

Early learning in Canada: recent trends from Canada and abroad, with a focus on transitions

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Early Childhood Development on
Accounting for Quality in the Early
Childhood Workforce

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cmec

Council of
Ministers
of Education,
Canada

Conseil des
ministres
de l'Éducation
(Canada)



**Introduction
to CMEC and
early learning
in Canada**

**Review of the OECD's
Starting Strong V
project**

Review of Trends in:

- **1) organization and governance of ECEC**
- **2) professional continuity in ECEC**
- **3) continuity of learning in ECEC and primary education and developmental continuity**

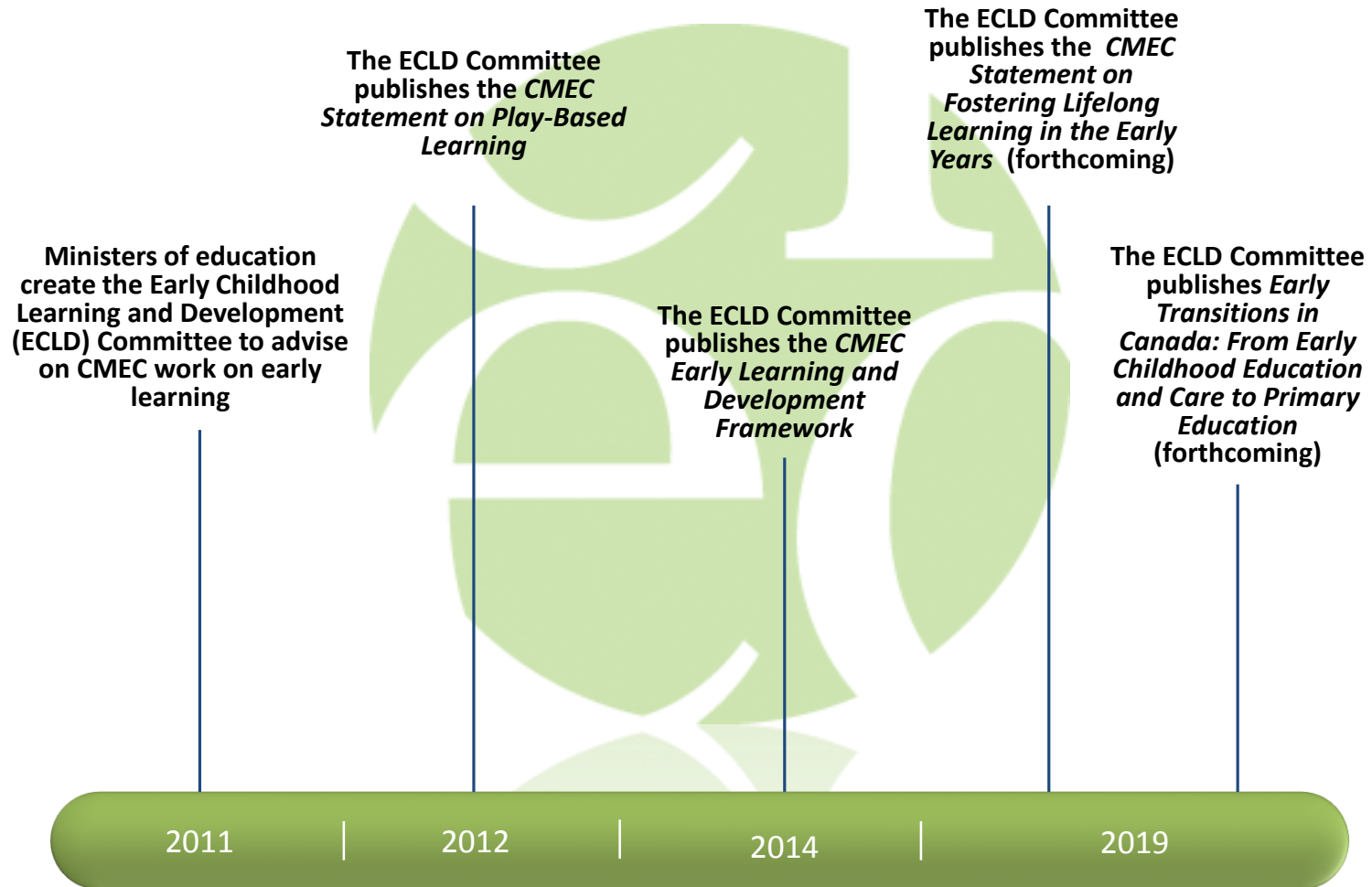
Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC)



CMEC is an inter-governmental body founded in 1967 by ministers

- CMEC provides leadership in education at the pan-Canadian and international levels and contributes to the exercise of the exclusive jurisdiction of provinces and territories over education.

Pan-Canadian Early Learning at CMEC



Canada's education systems across provinces and territories for ages one to six



Programs in the early years from birth to age 12, provinces and territories, 2016

		NB BC AB NU NL PE	ON QC NS MB NT YK	SK
Age	+	Grade 3	Grade 3	Grade 3
		Grade 2	Grade 2	Grade 2
	6	Grade 1	Grade 1	Grade 1
		↑	↑	↑
	5	Kindergarten	Kindergarten	Kindergarten
		↑	↑	↑
	4	Various licensed/regulated early childhood education and care programs	Pre-Kindergarten / Junior Kindergarten	Pre-K (in some communities)
			↑	
	3		Various licensed/regulated early childhood education and care programs	Various licensed/regulated early childhood education and care programs
	2			
1				

Canada



- AB** Alberta
- BC** British Columbia
- MB** Manitoba
- NB** New Brunswick
- NL** Newfoundland and Labrador
- NS** Nova Scotia
- NT** Northwest Territories
- NU** Nunavut
- ON** Ontario
- PE** Prince Edward Island
- QC** Quebec
- SK** Saskatchewan
- YK** Yukon

Quebec: Pre-kindergarten for 4 year-olds in Quebec is not yet universally available. Currently, it is available in some school districts and for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Manitoba: Junior-kindergarten for 4 year-olds in Manitoba is only available in some schools.

Yukon: Pre-kindergarten for 4 year-olds is available in the majority of communities in Yukon.

British Columbia: British Columbia offers StrongStartBC, a drop-in program for children (aged birth to five) that is run by early childhood educators and allows children to participate in play-based early learning activities (e.g., stories, music, and art).

Nova Scotia: Kindergarten for five-year-olds is known as Grade Primary in Nova Scotia. Grade Primary is compulsory and considered part of primary education.

Prince Edward Island: Kindergarten for five-year-olds is compulsory in Prince Edward Island

New Brunswick: Kindergarten for five-year-olds is compulsory in Prince Edward Island

Saskatchewan: Pre-kindergarten is an early childhood education program available in some schools for children who are 3 and 4 years old.

