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What are the Arguments for Childcare? What are the Arguments for Childcare?

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What are the Arguments for Childcare?

A Comparative Study on Policy Framing of Childcare in Ireland and Sweden

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Abstract

This thesis objective is to research differences between the framing of childcare in Europe and how it has developed over time to fit narratives of new risks. Is there a difference between welfare regimes? This thesis will more specifically research and compare the political framing and rationales behind childcare in Sweden and Ireland between 1990 and 2020. It does this through content analysis of policy documents with the aim to find one of the four categorised frames: feminist, economic, social equality or demographic. This research finds that Sweden frames childcare within the motive of social equality, while Ireland frames their childcare within the motive of economic benefits. The theoretical expectations for each regime were supported to a large extent.

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1. Introduction

“The child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity”

(Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989)

That the child is important has not gone unnoticed in modern society. Children are our future. Thus, it is not surprising that one of the main pillars in the modern welfare state is family policies. van Kersbergen and Vis (2014b) define the welfare state as; “enhancing the welfare of vulnerable groups of people in society and offering or facilitating social protection for all“ (p. 78). One of these vulnerable groups can be assumed to be children. This definition of the welfare state suggests that the welfare system should attempt to constrain challenges in society through facilitating social services. For this to occur, with the ever-changing environment of the welfare state, the welfare system requires restructuring and adaptation (van Kersbergen & Vis, 2014c; d’Addio & d’Ercole, 2005). Reform has been explained by multiple theories in different contexts. For example, some well-known policy-making theories are the power-source theory, the coalition analysis, and institutionalism (Cox, 2011, pp. 466-469). However, the field of welfare reforms has experienced a move towards constructivism (e.g. Loyd, 2015; Kuebler, 2007; Nyby, et al., 2018). Therefore, reforms are considered to not happen by themselves but are dependent on the dominant narrative of what are the main challenges within the welfare system.

Firstly, Campbell (2002) stated that there needs to be more research and attention to how narratives influence policy-making in the literature. However, scholars in this field have focused on finding childcare rationales in one country at a time or compared countries in similar contexts (e.g. Ruling, 2010; Cock, Corr & Breitreuz, 2017; Chaney, 2015). Therefore, this thesis will compare childcare rationales in different welfare regimes. It will discuss the connection between framing and rationales before moving into the conceptualisation and expectations. The conceptualisation is the identification and construction of frames in childcare through the categorisation of theoretical political rationales. The political rationales discussed in the operationalisation will be the basis of the content analysis of government documents on childcare

proposals and policies. After the clarification of methodology, the results will be presented together with a comparative discussion of the frames found in the regimes. Lastly, the conclusion will discuss the main findings and the interpretation of the result, further possible research and limitations.

2. Literature review

Political rationales are the rationales behind specific policies introduced in government, meanwhile, the frame is the larger motive behind policy-making. To identify the frame of each country, and any possible difference in framing, this thesis needs to find the political rationales behind the reforms or proposals. Cox (2011) stated that the rationales behind reforms are not as obvious as they may seem. He argues that rationales are often formulated in a way that implies that they strengthen the welfare state, such as cuts in welfare being motivated by the idea to eliminate moral hazards (Cox, 2001). Thus, a rationale might seem to eliminate moral hazards, however, analysing these rationales over time might discover a frame of retrenchment instead. Therefore, to look at all rationales, and throughout a longer period of time, a frame, rather than individual rationales, can be found. This literature review will discuss the literature of policy framing and political rationales within childcare policies before presenting the research question.

2.1 Policy framing

Family policies are not pursued in the same way as other social policy areas, but rather, they are driven by political actors' beliefs and ideas (Blum, Formánková & Dobrotic, 2014, p. 472). van Hulst and Yanow (2014) defines policy framing as “a process in and through which policy-relevant actors intersubjectively construct the meanings of the policy-relevant situations” (p. 97). Moreover, policy framing is directly connected to constructivism, which, according to Cox is “the beliefs and preferences of individuals are constructed in a social environment where the beliefs and preferences held by other members of the community constitute the basis for what is deemed to be socially valued or preferred” (2001, p. 473). Thus, policy framing is a complex constructed concept and is impacted by the individuals and the social environment of policy-making.

In addition, the main theoretical frameworks found in the field of childcare policies focus on approaches such as frames, ideas, or narratives (e.g. Souminen, 1975; van Gerven & Nygård, 2017; Blum & Kuhlmann, 2019). Campbell (2002) argues that re-framing has become an integral part of policy change (p. 27). Furthermore, Ruling (2010) argues that for a political shift in childcare policy to occur, there needs to be a change in the cultural norms around education and care (p. 155). Therefore, to find any changes in the framing of childcare, a large shift in political opinions and cultural norms needs to have occurred.

2.3 Political rationales

To differentiate political rationales from framing, rationales are the constructed objective behind a policy within childcare. According to Loyd and Penn (2014, p. 388) rationales are impacted by prevailing attitudes, national politics and changing perspectives on the role of the welfare state. Thus, rationales can tell us a lot about the different views on childcare. Rationales may be personal or context-specific, therefore, the literature review on rationales need to be broad to be able to find the general and established rationales within childcare.

Souminen (1975) researched the political rationales behind the Finnish parliament proposals for reform within childcare policies. She identified four main rationales: (1) equalisation for poor families, (2) increasing labour and consumption for the economy, (3) the concern for children's upbringing, and (4), the issue of the low birthrate in the country (1975, pp. 34-40). Furthermore, Blum, et al. (2014) found that the dominant ideas in recent family policy are; social investment, freedom of choice, workfare and austerity (pp. 472-473). Loyd and Penn (2014) build upon these rationales in the context of austerity in Europe and summarise the main rationales as; the social mobility policy rationale, the well-being, employment support, social justice, and the investment rationale (pp. 286-296). Overall, these scholars seem to have found similar rationales behind changes in family and childcare policies throughout time.

Furthermore, Loyd (2015) demonstrates how rationales might overlap, for example, the well-being rationale interacts with both social justice/mobility rationale and the investment rationale, as when parents are employed, it strengthens the whole family's socioeconomic position. Therefore, it also increases social mobility and well-being for both parents and children

as well as investing in the children's opportunity for education and future employment (p. 147). Lastly, White (2011, pp. 287-288) argues that the internationalisation of two dominant childcare policy rationales; the human capital and the children's well-being, is happening. However, Randall (2011) found that this convergence is limited by working patterns, feminism or cultural values. This discussion will be continued (see 6.2).

2.4 Gap and research question

This section will address the gap within the literature. Firstly, the literature review demonstrated the inadequacy of a discussion around a possible demographic crisis rationale as fertility continues to fall in most nations. This is a frame within childcare policymaking that seems to be overlooked. Secondly, most literature on the framing of childcare has focused on a singular case study or two similar case studies rather than two different cases (e.g. Chaney, 2015; Cock, Corr & Breitzkreuz, 2017; Ruling, 2010;). Lastly, because of the focus on similar or singular case studies, the issue of a possible convergence or internationalisation of childcare policies has not fully been researched.

As discussed, framing is a concept based on the constructed narratives, and as frames highly depend on the context of that narrative, different welfare regimes will have contrasting or various frames. Thus, this thesis aims to look into the differences and similarities between nations framing of childcare policies. It aims to analyse modern political rationales and framing of childcare policies in Europe, more specifically, and further discussed below (see 4.1) socially-democratic Sweden and liberal-conservative Ireland. Based on the argument that rationales are part of the framing, the research question of this thesis is: how are childcare policies framed in a social-democratic welfare regime compared to a liberal-conservative welfare regime between 1990-2020?

3. Theoretical framework

3.1 Conceptualisations

This section will explain and discuss the conceptualisations needed to replicate this research and construct frames based on the literature review. Framing is the simplification of complex political or similar issues into manageable thought structures (Winslow, 2018), and in this case, that means dividing the political rationales into policy frames. Based on the dominant rationales found in the literature, four frames have been identified. The choice of four frames is additionally based on Penn's (2011) summarisation of the main theoretical rationales found in childcare policies. This is further shown in the operationalisation of this thesis (Table 3). Overall, scholars discussed, in the literature review, found similar rationales, and therefore, these conceptualisations have familiarity within the field.

3.1.1 Feminist frame

The 1960-1980s wave of feminism theorised about the facilitation of middle-class women into the workforce and out of poverty, or oppressive patriarchal situations, through childcare (Dinner, 2010, pp. 578-582). The correlation between childcare and gender equality was established during this time, and the issue of more available and affordable childcare has been on the feminist agenda since. The importance of childcare for feminism is described by Hemerijck in the concept of the New Gender Contract, which has the focus on creating compatibility between work and childbearing, as well as creating a more egalitarian equilibrium between men and women (2017a, p. 11). Compatibility between female employment and childbearing creates female empowerment, independence and equal rights for women relative to men. The importance of compatibility has been supported by many (e.g. Saraceno, 2011, p. 85; Bonoli, 2007; D'Addio & d'Ercole, 2005, p. 69). However, Rubery (2017) argues that policy reform occurs to keep up with the behavioural changes of women, furthermore, Rubery stated that these feminist rationales are only used when the reform can achieve objectives other than gender equality too (pp. 577-578). To conclude, feminist theory in relation to childcare is based on the belief that women should have equal rights within employment and education.

3.1.2 Demographic frame

At the end of the last century, the focus within the demographic rationale was on the ageing population and its well-being, however, this risk has been limited with broad pension systems in most nations (Abu-Chadi & Immergut, 2019; Guirandon & Martin, 2018). Thus, the main part of this frame is the new risk of low fertility rates, as most developed nations have experienced falling fertility since the introduction of the double-earner model (Weller, 1968; Ahn & Mira, 2002; Adsera, 2004). d'Addio and d'Ercole (2005) found that the concern around fertility rates was not established until the 2000s, however, that interventions within the compatibility of childbearing and employment for women occur seldom anyhow (p. 46). In addition, Hoorens, et al. (2011a) argue that the issue of declining fertility has been recognised by policymakers and that it has caused pressure on the welfare system. Furthermore, they found that immigration has been contributing to the European population growth, but with decades of below-replacement level fertility and the baby boomer generation soon retiring, the issue is far from solved (p. 13). Lastly, fertility rates are complex, and creating policies to impact fertility is sensitive, for example, pro-natalist policies might clash with traditional cultural or religious beliefs (Hoorens, et al., 2011b; Saraceno, 2015). Therefore, the demographic frame is the use of childcare policies to change demographics or due to changing demographics.

3.1.3 Social equality frame

Scholars discussed social equality through childcare as the 'promotion of children's socio-emotional and intellectual development' which aims to generate better future life chances through education (e.g. Loyd & Penn, 2014, p. 387; Loyd, 2015, p. 146). Alternatively, Souminen (1975) focuses on social equality through the equalisation of incomes (p. 31). A more general conceptualisation is the description of the social equality frame as two-dimensional (Woods, MacKenzie & Wong, 2013). The first dimension is recognition, as in making the different cultures, values and socio-economic backgrounds relevant to educational opportunities, and the second dimension is redistribution, as the distribution of resources and skills from the dominant culture to the other cultures in the nation, to create equitable education (pp. 284-285). Childcare from a social equality perspective is also often motivated to prevent child poverty (Loyd, 2015, p. 147; Woods, MacKenzie & Wong, 2013, p. 284). Another part of the frame is human rights and the idea that children have an entitlement or right to childcare (Hard, Press & Gibson, 2013; Loyd, 2015). A weakness of this frame is the exploitation of the social justice

rationale for reductionist and standardisation policies (Luke, Woods & Weir, 2012), similar to the other rationales discussed, social equality can be exploited for other motives. Overall, social equality is conceptualised as the recognition of inequality and redistribution of means through childcare.

3.1.4 Economic frame

As both feminist and demographic motivated reforms can overlap with economic interests, this frame focuses on the rationale of directly cutting or investing in welfare due to the national economy. The two main economic theories within childcare policies are neoliberalism and social investment theory (Blum, et al., 2014, p. 471). Which economic rationale is implemented depends on the narrative that is dominant in that context. On one hand, the neoliberal austerity perspective means cuts in welfare programs and selective policies focusing on families in poverty (Nygård, et al., 2019). Greve (2020) mentions a scholarly debate about an austerity consensus (p. 2-3), however, contradictory, Pierson (1994) discusses the examples of where neoliberalism did not succeed due to retrenchments being viewed as unpopular by the electorate (p. 164). On the other hand, the social investment strategy, or the human capital theory, is the idea of investing in childcare. For example, investing in childcare so caregivers can join the workforce which will create economic profit long-term. A common argument in the field is that social investment is taking over the economic rationale in social policy (Hemerijck, 2018; Jenson, 2010; Nygård, et al., 2019). However, Hemerijck (2017b, p. 380) asks the question of whether the economic crisis in 2008 caused policy-makers to disregard social investments rationales due to its costs. The economic frame is thus conceptualised as two main things; neoliberal rationales and social investment rationales.

3.1.5 Childcare policies

Childcare is what the European Commission (EC) calls Early Childhood Education and Care. According to the EC, it is defined as ‘any regulated arrangement that provides education and care for children from birth to compulsory primary school age’ (2021). An alternative definition is Penns (2000, p. 37) definition; “a care service for children 0–5 years to cover working hours, provided by nursery nurses or unqualified care staff in a variety of settings including domestic settings”. However, Penn’s (2000) definition is less accurate today as childcare exists no matter

if the parent works or not in many nations, and therefore, the EC definition is more appropriate. Childcare does not necessarily mean the same thing in every country, for example, from what age it is available depends on the national legislation.

Rindfuss and Brewster (1996) argued that the most important factors for creating effective childcare policies are societal norms, availability, affordability, government rationale and efficiency. Kreyenfeld and Hank (2000, p. 334) stated that when analysing the effects of childcare on female employment, one should rather focus on the availability of care. In addition, d'Addio and d'Ercole (2005) argued that the most important part is to decrease the cost of having children, both directly and indirectly (p. 48). Thus, childcare policy will be conceptualised as the change of availability and/or affordability of childcare.

3.2 Theoretical expectations

This thesis classifies case studies according to Esping-Andersen's (1990) classification of welfare regimes. Esping-Andersen classified regimes partly based on their decommodification. Decommodification means the protection of the nation's population from social risks caused by the market and deconstructing the view of people as commodities (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 22). The theoretical expectations will be based on these classifications and the descriptions of each welfare regime.

