacancy
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	20	5	6	1	14	4
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	33	16	15	4	18	12
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	62	25	36	2	26	23
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)	122	47	70	9	52	38
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72 months)	24	10	12	3	12	7

Childcare places

County Carlow	All		Community		Private	
Age band	Waiting list	Vacancy	Waiting list	Vacancy	Waiting list	Vacancy
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	17	5	7	1	10	4
8 years+	10	0	6	0	4	0
Grand total	288	108	152	20	136	88

Table 5.14 Waiting lists and vacancies by county (including community/ private services breakdown) and extrapolation (based on county response rates)

County	Response rate (all) percentage (by county)	Waiting lists				Vacancies			
		Private	Community	Total	Extrapolation	Private	Community	Total	Extrapolation
Carlow	84%	136	152	288	343	88	20	108	129
Cavan	59%	21	124	145	246	84	35	119	202
Clare	88%	167	107	274	311	389	130	519	590
Cork City	70%	65	360	425	607	177	155	332	474
Cork County	87%	460	378	838	963	1,040	507	1,547	1,778
Donegal	84%	240	256	496	590	603	461	1,064	1,267
Dublin - Dublin City	70%	609	2,204	2,813	4,019	418	365	783	1,119
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	80%	601	188	789	986	368	51	419	524
Dublin - Fingal	76%	571	219	790	1,039	757	45	802	1,055
Dublin - South Dublin	74%	295	265	560	757	364	168	532	719
Galway	76%	433	143	576	758	634	356	990	1,303
Kerry	86%	33	77	110	128	353	386	739	859
Kildare	80%	342	15	357	446	707	40	747	934

County	Response rate (all) percentage (by county)	Waiting lists				Vacancies			
		Private	Community	Total	Extrapolation	Private	Community	Total	Extrapolation
Kilkenny	82%	190	103	293	357	138	92	230	280
Laois	89%	60	178	238	267	503	143	646	726
Leitrim	76%	69	16	85	112	33	126	159	209
Limerick	75%	277	204	481	641	531	245	776	1,035
Longford	78%	40	85	125	160	43	50	93	119
Louth	91%	206	254	460	505	596	118	714	785
Mayo	83%	258	93	351	423	322	346	668	805
Meath	79%	170	199	369	467	774	171	945	1,196
Monaghan	88%	115	112	227	258	159	234	393	447
Offaly	87%	46	19	65	75	185	203	388	446
Roscommon	94%	67	215	282	300	197	150	347	369
Sligo	77%	19	150	169	219	80	24	104	135
Tipperary	82%	158	119	277	338	376	249	625	762
Waterford	79%	98	166	264	334	140	179	319	404
Westmeath	80%	98	47	145	181	283	149	432	540

County	Response rate (all) percentage (by county)	Waiting lists				Vacancies			
		Private	Community	Total	Extrapolation	Private	Community	Total	Extrapolation
Wexford	86%	229	170	399	464	378	280	658	765
Wicklow	70%	243	82	325	464	352	78	430	614
Grand total	79%	6,316	6,700	13,016	16,476	11,072	5,556	16,628	21,048

6 Childcare fees

6.1 Overall national fees

During the 2015/2016 Programme Call period, the average cost of childcare in Ireland was €167.03 for full-time, €99.18 for part-time and €66.51 for sessional care per week. These national averages are broadly in line with the costs reported in previous years, with part-time seeing the biggest year-on-year increase of 4%. The 2015/2016 fees, along with the corresponding fees for the previous four years are presented in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Average weekly fees between 2011 and 2015 (full-day, part-time, sessional)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015/2016
Full-time	€165.54	€167.27	€166.63	€167.19	€167.03
Part-time	€84.64	€95.78	€94.88	€95.36	€99.18
Sessional	€58.75	€66.18	€65.18	€65.61	€66.51

When broken down into county, the weekly fees were found to be highest in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, with an average rate of almost €214 for a full-time place. Fees were found to be lowest in Monaghan, at just €142 per week, with a national average of €167.

A breakdown of fees under these categories by county is provided in Table 6.2:

Table 6.2 Fees by county (full-day, part-time, sessional)

County	Full day	Part-time	Sessional
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	213.94	119.03	76.64
Wicklow	200.20	118.05	74.46
Dublin - Fingal	196.791	109.93	71.28
Dublin - South Dublin	191.37	115.78	71.73
Dublin - Dublin City	187.50	107.11	66.55
Cork County	186.05	116.32	71.31
Cork City	179.96	98.62	73.95
Kildare	179.27	115.52	65.77
Meath	178.27	111.79	67.84

Childcare fees

County	Full day	Part-time	Sessional
Kerry	162.31	91.41	62.26
Donegal	162.18	93.10	55.56
Waterford	161.67	86.24	57.74
Louth	161.31	101.16	64.96
Westmeath	158.06	94.32	67.63
Laois	157.53	105.99	68.13
Wexford	157.16	92.19	62.94
Kilkenny	156.03	92.49	66.73
Clare	155.30	88.76	62.35
Offaly	155.00	108.69	65.65
Galway	154.16	96.68	62.79
Leitrim	152.67	87.37	60.83
Tipperary	148.23	92.35	62.26
Mayo	151.41	81.40	65.65
Sligo	150.94	95.63	67.84
Cavan	150.21	84.38	65.05
Carlow	146.79	92.02	72.06
Limerick	146.69	88.42	67.54
Longford	144.50	84.11	66.00
Roscommon	142.81	84.34	65.58
Monaghan	142.14	80.13	63.41
National averages	167.03	99.18	66.51

Looking specifically at full-time costs, it can be seen that four of the five most expensive county areas are located in Dublin, the sixth and seventh most expensive are Cork City and County.

This suggests a strong link between childcare fees and the urban/rural location of services. Using CSO classification of the electoral district in which the services were based, it was found that fees are indeed higher in urban areas, across all three categories of service type.

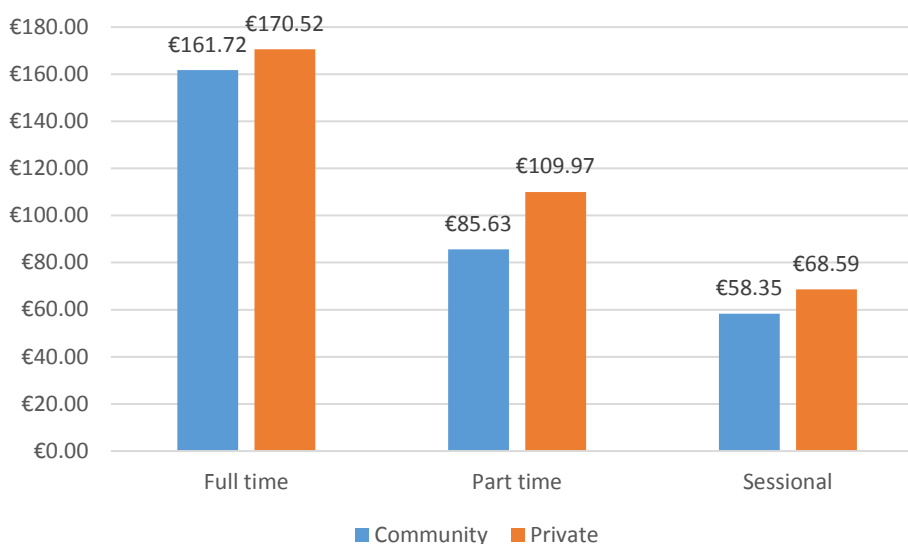
Table 6.3 Fees by urban/rural (full-day, part-time, sessional)

	Full day	Part-time	Sessional
Rural	157.12	93.05	63.23
Urban	173.35	103.31	69.42
National average	167.03	99.18	66.51

6.2 Fees by organisation type

Childcare fees were also seen to be influenced by whether a facility was community or private. Private services were, on average more expensive than community services across all category of service type. This can be seen in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1 Childcare fees by (full-day, part-time, sessional) and community/private

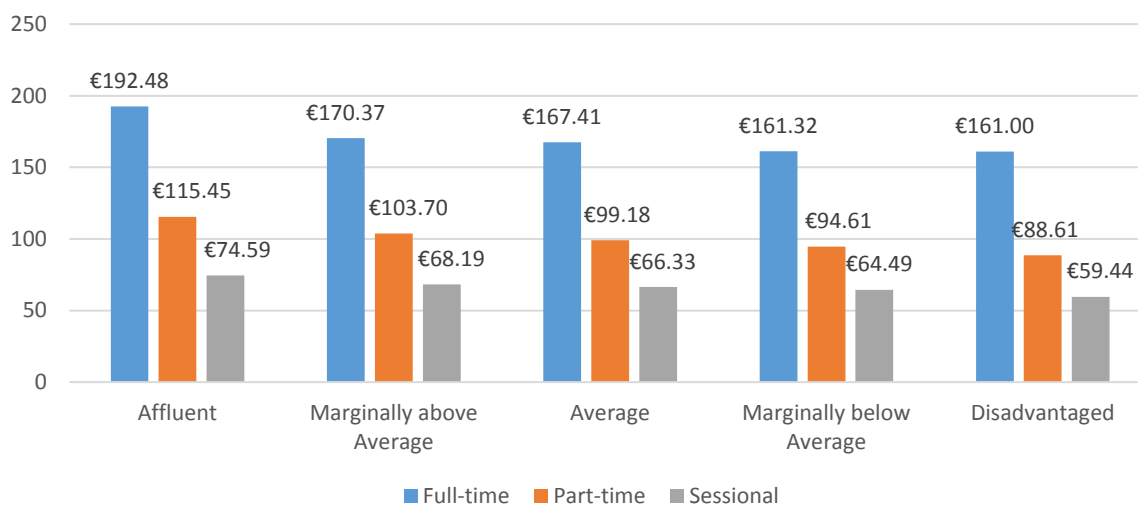


The biggest fee gap between community and private services is in relation to part-time fees. On average, community services charge 5% lower full-time fees than their private counterparts, yet charge 22% less for part-time care. Another way of interpreting this data is that **community services charge around half the price for part-time care as they do for full-time care, while private services charge part-time fees at two thirds the cost of full-time care.**

6.3 Fees by deprivation rating

In addition to analysing the data on fees on its own, a brief review was also undertaken to determine whether or not the relative affluence or disadvantage of the areas where services are located are linked with the amount of fees charged. The Pobal HP Deprivation Index was used in this exercise. The index attributes a relative deprivation score to each small area in Ireland, on a scale ranging from extremely disadvantaged to extremely affluent. This analysis found that fees are indeed more expensive, the more affluent an area is. This was found to be true across full-time, part-time and sessional.