OECD's Starting Strong V and the pan-Canadian companion report



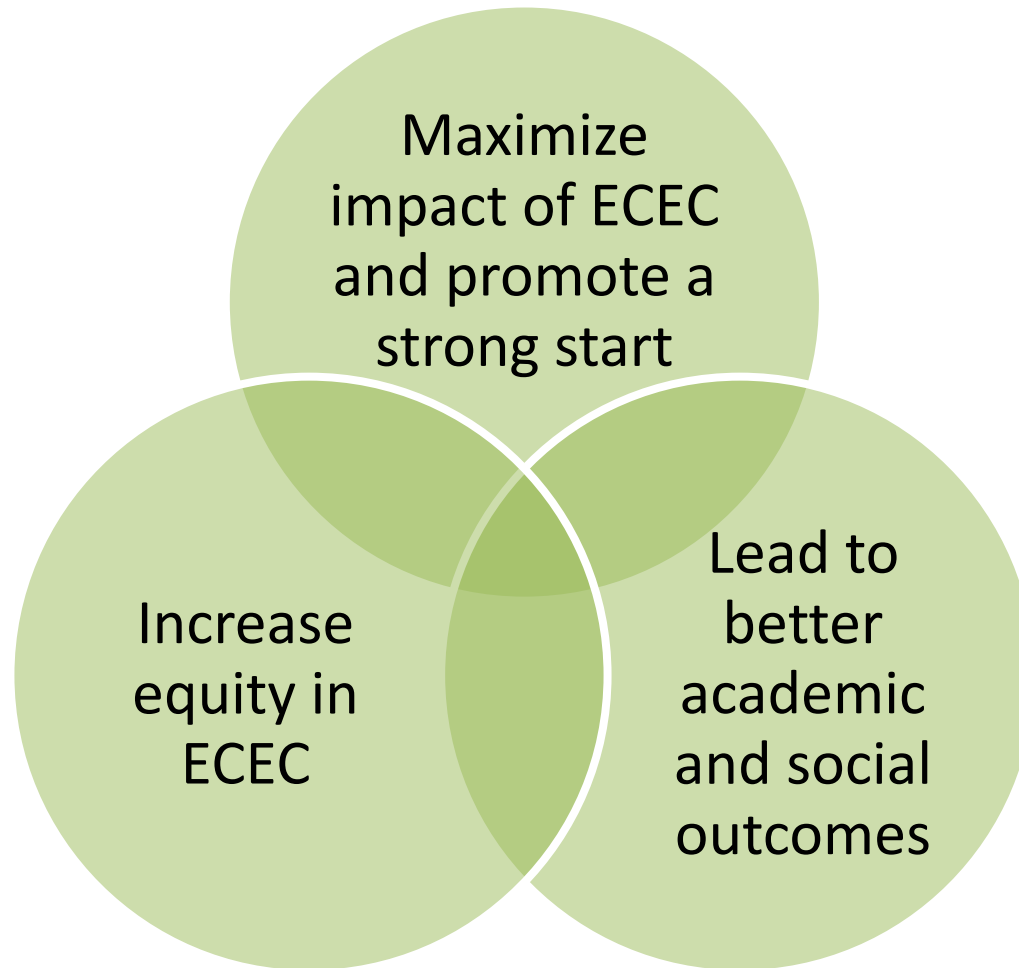
30 OECD and partner countries worldwide

13 provinces and territories in Canada

63 jurisdictions for some indicators

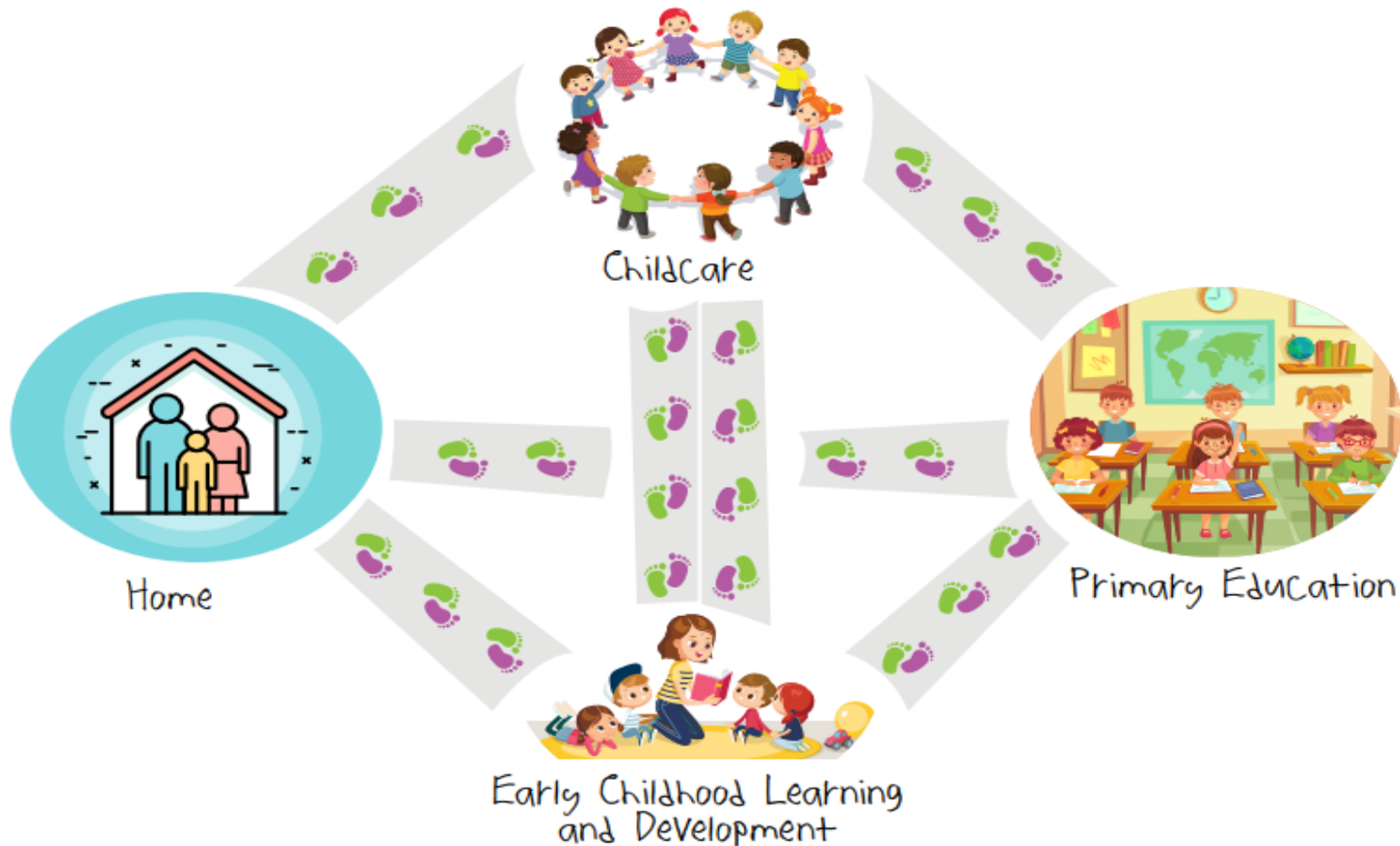


Starting Strong V: Why do smooth transitions matter in the early years ?