Firstly, the social-democratic welfare regime has a high degree of universalism and generosity and is often praised for its investments in the labour market (Kangas & Kvist, 2018; Hinrichs, 2020). Furthermore, in Esping-Andersen (1990), the social-democratic welfare state is based on high equality and focuses on the full participation of workers, where all workers have equal rights. Thus, the social-democratic state minimises social problems and maximises revenue income (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 27-28). In addition, Duncan (1995) points out that the best welfare regime for the universal right of childcare for mothers is the social democratic welfare regime. This is due to one of the main rationales for the social-democratic welfare regime is a large labour force, which is facilitated through extensive public provisions such as childcare (1995). Thus, the theoretical expectation is that a social-democratic welfare regime motivates childcare within the economic, feminist and social equality frames.

The liberal welfare regime according to Esping-Andersen (1990), is means-tested, modest universal transfers, and usually catering to low-income clientele. It is based on traditional and liberal work-ethic norms and encourages employment with modest benefits. The liberal welfare regime contains social rights and uses both state welfare for the people living in poverty and market-differentiated welfare among the majority (p. 26-27). Thus, a liberal welfare regime would motivate childcare through the economic frame, and secondly, the social equality frame. On the other hand, the conservative welfare regime focuses on the preservation of status and thus has little benefits, social rights or redistributive impact (Esping-Andersen, 1990). The welfare regime has a market welfare provider and is often shaped by Church influence and traditional family values. It also encourages motherhood, and thus childcare is heavily underdeveloped. Subsidies are only of existence when needed (p. 27). Thus neither social equality nor feminism is expected to be the dominant framing of childcare in this regime. Together, a liberal-conservative welfare regime is expected to motivate childcare within firstly, the economic frame, and secondly, to a lesser extent, the social equality frame.

4. Methodology

The main objective of this thesis is to analyse the rationales behind childcare policies in two countries and compare the overall framing of childcare. Therefore, the research design will be a qualitative comparative small-N approach (Heath & Halperin, 2017).

4.1 Case selection

The case selection is based on the Esping-Andersen classification of welfare regimes. The Esping-Andersen classification has an established familiarity within the field of welfare regimes, and explicitly differentiate between regimes and simplify the complex welfare systems (van Kersbergen & Vis, 2014a, p. 53). Esping-Andersen's classification is most suitable, as he built this classification upon Titmuss' classification (Aspalter, 2019, p. 79), and, in addition, has more categories of welfare regimes than the Beveridge-Bismarck classification. This thesis will use the comparative case selection method of most different system design to decide on what cases are relevant to this comparative research. The case selection is based on Esping-Andersen's

classification, thus there will be one social-democratic welfare regime, and, due to time and word limitations, the second selected case represents both the liberal and the conservative welfare regime.

The two cases selected are Sweden and Ireland. Esping-Andersen considered Norway and Sweden to be his ideal-typical social-democratic welfare regimes (Aspalter, 2019, p. 80), and therefore the representative case for social-democratic welfare regimes will be Sweden (Earles, 2011, p. 180). This selection is further justified by my understanding of Swedish, compared to Norwegian. Ireland is argued by Schäfer (2009) to be partly a liberal and partly a conservative welfare regime. Thus, Ireland is selected partly due to the double-regime classification, but also as English is their main language.

Sweden and Ireland represent their classified welfare regime and these differences need further commentary. Overall, the Swedish childcare policies are universal, defamiliarised and egalitarian (Andersen, Schoyen & Hvinden, 2017; Earles, 2011; Norrmann, Ronning & Norgaard, 2013). Furthermore, Sweden has a dual-earner model with a long history of state-subsidised childcare (Nyberg, 2004; Haataja & Nyberg, 2005). Ireland is a nation with a constitution that still states that the objective for mothers is to stay at home and is still based on a breadwinner model (Irish Constitution, 1937, Art. 41.2.2; Ciccia & Bleijenbergh, 2014). Furthermore, the Irish welfare state has a selective welfare system with familiarised childcare that recently started to be state-subsidised (Hufkens, et al., 2019; Wolfe, et al., 2013; OECD, 2004). These two regimes are thus very different in their values and systems.

Lastly, Sweden and Ireland did develop both similarly and differently throughout the last three decades when it comes to, for example, female labour, fertility and child poverty (Worldbank, 2021ab; Eurostat, 2021). As argued, rationales and frames are impacted by endogenous and exogenous factors as these concepts are constructs. Therefore, it can further be expected to have different childcare policies as the contexts for the frames are different.

4.2 Data collection and method of analysis

4.2.1 Data collection

The data for this thesis will be official government documents surrounding childcare reforms. Data will be collected through triangulation to gather a mixture of debates, proposals, reports, acts and reform documents as data (Halperin & Heath, 2017, p. 161). These documents are expected to provide the rationales of childcare in each country as these debates, proposals, reports and acts will discuss previous policies, new policies and contemporary issues needed to be solved in the country. Furthermore, policy documents are a familiar source for rationales used in policy framing research (e.g. Fagnani, 2012; Ruling, 2010; White, 2011). The analysis of debates complements policy reforms with the inclusion of the main discourse around childcare policies at the time.

4.2.2 Data sampling and selection

Sampling will be all documents found from the coding scheme (Table 2). The sampling strategy is limited by the spatial and temporal domain, which means the sample can only be within the years 1990-2020 in Sweden or Ireland. The sampling is based on snowballing (Heath & Halperin, 2017). Snowballing is used as some of these documents on childcare policies will most likely mention other documents within my temporal domain, and thus, this will ensure that documents that do not exist on the governmental pages are still included.

The two countries have similar methods of saving official documents, as they have search engines on the web page to find documents needed. However, one difference is that Sweden has their older reports on a separate webpage (SOU), meanwhile Irish reports are found on their Government webpage.

Table 1: Data collection method

Country		Webpage
Sweden	Legislature publications	https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/
	National Agency for Education	https://www.skolverket.se/
	Official government reports (SOU)	http://www.sou.gov.se/
	Government publications	https://www.regeringen.se/
Ireland	Legislature publications	https://www.oireachtas.ie/en
	Educational department publications	https://www.education.ie/
	Government publications	https://www.gov.ie/en/publications/

4.2.3 Method of analysis

This thesis aims to find childcare rationales in documents surrounding childcare policies, which will lead to finding the dominant frame of childcare in each regime. The method of analysis will be a content analysis, which reduces bias and can analyse large populations of text, condense large texts to codes and allow latent and manifest analysis of framing (Heath & Halperin, 2017, p. 336-346). Furthermore, the method used is deductive, and the analysis will extract previously known theoretical concepts from the literature to find, in this case, the identified frames of childcare (Elo & Kyngäs, 2007). Therefore, content analysis is fitting for the purpose of this research due to its ability to analyse textual content and to find themes and narratives in text. Content analysis is commonly used in childcare policy-framing research, for example, Chaney (2015) or Campbell-Barr (2009). The alternative method, discourse analysis, would look for assumptions, not the objective motive behind policies, and would therefore go beyond the scope of this thesis.

4.3 Operationalisation

The operationalisation is based on identified rationales in each frame. These categories need to be and are, both mutually exclusive, unidimensionally and exhaustive (Heath & Halperin, 2017). Furthermore, the coding scheme will be partly open coding, where codes in relation to rationales not previously discussed, and therefore outside of the coding frame, will be written down if it seems relevant to the research question. Thus, this thesis contains a level of flexibility in case the conceptualised frames are lacking important categories of political rationales in childcare policies, or find political rationales that have yet to be found by the field due to the temporal domain being most recent. Table 2 presents the identified codes for data collection, this too is flexible and open for other codes.

Table 2: Coding scheme of indicators for data (*English and Swedish*)

Childcare policies reform and proposals	
Childcare	barnomsorg
preschool/school/kindergarten	förskola/skola/förskoleverksamhet
child/children	barn/barnen
ECEC (early childhood education and care)	skolbarnomsorg
(childcare) benefit	barnomsorgspeng
(childcare) policies	familje-politik

The table below (Table 3) summarises example rationales within each frame. It is primarily based on Penn’s (2011) theoretical summarisation of rationales, but has been complemented with rationales discussed in the conceptualisation, to ensure a wide and general basis for the coding to be inclusive. This table is not exclusive from other possible rationales, however, gives the overall directive of what the analysis should identify.

Table 3: Representative rationales per frame

Frames	Example of Rationales
Economic	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Early intervention is a good investment in that it mitigates the expense of remedial action in primary and secondary schooling and results in subsequent adult productivity, and the relative absence of anti-social behaviour (Penn, 2011).2. Early education (and care) is only a good investment if it is of high quality. Poor care may do more harm than good especially for vulnerable children (Penn, 2011).3. Selective neoliberal policies focus on families in need, such as families in poverty or of disadvantage, rather than unnecessary large fiscal expenditures (Nygård, et al., 2019).
Feminist	<ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Women are essential contributors to a dynamic economy (Penn, 2011).5. Working mothers contribute to tax revenues and lessen the need for social security payments; they make an important contribution to family income (Penn, 2011).6. Mothers need to be involved with their children; parents are a child's first educators (Penn, 2011).
Social Equality	<ol style="list-style-type: none">7. Early education benefits all young children and socialises them before starting school, especially children from poor and migrant families (Penn, 2011).8. Education and life-long learning are essential to a competitive knowledge economy. Education promotes social mobility (Penn, 2011).9. Children, including young children, are rights bearers and all children have a right to protection, provision and participation (Penn, 2011).
Demographic	<ol style="list-style-type: none">10. Birth rates below the level of replacement are a societal problem (Penn, 2011).11. Immigration causes higher birth rates and larger population and thus need more resources (Hoorens et al., 2011a)12. Traditional values and religious belief clashes with pro-natalist policies (Hoorens et al., 2011b; Saraceno, 2015)

To further differentiate between the different rationales within each frame, this analysis will create codes summarising the main argument of each rationale. Below are the main interpretations expected to be found in the analysis.

Table 4: Example of interpretations for each frame

Social equality	Economic	Feminist	Demographic
Human rights	National resources	Gender equality	Social changes
Equal opportunities	Labour force	Compatibility between work and childbearing	Demographic changes
Socio-emotional / intellectual development	Social investment		Pro-natalist measures

5. Results

This section presents the results. The first chart per country shows the overall result, which is the main findings. The three smaller charts show per decade. Per decade is used to give a comparative overview of the possible trends within framing in both countries. Using less than a decade would give little data per chart and more than a decade would make it harder to discover patterns.

5.0.1 Rationales in Sweden

Chart 1: Percentage of rationales in each frame in Sweden 1990-2020

Percentage of rationales per frame in Sweden 1990-2020

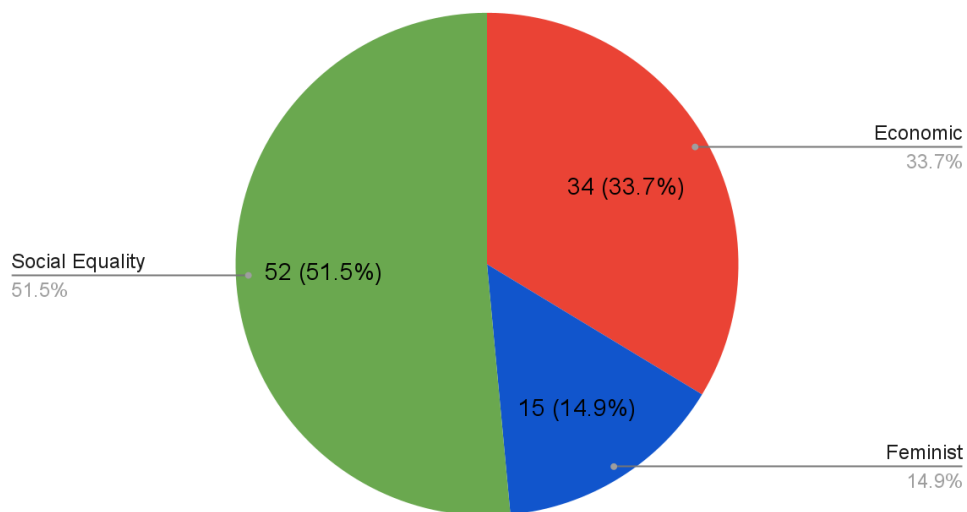
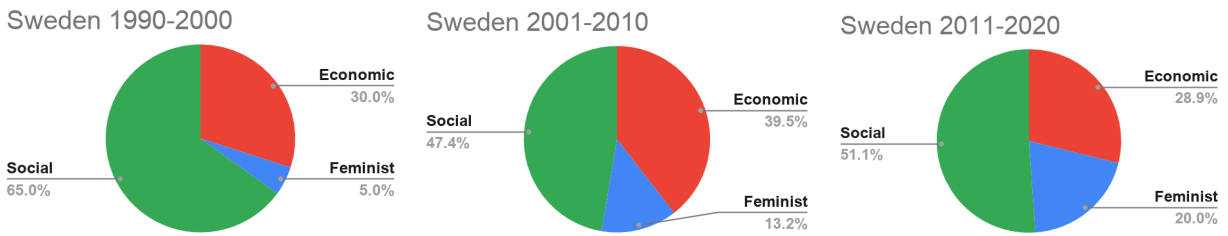


Chart 2, 3 and 4: Percentage of rationales per decade in each frame per decade



In Sweden, only three out of four frames are found. The most prevalent frame is social equality, followed by the economic frame and then, lastly, the feminist frame. The feminist frame increases in rationales throughout. The economic frame peaks in 2001-2010, and at the same time, the social equality frame temporally decreases.