Figure 6.2 Childcare fees by service type and relative affluence/disadvantage of area

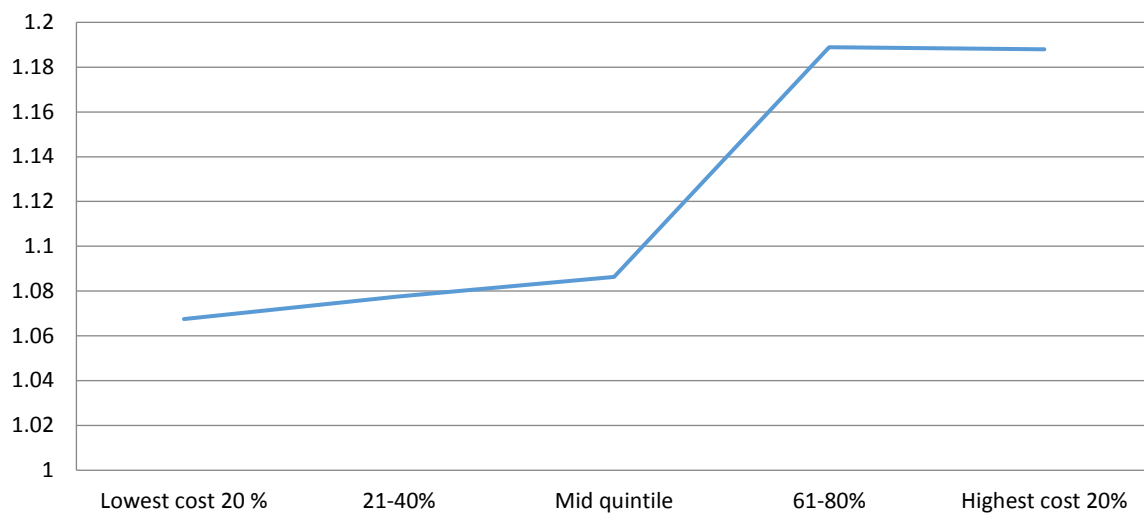


6.4 Fees by staff qualification

An analysis was also undertaken on whether or not there was a relationship between staff qualifications and childcare fees. In order to do this, services were broken down into five ranges of price, from lowest to highest, using the price of sessional childcare. As services have multiple staff, many with different qualification levels, an averaging methodology was developed whereby staff with no qualification or qualifications of less than NFQ level 5 were assigned a score of 0. Those with NFQ level 5 and 6 were assigned a score of 1 and those with a qualification of NFQ level 7, 8 or 9 were scored as 2. This provided comparative, yet weighted data shown in Figure 6.3 that services charging higher fees have, on average, a more qualified workforce.

Childcare fees

Figure 6.3 Childcare fees by staff qualifications



This difference is most prominent in the 40% of services offering the highest cost childcare places and is likely to be reflective of the higher capitation rates available for higher qualified staff, as fees cited are inclusive of subvention.

7 Staff

This section provides data on the numbers of staff working directly with children and ancillary staff³⁷ in the respondents' childcare services.

This data is the most comprehensive information currently available on the early year's workforce in Ireland. Unlike surveys in previous years, the 2015/2016 survey made it mandatory for services with staff to provide all the information requested.

Of the 3,429 respondents to the overall questionnaire, 3,402 provided a detailed staff breakdown³⁸

7.1 Staff numbers

A total of 20,823 staff were reported to be working across 3,402 childcare services. This includes those working directly with children and ancillary staff and represents an average of six staff per facility. Of this number, 18,906 staff work directly with children and 1,917 are ancillary staff such as cooks, cleaners or administrators³⁹

When extrapolated to reflect the national figure, it is estimated that approximately 25,653 staff work in the Early years sector, 23,291 of whom work directly with children. This is an increase of almost three thousand staff working with children as reported in 2014 (extrapolated estimate of 20,330). However, it is likely that this increase is partly due to the updated methodology of the survey. For example, in previous years, a maximum of 20 staff could be entered in the survey. There was no such limit in this year's survey, with 1 organisation entering 54 individual staff members.

Table 7.1 shows the total and average number of staff, broken down by all, childcare and ancillary staff, working in community/private and urban/rural services. The average number of staff reported per facility was six, whereas the number of childcare staff per facility is five, which was the same in 2014. As was the pattern in previous years, the average number of staff is higher in community services than in private services, although community services make up only 27% of childcare services, they employ 41% of staff. As described below, this is partly due to community staff being more likely to be employed on a part-time basis.

³⁷ Ancillary staff are those providing necessary support to the primary activities or operation of the service, e.g. Caretaker, Catering staff, etc.

³⁸ Information on staff numbers was not provided by 27 services. For this reason 3,402 will be used in this section as the total sample size.

³⁹ A number of services (444) incorrectly classified some of their staff as Ancillary (1,065), despite having childcare specific/related job titles. Details of these staff have been included as childcare staff, however some data which was asked specifically of staff who work with children is not available for this cohort.

Table 7.1 Staff numbers – childcare and ancillary staff by all, urban/rural and community/ private services

Services	Number of services	All staff		Staff who work with children		Ancillary staff	
		Number of staff	Average per service	Number of staff	Average per	Number of staff	Average per
All	3,402	20,823	6	18,906	6	1,917	2
Community	986	8,531	9	7,493	8	1,038	3
Private	2,416	12,292	5	11,413	5	879	2
Urban	2,002	13,501	7	12,218	6	1,283	2
Rural	1,400	7,322	5	6,688	5	634	2

Only half of staff were reported as working full-time, with the remaining half working part-time. This indicates a far higher rate of staff working part-time compared to other sectors – nationally 14% of workers are part-time employees (CSO, 2016)⁴⁰. Table 7.2 shows the number and percentage of staff in part-time and full-time employment by type of service. 60% of staff in community services are part-time compared to 42% of staff in private services. This reflects the scheme staff who are all part-time. When looking at staff directly employed by the service (those not on employment schemes), 49% of staff in community services are part-time, compared to 42% of staff in private services. This in part explains the disproportionately high number of staff employed in community services - 41% of staff while only representing 27% of services.

Table 7.2 Staff working full-time and part-time by community/ private

	Full-time	Part-time
Community	40%	60%
Private	58%	42%

Table 7.3 presents the breakdown of staff by sector and type of employment. 88% of staff are in direct employment⁴¹, of whom 56% work full-time and 44% work part-time.

⁴⁰ National Quarterly Household Survey, Q2 2016, available from: <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/qnhs/quarterlynationalhouseholdsurveyquarter22016>

⁴¹ Staff paid directly by the service/not including those on work activation programmes, such as CE.

One out of every eight staff members (12%) are participants in various employment schemes⁴² (the largest of which is Community Employment (CE)). Unpaid volunteers make up just 0.5% of staff. Of the paid staff (excluding staff involved in employment schemes) in community services, 51% are full-time staff and 49% are part-time.

Participants of the Jobs Initiative (JI), Community Employment (CE) or Community Services Programme (CSP) schemes are eligible for work in community services only (JobBridge participants can work in private or community services). While such staff can be counted towards the ratio of staff-to-children at a facility, they are not paid by the facility itself. Staff participating in these schemes represent 27% of all paid staff working in the community sector and 25% of staff working with children, which is an increase on the figure of 21% in 2014. This demonstrates that, as in previous years, the community early years sector continues to have a dependency on staff participating in labour market schemes. A county breakdown of this data is available in Appendix VI.

Table 7.3 Number of staff employed by sector by type of employment and by community/ private services

	Community	Private	Sector totals	% of Staff overall
Number of services	986	2,416	3,402	N/A
Directly employed staff	6,188	12,076	18,264	88%
CE - Community Employment participant	1,741	29	1,770	9%
CSP - Community Services Programme participant	202	9	211	1%
Gateway	7	0	7	0%
JI - Jobs Initiative	53	27	80	0.4%
Tús	260	2	262	1%
JobBridge participant	52	78	130	1%
Volunteer	28	71	99	0.5%
Total	8,531	12,292	20,823	100%

Note: Private services (52) incorrectly categorised staff (67) under employment schemes that are available to community services only.

⁴² Private services (52) incorrectly categorised staff (67) under employment schemes that are available to community services only.

Based on data from PIP, it was observed that larger services were, on average more likely to respond to the Service Profile survey. This finding has been worked into our extrapolation figures to ensure this reporting bias does not result in an over extrapolation of staff numbers. Based on relative organisation size, it is estimated that responding organisations represented 81% of children, and therefore 81% of staff⁴³

Table 7.4 presents these estimates. Nationally, it is estimated that **over 25,000 staff** work in childcare services, of whom 23,291 staff work directly with children. This represents a slight increase on the 2014 figure of 20,330.