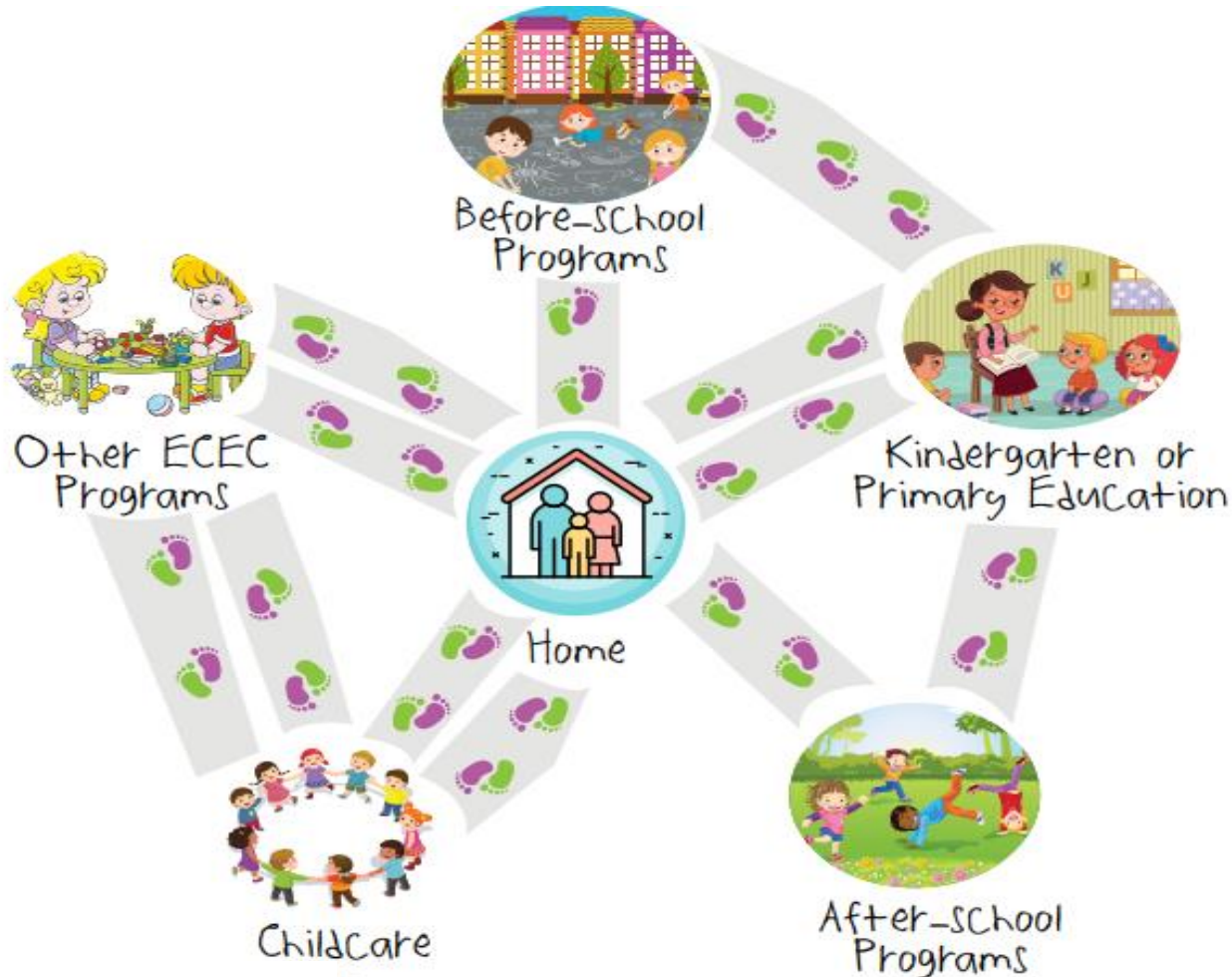
Most children experience more than one vertical transition prior to primary education

Common vertical transition pathways in the early years in Canada



Children may also experience several horizontal transitions over the course of a single day

Common horizontal transition pathways in the early years in Canada



1) Trends in the organization and governance of ECEC across OECD countries



Growing enrollment of **children under 3** in ECEC and **near-universal enrollment by age 5**

Last year of ECEC **physically integrated** with schools

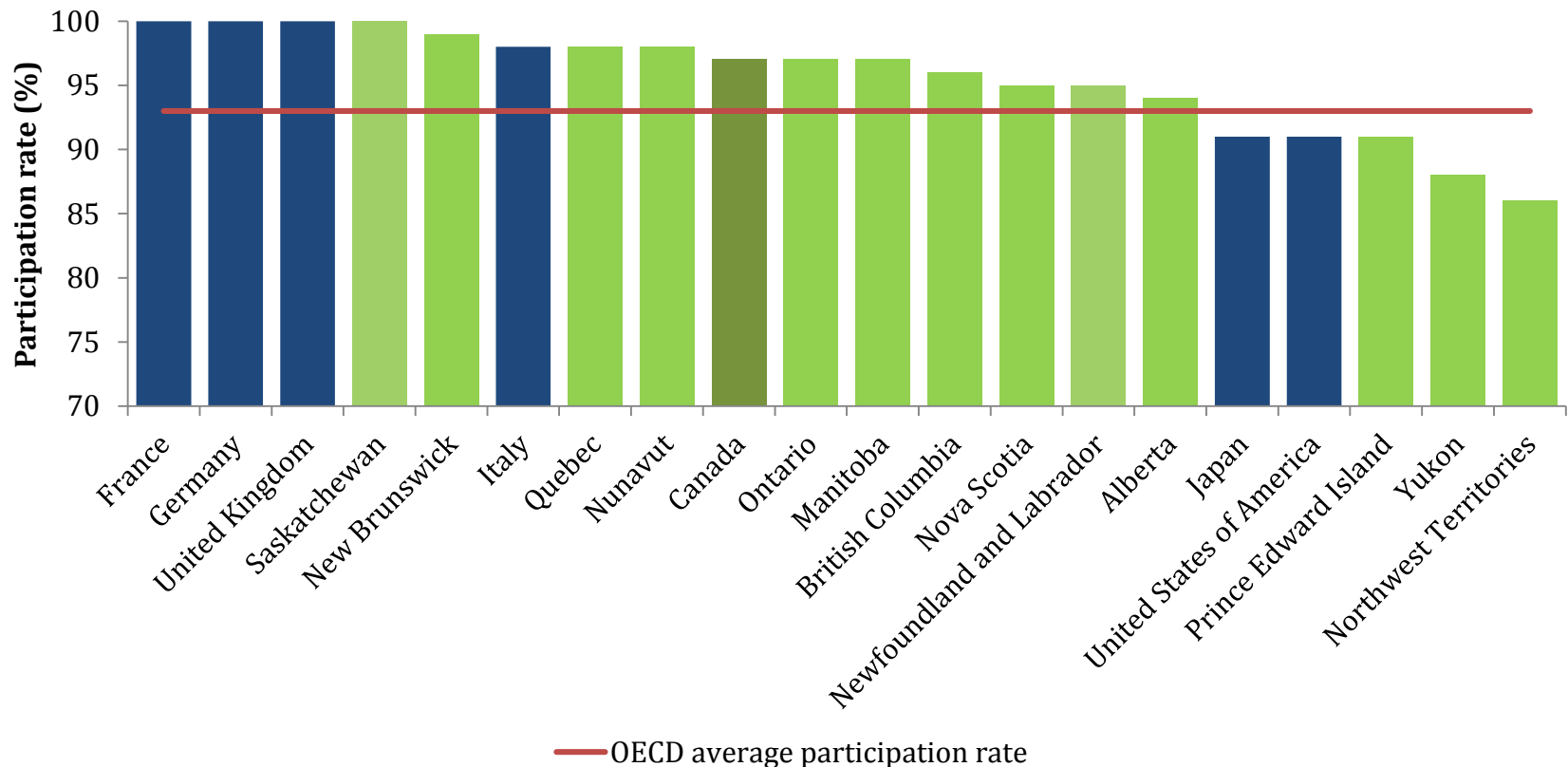
Last year of ECEC **compulsory** in a growing number of countries