5.0.2 Rationales in Ireland

Chart 5: Percentage of rationales in each frame in Ireland 1990-2020

Percentage of rationales per frame in Ireland 1990-2020

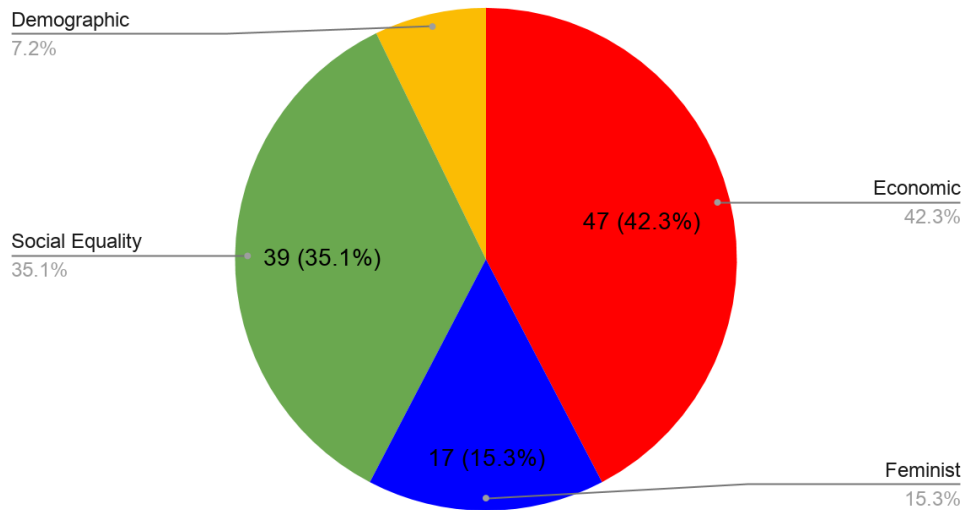
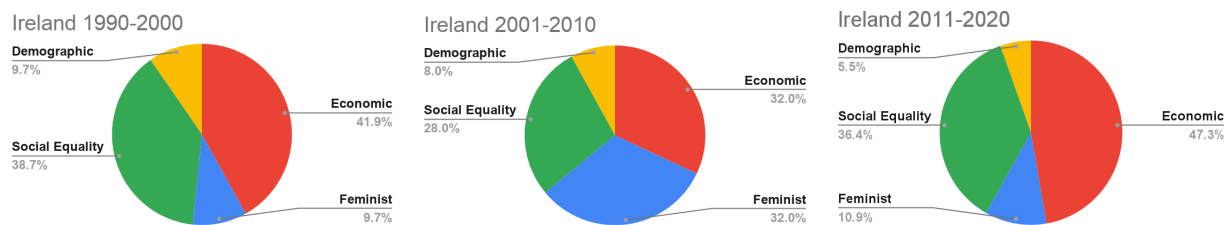


Chart 6, 7, 8: Percentage of rationales per decade in each frame per decade



In Ireland, all four frames were found. The economic frame is dominant throughout, however, between 1990-2010 the feminist frame and the economic frame are have around the same percentage (32%). The feminist frame peaks in 2001-2010 before going back to a similar percentage as the decade before. Lastly, the demographic frame decreased throughout time.

The section below presents the main rationales within each frame for each nation. It further presents the result of rationales in each frame to ensure an elaborate discussion of the main findings.

5.1 Sweden

5.1.1 Social equality frame

The most common rationale is the importance of creating equal opportunities between children, and, specifically, to prevent parents socio-economic situations, or other disadvantages, impacting the child's right to education and care. A common rationale within this frame was the purpose of following children's rights or human rights. However, the rationales seldom explicitly mention any conventions but rather discuss the child's right or entitlement to education. In addition, a rationale was that education should be planned after each child's ability. Another rationale highlighted the importance of facilitating integration, for example in the analysed 2018 proposition in Sweden (The Government, 2018, p. 70). In 2011-2020 a new rationale was found which was the counteracting of gender roles within preschool and that girls, boys and others should have equal opportunities.

5.1.2 Economic frame

The economic rationales were mainly to ensure that parents could work and be productive taxpayers. The emphasised social investment rationale emphasised the need for economic

benefits long-term through preventing future criminality by education, for example, in the Swedish Government Official Report on countering segregation (2020a). The economic rationale was also focused on the national ability to meet the criteria of childcare, it especially had a focus on the availability of resources for restructuring childcare. Lastly, a neoliberal rationale was the motive to increase the availability of childcare to stimulate higher consumption by families but also increased market competition among childcare centres.

5.1.3 Feminist frame

The main rationale was the creation of gender equality in relation to labour. It repeatedly implied a focus on women rather than men, however, nothing was explicitly mentioned. In 2011-2020, the rationales were affected by the discussion on the issue of extending childcare until evening, nights and weekends for parents who need it for flexible work hours.

5.1.4 Demographic frame

Rationales within the demographic frame were nonexistent.

5.2 Ireland

5.2.1 Social equality frame

One of the prevalent rationales within this frame was the rationale to create equal opportunities for parents to ensure their children get the care that they need without being impacted by the family's socio-economic status. A second rationale is a right or entitlement to childcare which was in the context of UN conventions about the right of the child, and the parents right to provide care to their child. Multiple rationales within the social equality frame were motivated by the need to help disadvantaged families or children in poverty. In 2011-2020 the rationale of socio-emotional and intellectual well-being was emphasised, sometimes together with the prevention of parental situations impacting the child's right to education and care.

5.2.2 Economic frame

The most prevalent rationale was the social investment rationale. The motivation of childcare through the idea of investment and returns runs throughout the decade. However, the motive to ensure that parents can to a larger extent join the labour force was highly present as well. Lastly,

there were less emphasised rationales concerning the national economy and the possible economic benefits from childcare or the need for resources for childcare.

5.2.3 Feminist frame

The most dominant rationale within the feminist frame in Ireland was the rationale to create equal opportunities for women and men to be educated and employed. Furthermore, the Programme for Prosperity and Fairness motivated childcare with the increased shared responsibility of care between parents, indirectly encouraging gender equality at home (1999b). The rationale of compatibility for women to go into the workforce is heavily present throughout all documents, and it is gendered in the sense that they focus on women entering the force.

5.2.4 Demographic frame

Some reform in childcare was found motivated by the changing public values on the traditional family structures, which caused pressure to develop the childcare sector. Another rationale had the motivation that fertility rates are increasing and thus causing a need for increased childcare availability and affordability. Lastly, in the debate of the Seanad Éireann there were overt rationales for the need for pro-natal policies (2007, p. 27).

6. Discussion

This part will discuss and analyse the results. It will introduce and analyse each welfare regime's result in a comparative discussion of each frame (6.1), then section 6.2 will discuss the trends found concerning childcare framing.

6.1 Comparison of frames

Overall, Sweden motivates childcare within firstly, the social equality frame and secondly, the economic frame, meanwhile, Ireland does the opposite. In Sweden there is an increasing trend in the feminist framing, however, in Ireland, trends are harder to find. This might be due to Ireland having a larger mix of rationales for childcare compared to Sweden. In comparison, Sweden is highly attached to social equality and economic rationales throughout. This implies that decades of childcare policies establish a frame that is known to be efficient and/or based on public values.

Due to the lack of clear patterns in Ireland, this discussion will look at each frame of each nation. The differences in childcare rationales in each frame can be partly explained by historical and national factors. This will be elaborated on below together with the theoretical expectations.

6.1.1 Social equality frame

In Sweden, the framing through social equality was always around 50% of the rationales found, while in Ireland, social equality never exceeded 36%. This supports the theoretical expectations of Sweden framing childcare mainly within social equality while Ireland to a lesser extent frames childcare through social equality. Nevertheless, social equality has been proven to be of importance in both regimes.

In the social equality frame the national factors seem to be influential. The Swedish welfare system ‘folkhemmet’ is a major part of Swedish welfare. It is a concept that introduced and established the importance of equality, solidarity and universalism in Swedish society (Andersson, 2006, p. 278). Therefore, social equality has a history in Swedish welfare. On the other hand, the emphasis on social equality in Ireland grew a lot after 2010, however, rather than focusing on human rights like Sweden, Ireland had a focus on child poverty. This may be explained by the realisation of child poverty in the nation after the Great Recession of 2008-2010. One in six children was at risk of poverty after the recession in Ireland (End Child Poverty Coalition, 2011) and the material deprivation of children doubled between 2009-2013 (Early Childhood Ireland, 2020). This could have put pressure on the Irish government to ensure social equality for children and explain the major increase of social equality framing. This explains the Swedish framing of childcare through rights, compared to the Irish focus on poverty.

Another difference between the two nations is that the development of universalism is slow in Ireland, meanwhile, in Sweden universalism is an established part of childcare. Irish Senator Ivana Bacik stated that “We have long accepted the principle, rightly, that child benefit is a universal, non-means-tested payment payable to all parents whatever their incomes. [...] Yet, in ten years there has been no attempt by the Government to develop a universal childcare policy that would address the needs of all parents who work outside the home.” (Houses of the

Oireachtas, 2007, p. 25). Therefore, even if social equality is the second frame of childcare in Ireland, it has not yet reached the universalist and equal system Sweden has achieved.

6.1.2 Economic frame

Both Ireland and Sweden framed childcare extensively within the economic frame. The economic frame is the dominant frame in Ireland (42.3%) and the second most prevalent frame in Sweden (33.7%) (Chart 1 & 5). This supports the theoretical expectation of each welfare regime. However, the way the nations motivated the economic frame differed, and the explanation can be found in economic factors.

A national-specific explanation of the economic focus is Ireland's recent economic growth since 1990. The nation suddenly had economic growth that allowed them to invest and catch up with the rest of Europe on childcare (Murphy, 2000, p. 3-5). Thus, social investment and economic framing would be prevalent. In comparison, it was not until 2001 the economic frame became more present in Sweden. It is important to point out that the economic frame is not significantly more present than the social equality frame in 2001-2010, thus, should not be overemphasised. Nonetheless, one of the reasons behind this increase in economic framing in Sweden might be the 1990s economic crisis catching up in childcare framing, or the 2008 great recession that caused states to turn to the welfare state to decrease expenditure (Hemerijck, 2017b). Thus, the economic framing in Sweden might have appeared from the economic crisis, meanwhile, in Ireland, the economic framing comes from an economic boom.

A result that was not expected is the marketisation of childcare in Sweden. The motivation for the marketisation was to increase the availability of childcare. According to Esping-Andersen (1990, p. 27) allowing market efficiency within welfare policies is a liberal regime characteristic, thus, should have rather been found in Ireland. However, according to Brennan, Cass, Himmelwit and Szebehely (2012), marketisation has been a trend for a while within the Nordic welfare model. Thus, Sweden deviates slightly from its expectation, and rather, is similar to liberal-conservative Ireland, instead of the other way around.

6.1.3 Feminist frame

The theoretical expectation was that the feminist frame is prevalent in Sweden and not in Ireland. Sweden framed childcare through the feminist frame 14.9% overall, while Ireland framed childcare as feminist 15.3%, and, therefore, more than Sweden. Thus, the theoretical expectation, that a social-democratic welfare regime frame childcare within the feminist frame more than a liberal-conservative regime, were not supported. Due to the expectation not being supported, Duncan's (1995) assumptions that social-democratic regimes are the best for female labour participation were not met to a significant extent in the rationales. Nevertheless, the feminist frame is increasing throughout 1990-2020 in Sweden, which might mean it is making a comeback, or that the fourth wave of feminism is arriving in Sweden. In comparison, in Ireland female labour participation was encouraged throughout the analysis. The feminist frame peaked in 2010 in Ireland (32%), however, this seems to rather be an asymmetrical data issue than a change in cultural values. As a conservative welfare regime, Ireland should focus on the preservation of status and traditional values (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 27). However, this is not found in the analysis. Overall, neither nation motivated childcare to a large extent through a feminist frame or fitted in with the Esping-Andersen description of the welfare regimes. This result implies that feminism has decreased in its importance in the field of childcare policies in both countries, or even Europe in general.

6.1.4 Demographic frame

The demographic frame was not expected to be found in either case, due to Esping-Andersen's description of each regime excluding possible demographic worries, and furthermore, as it is recently increasingly getting awareness (Hoorens, et al., 2011a). The expectation was supported in the case of Sweden, as there were no demographic rationales found. However, the demographic rationales were present in Ireland (7.2%), but due to the low percentage, it is not significant enough to argue that it is an important frame for Irish childcare.

Neither regime framed childcare as a way to increase childbirths, which was a main rationale in the conceptualisation. In contrast, Ireland discussed their high level of fertility compared to the rest of Europe. Therefore, the demographic frame rather involved the level of discussion and awareness towards changes in the population in each nation. The difference in this can be

explained by looking at recent demographic changes in each nation. Sweden has had a steady birth rate throughout the last decades together with the increased immigration. Thus, it has not been a societal issue for policy-makers to counter, rather, the issue of integration has appeared. In comparison, Ireland might be explained by the rapid decline in fertility rates. Ireland has dropped from a bit over 4 births per woman to 1.7 births per woman in the last 60 years. Thus, in Ireland, the issue of population growth might have been on the agenda to a larger extent due to these drastic changes, even if it still is high compared to the average European nation (Worldbank, 2021a).

6.2 Discovered themes

Throughout the analysis, this thesis discovered themes and patterns in framing childcare policies. There are two themes; firstly, the dominance of social investment rationale, and, secondly, the broad contexts of labour force rationale. These two are similar in both countries, and thus, this presents the similarities in their policy framing.

6.2.1 The dominance of the social investment

In the theoretical framework the argument that social investment is taking over as the main economic rationale in social policy was mentioned (e.g. Jenson, 2010; Nygård, et al., 2019; White, 2011). On the contrary, Hemerijck argued that the 2008 economic crisis decreased the interest in social investment (2017b, p. 380). However, the findings of this analysis show that social investment is the overall dominant rationale. Both Sweden and Ireland extensively framed childcare as an investment for future economic gains or framed children as human capital. Ireland framed childcare in 2014 as “Investment in children and young people is akin to a capital investment from which significant returns flow“ (Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, 2019, p. 3). Furthermore, Sweden framed childcare in 2020 as; “Investment for the reason of increasing the usage and quality in preschool should give high returns. The worth for both the individual and the nation is meaningful and shall be able to motivate large investments” (Swedish Government Official Reports, 2020b, p. 265). Both nations viewed and framed childcare within the social investment rationale extensively, and explicitly. Thus, this thesis has underpinned the idea of the increasing dominance of social investment in childcare policies.

6.2.2 The prevalence of labour participation

The second theme is the substantial presence of the labour force rationale. The labour force rationale is not the most common rationale, however, it was found in multiple contexts and frames. For example, in Sweden, there was a focus on increasing the labour force participation and compatibility for parents; “Not being able to get childcare that corresponds to one’s working hours must not be an obstacle for parents, nor single parents, to take a job.” (Swedish Parliament, 2012, p. 21). Meanwhile, for example, in Ireland they stated that “Employment is recognised as the best way out of poverty for families and considerable effort has been invested to facilitate the move for parents back into employment.” (Government of Ireland, 1999c, p. 36), where a clear connection to social equality is found, rather than compatibility between work and childcare. The connection between childcare and the labour force was used in an economic profit context too, for example, “To create sustainable well-paying jobs and strong economic growth” (Department of Education and Skills, 2016, p. 1). Lastly, in Sweden, the rationale of labour force participation was also connected to integration, for example: “The establishment on the labour market is also an important condition for integration and gender equality” (Swedish Government Official Reports, 2020b, p. 265). Thus, the association between childcare and the labour force has a wide reach and connects to at least three out of four frames. Therefore, even if social investment is the dominant rationale, the rationale of increasing the labour force is the one found in most contexts.