Table 7.4 Number of staff employed by sector and extrapolation⁴⁴ by community/ private

	Community	Private	Total	Total national extrapolation
Number of services	986	2,416	3,402	4,191
CE - Community Employment participant	1,741	29	1,770	2,181
CSP - Community Services Programme participant	202	9	211	260
Gateway	7	0	7	9
JI - Jobs Initiative	53	27	80	99
Tús	260	2	262	323
JobBridge participant	52	78	130	160
Volunteer	28	71	99	122
Not applicable	6,188	12,076	18,264	22,500
Grand total	8,531	12,292	20,823	25,653

⁴³ 81.17% (0.811721450388257)

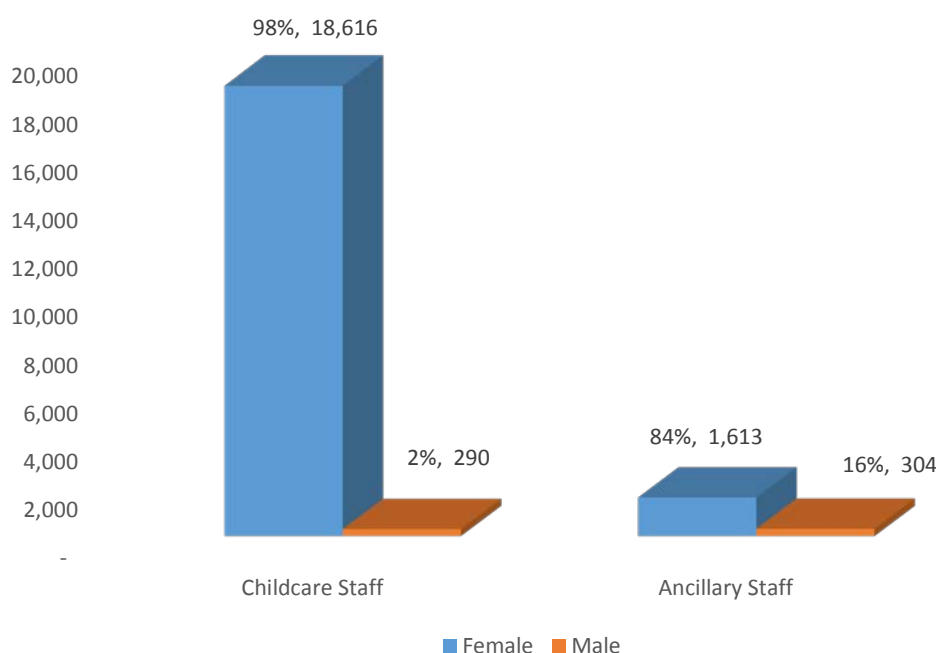
⁴⁴ Private services (52) incorrectly categorised staff (67) under employment schemes that are available to community services only.

7.2 Gender

Respondents were asked to state the gender of individual staff members. The vast majority of all staff (97%) are female and 3% are male. Even less men are reported to work directly with children (2%). This reflects the same average pattern in the early years sector workforce in Europe (2-3% are men), but well below the 10% that experts agree should be working in the sector, in order to combat gender stereotyping (European Commission, 2013). Ancillary staff consisted of 84% female staff and 16% male staff. Ancillary staff roles include, caretaker, driver, gardener, maintenance staff, etc.

Figure 7.1 presents the gender breakdown of all staff by childcare and ancillary staff.

Figure 7.1 Gender of staff working in early years services by childcare and ancillary staff



7.3 Staff turnover

Respondents were asked to indicate, for each staff member, how long they had been working in the service. The categories available were (a) under 1 year; (b) 1-2 years; (c) 2-4 years; (d) over 4 years and over 10 years (see Table 7.5). Over a quarter of all staff (28%) had been working in the same service for longer than 4 years. A further 23% had been working there for over 10 years and 32% had been working there for between 1 and 4 years. Just under one-fifth of staff (18%) had been working in the same service for less than 1 year. This is a slight increase in the number of new staff working in services in previous years (15.6% in 2014, 15.4% in 2013 and 14.9% in 2012). The number of staff working for less than 1 year is an indicator but not a definitive measure of staff turnover, as it may also reflect an increase in the number of childcare posts as well as new staff filling existing posts. The overall patterns regarding length of service were consistent across community/ private and urban/ rural categories.

Table 7.5 Breakdown of staff by length of service by community/ private and urban/ rural

	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	Totals
Number of staff	8,531	12,292	13,501	7,322	20,823
Under 1 year	17%	18%	18%	17%	18%
1-2 years	14%	14%	14%	12%	14%
2-4 years	17%	18%	18%	17%	18%
4 years+	28%	28%	27%	30%	28%
10 years+	23%	23%	23%	23%	23%

Age bands

Respondents were asked to indicate the age band of individual staff members working in their services. Table 7.6 presents the age band of staff working in early years services. Over half of all staff are aged between 25-44 years. A further 29% of staff are aged between 45-64 years and the smallest percentage of staff (1%) are aged 65 years and over. The patterns regarding the 25-44 years and 65 years and over age bands of staff are consistent across community/ private and urban/ rural categories. However, there are slightly more 45-64 year olds working in community services (33%) compared to their private counterparts (26%) and slightly more 15-24 year olds working in private services (14%) than in their community counterparts (8%).

Table 7.6 Age band of staff working in services by community/ private and urban/ rural

	Community	Private	Urban	Rural	Total
Number of staff	8,531	12,292	13,501	7,322	20,823
15 – 24 years	8%	14%	13%	10%	12%
25 – 44 years	58%	59%	59%	57%	58%
45 – 64 years	33%	26%	27%	32%	29%
65 – years and over	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

7.4 Job titles

Details on job titles for each individual staff member working in services were sought. In the case of staff working directly with children, respondents were asked to select appropriate job titles from a prescribed list⁴⁵ of choices and in relation to ancillary staff, they were asked to provide details of the job title in an open text field.

Due to the varying nature of the roles held by childcare and ancillary staff, these two types of staff were analysed separately.

Childcare staff

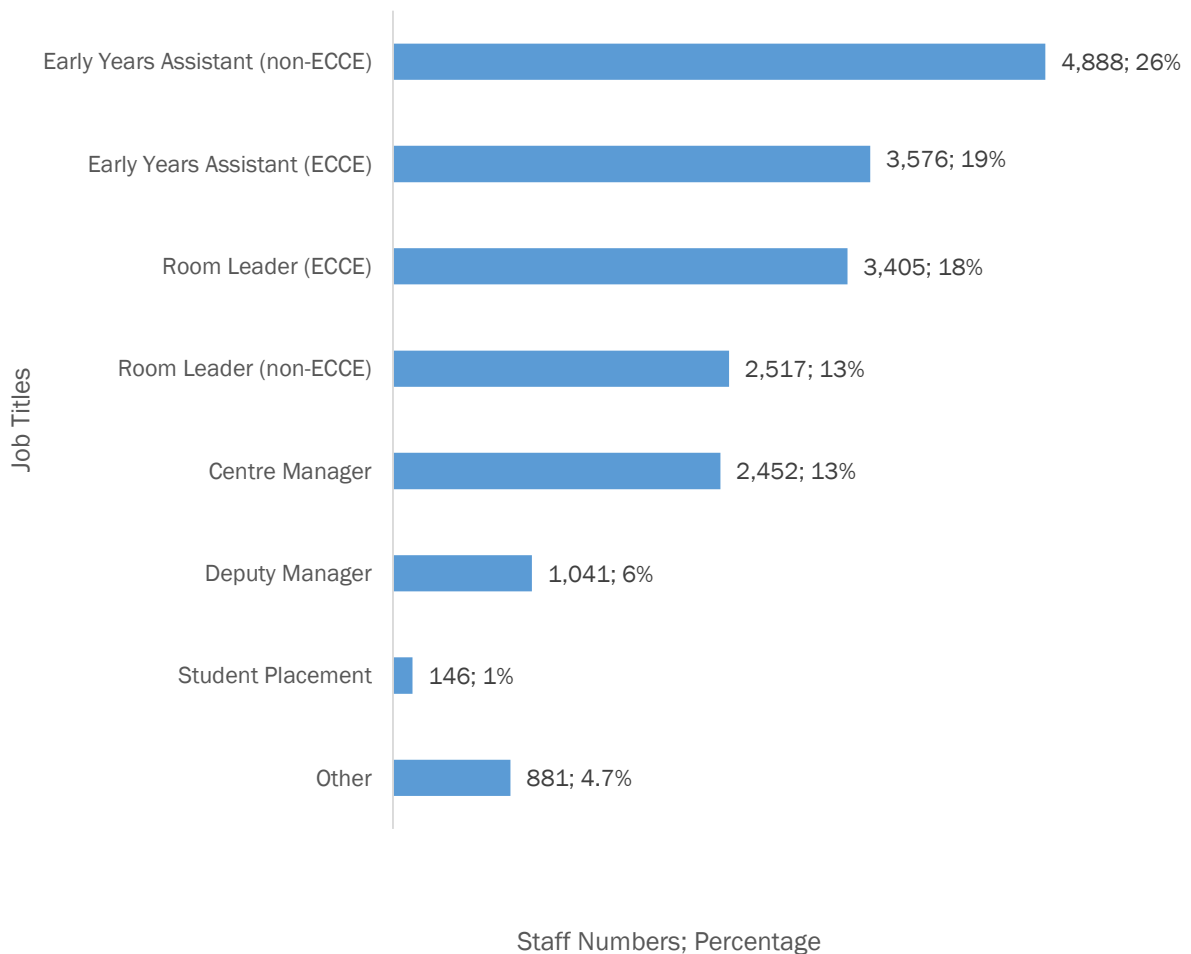
It is acknowledged that staff may work across a number of rooms and roles, so those completing the survey were prompted to choose the most accurate job title, in recognition that some staff may undertake more than one role.