Growing **integration of ECEC responsibilities**

97% of children in Canada are enrolled in Kindergarten versus 93% for the OECD average



Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), G7 countries, Canada, provinces and territories, 2015–16

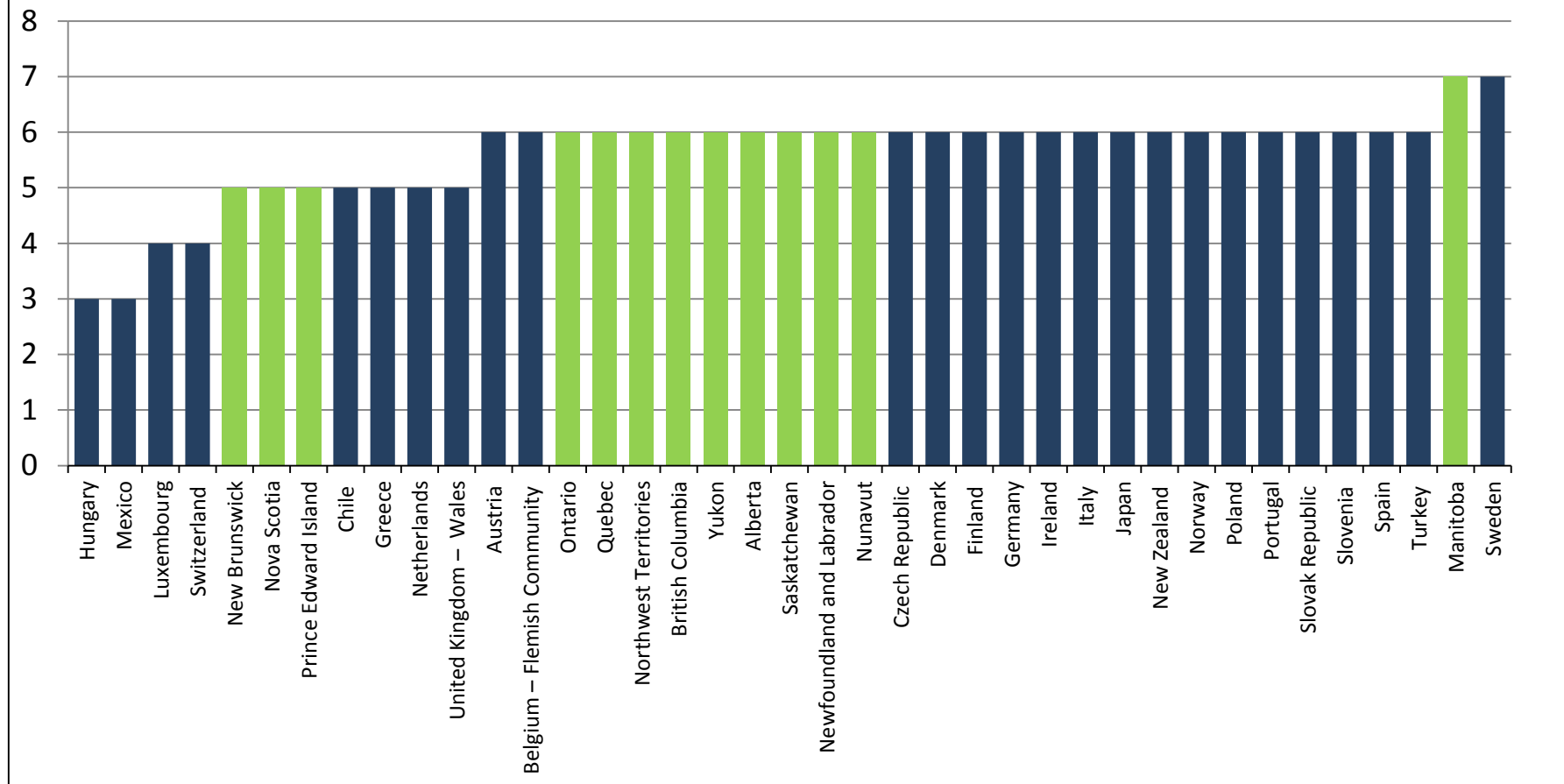


Sources: Statistics Canada, Elementary–Secondary Education Survey (ESES), Demographic Estimates and Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

OECD countries are lowering the age of compulsory education by making kindergarten at age 5 compulsory



Age of compulsory education, OECD countries, provinces and territories, 2016



Sources: OECD Network on ECEC, “Survey on transitions between ECEC and primary education”, June 2016, and CMEC, “Survey on Transitions between ECEC and primary education”, 2016

Reflection: what is needed for successful transitions?



➤ **Shared understanding**

- About transitions between ECEC settings and schools
- Of children's individual differences

➤ **Alignment**

- between what and how children learn in ECEC and primary school
- Alignment of working conditions of preschool and primary teachers

➤ **Collaboration**

- between preschool and primary teachers
- among staff, managers, parents and the community

Most countries cited leadership as a crucial factor for successful transitions and professional continuity



17
countries

Indicated that educators received key information on how to support transitions from their principals or ECEC centre leaders during meetings