7. Conclusion

7.1 Main findings

This thesis has compared different contexts and welfare systems and complemented the knowledge in the field. The aim of this thesis was to compare and analyse the framing of childcare in different welfare regimes. The main finding in liberal-conservative regime (Ireland) is that their childcare policies are motivated within the economic frame, meanwhile, the main finding in social-democratic regime (Sweden) is that their childcare policies are framed within social equality. Furthermore, FI has attempted to address the gap in the field when it comes to the debate on social investment dominance (e.g. Hemerijck, 2018), the convergence of European

welfare systems by (White, 2011), or the lack of analysing demographic rationales (e.g. d’Addio & d’Ercole, 2005).

The two cases support the characteristics of the welfare regime they represent. The theoretical expectation for the liberal-conservative regime was that it would mainly frame childcare policies within the economic frame, and secondary to that, within the social equality frame. This expectation was supported in the analysis. The other expectation was that the social-democratic regime would frame childcare policies within the economic, feminist and social equality frames. The feminist framing was to a lesser extent supported in Sweden, however, the result of the other two frames supported the expectation. Where the two regimes differed could be answered by the different national context of policy framing.

The implication taken from this thesis is that the two regimes are rather similar in their framing, as the two most prevalent was social equality and economic in both regimes. However, this does not mean their history, present or future childcare policies are the same. Sweden still has a largely universal and social-democratic welfare system, while Irish childcare is heavily based on liberal notions. This thesis rather implies that the framing of childcare is less important or influential when it comes to childcare policy decision making and implementation than expected, or that it takes a long time before the framing is seen in the implementation.

7.2 Future research and limitations

One limitation of this thesis is the exclusion of parental leave and child benefits as part of the childcare sphere. Including parental leave and child benefits would have complemented this research with a larger part of childcare policies to analyse, however, due to the word and time limits of this thesis, this had to be excluded. The sources used have an asymmetrical dimension, for both Sweden and Ireland, as the governments started the digitisation of documents at the turn of the millennium, which increased the amount of available digitised sources online after that. Nonetheless, the number of sources is similar in both nations and should not in itself create a bias towards one or another case (see Appendix B). Another limitation in this thesis is that some older governmental documents, in both countries disappear from the governmental pages when updated with newer versions or generally are no longer considered needed for the public.

For future research, a replication of this analysis could include three nations to compare each of Esping-Anderson's classifications. This research could also be replicated based on other welfare regime classifications to find possible associations between other characteristics of welfare systems. Lastly, the societal implications of this study are the realisation of how childcare policies are viewed and framed by the state. For example, the view of children as stocks to invest in, or that childcare can be used to create a more equal society in the future. To conclude, this thesis has demonstrated how childcare framing can help create a better and more equal world, and that is important for our future generations to ensure this.

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9. Appendix A: Coding

To aid the analysis and identify patterns easier, this content analysis will incorporate color coding. Each frame will have a specific color. In this case, the rationales within the frame of social equality will have the color **green**, the rationales within the frame of economy will have the color **red**, the rationales within the frame of feminism will have the color **blue** and, lastly, the rationales within the frame of demographic will have the color of **yellow**. Lastly, the uncolored/black coding is elements that seem of importance but have not necessarily been accounted for in the literature, theories or methods.

9.1 Sweden

Table 5: Analysis of policy documents for Sweden 1990-2020

Year	Document (translation)	Textual evidence	Interpretation
1990	Flexibel skolstart med skolpliktsålder 6 år. Motion 1990/91:Ub275 av Barbro Sandberg (fp) [Flexible School Start with Obligatory School Age at Six Years of Age Motion 1990/91:Ub275: by Sandberg, M.]	Föräldrarnas val blir en chimär. De skall välja under förutsättning att kommunen skapar utrymme för ett antal sexåringar i skolsystemet. Föräldrarnas val står mellan en avgiftsbelagd förskoleplats och en avgiftsfri grundskoleplats. Jag vänder mig bestämt emot att det är föräldrarnas ekonomiska situation som skall avgöra om barnet får en lämplig skolgång.	Equal opportunities

<p>1991</p>	<p>Utbildningsutskottets betänkande 1990/91:UBU17: Vissa frågor avseende skolväsendet</p> <p>[Parliamentary committee of Education Report 1990/91:UBU17: Certain Questions on Education]</p>	<p>Utskottet delar regeringens principiella ståndpunkt när det gäller att betrakta förskola och skola som på varandra följande led där innehåll och metod anpassas efter barns förutsättningar. Därmed reduceras begreppet skolplikt till att vara den juridiska term som garanterar barn rättighet att gå i skolan. Utskottet anser att det inte finns skäl att ändra nuvarande skolpliktsålder.</p> <p>Därvid bör givetvis ett antal förutsättningar vara för handen. Av stor vikt är självfallet tillgången till lärare och annan personal som fått möjlighet att genomgå fortbildning samt sammansättningen av personalgrupperna. En annan faktor är tillgången till ändamålsenliga lokaler. En ytterligare faktor är förekomsten av sådana samarbetsformer mellan förskola och skola samt inom grundskolans lågstadium att en individualiserad verksamhet kan åstadkommas. Innehåll och metodik måste vidare anpassas efter barnens behov.</p> <p>Att införa en tioårig skolpliktstid skulle enligt utskottets uppfattning få stora ekonomiska konsekvenser för statsverket. Med hänvisning härtill och till det statsfinansiella läget föreslår utskottet att riksdagen avslår motionerna 1990/91:Ub186 yrkande 1 delvis och 1990/91:Ub275 delvis.</p> <p>Enligt motion 1990/91:Ub181 (mp) yrkande 5 får de ekonomiska skälen för familjerna inte bli avgörande för om ett barn skall börja i skolan eller ej. Även i motion 1990/91:Ub184 (s) delvis framhålls att frågan om neutral avgift för omsorg på daghem och fritidshem måste uppmärksammas i det fortsatta arbetet med flexibel skolstart.</p> <p>Frågan om avgifter för omsorg på daghem, fritidshem m.m. är en kommunal</p>	<p>Human rights</p> <p>National Resources</p> <p>National Economy</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>
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		<p>angelägenhet. Utskottet ser i likhet med föredragande statsrådet dock en risk i att rent ekonomiska skäl skulle vara avgörande för barns skolstart, då det på många håll är billigare att ha barnen i skola och fritidshem än i daghem. Enligt vad utskottet erfarit har dock några kommuner i landet redan fattat beslut om neutrala taxor för daghem och fritidshem. Utskottet utgår från att frågan kommer att följas av berörda myndigheter.</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p>
1991	<p>Motion 1990/91:So637: Lagstiftning om rätt till förskola för alla barn.</p> <p>[Motion 1990/91:So637: Legislation on The Right to Preschool for All Children]</p>	<p>Det finns mycket som talar för att riksdagsbeslutet skall följas upp med en lagstiftning. I propositionen 1984/85:209 läggs principen fast om alla barns rätt till barnomsorg. Rätten till en förskoleplats är principellt en så viktig rätt att den bör omfatta alla barn. Det är knappast möjligt att tala om en rätt om den inte kommer till uttryck i en lag. En icke lagfäst rätt kan knappast anses som mer än en målsättning. Utan en lagfäst rätt kan barn komma att ställas utan förskola.</p> <p>En lagstiftning gör det klart för de kommuner som av olika skäl inte anser sig kunna uppfylla målet att de måste prioritera denna verksamhet och bygga ut barnomsorgen. En lagstiftning skulle också göra tydligt vad det är för rätt som de enskilda barnen och föräldrarna har. Man kan därvid skilja på barnens rätt till förskola med ett pedagogiskt innehåll och föräldrarnas rätt till omvårdnad av barnen under den tid de arbetar eller studerar. Bland argument av mer teknisk natur kan nämnas att en lagstiftad rätt till barnomsorg för alla barn gör det möjligt att gå över från specialdestinerade statsbidrag till mer generella statliga bidrag.</p> <p>Vi står inför ett vägval i synen på barnomsorgen. Skall det vara en generell rättighet som kommer alla barn till del eller skall den bero på den enskilda kommunens politik, vilja och förmåga att</p>	<p>Children's Rights</p> <p>Children's Rights Labour force</p> <p>Children's Rights National Resources</p>

		prioritera och hushålla med befintliga resurser?	
1991	Riksdagens snabbprotokoll 1990_91_123 [Verbatim reproduction 1990_91_123]	Anf. 110 Finansminister Allan Larsson (s): [...] Låt mig ge några exempel. I valet mellan stora skattesänkningar eller en god omsorg, hemma eller på dagis, för alla småbarn, står vi på barnens sida. Vi vill engagera alla goda krafter i barnomsorgen för att vidareutveckla den, hushålla med resurserna och förbättra pedagogiken. Barnen skall ha det bra på dagis, och föräldrarna skall känna trygghet för sina barn. p. 232	Children's Rights National Resources
1994	Läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet Lpo 94 [Educational Curriculum for the Obligatory Education System, Preschool and Youth Recreation Center]	Människolivets okränkbarhet, individens frihet och integritet, alla människors lika värde, jämställdhet mellan kvinnor och män samt solidaritet med svaga och utsatta är de värden som skolan skall gestalta och förmedla. I överensstämmelse med den etik som förvaltats av kristen tradition och västerländsk humanism sker detta genom individens fostran till rättskänsla, generositet, tolerans och ansvarstagande. (p. 3) Ingen skall i skolan utsättas för diskriminering på grund av kön, etnisk tillhörighet, religion eller annan trosuppfattning, sexuell läggning eller funktionshinder eller för annan kränkande behandling. (p. 3) Det svenska samhällets internationalisering och den växande rörligheten över nationsgränserna ställer höga krav på människors förmåga att leva med och inse de värden som ligger i en kulturell mångfald. Medvetenhet om det egna och delaktighet i det gemensamma kulturarvet ger en trygg identitet som är viktig att utveckla, tillsammans med förmågan att förstå och leva sig in i andras villkor och	Human rights Human rights Globalization

		<p>värderingar. (pp. 3-4)</p> <p>Undervisningen skall anpassas till varje elevs förutsättningar och behov. (p. 4)</p> <p>Den skall med utgångspunkt i elevernas bakgrund, tidigare erfarenheter, språk och kunskaper främja elevernas fortsatta lärande och kunskapsutveckling. (p. 4)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>
2000	<p>Proposition 1999/2000:129 Maxtaxa och allmän förskola m.m.</p> <p>[Bill 1999/2000:129: Max Taxation and Public Preschool]</p>	<p>Betoningen av förskolans pedagogiska roll gör att frågan om vilka barn som inte nås av förskolan får ökad betydelse. Förutsättningarna inför skolstarten ser olika ut för de barn som har flera år av vistelse i förskola bakom sig när de kommer till förskoleklassen, jämfört med dem som inte har det. I dag är det ofta barn som mer än andra skulle ha behov av förskola, som inte får del av den - barn i socialt utsatta bostadsområden, barn med utländsk bakgrund och barn till arbetslösa föräldrar. Genom att förskolan görs tillgänglig för alla barn från fyra års ålder kommer barn i socialt utsatta stadsdelar, i landsbygdskommuner och i övriga mindre kommuner att få tillgång till den i högre grad än nu. En allmän förskola erbjuder alla barn pedagogisk stimulans och gruppgemenskap och förbättrar därmed barnens möjligheter till lärande och en positiv utveckling. (p. 18)</p> <p>En annan viktig aspekt på förskoleverksamhet och arbetslöshet är givetvis föräldrars möjlighet att söka arbete och att kunna göra det på ett effektivt sätt. Detta är särskilt angeläget under den pågående starka konjunkturutvecklingen med den ökade efterfrågan på arbetskraft. För att vara aktivt arbetssökande och snabbt kunna ta ett arbete när ett sådant erbjuds är förskoleverksamhet för barn till arbetslösa föräldrar av största betydelse.</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Labour force</p>