The highest percentage of childcare staff in services are early years assistants (non-ECCE) (26%), followed by early years assistants (ECCE) (19%). The lowest percentages of staff held the positions of Deputy Manager and Student - 6% and 1%, respectively. Overall, nearly half of the workforce are early years assistants, and almost another half are Room Leaders or Managers⁴⁶. For a detailed breakdown, see Figure 7.2.

⁴⁵ Staff that were incorrectly classified as *Ancillary* (1,065), despite having childcare specific/related job titles have been included in these figures. However, titles provided that were not on the prescribed list are included as 'Other'.

⁴⁶ It should be noted that for smaller services it is likely that the manager may also provide direct childcare duties, so this table does not indicate that half the workforce are solely management level.

Figure 7.2 Childcare staff job titles



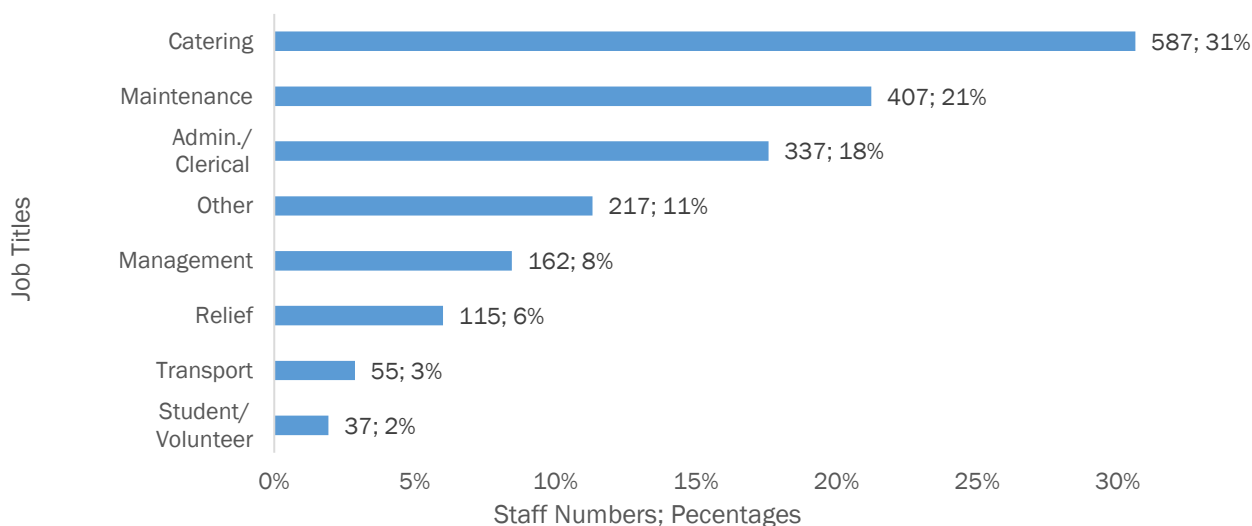
Ancillary staff

There were numerous roles/job titles listed for ancillary staff. For the purposes of reporting, these details were classified into related categories/areas, as follows:

- Admin./Clerical
- Catering
- Maintenance
- Management
- Relief/Cover
- Student/Volunteer
- Transport
- Other

Almost one third of all ancillary staff (31%) work in catering (which includes cooks/chefs, food handlers, etc.). A further 21% work in the area of maintenance (caretakers, cleaners, gardeners, etc.) and 18% of staff worked in the area of administration (includes financial/ HR/ PR/ marketing staff, etc.). The lowest percentage of staff are student/volunteers (2%), followed by transport staff (bus drivers/school drop-off/collection drivers) at 6%. For a detailed breakdown see Figure 7.3.

Figure 7.3 Ancillary staff job titles



7.5 Children First training

Respondents were asked if each individual staff member had completed Children First training in the last 3 years. It was reported that over half of all staff (56%) had received this training. The same pattern was reported for staff working directly with children, with 59% of staff (n=11,196) having received the training. This is an increase on the number of staff reported as having received this training in 2014 (52.4%). However, when looking at ancillary staff, the percentage of staff who received the training was just over one quarter (28%).

Table 7.7 Children First training received by all staff, childcare staff and ancillary staff

	All staff		Childcare staff		Ancillary staff	
	Number of staff	Staff %	Number of staff	Staff %	Number of staff	Staff %
Yes	11,735	56%	11,196	59%	539	28%
No	9,088	44%	7,710	41%	1,378	72%
Grand total	20,823	100%	18,906	100%	1,917	100%

7.6 Garda Vetting

The [National Vetting Bureau \(Children and Vulnerable Persons\) Acts 2012-2016](#), which came into effect on 29th April 2016, makes it mandatory for people working with children or vulnerable adults to be vetted by the Garda Síochána National Vetting Bureau.

Services were requested to complete details of staff who had completed Garda Vetting. The total number of staff that have completed Garda Vetting is 20,468 (98%), see Table 7.8.

The same pattern is consistent across all staff, childcare and ancillary staff and nationally.

Table 7.8 Garda vetting completed for all staff, childcare staff and ancillary staff

	All staff		Childcare staff		Ancillary staff	
	Number of staff	Staff %	Number of staff	Staff %	Number of staff	Staff %
Yes	20,468	98%	18,630	99%	1,838	96%
No	355	2%	276	1%	79	4%
Grand total	20,823	100%	18,906	100%	1,917	100%

There were 355 staff who were reported as not having Garda vetting in place at the time of completing the survey. It should be noted that the survey was open before the commencement of the Acts and that the average reported turnaround time for Garda vetting was eight weeks.

7.7 DCYA recognised early years qualifications

7.7.1 Highest qualifications attained

The Service Profile survey sought information on the highest qualification attained by childcare workers. The level of qualification of practitioners in early years settings has long been acknowledged as an important contributor to and indicator of quality service provision (Sylva et al, 2010).

The introduction of the ECCE Programme in 2010 for the first time imposed a minimum qualification requirement on early years staff - all ECCE Room Leaders must now have a major award at Level 5 on the NFQ or equivalent. This changed to NFQ Level 6 in 2015 for new services. The ECCE Programme also incentivises further training by means of a higher capitation which is available to an ECCE service where the ECCE Room Leader has achieved a minimum NFQ Level 7 qualification or equivalent and assistant staff have achieved a minimum NFQ Level 5 award, or equivalent. This initiative has had a positive impact on the

early years sector by improving the level of qualifications of early years staff and is expected to have a positive effect on quality education. These ECCE qualification requirements continue throughout 2016 for existing services, although for new ECCE services, the ECCE contract requires that ECCE Room Leaders have achieved a minimum Level 6 award on the NFQ or equivalent, and that assistant staff have a minimum NFQ Level 5 or equivalent. From 31st December 2016, there will be new minimum qualification requirements as a result of the commencement of the revised Regulations⁴⁷. From this date all staff working directly with children will be required to hold 'at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the NFQ or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent'. The exceptions to this are early years workers who have signed a 'Grandfather' declaration or are exempted by a letter from the minister. Also from the same date (31st December 2016), the ECCE Programme requires that all ECCE Room Leaders have a minimum NFQ Level 6 or equivalent. The minimum qualification requirements for the Higher ECCE capitation remains the same: Room Leader to have Level 7 on the NFQ or equivalent, and Assistant to have Level 5 on the NFQ or equivalent. Under the 2016 Regulations, for *newly registering* early years services, the qualification requirement for all staff working directly with children to have minimum NFQ Level 5 or equivalent, applies from 30th June 2016.

The DCYA has published a searchable qualifications database of awards indicating which qualifications are deemed to meet 1) the minimum requirements for all childcare staff, 2) the (new) minimum requirements for ECCE Room Leaders, and 3) the minimum requirement for higher capitation Room Leaders.

It is noted that the most recent Pobal compliance visit reports (based on 1,414 ECCE services visited between November and April 2016) indicated that 90% of ECCE services (n=1,279) visited were compliant with the current Room Leader minimum requirements, i.e. Level 5 on the NFQ or equivalent. Non-compliant services are notified to the DCYA on a quarterly basis through the compliance quarterly reports for follow up.

Currently the early years sector is preparing for the implementation of these new qualification requirements, and continues to be supported by investment in the Learner Fund. The Fund was launched in four rounds, the current round of which is open until October 2016.

Respondents provided information on the level of training/qualifications of 17,841 staff working directly with children. The findings are summarised in Table 7.9. **88% of all staff have a qualification equal to or higher than NFQ Level 5.** It is an increase of 1% on figure reported in 2014. It should be noted that this figure includes staff on work placement programmes such as CE. *When looking specifically at staff directly employed by the facility, the rate of qualification to level 5 or higher is 93%.*

⁴⁷ Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016:

<http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/20160510ChildCareActEarlyYrsRegs2016SI221of2016.pdf>

Table 7.9 Childcare Education and Training Awards (highest level achieved per staff member) by private/ community and all services

	Private	Community	All
Total Staff by Provider Types	10,795	7,046	17,841
NFQ Level 5 or above*	9,928 - 92%	5,774 - 82%	15,702 - 88%
NFQ Level 6 or above*	6,692 - 62%	3,328 - 47%	10,020 - 56%
No childcare qualification	773 - 7%	1,186 - 17%	1,959 - 11%
NFQ (NCVA) Level 4 Award	1%	1.2%	1%
NFQ (NCVA) Level 5 Award	30%	34.7%	32%
NFQ (NCVA) Level 6 Award	41%	33.6%	38%
NFQ Level 7 Award (Ordinary Degree)	6%	4.1%	5%
NFQ Level 8 Award (Honours Degree)	14%	8.6%	12%
NFQ Level 9/10 Award (Masters/PhD)	1%	0.9%	1%

In previous years, on average, staff in private services had slightly higher levels of qualifications than in community services - a pattern that is also evident in the 2015/2016 data. 17% of staff in community services have no childcare qualification (compared with 13.3% in 2014). In comparison, private services reported 7% of staff as having no childcare qualifications (compared with 5.7% in 2014). This figure includes work activation scheme staff, who are far more prevalent in community services.