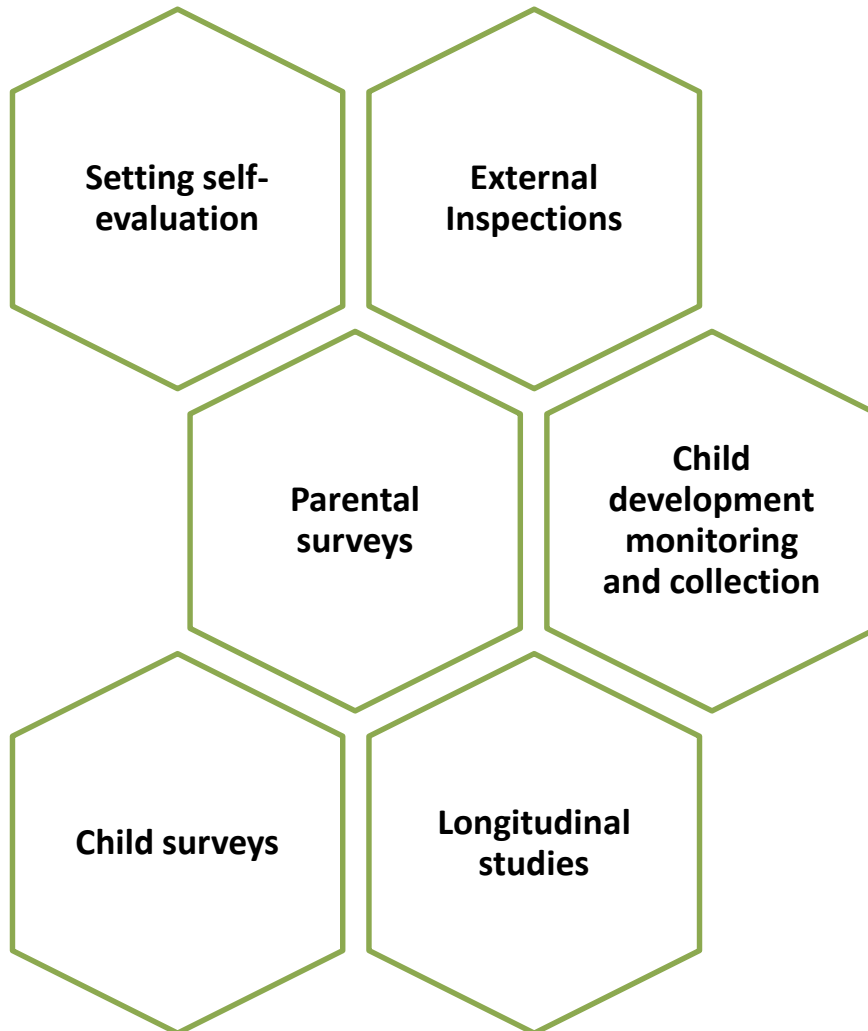
Strong leaders can support transitions and professional continuity by:

- ❖ Being **well-informed** about children's needs and the strengths of educators
- ❖ Encouraging or facilitating **information exchange** among educators and between educators and families
- ❖ Ensure that transitions practices match **local needs, diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds**, and (parental) expectations
- ❖ Focusing on **making schools ready for children**, not children ready for school

Monitoring transitions can lead to better outcomes for children and families



How do OECD countries monitor transitions?



In Canada, provinces and territories also use different types of child monitoring methods, including the **Early Development Instrument (EDI)** and the **Early Years Evaluation (EYE)**.

The monitoring of transitions is not yet universal across OECD countries



11
countries

monitor transitions in ECEC, including Kindergarten

12
countries

monitor transitions in primary education

14
countries

do not monitor transitions

2) Trends in professional continuity



Minimum of 4 years of university education required for all primary teachers in Canada.

1 - 4 years of postsecondary education required for ECEs in Canada.

Professional development requirements for educators vary widely across countries.

Transitions specific training is not yet universal across OECD countries.

Participation in professional development is mandatory for ECEs in a number of provinces and territories in Canada



No minimum number of hours prescribed but ECEs must develop a self-assessment, an individual learning plan and a record of professional learning activities.



ECEs must complete **30 hours** of professional development **every 3 years**.



ECEs must complete **40 hours** of professional development **every 5 years**.



Professional development for ECEs are linked to licensing requirements.

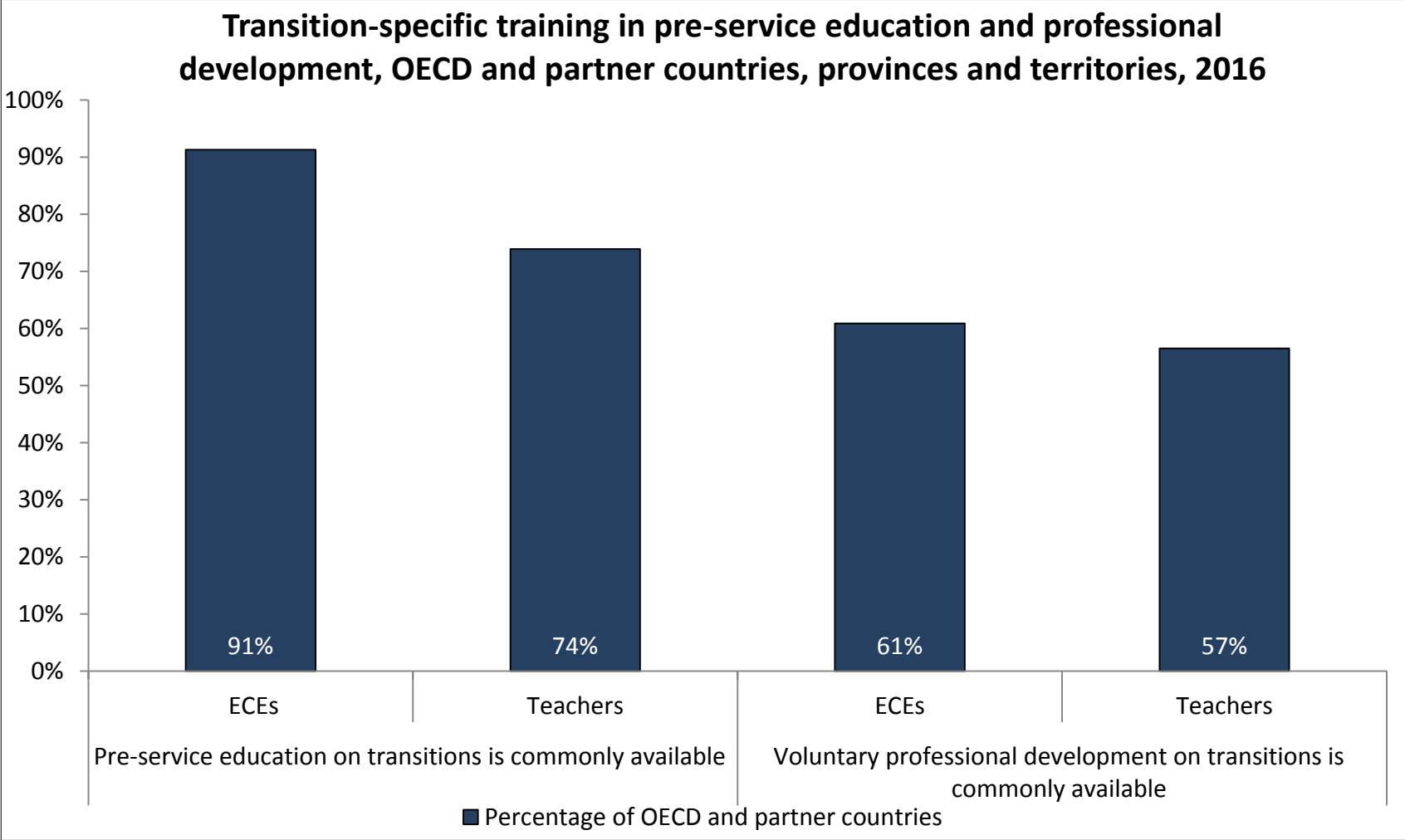


ECEs must complete **45 hours** of professional development **every 3 years**.