		<p>(p. 22)</p> <p>Sänkta margineffekter ökar det privatekonomiska utbytet av förvärvsarbete och är därför en viktig komponent för att långsiktigt värna finansieringen av den generella välfärden. När avgifterna sänks för förskoleverksamheten och skolbarnsomsorgen kommer margineffekterna vid en inkomstökning att minska för barnfamiljerna. Särskilt stor blir minskningen för dem som går från arbetslöshet till arbete, eller från kort deltid till längre deltid eller heltid. För många kvinnor, som tidigare velat gå ut på arbetsmarknaden, men avstått på grund av att det ekonomiska utfallet blivit för litet, kommer det att löna sig bättre att börja förvärvsarbete. Det kommer också att bli mer lönsamt att gå upp i arbetstid. På så vis stimuleras arbetskraftsdeltagandet och möjligheterna för personer att vara självförsörjande genom arbete. Inte minst ur jämställdhetsperspektiv är detta angeläget.</p> <p>(p. 29)</p>	<p>Gender Equality</p>
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2001	<p>Betänkande 2000/01:UbU5: Maxtaxa och allmän förskola m.m.</p> <p>[Parliament committee of Education Report 2000/01:UbU5: Max Taxation and Public Preschool]</p>	<p>Utskottet anser i likhet med regeringen att det är främst barnets eget behov av det som förskoleverksamheten kan ge som ett komplement till hemmet som motiverar en lagstadgad skyldighet för kommunerna att erbjuda barn till arbetslösa, i likhet med barn till förvärvsarbetande eller studerande föräldrar förskoleverksamhet. En sådan skyldighet är också väsentlig för föräldrarnas möjligheter att söka arbete på ett effektivt sätt. För att föräldrarna skall kunna ta ett arbete snabbt när det erbjuds är förskoleverksamhet för barnen av största vikt. Utskottet anser det angeläget att hinder för aktivt arbetssökande hos arbetslösa föräldrar kan undanröjas. (p. 9)</p> <p>Verksamheterna har också en stor social betydelse genom att de bidrar till att</p>	<p>Children's Rights</p> <p>Labour Force</p>
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		<p>utjämna skillnader i uppväxtvillkor för barn i olika befolkningsgrupper och skapar mötesplatser för barn med olika etnisk, kulturell och social tillhörighet. (p. 11)</p> <p>En låg avgift i förskoleverksamhet och skolbarnsomsorg kommer vidare att innebära en avsevärd ekonomisk standardhöjning för merparten av alla barnfamiljer. Genom den konstruktion av maxtaxan som föreslås med dels ett tak, dels en begränsning av barnomsorgsavgiften till en viss, högsta andel av inkomsten garanteras att alla, även de med de allra lägsta inkomsterna får del av avgiftssänkningarna. Förutom pedagogiska och familjeekonomiska motiv för införande av en maxtaxa anför regeringen även arbetsmarknads- och jämställdhetsskäl. Regeringen anför bl.a. att sänkta marginaleffekter ökar det privatekonomiska utbytet av förvärvsarbete. När avgifterna sänks för förskoleverksamhet och skolbarnsomsorgen kan marginaleffekterna vid en inkomstökning komma att minska för familjerna. Det medger ökad flexibilitet för familjerna att själva ta ställning till hur man vill använda det ökade utrymmet. (p.12)</p> <p>Det är nämligen viktigt att familjepolitiken, samtidigt som den möjliggör för båda föräldrarna att kombinera förvärvsarbete och föräldraskap, även stimulerar förvärvsarbete så att Sverige fortsatt har råd med en god välfärd. (p. 13)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Gender Equality</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Labour Force, Gender Equality, National economy</p>
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<p>2003</p>	<p>Utbildningsutskottets betänkande 2002/03:UBU9: Förskolan</p> <p>[Parliamentary committee of Education Report 2002/03:UbU19: Preschool (renewed statement of opinion)]</p>	<p>Därför föreslås att det under en femårig övergångsperiod skall vara möjligt för en kommun att erbjuda plats i familjedaghem om det skulle medföra betydande organisatoriska eller ekonomiska svårigheter för kommunen att erbjuda plats i förskola. Om vårdnadshavarna hellre önskar familjedaghem för sitt barn skall detta tillgodoses om det inte finns praktiska hinder för det. Kommittén har också övervägt förslag om att införa en generell skyldighet för kommunen att erbjuda alla barn från ett års ålder förskola. En kostnadsberäkning för detta redovisas men något sådant förslag lämnas inte. (p. 18)</p> <p>Att föreslå en skyldighet för kommunerna att ordna sådan omsorg skulle medföra ökade kostnader, och var inte möjligt inom kommitténs uppdrag. (p. 19)</p> <p>Regeringen har uttalat sig i frågan och menat att det i ett modernt samhälle skall gå att kombinera föräldraskap och förvärvsarbete. Av detta skäl är det viktigt att kommunerna ger möjlighet för föräldrar att få trygg omsorg för sina barn, även om föräldrarnas arbetstider är förlagda till sena kvällar, helger eller nattetid. (p. 19)</p>	<p>National Economy</p> <p>National Economy</p> <p>Compatibility of work and childbearing</p>
<p>2004</p>	<p>Betänkande 2004/05:UBU3: Utbildningsutskottets betänkande: Kvalitet i förskolan, m.m.</p> <p>[Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2004/05:UBU3: Quality in Preschool]</p>	<p>Regeringen har givit Myndigheten för skolutveckling i uppdrag att genom åtgärder som myndigheten bedömer lämpliga främja utvecklingen i förskolor och skolor i områden präglade av social och etnisk segregation med syfte att en större andel av eleverna i dessa områden skall nå målen för utbildningen. Förskolans, förskoleklassens samt fritidshemmens roll i detta sammanhang skall särskilt beaktas. Myndighetens utvecklingsinsatser skall ske i nära samarbete och dialog med kommuner och övriga skolhuvudmän. (p. 21)</p> <p>Om kommunernas skyldighet att erbjuda</p>	<p>Integration Equal opportunities</p>

		<p>allmän förskola utvidgas till att även omfatta treåringar medför detta enligt finansieringsprincipen att staten måste tillskjuta ytterligare medel. (p. 29)</p> <p>Rätt till förskoleverksamhet för arbetslösa barn infördes den 1 juli 2001 och för föräldraledigas barn den 1 januari 2002. Den 1 januari 2003 infördes allmän avgiftsfri förskola för alla barn fr.o.m. höstterminen det år barnet fyller fyra år med 525 timmar om året. Förskolan har därmed närmat sig den princip som gäller i skolan, dvs. att verksamheten skall vara avgiftsfri, tillgänglig och likvärdig för alla. (p. 29)</p>	<p>National resources</p> <p>Children's Right Equal opportunities</p>
2005	<p>Uppföljning av reformen maxtaxa, allmän förskola m.m.</p> <p>[Audit on the Reform: Max Taxation, Public Preschool]</p>	<p>Ett huvudsyfte med reformen har varit att öka tillgängligheten till förskoleverksamhet och skolbarnsomsorg. En strävan är att förskoleverksamheten och skolbarnsomsorgen i likhet med skolan, föräldraförsäkringen, barnbidraget och hälso- och sjukvården skall bli en del av den generella välfärden och erbjudas alla barn och barnfamiljer. Maxtaxan syftar även till ekonomiska förbättringar för barnfamiljerna. Ett ytterligare syfte har varit att minska marginaleffekterna och därigenom underlätta för föräldrar att gå upp i arbetstid. Ett avgiftssystem utan många tidsintervaller gör dessutom att barnens närvaro blir mindre splittrad och det blir lättare att bedriva en väl fungerande pedagogisk verksamhet. (pp. 14-15)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Labour force</p>
2006	<p>Betänkande 2005/06:UbU12: Utbildningsutskottets betänkande: Förskolan.</p> <p>[Parliamentary committee of Department of</p>	<p>I 1994 års läroplan för det obligatoriska skolväsendet, förskoleklassen och fritidshemmet (Lpo 94) anges inledningsvis skolans värdegrund och uppdrag. I det första avsnittet Grundläggande värden anges bl.a. följande: ‘Människolivets okränkbarhet, individens frihet och integritet, alla människors lika värde, jämställdhet mellan kvinnor och män samt solidaritet med svaga och utsatta är de värden som skolan</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p>

<p>Education Report: 2005/06:UbU12: Preschool]</p>	<p>skall gestalta och förmedla. I överensstämmelse med den etik som förvaltats av kristen tradition och västerländsk humanism sker detta genom individens fostran till rättskänsla, generositet, tolerans och ansvarstagande. (p. 12)</p> <p>Regeringen har givit Myndigheten för skolutveckling i uppdrag att genom åtgärder som myndigheten bedömer lämpliga främja utvecklingen i förskolor och skolor i områden präglade av social och etnisk segregation med syfte att en större andel av eleverna i dessa områden skall nå målen för utbildningen. Förskolans, förskoleklassens samt fritidshemmens roll i detta sammanhang skall särskilt beaktas. (p. 16)</p> <p>I rapporten Tänk långsiktigt! (2004), som tagits fram av Folkhälsoinstitutet, Skolverket och Socialstyrelsen i samarbete, lyfts öppen förskola fram som ett exempel på en förebyggande generell insats som vänder sig till alla barnfamiljer. I rapporten presenteras en samhällsekonomisk modell där kostnaderna för generella insatser ställs mot insatsernas effekter på barns och ungdomars psykiska hälsa och de samhällsekonomiska vinster som dessa i sin tur kan ge upphov till. (p. 23)</p> <p>Maxtaxan i förskoleverksamhet och skolbarnsomsorg har som främsta syfte att öka tillgängligheten för flera grupper, förbättra barnfamiljernas ekonomi, minska marginaleffekterna för barnfamiljerna samt underlätta arbetskraftsdeltagandet. Ett viktigt syfte har också varit att begränsa avgifternas koppling till barnens närvarotid samt att minska avgiftsskillnaderna mellan kommunerna. (p. 29)</p> <p>Samtliga kommuner är anslutna till systemet</p>	<p>Gender equality</p> <p>Equal opportunities Integration</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>National economy</p> <p>Equal opportunities, Labour force</p>
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		<p>med maxtaxa i förskoleverksamhet och skolbarnsomsorg. Skillnaderna mellan kommunernas avgifter har utjämnats och barnfamiljer har fått lägre avgifter, vilket bidragit till ett ökat konsumtionsutrymme för denna grupp. Ett flertal kommuner har ingen koppling mellan avgift och barnets närvarotid. Reformens genomslag har således varit stort. (p. 29)</p>	<p>National Economy (Increased consumption)</p>
2006	<p>Jämställdhet i förskolan</p> <p>[Equality in the Preschool]</p>	<p>I detta betänkande finns det flera förslag och åtgärder som skulle kunna vara ganska enkla och inte alls speciellt kostsamma att genomföra inom en snar framtid, om regering, riksdag, lärosäten och framförallt kommuner finner dessa lämpliga. Det är dock svårt att överblicka de totala kostnaderna detta skulle kunna innebära, då det ser olika ut i kommuner och på olika lärosäten. Något som också försvårar denna kostnadsberäkning är att det i dag är svårt att veta hur många förskoleenheter som finns i landet. För att ändå kunna beräkna någon form av ekonomiska kostnader av våra förslag har vi därför utgått från antal anställda inom förskolan och antal önskade utbildningsförstärkningar. (p. 277)</p> <p>Detta skulle förstås innebära förändringar för de enskilt drivna förskolorna, men vi bedömer inte att detta i sig medför ökade kostnader för dessa förskolor eller för det allmänna. (p. 278)</p> <p>Dessa förslag och rekommendationer handlar i första hand om att öka kompetensen om genusfrågor hos personal som beslutar om och arbetar inom förskolan samt undervisande personal på lärarutbildningar. Delegationen menar att många av dessa kostnader ryms inom den ordinarie ekonomin. (p. 278)</p> <p>Trots det vi skriver ovan är vi naturligtvis medvetna om kostnadskonsekvenser för de förslag vi har i övrigt. (p. 278)</p>	<p>National economy</p> <p>National economy</p> <p>National economy</p> <p>National economy</p>

		<p>Vi lämnar inga förslag som rubbar balansen mellan statens och kommunernas roller. Vi menar att de förslag vi lämnar snarare stärker den kommunala självbestämmelsen genom att klargöra vad som är statens respektive kommunernas ansvar. (p. 284)</p> <p>Enligt olika statistik vet vi i dag att 95–98 procent av allt våld i världen utförs av män. Att arbeta med att ändra på traditionella könsmaktsmönster innebär också att arbeta för att motverka våldet i samhället och därmed också brottsligheten. (p. 285)</p>	<p>Balance between state power and municipality power</p> <p>Gender equality</p>
2009	<p>Betänkande 2008/09:UbU11: Barnomsorgspeng och allmän förskola även för treåringar</p> <p>[Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2008/09:UbU11: Childcare grant and Public Preschool also for Three Year Olds]</p>	<p>Utskottet ser mycket positivt på förslaget syfte att skapa mångfald och ökade valmöjligheter för barn och föräldrar. Utskottet konstaterar att ambitionen att förstärka förskolans pedagogiska uppdrag är oförändrad. Det kan också konstateras att förslaget ses som en stimulans för ökat företagande. Utskottet delar regeringens uppfattning att det inte finns någon motsättning mellan införandet av en barnomsorgspeng och regeringens andra initiativ på förskoleområdet. (p. 14)</p> <p>Allmän förskola ska vara tillgänglig och likvärdig. Det innebär att alla barn, oavsett vilken förskola föräldrarna väljer åt sina barn, ska möta en trygg förskola med hög pedagogisk kvalitet som utgår från barnets individuella förutsättningar. Allmän förskola ska erbjuda alla barn en pedagogiskt planerad verksamhet och därmed förbättra deras möjligheter till lärande. (p. 20)</p>	<p>National economy (Increased consumption)</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Socio-emotional and intellectual development</p>
2012	<p>Utbildningsutskottets betänkande: Förskolan 2011/12:UbU13</p>	<p>Det ställer självklart till problem för de föräldrar som arbetar på dessa tider, vilket är vanligt bl.a. inom vården, industrin, servicesektorn och kulturvärlden. Ett extra stort problem blir det för ensamstående föräldrar, och arbetslösheten är också högre</p>	

	<p>[Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2011/12:UbU13: Preschool]</p>	<p>bland ensamstående föräldrar än bland andra föräldrar. Att inte kunna få barnomsorg som motsvarar ens möjliga arbetstider får inte vara ett hinder för föräldrar, och inte heller ensamstående föräldrar, att ta ett jobb. Föräldrar som arbetar, eller skulle kunna arbeta, på kvällar, nätter och helger ska under trygga former få sitt behov av barnomsorg tillgodosett. Utskottet vill därför att regeringen inom ramen för budgetprocessen återkommer till riksdagen med förslag till ett stimulansbidrag så att kommunerna i ökad utsträckning erbjuder barnomsorg på kvällar, nätter och helger. Vad utskottet anfört bör riksdagen som sin mening ge regeringen till känna. (p. 21)</p>	<p>Labour force</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>
<p>2013</p>	<p>Utbildningsutskottets betänkande 2012/13:UbU4: Förskolan</p> <p>[Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2012/13:UbU4: Preschool]</p>	<p>Socialdemokraterna betonar i kommittémotion 2012/13:Ub466 av Ibrahim Baylan m.fl. yrkande 4 vikten av förskolans kompensatoriska roll. Förskolan kan bidra till att minska framtida klyftor i samhället. Förskolans roll måste stärkas så att alla barn får en mer likvärdig skolstart. (p. 6)</p> <p>Utskottet vill inledningsvis understryka, i likhet med finansutskottet, vikten av regeringens arbete med att öppna upp för en ökad konkurrens och därmed förbättra valfriheten inom den offentliga sektorn. En ökad mångfald av utförare leder till en ökad konkurrens och därmed till bättre tillgänglighet och service för konsumenterna (bet. 2010/11:FiU30 s. 23). (p.10)</p> <p>Befolkningen ska erbjudas en behovsanpassad, tillgänglig och effektiv offentlig service av god kvalitet. Strävan ska vara att flytta makten till medborgarna, höja kvaliteten och öka mångfalden inom den solidariskt finansierade vården och omsorgen. Politiken kan bidra till ett effektivare resursutnyttjande. Finansutskottet har vidare framhållit att det är missledande att ställa privata intressen och</p>	<p>Social equality and integration</p> <p>National economy (market competition)</p> <p>National resources</p>