In community services, 82% of staff are now qualified to NFQ level 5 or above (the same as in 2014). In private services, their share is higher at 92% (90% in 2014). However, when work activation programme staff are excluded, the figure is 93% for both community and private services. Looking at qualifications at Level 6 or above, 47% (41.5% in 2014) of staff attained this level of qualification in community services and 62% in private services (57% in 2014). It is likely that at least some of the variation between community and private settings is due to the high numbers of community staff who are participating in employment schemes (referred to above), 53% of such staff have no early years qualifications (45% in 2014). Although 45% of employment scheme staff have qualifications at Level 5 or above (43% in 2014), this is considerably lower than is the case across the sector more widely.

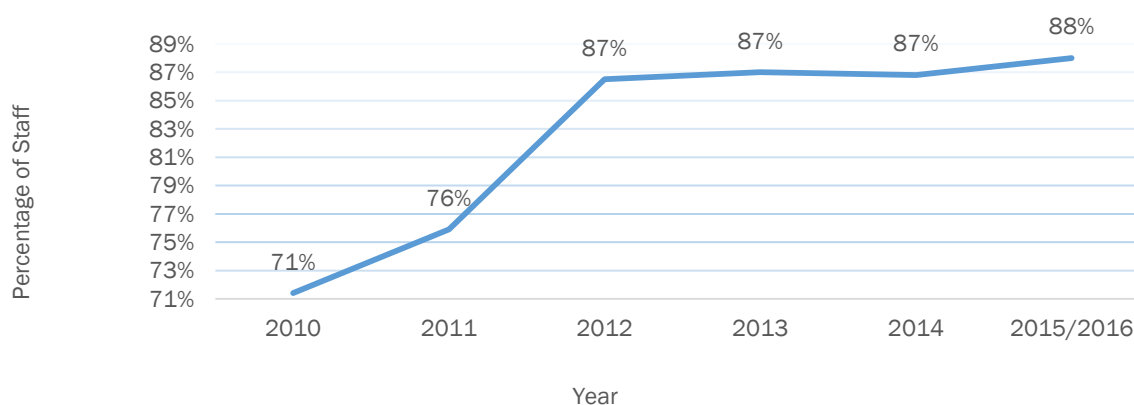
An urban/ rural comparison shows that both have similar levels of qualifications (see Table 7.10). In terms of staff with no childcare qualifications, 11% of staff in both urban and rural services fall into this category. In urban services, 88% of staff have attained NFQ Level 5 or higher; the corresponding percentage in rural services is 89%. Those having achieved Level 6 and above are at 56% of staff in urban services (48% in 2014) and 57% of staff in rural services (52% in 2014).

Table 7.10 Childcare Education and Training Awards (highest level achieved per staff member) by urban/ rural and all

	Urban	Rural	All
Total Staff by Provider Types	11,516	6,325	17,841
NFQ Level 5 or above*	10,097 - 88%	5,605 - 89%	15,702 - 88%
NFQ Level 6 or above*	6,422 - 56%	3,598 - 57%	10,020 - 56%
No childcare qualification	1,290 - 11%	669 - 11%	1,959 - 11%
NFQ (NCVA) Level 4 Award	1%	0.8%	1%
NFQ (NCVA) Level 5 Award	32%	31.7%	32%
NFQ (NCVA) Level 6 Award	37%	40.8%	38%
NFQ Level 7 Award (Ordinary Degree)	6%	4.6%	5%
NFQ Level 8 Award (Honours Degree)	12%	10.5%	12%
NFQ Level 9/10 Award (Masters/PhD)	1%	1.0%	1%

The details of staff numbers in each category by provider type is available in Appendix VI.

Figure 7.4 Growth in % of staff who have Level 5 qualification or above (from 2010 to 2015/2016)



Note: Figure 7.4 includes work activation programme staff. The percentage of directly employed staff who have Level 5 qualification or above is 93%.

At the time of completing the survey, the ECCE programme was the only one that placed requirements⁴⁸ upon services in terms of the qualifications that must be held by staff, and is therefore worth examining services participating in this programme as a category in its own right. Of those who responded to the survey, 3,257 services are participating in the ECCE programme and provided information on the qualification levels of their staff (see Table 7.11 for details). 99.7% of services have at least one staff member qualified to NFQ Level 5 or higher, 96% (89% in 2014) have at least one staff member qualified to NFQ Level 6 or higher and 49% have at least one staff member qualified to NFQ Level 7 or higher (41% in 2014). Over one third of all services (37%) reported having at least one member of staff qualified to NFQ Level 8 or above (29% in 2014).

There were 11 services reported to be participating in ECCE that, in 2015/2016, did not have any staff member qualified to NFQ Level 5 or above.

⁴⁸ The new Early Years (Pre-school) Regulations state that every person working directly with pre-school children (with the exception of interns, students or volunteers) must hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework (NFQ) or equivalent qualification.

Table 7.11 Qualification levels of staff working in ECCE services from 2011-2015/2016

	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015/2016	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
ECCE Services that have:	N = 2,921	%	N = 2,518	%	N = 2,299	%	N = 2,146	%	N = 3,257	%
At least one staff member qualified to NFQ Level 5 or above	2,802	96%	2,414	96%	2,286	99.4%	2,134	99.4%	3,248	99.7%
At least one staff member qualified to NFQ Level 6 or above	2,196	75%	1,860	74%	1,983	86%	1,919	89%	3,133	96%
At least one staff member qualified to NFQ Level 7 or above	996	34%	509	20%	909	40%	876	41%	1,611	49%
At least one staff member qualified to NFQ Level 8 or above	650	22%	290	12%	613	27%	622	29%	1,218	37%
At least one staff member qualified to NFQ Level 9/10*	94	3%	43	2%	61	3%	57	3%	160	5%
NFQ Level 5 as the highest level of qualification in the service	606	21%	554	22%	303	13%	215	10%	115	4%
No member of staff qualified to NFQ Level 5 (or higher)	118	4%	88	4%	13	1%	12	1%	11	0.3%

The information above differs somewhat from the patterns found on Pobal compliance visits to ECCE services, where 90% of ECCE services visited between November 2015 and April 2016 were found to be compliant with the programme conditions in relation to the Level 5 qualification. It is clear that almost all services have now reached the staff qualification levels required under the ECCE programme and, as noted above, the Learner Fund is likely to make a significant contribution to bringing the remaining services up to the required qualification levels.

The Service Profile survey gathered information on the age range of the children with whom the staff members work. Part of the rationale for this question was to establish if there is a difference, on average, between the levels of qualifications held by the staff working with the older (including preschool age) children relative to those working with the younger age groups. Some concerns had been raised in recent years (since the introduction of the ECCE programme) that its specific requirements in relation to qualifications *could* lead to service providers assigning their most qualified staff to work with their ECCE participants. Respondents were asked to categorise each staff member as working with (a) children under 3, (b) children over 3 (pre-school) and (c) children over 4 (Afterschool). Table 7.12 shows the qualifications of staff by age band of children they work with.

Across all staff for which information on the age range of the children they work with was received, 11% (8.9 % in 2014) were found to have no childcare qualifications. When excluding work activation programme staff this figure is 7% (5% in 2014).

All staff working with children over 3 years old are slightly more likely to have some form of accredited qualifications (8% of this group does not hold any qualification). 12% of staff who work with the age ranges of under 3 and over 4 years (afterschool) do not have a qualification. Staff working with these age ranges are slightly more likely to have *any* qualification at Level 5 or above (87% and 86%, respectively). 91% of staff working with children over 3 (pre-school) have a qualification at Level 5 or above and 42% of staff have completed Level 6, compared with 35% and 37% of staff working with under 3s and over 4s, respectively.

This pattern is very likely related to the requirements under the ECCE programme for preschool Room Leaders to hold a Level 6 qualification.

These findings suggest that, as in 2012 and 2013, there is *some* evidence of a concentration of higher qualified staff in services (or rooms) where they work with preschool children. The findings do raise some questions about the level of qualifications of staff working with children under 3 years old, compared with other age cohorts⁴⁹. As mentioned above, the planned introduction of a minimum Level 5 qualification for all early years staff may redress any imbalance that exists at present.

⁴⁹ An exemption from the Level 5 (not the Level 6) requirement could be sought up to 30th June 2016 if a staff member intended to retire from the early years sector. The exemption will be applicable up to 1st September 2021.

Table 7.12 Childcare education and training awards by age category⁵⁰

	Under 3	Over 3 (preschool)	Over 4 (afterschool)	Totals by range
Total number by provider	8,862	12,096	5,067	3,373
NFQ Level 5 or above*	87%	91%	86%	88%
No childcare qualification	12%	8%	12%	11%
NFQ Level 4 Award	1%	1%	1%	1%
NFQ Level 5 Award	38%	27%	28%	32%
NFQ Level 6 Award	35%	42%	37%	38%
NFQ Level 7 Award	4%	6%	6%	5%
NFQ Level 8 Award	9%	14%	14%	12%
NFQ Level 9/10 Award	1%	1%	1%	1%

7.7.2 DCYA recognised qualifications

Staff qualifications are an important aspect of the early years sector, therefore, an additional question was asked to establish status of staff in regard to DCYA Recognised Qualifications. Respondents were asked to select from the following options:

- Would meet Contract requirements for ECCE Room Leader (Higher Capitation);
- Would meet Contract requirement for ECCE Room Leader;
- Is in the process of qualifying to meet Level 6 qualification;
- Would meet Minimum Regulatory Qualification Requirement;
- Is in the process of qualifying to meet required minimum qualification level;
- Not applicable (i.e. not core adult/child ratio staff);
- None of the above.