ECEs must complete **45 hours** of professional development every **3 years**.

Pre-service and in-service training on transitions is not yet universal across OECD and partner countries



Source: OECD Network on ECEC, "Survey on transitions between ECEC and primary education", June 2016

Additional trends in professional continuity across OECD countries



Pre-primary Educators

Tend to spend more time in direct contact with children

Tend to be younger

Tend to earn less than primary teachers

Primary Teachers

Tend to spend more time on other tasks

Tend to be older

Tend to earn more or equal to pre-primary educators

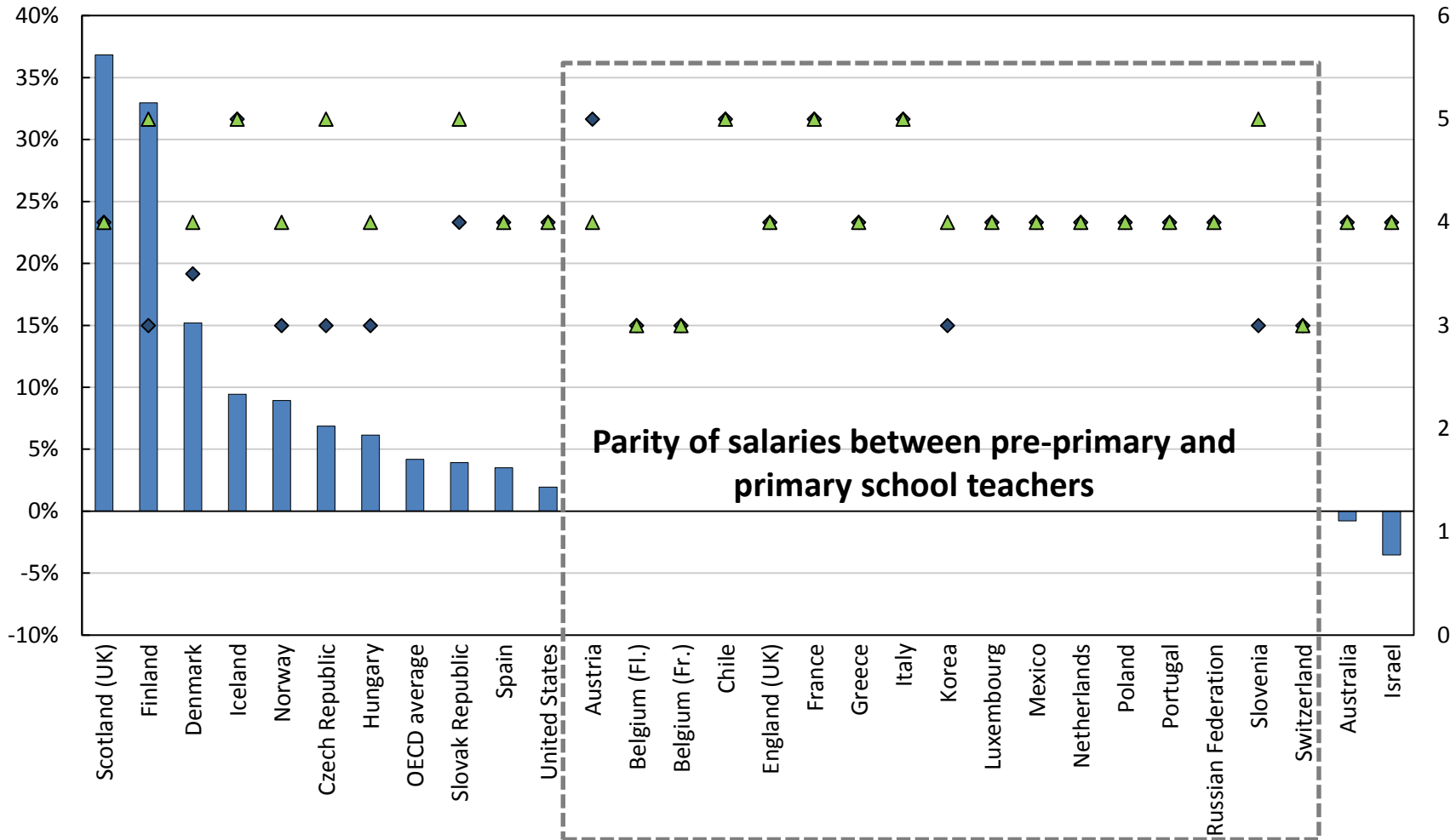
Primary teachers still earn more than their pre-primary counterparts in some OECD countries



Primary education teacher salaries in percentage of pre-primary education teachers

- Difference of salary, in percentage of pre-primary teacher salary
- ◆ Number of years of education for teacher in pre-primary schools (right scale)
- ▲ Number of years of education for teachers in primary schools (right scale)

Duration of pre-service training in years



Source: Table D3.1a, OECD (2015), Education at a Glance 2015: OECD Indicators

3) Trends in continuity of learning in ECEC and primary education across OECD countries



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Curricula between last year of ECEC and Grade 1 is **aligned or integrated** in most OECD countries.

Ethics, ICT and foreign languages are increasingly taught in pre-primary education.