		<p>välfärd mot varandra och att det leder till en politik som skulle försämra för medborgarna. (p.10)</p> <p>Reformerna har syftat till att stärka mångfalden och utveckla valfriheten, så att föräldrar ges ökade möjligheter att välja den typ av verksamhet som är lämplig just för deras barn och situation. (p. 13)</p> <p>Familjepolitiken bör enligt utskottet underlätta för föräldrar att kombinera yrkesliv med familjeliv genom att förbättra möjligheterna för båda föräldrarna att delta i arbetslivet och ta hand om barnen när de är små. Familjer är olika och har olika önskemål och behov, och det är därför viktigt med valfrihet och flexibilitet. (pp. 13-14)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Compatibility of work and childbearing</p>
2015	<p>Utbildningsutskottets Betänkande 2014/15:UbU8: Förskolan</p> <p>[Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2014/15:UbU8: Preschool]</p>	<p>Enligt läroplanen ska förskolan motverka traditionella könsmonster och könsroller. Flickor och pojkar ska i förskolan ha samma möjligheter att pröva och utveckla förmågor och intressen utan begränsningar utifrån stereotypa könsroller. (p. 9)</p> <p>Utbildningsutskottet föreslog i betänkande 2011/12:UbU13 (rskr. 2011/12:215) ett tillkännagivande till regeringen om att regeringen inom ramen för budgetprocessen skulle återkomma till riksdagen med förslag till ett stimulansbidrag så att kommunerna i ökad utsträckning erbjuder barnomsorg på kvällar, nätter och helger. Utskottet uttalade då bl.a. att det faktum att man inte kan få barnomsorg som motsvarar ens möjliga arbetstider inte får vara ett hinder för föräldrar, och inte heller för ensamstående föräldrar, att ta ett jobb. Föräldrar som arbetar, eller skulle kunna arbeta, på kvällar, nätter och helger ska under trygga former få sitt behov av barnomsorg tillgodosett (bet. 2011/12:UbU13 s. 21). (p. 17)</p>	<p>Gender equality</p> <p>Labour force</p>

		<p>Taket i maxtaxan bör också indexeras så att förskolan inte urholkas på resurser över tid. För fritidshem vill motionärerna tillämpa samma modell som för förskolan och låta kommuner som har en konkret plan att minska barngrupperna höja maxtaxan för fritidshem på motsvarande sätt. (p. 18)</p> <p>Syftet med en barnomsorgspeng är att öka föräldrarnas valfrihet och möjlighet att välja olika former av pedagogiska verksamheter för sina barn. (p. 19)</p> <p>Utskottet vill understryka betydelsen av förskolans roll i att skapa likvärdiga förutsättningar för barn inför skolstarten. (p. 19)</p>	<p>National resources</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>
2018	<p>Regeringens proposition 2017/18:9: Obligatorisk förskoleklass med skolplikt för eleverna fr.o.m. hösten 2018.</p> <p>[Government bills 2017/18:9: Obligatory Preschool with Compulsory Attendance for Students from the Fall of 2018]</p>	<p>Ur ett likvärdighetsperspektiv är det emellertid viktigt att alla barn går i förskoleklassen och därmed får ta del av en utbildning som ska stimulera deras utveckling och lärande och förbereda dem för fortsatt utbildning. Med närvaroskyldighet och skolplikt markeras betydelsen av att alla barn får samma förberedelse inför årskurs 1 i grundskolan och motsvarande skolformer. (p. 64)</p> <p>Rätten till utbildning är även reglerad i FN:s konvention om ekonomiska, sociala och kulturella rättigheter och i Europakonventionen om de mänskliga rättigheterna. Syftet med förslagen i denna proposition är att skapa bättre förutsättningar för att alla barn får en likvärdig grundläggande utbildning av god kvalitet. (p. 67)</p> <p>Lärande i sig och att gå ut skolan med goda resultat leder till minskad ohälsa samt minskad risk för utanförskap. Att klara skolan är också den enskilt viktigaste faktorn för barns framtida hälsa. Åtgärder</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>International law / children's right</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>

		<p>som stärker skolan är därför angelägna. (pp. 67-68)</p> <p>Förslagen innebär därmed att förskoleklassen blir mer likvärdig, att förskoleklassens syfte kan förverkligas i större utsträckning och att alla elever kan bli bättre förberedda för den fortsatta skolgången. (p. 68)</p> <p>För de föräldrar, framför allt kvinnor, som i dag är hemma med sina sexåringar blir det en omställning, när barnen får skolplikt och måste närvara i förskoleklassen. De kan få mer utrymme till förvärvsarbete eller studier, vilket får positiva konsekvenser för jämställdheten. Den tillkommande gruppen är dock liten och effekterna på nationell nivå förväntas bli små. (p. 70)</p> <p>Nyanlända elever utgör en del av den grupp som kan beröras av obligatorisk förskoleklass. När alla sexåringar får skolplikt och måste delta i förskoleklassen får de möjlighet att använda svenska språket och att vara tillsammans med andra barn i grupper med olika bakgrund. Detta gör dem mer förberedda att börja årskurs 1 som sjuåringar. I och med att förslagen, på lång sikt, syftar till att andelen elever som uppnår behörighet till gymnasieskolans nationella program ska öka, påverkas de integrationspolitiska målen i positiv riktning. Även föräldrar kan få utökade kontakter med svenskspråkiga miljöer och fördjupad inblick i det svenska samhället genom att deras barn går i förskoleklassen. (p. 70)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Gender equality</p> <p>Compatibility of work and childbearing</p> <p>Integration</p> <p>Integration</p>
2018	Utbildningsutskottets Betänkande 2017/18:UBU13 : Förskolan	<p>Flickor och pojkar ska i förskolan ha samma möjligheter att pröva och utveckla förmågor och intressen utan begränsningar utifrån stereotypa könsroller. (p. 10)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p>

	<p>[Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2017/18:UbU13: Preschool]</p>	<p>Syftet är att ge en introduktion till förskolan samtidigt som föräldrar får stöd i språkinläring och etablering i samhället. Ambitionen är också att öka nyanlända barns deltagande i förskolan för att skapa likvärdiga förutsättningar inför skolstarten och påskynda etableringen för utrikes födda kvinnor. (p. 21)</p> <p>I ett modernt samhälle bör det finnas tillgänglig barnomsorg av god kvalitet på de tider när föräldrarna faktiskt arbetar. Antalet kommuner som erbjuder omsorg under kvällar, nätter och helger fortsätter att öka. Utskottet finner denna utveckling positiv, inte minst ur jämställdhetssynpunkt i och med att denna omsorg förbättrar i synnerhet kvinnors möjlighet till förvärvsarbete. (p. 29)</p>	<p>Integration Gender equality</p> <p>Gender equality</p>
2020	<p>Förskola för alla barn - för bättre språkutveckling i svenska SOU 2020:67</p> <p>[Report on more Children in Preschool for Better Language Development in Swedish].</p>	<p>Barn som har gått i förskola har bättre psykisk hälsa och lägre risk för kriminalitet och drogproblem under ungdomsåren. I vuxen ålder har de som gått i förskola högre utbildningsnivå, sysselsättningsgrad och inkomst än de som inte har deltagit i förskolans verksamhet. Eftersom effekterna av att delta i förskolan är störst för barn med svag socioekonomisk bakgrund har förskolan stor potential att bidra till mer likvärdiga förutsättningar för barn med olika uppväxtvillkor. (p. 265)</p> <p>Ett ökat deltagande i förskolan kan även leda till en ökad delaktighet på arbetsmarknaden, framför allt bland kvinnor. När barnen är i förskolan frigörs tid för vårdnadshavarna att arbeta, studera, söka jobb eller delta i etableringsinsatser. En hög sysselsättning genererar högre skatteintäkter och minskar samhällets kostnader för transfereringar såsom försörjningsstöd och bostadsbidrag. (p. 265)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Labour force Gender equality</p> <p>National economy</p>

		<p>Etablering på arbetsmarknaden är även en viktig förutsättning för integration och jämställdhet mellan kvinnor och män. När kvinnor och män är delaktiga på arbetsmarknaden och i samhället minskar risken för ekonomisk utsatthet och segregation.(p. 265)</p> <p>Investeringar i syfte att öka deltagandet och höja kvaliteten i förskolan bör således ge hög avkastning. Värde för såväl den enskilda som för samhället är betydande och skulle kunna motivera stora insatser. Det är dock svårt att mäta vinsterna samt att beräkna kostnaden för uteblivna investeringar, t.ex. i form av fler skolmisslyckanden eller försämrad psykisk hälsa. (p. 265)</p>	<p>Labour force Gender equality Integration</p> <p>Social Investment</p>
2020	<p>En Mer likvärdig Skola - minskad skolegregation och förbättrad resurstilldelning</p> <p>[Report A more Equal School: Decreased School Segregation and Better Resource Distribution].</p>	<p>Stora samhällsekonomiska vinster kan nås med ett skolväsende i vilket alla elever ges goda möjligheter att utvecklas utifrån sina egna förutsättningar och där alla ges tillgång till bildning, personlig utveckling och förutsättningar till ett aktivt deltagande på arbetsmarknaden och i ett demokratiskt samhälle. (p. 636)</p> <p>Att faktiskt beräkna de samhällsekonomiska kostnaderna av skolmisslyckanden eller försenat inträde på arbetsmarknaden är däremot svårare. Ett beräkningsexempel finns i rapporten Unga, misslyckande och arbetsmarknad där de tänkbara och möjliga samhällsekonomiska effekterna av ett fungerande stöd för elever med funktionsnedsättning analyseras. Rapporten visar att de samhällsekonomiska kostnaderna vid ett uppskjutet arbetsmarknadsinträde på tio år för en enskild individ utan några psykosociala problem uppgår till 4 miljoner kronor i form av produktionsbortfall och försörjningsstöd. Om psykosociala problem tillkommer uppgår kostnaden för samhället till 6 miljoner kronor och vid missbruksproblem uppgår kostnaderna till 10 miljoner kronor.</p>	<p>Social investment</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Social investment</p>

		<p>Rapportförfattarna förklarar det faktum att så pass många elever tillåts misslyckas i skolan med att kostnaderna för utanförskap i regel drabbar någon annan aktör och sker betydligt längre fram i livet. Stuprörstänk och kortsiktighet sätter därmed käppar i hjulet för en god ekonomisk resurshushållning. (p. 638)</p> <p>Utredningens förslag om förändrade förutsättningar för skolval förväntas leda till en minskad segregation mellan skolor och att fler elevgrupper får möjlighet att gå på skolor med högt mervärde. Talar man i termer av sociala investeringar, dvs. att kostnaden för en åtgärd i skolan i dag ställs mot förväntade vinster i framtiden, bedöms förslagen ha förutsättningar att bli framgångsrika. Detta kräver dock att beräkningen kan ställa den nutida säkra kostnaden i skolan mot en framtida osäker intäkt t.ex. för kommunens socialförvaltning eller i minskade kostnader i socialförsäkringssystemet. (p. 639).</p>	<p>Social investment National resources</p> <p>Integration</p> <p>Social Investment</p>
2020	<p>Kommittédirektiv: 10 årig skolgång</p> <p>[Committee terms of reference: A Ten Year Public School]</p>	<p>Utbildning är en av de viktigaste faktorerna för barn och ungdomars framtida möjligheter till fortsatta studier och etablering i arbets- och samhällslivet. Lärande i sig och att slutföra skolan med goda resultat leder bl.a. till minskad risk för kriminalitet och utanförskap. Att klara skolan är därtill den enskilt viktigaste faktorn för barns framtida hälsa (se t.ex. prop. 2017/18:182 s. 49). (p.2)</p> <p>Svenska elever är inom viktiga områden långt ifrån den framstående position som är regeringens mål. Skillnaden mellan olika elevgrupper är också stora, bl.a. utifrån socioekonomisk bakgrund och kön (se t.ex. Skolverkets statistik om betyg i årskurs 9). Bilden förstärks ytterligare av att alltför många elever inte når godkänt resultat på de nationella proven och att mer än 15 procent av eleverna som avslutar årskurs 9 saknar behörighet till gymnasieskolans nationella</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Equal opportunities Gender equality</p>

		<p>program. (p. 3)</p> <p>Eleverna ges då även mer tid inom den regel- och kompetensmässiga struktur som grundskolan har, exempelvis när det gäller särskilt stöd och bedömning av nyanlända elevers kunskaper. Något som inte minst kan vara viktigt för de elever som riskerar att inte nå upp till de kunskapskrav som minst ska uppnås, där pojkar som grupp är överrepresenterad liksom elever med svag socioekonomisk bakgrund. Detta ger personalen inom grundskolan ytterligare ett år att utveckla eleverna mot utbildningens mål och möjliggör en större kontinuitet i elevernas lärande när de ges utbildning inom samma skolform under en längre tid. (p. 6)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p>
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9.2 Ireland

Table 6: Analysis of policy documents for Ireland 1990-2020

Year	Document	Textual evidence	Interpretation
1999	White Paper on Early Childhood Education, Ready to Learn	<p>This intervention is considerably less cost-effective than preventive action prior to entry to the education system: “Prevention of educational failure and social exclusion beginning at the pre-primary level is less expensive and more effective in solving a wide range of social problems than treatment after problems have emerged.” (p. 13)</p> <p>Limited long-term follow-up of pre-school participants means that findings are less extensive concerning the impact of early childhood education on employment patterns and earning power. (p. 14)</p> <p>Parents may benefit from involvement in early childhood education through improved self-confidence and better relationships with</p>	<p>National economy Social investment</p> <p>National economy Labour force</p>

		<p>their children. Opportunities for further education and career development will also arise. (p. 14)</p> <p>Significant benefits to society as a whole accrue to investment in education. Research has shown that the rate of return is greatest at lower levels of education. Returns may be in the form of increased economic growth: better educated workers yield higher productivity. (p. 14)</p> <p>Social returns may also accrue in the form of measurable savings on Government expenditure. In particular, improved levels of education lead to reductions in costs associated with unemployment, crime and healthcare. (pp. 14-15)</p> <p>The simplest and most direct approach to enhancing parental involvement in their children’s early education is to facilitate greater provision in the home or in parent-child groups. This would involve progress on two fronts. Firstly, parents would have to be facilitated, through a combination of financial support (to cushion the impact of loss of earnings) and continuing improvements concerning access to flexible working arrangements (such as jobsharing, term-time working and career breaks) to provide some or all of their children’s care and education in the home setting. (p. 95)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Social investment</p> <p>National economy (increased productivity) Labour force</p> <p>National economy</p> <p>Compatibility of work and childbearing</p>
1999	Programme for Prosperity and Fairness	<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To meet the diverse needs of parents and children, including key target groups, by supporting the development of childcare services which are accessible and of high quality. - To enhance the opportunities and remove disincentives to participation by parents in economic and social activity 	<p>Equal opportunities</p>