This was intended to capture the “pipeline” of staff who can be expected to gain the required minimum qualifications.

In total, services reported that 5,721 childcare staff (32%) would meet the contract requirement for ECCE Room Leader (see Table 7.13 for details). A further 5,413 staff (30%) would meet the minimum regulatory qualification requirement. And 1,581 staff (9%) are in the process of qualifying to meet the required

⁵⁰ Information on the age range worked with was not provided for 2 staff members. The data in this table relates only to staff members for which information on both the age ranges worked with and levels of qualifications was available.

minimum qualification level, which narrows the gap considerably on those listed as having no qualification or Level 4 qualification in previous section above, on highest qualification attained.

This information was particularly useful when looking at staff who were not currently qualified. In order to establish the number of staff who were not qualified, and not in the process of qualifying, this information was cross referenced. To do this, the number of individuals who were not qualified to Level 5 or higher was established (n=2,139), staff on work activation programmes such as CE were excluded (n= 1,183), those who had signed a grandfathering declaration were excluded (n=875) and finally, those in the process of gaining a qualification were excluded. As a result, a total of 247 staff (2%) were reported as not yet qualified and not in the process of qualifying, as of May 2016.

It is likely that many staff who are in the process of qualifying are doing so with the support of the Learner Fund, under which over 4,310 learners were approved subsidies to assist them in obtaining the required minimum and higher qualification levels. As shown in Table 7.13, community services report having a significant proportion of staff in the process of qualifying to meet required minimum qualification level (14%) compared to those in private services (5%).

Table 7.13 DCYA recognised qualifications by community/ private services

	% of Comm. services with one or more staff	Number of staff in Comm. services	As % of all childcare staff working in Comm. services	% of Priv. services with one or more staff	Number of staff in Priv. services	As % of all childcare staff working in Priv. services	% of all services with one or more staff	Number of staff in all services	As % of childcare all staff
Would meet Contract requirements for ECCE Room Leader (Higher Capitation)	42%	728	10%	44%	1,859	17%	44%	2,587	15%
Would meet Contract requirement for ECCE Room Leader	75%	1,982	28%	75%	3,739	35%	75%	5,721	32%
Is in the process of qualifying to meet Level 6 qualification	41%	802	11%	30%	1,146	11%	33%	1,948	11%
Would meet Minimum Regulatory Qualification Requirement	68%	2,200	31%	49%	3,213	30%	55%	5,413	30%
Is in the process of qualifying to meet required minimum qualification level	38%	1,002	14%	17%	579	5%	23%	1,581	9%
Not Applicable (i.e. not core adult/ child ratio staff)	22%	324	5%	9%	257	2%	13%	581	3%
None of the above	1%	8	0.1%	0.1%	2	0.02%	0.2%	10	0.1%
Totals		7,046	100%		10,795	100%		17,841	100%

7.7.3 Signed Grandfathering Clause

As of the end of 2016, all staff will be required to have a minimum relevant qualification of Level 5 on the NFQ. The exception to this rule is where a staff member signs a 'Grandfathering Agreement', which states their intention to retire or resign before the 1st September 2021. Respondents were asked to indicate if a staff member had signed a grandfathering agreement. Of the overall number of childcare staff 729 have had such agreement in place. 3% of staff in community services had a grandfathering agreement, while their share in private services was 5%.

For a county breakdown of staff with grandfathering agreement, please see Table 7.14.

Table 7.14 Staff with signed Grandfathering Agreement (GF)

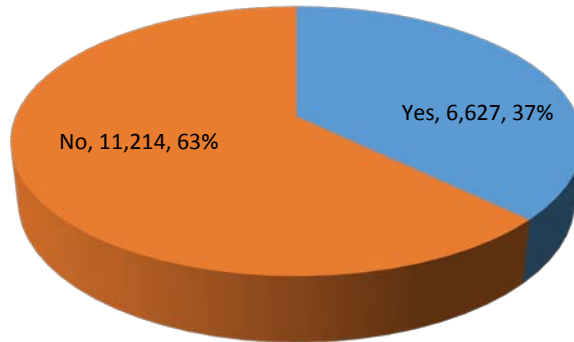
County	Overall staff	Staff with GF agreement	% of staff with GF agreement
Carlow	264	4	2%
Cavan	231	9	4%
Clare	491	19	4%
Cork City	396	8	2%
Cork County	1,386	37	3%
Donegal	622	21	3%
Dublin - Dublin City	2,021	62	3%
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	937	48	5%
Dublin - Fingal	1,091	85	8%
Dublin - South Dublin	945	32	3%
Galway	963	45	5%
Kerry	564	16	3%
Kildare	825	34	4%
Kilkenny	377	25	7%
Laois	383	19	5%
Leitrim	138	4	3%

County	Overall staff	Staff with GF agreement	% of staff with GF agreement
Limerick	665	32	5%
Longford	218	4	2%
Louth	589	34	6%
Mayo	400	14	4%
Meath	725	44	6%
Monaghan	402	35	9%
Offaly	223	5	2%
Roscommon	280	11	4%
Sligo	310	8	3%
Tipperary	578	25	4%
Waterford	382	14	4%
Westmeath	395	13	3%
Wexford	584	13	2%
Wicklow	456	9	2%
Grand Total	17,841	729	4%

7.7.4 Seasonal contracts

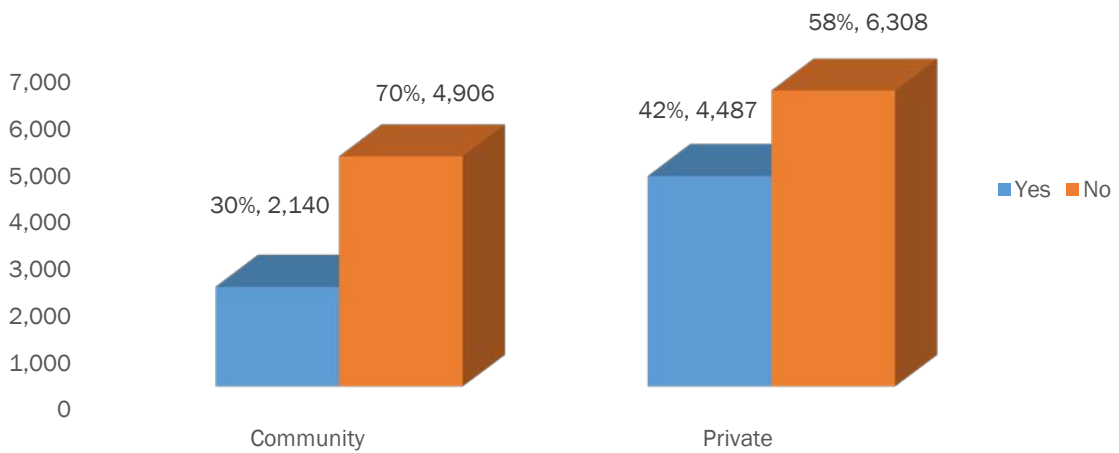
For each childcare staff member, respondents were asked to indicate whether they had staff on seasonal contracts. Figure 7.5 shows the share of staff with seasonal contracts. A total of 6,627 staff (37%) have this type of contract, whilst 11,214 (63%) do not.

Figure 7.5 Staff on seasonal contract



A further breakdown shows that there is a higher percentage of staff on seasonal contracts in private services (42%) as opposed to 30% in community services (see Figure 7.6). If staff on activation programmes are excluded, the figures for private services and community services are 42% and 36%, respectively.

Figure 7.6 Staff on seasonal contract by community/ private services breakdown



8 Child Protection

Child Protection continues to be an issue of paramount importance within the early years sector. Government policy (DCYA, 2011) along with the Túsla (The Child and Family Agency) support the view that every organisation and/or individual, who have direct contact with children, must adhere to the guiding principles of Child Protection Policy which are:

- The safety and wellbeing of children take priority;
- A report should always be made if a concern about a potential risk to a child is made.

Best practice states that childcare professionals, in particular those working within the early years sector, must appoint a designated liaison person (DLP) whom staff have access to, should they have any concerns in this area. Providers must also develop a Child Protection Policy which sets out guidance and procedures for staff who may have concerns about the safety and welfare of the children they care for. Staff working with children should also receive adequate training to allow them understand and recognise the signs of abuse or neglect.

The Service Profile survey asked respondents to state whether they had a DLP in place, whether or not they have a Child Protection Policy (including details on last review date) and if services required any further training and support in the area of Child Protection. Table 8.1 provides details as reported by respondents on the above.

Table 8.1 Child protection (designated staff, written policy and staff training) by all and community/ private services

	All	Community	Private
% of services with a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for child protection	99.0%	99.3%	98.9%
% of services with a Child Protection Policy in place	99.0%	99.3%	98.8%
% of staff trained in Children First in last 3 years	59.0%	63.5%	56.5%
% of services reported needing more support	62.0%	62.5%	62.8%

8.1 Designated staff member

'Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children' (DCYA, 2011) states that any organisation working directly or indirectly in the care of children, should appoint a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) as the responsible person for dealing with child protection issues. Respondents to the survey were asked to state whether they had a DLP in place, to which (99%) reported 'Yes'. This marks an increase on the 98.5% reported in 2014. When looking at the figures by county (Table 8.3), 100% of respondents in

in 15 counties reported that they have a DLP for child protection. The remaining counties reported between 95% and 99% for same.

8.2 Child Protection Policy

Respondents were also asked to state whether or not they had a Child Protection Policy (CPP) in place, and if so, to specify the date this policy was last reviewed. Of the 3,390 services which responded to this question, 99% reported having a Child Protection Policy in place. 98% of private services and 99% of community services had a CPP in place. In 13 counties, 100% of services reported having a CPP in place, down from 17 services in 2014 (Table 8.3).