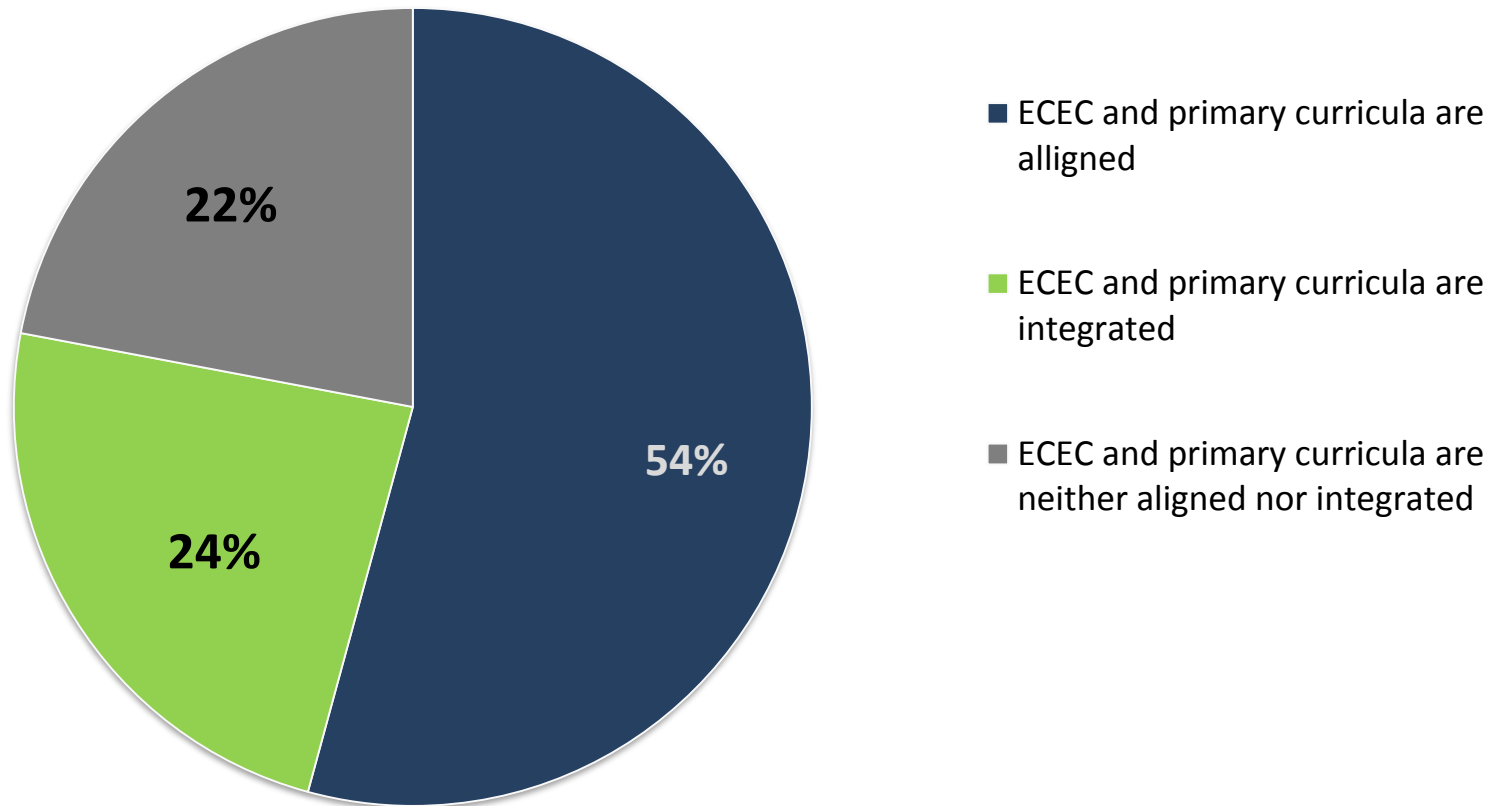
Children are generally exposed to **similar subject areas** in Kindergarten and in Grade 1 in Canada.

Children experience a **higher child-staff ratio** in primary education than in ECEC.

Continuity in curricula between ECEC and primary school through alignment or integration in most participating countries



Alignment between curriculum for last year of ECEC and curriculum for primary school, OECD and partner countries, 2016



Source: OECD Network on ECEC, "Survey on transitions between ECEC and primary education", June 2016

Continuity of learning from Kindergarten to Grade 1 in Canada



Literacy

Numeracy

Physical education

Science

Arts

Music

Social Sciences

Ethics and Citizenship

ICT Skills

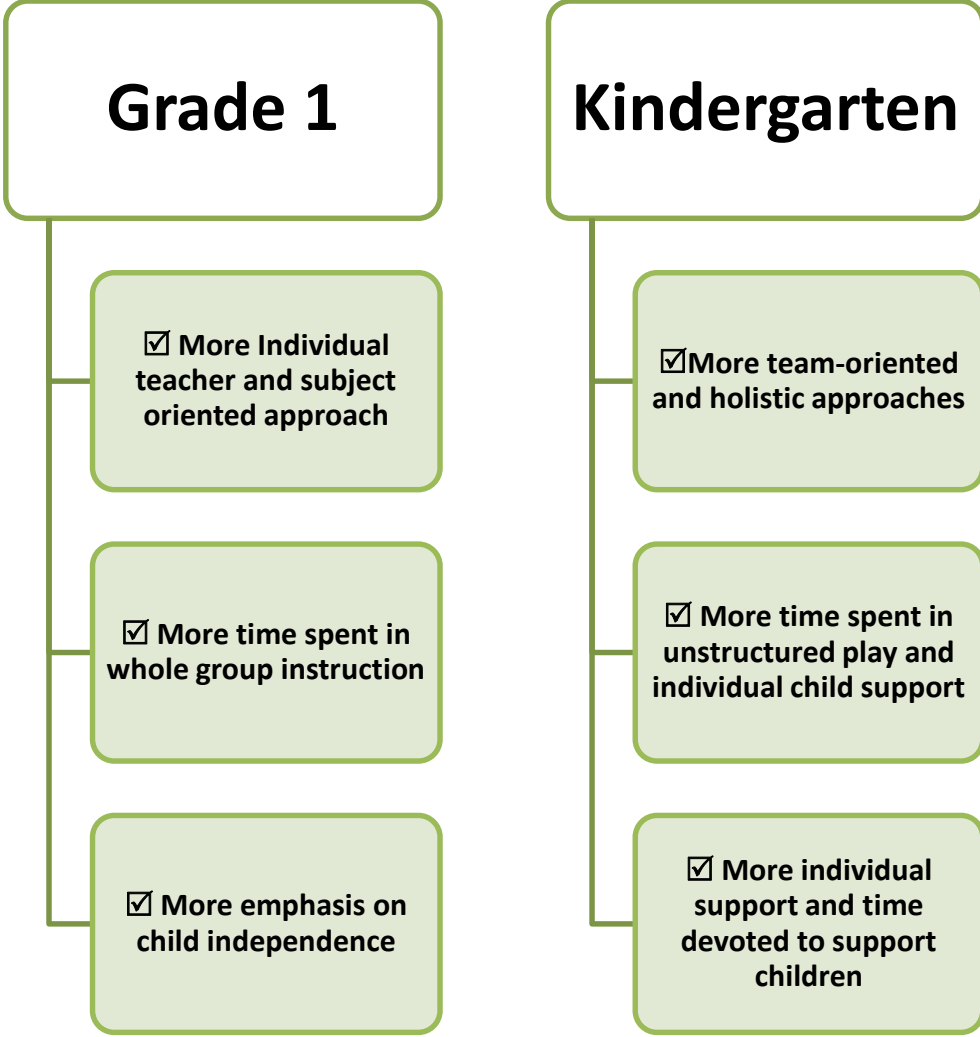


Free play-time

Practical Skills

Additional languages

Continuity in the classroom: Children experience higher staff-child ratio in primary school than in last year of ECEC in most countries