		<p>through appropriate childcare.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To increase the number of childcare places available in both the private and the community sectors. - To develop an equitable framework to support financially parents in meeting their childcare needs. - To ensure that the development and well-being of children are addressed in the childcare sector, including the early educational needs of children. - To ensure the quality of childcare provision across the country, through appropriate inspection, regulation, and personnel training systems. - To support family life, to offer choices for families and to offer equal opportunities for both men and women to play an active caring role in families. - To seek to encourage the growth of family-friendly policies in employment, including parental leave, care arrangements, work sharing and more flexible working arrangements. <p>(p. 119)</p> <p>Measures to promote greater sharing by men and women of the caring responsibilities carried out within the home for children and dependent family members will be developed. (p. 120)</p>	<p>Childrens well-being</p> <p>Gender equality</p> <p>Gender equality</p>
1999	National Childcare Strategy Report of the Partnership 2000 Expert Working Group on Childcare	<p>The rights of children to equality of care and education are also part of the childcare debate and there has been strong recognition, both nationally and internationally, of the benefit of quality childcare for children, families and Communities. (p. 5)</p> <p>Studies show the social benefits of early education in children’s cognitive and social development, particularly for children from disadvantaged areas. The positive</p>	<p>Human rights</p>

		<p>impact of out of school programmes on the social and personal development of children has also been demonstrated. Quality childcare also benefits parents and the wider community and has an important role in combating family stress and social exclusion, particularly within families experiencing poverty and disadvantage. Economic benefits of investing in quality childcare are shown at a number of levels: social benefits to children leading to gains in human capital, increased employability of parents combating skill and labour shortages, improving the capacity, profitability and sustainability of childcare provision and job creation in the childcare sector. Demand for childcare is likely to increase by between 25% and 50% over the period to the year 2011. (p. 7)</p> <p>Within the National Childcare Strategy, the needs of children and families experiencing poverty, disadvantage or social exclusion should be prioritised and resources targeted accordingly. (p. 9)</p>	<p>Socio-emotional and intellectual development</p> <p>Child poverty</p> <p>Social investment</p> <p>Labour force</p> <p>Child poverty</p>
2000	The National Children's Strategy: Our Children - Their Lives.	<p>The aim of this objective is to ensure that all children have access to quality support services offering early education, developmental and socialisation opportunities. (p. 30)</p> <p>Changed demographic and socio-economic circumstances, not least of which has been the ongoing increase in labour market participation rates by married women, have brought increased pressure on an underdeveloped childcare sector and, in some circumstances, reduced the affordability of quality childcare services. In response to a tightening labour market, family-friendly employment policies are increasingly becoming a feature of the workplace as employers endeavour to attract and retain qualified staff. (p. 30)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Demographic changes</p>

		<p>Supporting parents with their child-rearing responsibilities and the provision of childcare services and facilities feature in Article 18 of the UN Convention. (p. 30)</p> <p>Play, recreation and cultural activities are essential childhood experiences which enrich the lives of children and provide them with experiences and competencies that will serve them well in later life. They support children’s development along all dimensions of the ‘whole child’ perspective and are central to their development on the social and peer relationships dimension. They have a strong effect on their future health and wellbeing, particularly those affected by disadvantage, substance abuse, crime and social exclusion. Their importance in children’s lives is reflected in Article 31 of the UN Convention. (p. 33)</p> <p>Employment is recognised as the best way out of poverty for families and considerable effort has been invested to facilitate the move for parents back into employment. A systematic approach to improving financial supports for children was adopted in the 1990s to address the anomalies creating unemployment and poverty traps for families; to reduce gradually the role of qualified child dependent increases under the social welfare payments system in favour of an enhanced role for Child Benefit; to taper the withdrawal of secondary benefits on return to employment and to ease parents’ re-entry into labour markets. (p. 36)</p> <p>In the long term, the most effective approach is to build on the prevention and early intervention mechanisms developed in the 1990s to ensure that these children [with behavioral issues] can be identified early and a range of family supports provided so that emerging problems are tackled before they escalate. The provision of appropriate</p>	<p>Legislation / rights</p> <p>Childrens well-being</p> <p>Legislation / rights</p> <p>labour force</p> <p>Social investment</p>
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		<p>facilities and services for these children to facilitate their reintegration into their communities will continue to be a priority. (p. 38)</p> <p>Instances of racial attack are becoming more common and the attitude of some communities to the provision of Traveller halting sites or accommodation for refugees and persons seeking asylum have given rise to some community tensions. Such instances reinforce the need for education so that we can develop an inclusive society, whose citizens are receptive to and value social and cultural diversity in all its forms. Tackling racism and promoting respect for socially and culturally diverse communities will therefore continue to be a key social policy issue. (p. 40)</p> <p>The changing pattern of family life, partly in response to changing economic conditions and the growing diversity of family formation, indicates the need for a flexible and varied response to ensure that children enjoy their family life. (p. 41)</p> <p>Despite the increased mobility of people, the growth of individualism and other stresses brought on by longer working hours and greater activity, the social networks between children, families and their communities remain significant and strong linkages in the everyday lives of children. These social supports range from the reciprocal material and emotional support between neighbours, to more formalised interventions and services provided by social services and supports and advocacy provided by the community for the community. (p. 43)</p>	<p>Integration</p> <p>Demographic changes</p> <p>Demography (familiarisation)</p>
2000	Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme (EOCP) 2000-2006	<p>General Aims And Objectives Proposals/projects should:</p> <p>1.1 Increase the number of childcare facilities and places.</p> <p>1.2 Enhance the quality of childcare</p>	

		<p>provision in the locality.</p> <p>1.3 Allow parents to avail of educational, training or employment opportunities.</p> <p>1.4 Ensure the developments of childcare facilities are co-ordinated at local level where appropriate.</p> <p>(p. 3)</p>	Labour force
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2006	Social Welfare Law Reform and Pensions Bill	<p>Reforms that will help to confront the unacceptable blemish of child poverty in the Ireland of the 21st century, an Ireland of exceptional wealth. Child poverty is unacceptable and we must strive to banish it for good. (p. 3)</p>	Child poverty
2006	Síolta - The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education	<p>The first of these is the recognition of the value of ECCE to all children, particularly those with special needs and those affected by disadvantage. Secondly, the growing participation of women in the workforce owing to unprecedented economic growth catalysed interest in the provision of services. (p. 8)</p> <p>Increased economic prosperity has also impacted on the percentage of women in the workforce, particularly those with children. In the last decade, the percentage of women in the workforce has increased from 41.4% in 1995 to 55.8% in 2004 (CSO, 2005a:33). More notably, 76.8% of women aged 25-34 are now in employment, an increasing number of these being the mothers of young children (CSO, 2005c:Table 9). (p. 9)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Compatibility of work and childbearing</p> <p>Compatibility of work and childbearing</p>
2007	Seanad Éireann debate: Community Child Care Subvention Scheme 2008-2010	<p>Minister of State at the Department of Health and Children (Deputy Brendan Smith): However, the fundamental principle which must guide us in meeting these needs while, at the same time, further developing child care policy is that we ensure we find a fair and equitable approach to targeting disadvantaged parents using community child care facilities which is underpinned by</p>	Equal opportunities

		<p>transparency and accountability. (p. 5)</p> <p>Minister of State at the Department of Health and Children (Deputy Brendan Smith): Generally, this relates to those participating in back to work or community employment schemes, training or education, lone parents and young mothers completing secondary education. It is crucial that parents in receipt of social welfare payments can access affordable pre-school services for their children, for which reason the subvention scheme will be necessary. (p. 8)</p> <p>Senator Frances Fitzgerald: The Minister's scheme will act as a disincentive to seek and remain in employment. Under the new scheme the prospects of parents working in the home returning to the work force or obtaining essential training and education will also be undermined. (p. 13)</p> <p>Senator Mary M. White: In my document, A New Approach to Childcare, recommendation No. 5 states that the Government should provide greater financial supports for parents to break the cycle of poverty and unemployment. (p. 16)</p> <p>Senator Mary M. White: Therefore, we cannot allow a situation develop where women will have to give up their jobs and their financial independence. The image of modern young women is that of stressed and worn out women with black rings under their eyes as a result of all their commuting and minding of children. However, the reality is that women with a job are happy, because they have a choice and their own money. (p. 18)</p> <p>Senator Mary M. White: The marriage bar is gone now and there are huge employment opportunities. Women yearn to develop their potential, receive training and have</p>	<p>Labour force (and education opportunities)</p> <p>Labour force</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Gender equality</p> <p>Compatibility between</p>
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	<p>financial independence. The people using child care are not just those who are working, but also those who are going back to college for an education so that they can get a better job. (p. 18)</p> <p>Senator Mary M. White: We would like to keep that group at work, retraining or studying so that they can develop their potential. This group would be the perfect example of a group that should be helped under the departmental brief to help disadvantaged groups in advantaged areas. (p. 19)</p> <p>Senator Joe O’Toole: That is where the problem lies. There is an economic strategy to attract people into the workplace. While I do not want to sound sexist about this, in general, this strategy currently refers to attracting women into the workplace for their economic contribution to the GDP and GNP of this State. That is what needs to happen but whether we like it or not, the issue of child care is very much a women's issue. The cost of it is shared but in the main, although not exclusively, the responsibility for it falls on women's shoulders. I want to make that point because much else flows from it. If men were more reliant on child care much more would have been done in the meantime. (p. 22)</p> <p>Senator Ivana Bacik: The change announced by the Government has caused grave concern for those just above the threshold who feel the Government has effectively introduced through the back door a one-child policy. It has removed the possibility for many parents to contemplate having a second child due to the high cost of child care. In addition, many parents and child care providers have expressed genuine concerns that the effect of this scheme will be to create a segregated or ghettoised system where children of parents on social welfare will</p>	<p>work and childbearing</p> <p>Labour force (educational opportunities)</p> <p>Labour force</p> <p>Gender equality</p> <p>Gender equality</p> <p>Compatibility of work and children</p>
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	<p>remain in community-supported, not-for-profit child care places, while everybody else will have to avail of privately provided facilities. That is simply not good enough for parents who work outside the home. We have long accepted the principle, rightly, that child benefit is a universal, non-means tested payment payable to all parents whatever their incomes. We must also accept that the needs of all children are universal; they all require high-quality child care if their parents work outside the home. Yet, in ten years there has been no attempt by the Government to develop a universal child care policy that would address the needs of all parents who work outside the home. That is the fundamental problem. (p. 25)</p> <p>Senator Rónán Mullen: This is an economically counterproductive attitude shown by many employers. As women approach their early to mid-30s, they will want to take time off work but it is a time when they will have engaged in much training and are moving into senior management positions. By not facilitating the possibility for people to take two years out for those important first years of their children's lives, employers show that there has been little change in their attitudes in this area. One would expect there to be a more generous attitude by employers. (p. 27)</p> <p>Parents should not be militated against no matter what choice they make. It is a very personal, family-centred decision about who is responsible for the children and how they are to be raised. Whereas the tax individualisation policy was introduced to address the chronic shortage of employees in the workplace, we now face a new dispensation in which we have an ageing population and we need more pro-natal and pro-family policies. As the ratio of those on pension and in the workplace</p>	<p>Universalism</p> <p>Lack of universalism</p> <p>Compatibility of work and children</p> <p>Demographic changes (pro-natalist)</p>
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		<p>becomes more problematic, we need to plan to ensure we get the balance right. We need more pro-natal policies. (p. 27)</p> <p>Senator Déirdre de Búrca: The availability of quality child care services is very important for working parents and parents who want to access education and training. It is especially important where people from disadvantaged areas are concerned because the only way we will assist people in helping to break the cycle of poverty and disadvantage is to make child care available to enable them to go back into education and training which will allow them to take up employment opportunities subsequently. (p. 29)</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Labour force</p>
2010	Statement of Strategy 2011-2014.	<p>The lives of children and young people, as well as the context in which they live, have changed significantly in recent years. Ireland’s comparatively young population combined with an increasing birth rate create an urgency around ensuring that services and supports to meet health, welfare, education and social needs are effective and efficient in supporting children’s outcomes. (p. 2)</p> <p>The DCYA must also operate in a global context and framework, provided primarily through its membership of the United Nations, the European Union and the Council of Europe. International human rights norms ratified by Ireland, in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Hague Convention on Adoption, provide a framework for domestic policy and practice relating to children’s rights. (p. 6)</p> <p>The serious economic situation facing Ireland and the Government’s Programme to underpin recovery provide a challenging backdrop to the actions to be taken by the DCYA over the period of this strategy</p>	<p>Demographic changes</p> <p>Human rights</p>