Of the 3,390 respondents that reported having a child protection policy in place, 99% provided details of the date this policy was last reviewed. The data shows that 91% of services (n=3,074) carried out a review within the last 3 years (2013-2016) while 5% (n=158) reported that they had not carried out a review within the last 5 years. The patterns remain similar when looking at community versus private services.

8.3 Child protection training

'Children First' (2011)⁵¹ is the national policy that guides all matters concerning the welfare and protection of children. In January 2014, responsibility for this area moved from the HSE to Tusla, the newly established Child and Family Agency. The National Guidance Document for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Children First) published by the DCYA, states clearly that all staff who work in direct contact with children have a duty under Children First to protect children from harm and promote their welfare. They should also be equipped with the appropriate knowledge and tools to initiate immediate steps when signs of abuse or neglect are recognised.

Respondents were asked how many staff (working directly with children and ancillary staff), if any, within their service had received Children First training in the preceding three years. Many assume that only staff who work in direct contact with children should be trained in Child Protection. However, the national guidelines recommend, that all staff regardless of position, role, etc. have a duty of care under Children First to protect children. This includes the Room Leader, the early years assistant as well as the receptionist and catering staff within a service.

Details on the numbers of all staff who received Children First training in the last 3 years can be found in Chapter 7, Table 7.7. Almost two-fifths (59%) of childcare staff⁵² have received Children First training in the past three years (see Table 8.1). The figure is higher for community services (63.5%) compared with 56.5% in private services. A county breakdown of percentages (see Table 8.3) show that services in Leitrim had the highest number of staff who work directly with children trained in Children First with 93%, followed by services in Kerry and Roscommon, where in both 84% of staff were trained. In Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-

⁵¹ <http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/2/PrimaryCare/childrenfirst/>

⁵² These percentages only relate to childcare staff, i.e. those who work directly with children. They do not include the percentages of ancillary staff as these are covered in the Chapter on Staff below.

Rathdown, services reported the lowest number of staff who work directly with children as having received Children First training (42%) followed by services in Laois (49%).

8.4 Further support with Child Protection

In previous years, respondents were asked to state whether or not their service required further training and support in the area of Child Protection. This year, however, it was decided to examine this question further and ask services which answered 'Yes' to the question on requiring further support and training, to specify what areas of training and support was required. Respondents were presented with a prescribed list of seven options which included: 'Other' and 'No further training and support required'. Respondents could choose more than one option from the list, which is shown in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2 Numbers and percentages of services requiring further support and training in areas of child protection by all and community/ private services

Further support and training options	All		Community		Private	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Number of Services requiring further support and training	2,139	62.3	617	62.4	1,522	62.3
Developing or updating a Child and Welfare Protection Policy	777	36%	195	32%	582	38%
Training in Children First	1,144	53%	333	54%	811	53%
Training for the Designated Liaison Person	951	44%	305	49%	646	42%
Garda Vetting for staff	295	14%	57	9%	238	16%
Development of a Code of Behaviour for working with children	717	34%	215	35%	502	33%
Other	275	13%	79	13%	196	13%
No further support/training needed at this time	1,257	37%	361	29%	896	71%

Child Protection

The figures in Table 8.2 show that over half of all respondents (53%) who require further training and support, are seeking further training in Children First. A total of 44% (n=951) services require further training and support for their Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for Child Protection. Just over one-third of services require further support in 'developing or updating a Child and Welfare Policy' and 'developing a Code of Behaviour for working with children'. Only 13% of services selected 'other' in response to further support and training, however, despite being given an opportunity to specify what this is, only 1 service responded requesting the development of a "simplified observations records method". 37% (n=1,257) of respondents stated that no further support/training was needed at the time of completing the survey.

It is hoped that this information can inform the future training and supports requested by services in the early years sector. The findings suggest that there is still work to be done in this area. Table 8.3 shows the county breakdown of services require further training and support. In Carlow, Clare and Leitrim, less than 50% of services in these counties reported a need for further training. In the remaining counties, over 50% of services reported that they require further training and supports, with Mayo (78%), Roscommon (73%) and Wexford (72%) having the highest number of services reporting a need for further training .

Table 8.3 Child Protection (designated staff, written policy and staff training) – by county

County	% with a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for Child Protection	% with Child Protection Policy	% of staff with Children First Training in last 3 years	% of services who require further support
Carlow	100%	100%	65%	49%
Cavan	100%	97%	71%	62%
Clare	98%	96%	68%	43%
Cork City	95%	98%	72%	50%
Cork County	99%	100%	54%	63%
Donegal	100%	99%	72%	52%
Dublin - Dublin City	100%	99%	57%	63%
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	99%	96%	42%	60%
Dublin - Fingal	99%	98%	56%	63%
Dublin - South Dublin	99%	99%	51%	69%
Galway	100%	99%	53%	55%
Kerry	100%	99%	84%	63%
Kildare	99%	99%	59%	66%
Kilkenny	100%	98%	50%	64%

Child Protection

County	% with a Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for Child Protection	% with Child Protection Policy	% of staff with Children First Training in last 3 years	% of services who require further support
Laois	100%	100%	49%	69%
Leitrim	100%	100%	93%	31%
Limerick	98%	100%	72%	58%
Longford	100%	96%	57%	52%
Louth	98%	100%	50%	72%
Mayo	96%	99%	50%	78%
Meath	99%	100%	54%	71%
Monaghan	100%	100%	63%	68%
Offaly	100%	100%	72%	57%
Roscommon	100%	100%	84%	73%
Sligo	100%	100%	71%	57%
Tipperary	98%	96%	54%	64%
Waterford	99%	100%	70%	58%
Westmeath	97%	100%	72%	64%
Wexford	100%	99%	52%	72%
Wicklow	98%	98%	63%	66%
Total	99%	99%	59%	62%

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Appendices

Appendix I National number of registrations and registration values for ECCE, CCS and TEC – updated Table 2.6 (figures extracted from PIP system on 3rd October 2016)

	Programme	2014/2015	2015/2016	Annual difference	% difference
Registrations	ECCE	68,333	77,414	9,081	13%
	CCS	23,775	26,374	2,599	11%
	TEC	8,171	9,277	1,106	14%
Approved registration values	ECCE	€ 138,959,129.9	€178,054,067.0	€39,094,937.1	28%
	CCS ⁵³	€ 39,700,819.7	€39,675,222.1	-€25,597.6	0%
	TEC	€ 18,416,267.5	€18,676,285.3	€260,017.8	1%

⁵³ The registration values for CCS include special allocation.

Appendix II Breakdown of early years services by county and community/ private services

County	Community	Community %	Private	Private %	Total	% of services nationally
Carlow	17	34%	33	66%	50	1%
Cavan	27	41%	39	59%	66	1.5%
Clare	40	27%	107	73%	147	3%
Cork City	47	49%	48	51%	95	2%
Cork County	95	26%	276	74%	371	8%
Donegal	77	55%	63	45%	140	3%
Dublin - Dublin City	156	37%	267	63%	423	10%
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	29	16%	156	84%	185	4%
Dublin - Fingal	16	5%	302	95%	318	7%
Dublin - South Dublin	44	19%	184	81%	228	5%
Galway	82	30%	187	70%	269	6%
Kerry	59	44%	76	56%	135	3%
Kildare	16	8%	186	92%	202	5%
Kilkenny	24	25%	73	75%	97	2%

County	Community	Community %	Private	Private %	Total	% of services nationally
Laois	19	22%	67	78%	86	2%
Leitrim	21	62%	13	38%	34	1%
Limerick	46	26%	133	74%	179	4%
Longford	12	36%	21	64%	33	1%
Louth	20	18%	91	82%	111	3%
Mayo	55	45%	66	55%	121	3%
Meath	22	11%	177	89%	199	5%
Monaghan	32	55%	26	45%	58	1%
Offaly	16	23%	53	77%	69	2%
Roscommon	25	48%	27	52%	52	1%
Sligo	27	41%	39	59%	66	2%
Tipperary	45	29%	110	71%	155	4%
Waterford	38	40%	57	60%	95	2%
Westmeath	23	26%	64	74%	87	2%
Wexford	46	34%	89	66%	135	3%

County	Community	Community %	Private	Private %	Total	% of services nationally
Wicklow	24	14%	147	86%	171	4%
Total	1200	n/a	3177	n/a	4377	100%

Appendix III County breakdown of numbers enrolled, including, community/ private services

County	Community	Community %	Private	Private %	Overall total	% rate for extrapolation	Extrapolation
Carlow	1,161	57%	879	43%	2,040	87%	2,332
Cavan	998	55%	826	45%	1,824	62%	2,965
Clare	1,505	39%	2,333	61%	3,838	87%	4,427
Cork City	1,525	56%	1,222	44%	2,747	73%	3,744
Cork County	3,782	30%	8,849	70%	12,631	88%	14,413
Donegal	2,492	53%	2,244	47%	4,736	91%	5,181
Dublin - Dublin City	5,746	46%	6,624	54%	12,370	73%	16,878
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	1,691	26%	4,804	74%	6,495	80%	8,165
Dublin - Fingal	565	6%	8,357	94%	8,922	76%	11,778
Dublin - South Dublin	1,633	23%	5,391	77%	7,024	74%	9,436
Galway	3,153	38%	5,052	62%	8,205	81%	10,119
Kerry	2,571	57%	1,927	43%	4,498	90%	4,997
Kildare	472	7%	6,368	93%	6,840	76%	9,038
Kilkenny	1,048	34%	1,990	66%	3,038	84%	3,629