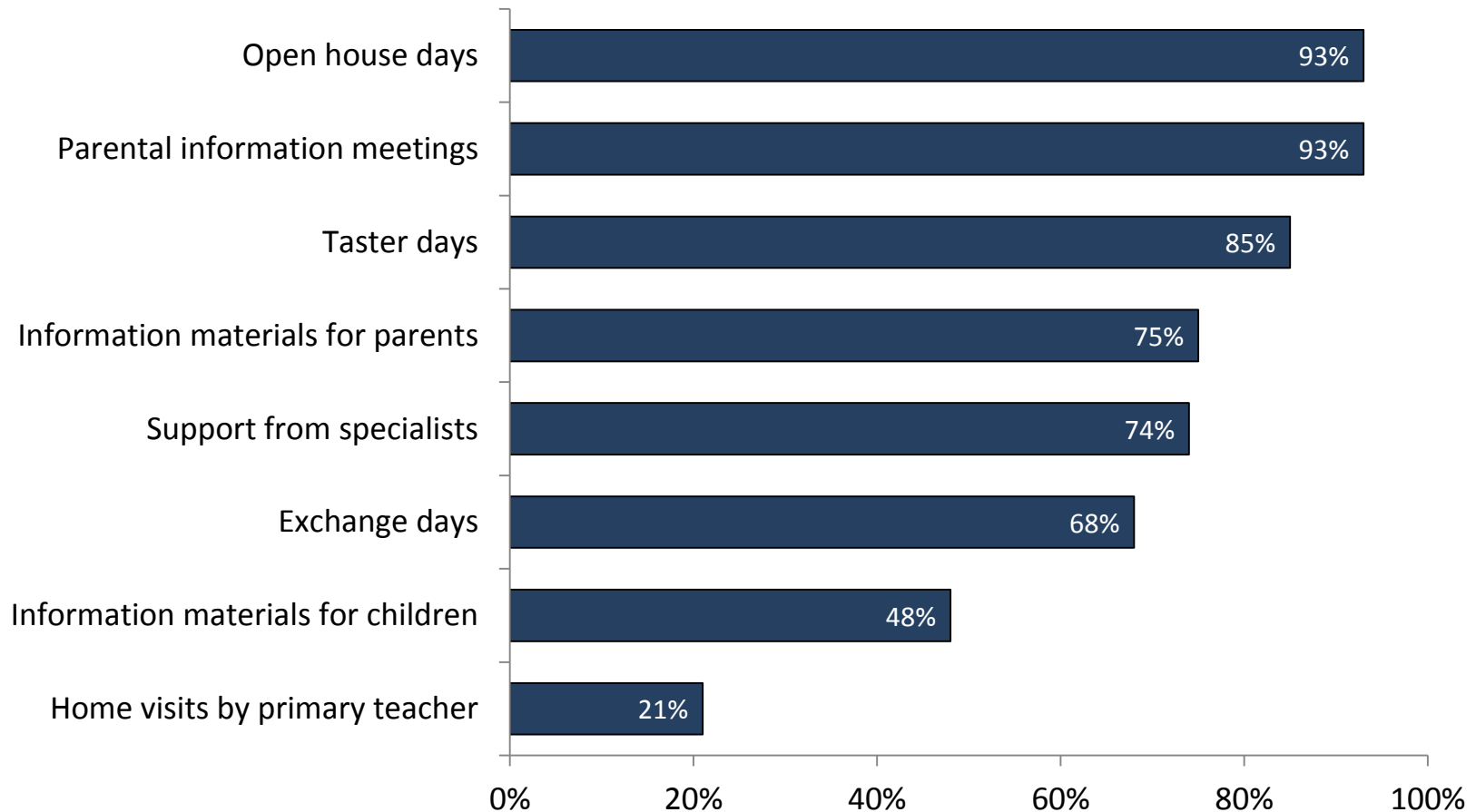


Source: OECD Network on ECEC, "Survey on transitions between ECEC and primary education", June 2016

Open house days and parental information meetings are the most common transition practices employed across OECD countries

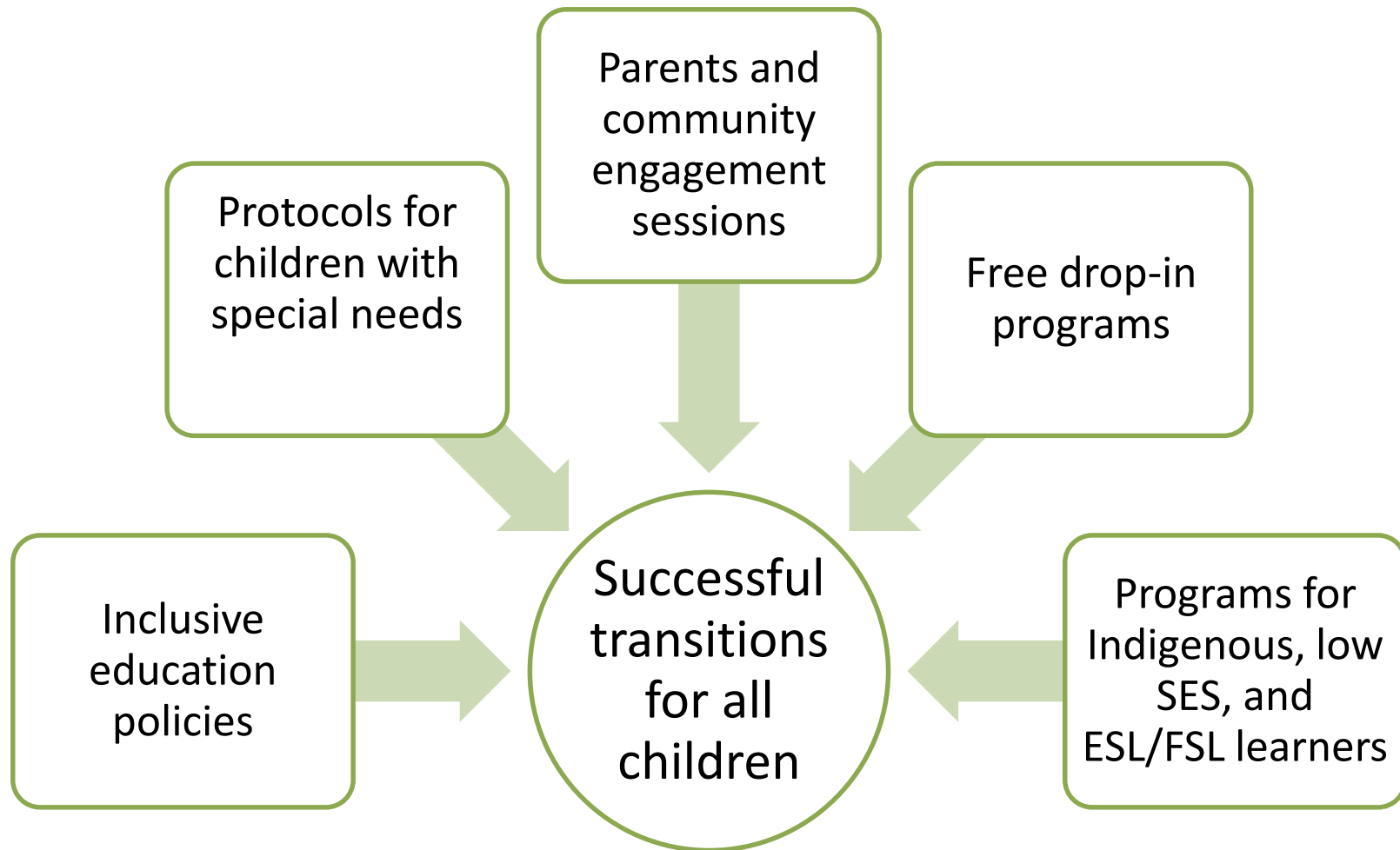


Transition practices to help children make the transition to a school setting, by percentage, OECD and partner countries, 2016



Source: OECD Network on ECEC, "Survey on transitions between ECEC and primary education", June 2016

Additional approaches to support transitions in the early years



Thank you!

Questions?



Questions? Contact us at

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