County	Community	Community %	Private	Private %	Overall total	% rate for extrapolation	Extrapolation
Laois	1,211	38%	2,013	62%	3,224	91%	3,560
Leitrim	716	75%	233	25%	949	70%	1,360
Limerick	1,921	34%	3,724	66%	5,645	76%	7,393
Longford	881	63%	515	37%	1,396	81%	1,714
Louth	977	23%	3,285	77%	4,262	93%	4,575
Mayo	1,750	51%	1,689	49%	3,439	85%	4,034
Meath	1,343	23%	4,587	77%	5,930	79%	7,523
Monaghan	2,154	72%	821	28%	2,975	92%	3,236
Offaly	618	29%	1,508	71%	2,126	88%	2,419
Roscommon	1,096	48%	1,174	52%	2,270	94%	2,415
Sligo	1,166	51%	1,103	49%	2,269	81%	2,809
Tipperary	1,636	36%	2,914	64%	4,550	81%	5,587
Waterford	1,620	48%	1,731	52%	3,351	81%	4,112
Westmeath	882	30%	2,093	70%	2,975	83%	3,595
Wexford	2,226	46%	2,566	54%	4,792	87%	5,505

County	Community	Community %	Private	Private %	Overall total	% rate for extrapolation	Extrapolation
Wicklow	811	22%	2,796	78%	3,607	74%	4,858
Grand Total	49,350	36%	89,618	64%	138,968	81%	171,202

Appendix IV Total attendance by county, including service (community/ private) and urban/ rural breakdown

County	Overall Total	Number of services with children enrolled	Average no. enrolled per facility	Community	Private	Rural	Urban
Carlow	2,040	39	52	1,161	879	785	1,255
Cavan	1,824	37	49	998	826	1,474	350
Clare	3,838	120	32	1,505	2,333	2,372	1,466
Cork City	2,747	64	43	1,525	1,222		2,747
Cork County	12,631	307	41	3,782	8,849	6,181	6,450
Donegal	4,736	112	42	2,492	2,244	3,030	1,706
Dublin - Dublin City	12,370	286	43	5,746	6,624		12,370
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	6,495	138	47	1,691	4,804		6,495
Dublin - Fingal	8,922	230	39	565	8,357	800	8,122
Dublin - South Dublin	7,024	162	43	1,633	5,391	524	6,500
Galway	8,205	200	41	3,153	5,052	5,036	3,169
Kerry	4,498	110	41	2,571	1,927	2,829	1,669
Kildare	6,840	150	46	472	6,368	2,328	4,512
Kilkenny	3,038	78	39	1,048	1,990	1,584	1,454

County	Overall Total	Number of services with children enrolled	Average no. enrolled per facility	Community	Private	Rural	Urban
Laois	3,224	71	45	1,211	2,013	1,262	1,962
Leitrim	949	25	38	716	233	949	
Limerick	5,645	127	44	1,921	3,724	2,450	3,195
Longford	1,396	24	58	881	515	987	409
Louth	4,262	98	43	977	3,285	1,154	3,108
Mayo	3,439	97	35	1,750	1,689	2,339	1,100
Meath	5,930	145	41	1,343	4,587	1,922	4,008
Monaghan	2,975	47	63	2,154	821	2,430	545
Offaly	2,126	60	35	618	1,508	1,034	1,092
Roscommon	2,270	48	47	1,096	1,174	1,809	461
Sligo	2,269	51	44	1,166	1,103	1,460	809
Tipperary	4,550	122	37	1,636	2,914	2,191	2,359
Waterford	3,351	73	46	1,620	1,731	787	2,564
Westmeath	2,975	68	44	882	2,093	1,101	1,874
Wexford	4,792	108	44	2,226	2,566	2,815	1,977

County	Overall Total	Number of services with children enrolled	Average no. enrolled per facility	Community	Private	Rural	Urban
Wicklow	3,607	110	33	811	2,796	1,241	2,366
Grand Total	138,968	3,307	42	49,350	89,618	52,874	86,094

Appendices

Appendix V Details of children on a waiting list by age band as a percentage of children attending by community/private and urban/ rural service

Age band	Community				Private			
	Number of places sought	Places sought as % of total places sought	Number of children attending	Places sought as % of children attending	Number of places sought	Places sought as % of total places sought	Number of children attending	Places sought as % of children attending
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	505	8%	833	61%	644	10%	1,884	34%
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	954	14%	3,158	30%	695	11%	6,131	11%
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	1,787	27%	6,802	26%	1,044	17%	11,690	9%
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)	2,441	36%	20,669	12%	3,005	48%	44,768	7%
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72 months)	487	7%	8,191	6%	618	10%	14,347	4%
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	276	4%	5,083	5%	240	4%	7,133	3%
8 years+	250	4%	4,614	5%	70	1%	3,665	2%
Total	6,700	51%	49,350	14%	6,316	49%	89,618	7%

Age Band	Urban				Rural			
	Number of places sought	Places sought as % of total places sought	Number of children attending	Places sought as % of children attending	Number of places sought	Places sought as % of total places sought	Number of children attending	Places sought as % of children attending
Up to 1 year (0-12 months)	857	9%	1,842	47%	292	10%	875	33%
1 year+ to 2 years (13-24 months)	1,322	13%	6,343	21%	327	11%	2,946	11%
2 years+ to 3 years (25-36 months)	2,301	23%	12,373	19%	530	18%	6,119	9%
3 years+ to 4½ years (37-54 months)	4,005	40%	40,219	10%	1,441	48%	25,218	6%
4½ years+ to 6 years (55-72 months)	884	9%	13,166	7%	221	7%	9,372	2%
6 years+ to 8 years (73-96 months)	383	4%	7,177	5%	133	4%	5,039	3%
8 years+	256	3%	4,974	5%	64	2%	3,305	2%
Total	10,008	77%	86,094	12%	3,008	23%	52,874	6%

Appendix VI Childcare staff numbers – breakdown by county, community (comm.),/private (priv.) service and employment status

County	CE (Community Employment) Scheme*			CSP - Community Services Prog.*			Gateway *			JI - Jobs Initiative*			Tús*			JobBridge			Volunteer			Directly employed staff			
	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total	Total	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total	Comm.	Priv.
Carlow	34	34	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	267	155	112		
Cavan	30	30	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	2	1	5	5	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	229	129	100		
Clare	25	25	0	13	13	0	0	0	2	1	1	6	6	0	5	3	2	7	2	5	499	218	281		
Cork City	91	91	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	403	224	179		
Cork County	67	64	3	4	0	4	0	0	1	0	1	12	12	0	5	2	3	10	3	7	1,571	468	1,103		
Donegal	63	63	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	28	28	0	12	4	8	3	1	2	630	353	277		
Dublin -	360	357	3	20	20	0	5	9	9	0	0	30	30	0	11	8	3	11	9	2	1,982	882	1,100		
Dublin - Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown	14	13	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	4	2	2	1	0	1	1,046	195	851		
Dublin - Fingal	28	25	3	11	11	0	0	0	1	0	1	10	9	1	4	0	4	11	0	11	1,169	64	1,105		
Dublin - South Dublin	74	71	3	18	17	1	0	5	4	1	6	6	6	0	8	0	8	2	0	2	962	204	758		
Galway	28	28	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	2	18	18	0	4	1	3	6	0	6	1,057	378	679			
Kerry	72	72	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	9	9	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	542	295	247		

County	CE (Community Employment) Scheme*		CSP - Community Services Prog.*		Gateway *	JI - Jobs Initiative*		Tús*		JobBridge		Volunteer		Directly employed staff				
	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total		Comm.	Priv.	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total	Comm.	Priv.		
Kildare	21	20	1	3	3	0	0	1	4	4	0	1	4	0	4	889	56	833
Kilkenny	18	18	0	0	0	0	1	5	5	0	4	1	3	1	2	402	141	261
Laos	34	34	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	5	0	5	0	1	394	117	277
Leitrim	16	14	2	12	12	0	0	3	3	0	1	1	0	1	0	119	88	31
Limerick	86	86	0	2	1	1	7	3	3	0	10	5	5	3	0	687	219	468
Longford	76	74	2	1	1	0	0	6	5	1	5	2	3	0	0	182	107	75
Louth	93	92	1	62	61	1	7	1	1	0	6	2	4	2	0	502	100	402
Mayo	52	50	2	3	3	0	2	13	13	0	6	3	3	1	0	408	199	209
Meath	63	61	2	3	3	0	3	3	3	0	2	0	2	4	1	756	152	604
Monaghan	93	93	0	2	2	0	9	20	20	0	6	4	2	2	1	361	234	127
Offaly	11	11	0	1	1	0	1	8	8	0	2	0	2	1	0	245	73	172
Roscommon	36	36	0	19	19	0	0	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	271	111	160
Sligo	56	56	0	5	5	0	0	7	7	0	3	2	1	0	1	332	169	163
Tipperary	27	27	0	1	1	0	1	17	17	0	5	2	3	9	5	601	224	377
Waterford	27	25	2	1	1	0	1	7	7	0	2	1	1	3	2	388	200	188
Westmeath	60	56	4	8	8	0	9	4	4	0	4	0	4	1	0	360	104	256

County	CE (Community Employment) Scheme*		CSP - Community Services Prog.*		Gateway *	JI - Jobs Initiative*		Tús*		JobBridge		Volunteer		Directly employed staff							
	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total		Comm.	Priv.	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total	Comm.	Priv.	Total	Comm.	Priv.					
Wexford	82	82	0	4	4	0	4	1	3	22	22	0	4	4	0	4	1	3	552	243	309
Wicklow	33	33	0	12	12	0	1	0	1	4	4	0	1	0	1	7	0	7	458	86	372
Grand Total	1,770	1,741	29	211	202	9	7	80	53	262	260	2	130	52	78	99	28	71	18,264	6,188	12,076

**These schemes are in Community services only. Private Providers (52) incorrectly categorised staff (67) under Work Activation Programmes that are available to community services only.)

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Pobal wishes to thank all those involved in the analysis and write up of this report, namely Marian Cahalan, Ela Hogan, Kellyann McGrory, Martin Quigley & June Simmons.

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