		<p>(2011-2014). It is clear that resources will be severely constrained, including financial and human resources, and that more will have to be done with less. (p. 6)</p> <p>Integrating the lessons learned from the Prevention and Early Intervention Programme combined with an area-based focus can provide a starting point for this work. The role of affordable childcare in supporting labour market activation will also provide opportunities for the DCYA to contribute to the jobs agenda. (p. 6)</p> <p>The OECD in its 2011 Economic Survey of Ireland emphasized the importance and great potential of our ‘human capital’ – in particular our young people as our future workforce, innovators and leaders. [...] The DCYA therefore has a key role to play in supporting Ireland’s economic recovery through supporting the development of Ireland’s human capital, starting with the care and education of children in early years. The free pre-school year is an investment in our human capital and in the country’s future prosperity. (p. 7)</p> <p>Strategic objective no. 5: Support children and young people so that they can fully engage in active learning, including through the provision of high-quality early childhood care and education, youth services and addressing issues of school attendance and participation. (p. 12)</p>	<p>National resources</p> <p>Labour force</p> <p>Social investment</p> <p>socio-emotional and intellectual development</p>
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2013	Right from the Start: Report of the Advisory Group on the Early Years Strategy	While it is not part of our remit to develop anti-poverty strategies for children, we were deeply conscious throughout our work that the lives of a significant number of children in Ireland are beset by poverty and disadvantage; these children and their families struggle to benefit from universal approaches alone. There are many children	Child poverty
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	<p>– children with disabilities, children at risk from abuse or neglect, children who are stigmatised or marginalised because of their ethnic origins – who need to be at the centre of public policy to a far greater extent than they are. (p. 2)</p> <p>Second, all our work has been based on the assumption that children have rights and that the rights of young children need to be a central consideration for wider society. (p. 2)</p> <p>There is a large and growing body of evidence – in Ireland and internationally – around the human, social and economic benefits of investing in children’s early years. There is also an imperative to invest in the early years because childhood is an important time of life in its own right. (p. 6)</p> <p>Many costly and damaging social problems are created because children are not given the right type of support in their earliest years, when they are achieving key milestones of social, physical and emotional development. What happens during these early years, starting from conception, is crucial to human development and has lifelong effects on many aspects of health and well-being. Focused support that encourages positive physical and mental health during pregnancy and in children’s foundation years are, by their nature, preventative and can reap dividends for society. If help is not provided early enough, then intervention can be more difficult and costly. (p. 7)</p> <p>All parents, without exception, need some support at some time in their child’s life. At present, primary health care services are not working as effectively as they might be; parents often do not have sufficient time at home in their child’s first year; they do not always have access to parenting programmes when they need them; and</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Human rights</p> <p>Social investment</p> <p>Childrens well-being</p> <p>Social investment</p> <p>Compatibility between work and childbearing</p>
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		<p>families in crisis are not always given the support they need. (p. 8)</p> <p>Some young children living in adverse environmental circumstances, such as consistent poverty, need additional supports, such as daily enhanced nutrition or extended early care and education provision. The cost of early intervention is far less than the burden the State will eventually carry as a result of not intervening. (p. 9)</p> <p>If families are supported through the crisis and its aftermath, parents and children are more likely to be resilient and overcome adversity. It is more useful for the State to anticipate that families will experience difficult situations and offer them supports at times of crisis that enable and support the development of children’s resilience rather than hope that families themselves can overcome adversity without a negative impact on the child. (p. 9)</p> <p>Quality matters for young children of all ages, equally for under-3s and for over-3s. It is essential, therefore, that quality standards apply equally to all age groups and that quality-raising supports are available equally to services working with all age groups. (p. 16)</p>	<p>Child poverty</p> <p>Social investment</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>
2014	Ministers Speech for the Launch of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures	<p>It’s the challenge of moving on from addressing the legacy of failings to promoting a culture and cross-government approach to doing better for all children; to improving outcomes for all children. (p. 2)</p> <p>It should be seen as a policy imperative, as an absolute MUST in economic terms. Our children are our present joy and future wealth. When other Western countries are experiencing reducing birth rates, Ireland’s population of children and</p>	<p>Childrens well-being</p> <p>Social investment</p> <p>Demographic change</p>

		<p>young people is growing. The total population of children and young people (aged 0-24 years) is 1.54 million. Since 2002 the 0-4 age group has grown by 32%. The Government’s Medium-Term ‘Strategy for Growth’ rightly recognises that “our increasing child and youth population is a significant resource for our country...” and that “ensuring the best possible outcomes for this group is therefore an important element in our future economic planning.”. Supporting childhood is building for Ireland’s economic future. (pp. 2-3)</p> <p>We will focus more on children’s early years – realising the potential of quality early years interventions to promoting best outcomes for children, and to generate longer-term returns to the state and society. In the coming months we’ll publish a detailed Early Years Strategy setting out the principles underpinning future investment in this important area. (p. 3)</p> <p>We will work better together to protect young people at-risk - to make sure that young people who are marginalised, at-risk or who demonstrate challenging behaviour, get the supports they need. (p. 4)</p> <p>We will tackle child poverty - setting a target of lifting 70,000 children out of poverty by 2020 through cooperation between Government departments; and increasing investment in services which can improve outcomes in relation to child poverty. (p. 4)</p>	<p>Socio-emotional and intellectual development Social investment</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Child poverty Social investment</p>
2014	Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 - 2020	<p>Our commitment to children is also in our collective economic and social interests. The estimated total population of children and young people (aged 0-24 years) in Ireland is 1.55 million, or 34% of the total population. This represents an increase of 6% since 2002, with the greatest growth in the</p>	<p>Social investment</p>

		<p>0-4 age group which saw an increase of 32% over the same period. At a time when other Western countries are experiencing reducing birth rates, Ireland’s population of children and young people is growing. (p. 8)</p> <p>The roots of many of these issues can be traced to childhood and adolescent experiences. To reverse these trends, a greater focus on investing in the early years and in earlier intervention and prevention across the life cycle is required. Research in Ireland and internationally is increasingly pointing to the returns that can accrue from investing early. (p. 3 in Executive Summary, p. 19 in Pdf)</p> <p>Investment in children and young people is a social responsibility and it makes good economic sense, but it needs to be guided by a medium to long-term perspective. Investment in children and young people is akin to a capital investment from which significant returns flow. Hence the focus in this Policy Framework on an agreed and enduring set of outcomes to guide decisions and measure progress. (p. 3 in Executive Summary; p. 19 in Pdf)</p> <p>This Policy Framework has adopted an outcomes approach, based on five national outcomes for children and young people. These outcomes are that they:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are active and healthy, with positive physical and mental wellbeing. 2. Are achieving their full potential in all areas of learning and development. 3. Are safe and protected from harm. 4. Have economic security and opportunity. 5. Are connected, respected and contributing to their world. <p>(p. 12 in Executive Summary; p. 28 in Pdf)</p> <p>Investing in children and young people to</p>	<p>Demographic changes</p> <p>Social investment</p> <p>Social investment</p> <p>Socio-economic well-being and development</p>
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		<p>reach their potential across the five national outcomes involves addressing inequalities within society, breaking cycles of intergenerational disadvantage and ensuring that supports, services and societal expectations strengthen children and help support them to achieve a full life experience. (p. 13 in Executive Summary; p. 29 in Pdf)</p>	<p>Social investment</p>
2015	Dáil Éireann debate: Children First Bill	<p>The Taoiseach: We must support families from day one if we are to give them the future and opportunity they deserve. Good and proportionate intervention is not interference, be it parenting programmes, family support services or the chance of an early education. It is how we truly support all our children and every family, in terms of health, nutrition, learning and social opportunities, now and into the future. That is good for our children, families, economy and society. We know that the rate of economic return on good early years investment is significantly higher than for any other stage in a child's life, so if not then, when? It is the way to a secure home life, access to education and later a good job and a place in society. This is our idiom of care as a government. (pp. 3-4)</p> <p>Deputy Robert Troy: I appreciate that but the kernel of the issue is that we can bring forward every piece of legislation we like but if it is not matched with the necessary resources, it will not be good enough. (p. 9)</p>	<p>Social investment</p> <p>National resources</p>
2015	Report [summary] on Open Policy Debate: Future Investment in Early Years and School Age Care and Education	<p>While home is thought to be the best early learning environment for children, it is not a feasible option, as affordability is a major issue for many families. All parents need support regardless of their background or circumstances, from family support-type services through to the provision of good quality universal care and education services. Ongoing support can ensure parental confidence and facilitate the early</p>	<p>Equal opportunities</p>

		<p>detection of childhood problems. (p. 4)</p> <p>The need to engage with parents is understood, with many parents often having to choose services based on cost rather than quality while others may not be aware what good quality looks like. Future policy development must engage with issues of flexibility, particularly for women. Likewise, a balance must be struck between the State and families over who should pay and how. (p. 5)</p> <p>Ensuring that vulnerable groups such as children with English as an additional language and minority children are included was flagged as a key element of prevention and early intervention. It was considered that disadvantaged groups should be catered for, while ensuring that the sector is not overly focused on disadvantage. (p. 6)</p> <p>Participants suggested that in reality parents did not have many childcare choices in the current economic climate. For many families there is no choice due to affordability and accessibility issues. It was further suggested that choice for some families will be reduced again when the One Parent Family Payment is cut. When affordability is the issue, then low cost childcare is often the only option for parents and low cost can sometimes mean low quality. (p. 7)</p>	<p>Compatibility between work and childbearing</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>
2016	End of Year Review: Action Plan for Education 2016-2019	<p>The quality of the service we provide through our education system will determine whether we can deliver the Programme for Government's most important goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To break cycles of disadvantage and ensure that every person has an opportunity to fulfil their potential - To create sustainable well-paying jobs and strong economic growth 	<p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Labour force National economy</p>

		<p>- To solve the great problems through research and innovation, and excel in culture, art and every other field of human endeavour (p. 1)</p> <p>The environment in which we operate is both challenging and complex. Political change both nationally and internationally including Brexit; the recovering and growing economy and the related changes in demands for skills and growing demand for upskilling and training for those in employment; the projected changes in demographics and their impact on enrolments and demands for places in Further Education and Training and in Higher Education, all present challenges and opportunities for Education and Training policy and provision. (p. 1)</p>	<p>National economy</p> <p>Labour force</p> <p>Changing demographic</p>
2017	Action Plan on School Age Childcare	<p>Research tells us that many parents have been prevented from entering the workforce, have had to give up their jobs, or have to work limited hours because of problems with the cost of childcare, concerns about the quality of childcare, or inadequate access to preferred childcare arrangements. These concerns regarding cost, quality and access are also regularly shared by those currently using school age childcare services. (p. 2)</p> <p>The Programme for a Partnership Government (2016) acknowledges that higher levels of public investment in social and economic infrastructure, skills, childcare, and community empowerment are needed for more inclusive, fairer and sustainable patterns of economic growth. While recognising the clear necessity for sustained investment in childcare, this Action Plan, initiated on foot of a number of commitments in the Programme for a Partnership Government, sets out a divers range of measures to address the many</p>	<p>Labour force</p> <p>Social investment</p>

		<p>challenges that exist. (p. 2)</p> <p>Ireland needs to continue to invest in early years and school age childcare to catch up with its OECD counterparts in terms of affordability and quality. The Programme for a Partnership Government states that higher levels of public investment in social and economic infrastructure, skills, childcare, and community empowerment are needed for more inclusive, fairer and sustainable patterns of economic growth and that the Government will seek to alleviate pressures affecting household budgets including childcare. (p. 3)</p> <p>Investment in school age childcare will help to deliver best outcomes for children and encourage parents to enter or remain in the workforce if they wish to do so, potentially benefiting all families, disadvantaged families in particular. (p. 3)</p> <p>By achieving the above aims, it is intended that the new scheme will provide a strong basis for supporting the higher-level objectives of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensuring that access to affordable childcare is not a barrier to labour market participation, including female labour market participation, - promoting positive child outcomes, - narrowing the gap in attainment between more and less advantaged children by enabling all children to access high quality, affordable childcare, - driving quality across the sector, and, crucially, - through the above objectives, contributing to poverty reduction in Ireland. (p. 25) 	<p>Social investment</p> <p>Social investment Labour force</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Labour force</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Child poverty</p>
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2019	Speech by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs at the 2019 Early Childhood Ireland Conference	They are also designed with the taxpayer in mind, ensuring that public funds are used to support the maximum number of families in need of financial support , and are managed correctly. (p. 9)	National resources
2019	Draft Childminding Action Plan	<p>Increasing the options for parents in terms of accessible, affordable and high quality early learning and care and school-age childcare can support increased labour market participation. In particular, childminders sometimes offer greater flexibility and responsiveness for parents, fitting around parents' working hours. Childminding also offers an effective solution to issues of supply and access, with little capital investment required, and economic viability even in remote rural areas. (p. 3)</p> <p>In achieving this overall objective, the Action Plan will contribute to the following aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support parental choice regarding type of provider of early learning and care and school-age childcare. 2. Increase access to affordable early learning and care and school-age childcare. 3. Increase the availability of places for early learning and care, especially for under-3s, and for school-age childcare. 4. Offer more flexibility for parents who work irregular hours. 5. Support labour market participation for all parents, including those who live in areas with low population density. 6. Improve the quality of provision of early learning and care and school-age childcare, thus supporting child development and educational outcomes. 7. Provide greater formal recognition 	<p>Labour force</p> <p>Social investment</p> <p>Labour force</p>

		for childminders and support their professional development. (p. 4)	
2019	First 5 - A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028	<p>An effective early childhood system will give parents choices about balancing working and caring. That means access to family-friendly arrangements that support work-life balance and ensuring that income from work is sufficient to support a family, supplementing it where necessary, so that all families have adequate resources and children’s material needs are met. It also means making Early Learning and Care, of different types, affordable and of high quality, so that participation in employment, whether full time or part time, is a viable option for parents in the confidence that their children are being well cared for. (p. 4)</p> <p>There are five major areas of action in which the Strategy will drive change: the First 5 Big Steps.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access to a broader range of options for parents to balance working and caring 2. [...] high-quality information and guidance will be made available for parents to promote healthy behaviours, facilitate positive play-based early learning and create the conditions to form and maintain strong parent-child relationships. A continuum of parenting services - ranging from universal to targeted - including high-quality parenting programmes, will also be made available. 3. A key action will be the development of a dedicated child health workforce, focussed initially in areas of high population density and disadvantage. [...] 4. First 5 builds on the very significant developments in Early Learning and Care (and school-age childcare) over recent years and seeks to further improve affordability, accessibility and quality. [...] 5. First 5 identifies new measures that will address poverty in early childhood. <p>(pp. 8-9)</p>	<p>Compatibility of work and childbearing</p> <p>Compatibility of work and childbearing</p> <p>Compatibility of work and childbearing</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p> <p>Child poverty</p>

10. Appendix B: Tables for rationales

There are more documents analysed in the Swedish case compared to the Irish, however, the analysis and coding of the Irish data found more rationales, and therefore, there should be no larger issue with the asymmetricality of data.

Table 7: The rationales per document in Sweden

No	Document	Year	Frame				Total
			Economic	Feminist	Social Equality	Demographic	
1	Motion 1990/91:Ub275: Flexible School Start with Obligatory School Age at Six Years of Age	1990	0	0	1	0	1
2	Parliamentary committee of Education Report 1990/91:UBU17: Certain Questions on Education	1991	2	0	3	0	5
3	Motion 1990/91:So637: Legislation on The Right to Preschool for All Children	1991	2	0	3	0	5
4	Verbatim reproduction 1990_91_123	1991	1	0	1	0	2
5	Educational Curriculum for the Obligatory Education System, Preschool and Youth Recreation Center	1994	0	0	4	0	4
6	Bill 1999/2000:129: Max Taxation and Public Preschool	2000	1	1	1	0	3
7	Parliament committee of Education Report 2000/01:UbU5: Max	2001	3	2	4	0	9

	Taxation and Public Preschool						
8	Parliamentary committee of Education Report 2002/03:UbU19: Preschool (renewed statement of opinion)	2003	2	1	0	0	3
9	Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2004/05:UBU3: Quality in Preschool	2004	1	0	4	0	5
10	Audit on the Reform: Max Taxation, Public Preschool	2005	1	0	2	0	3
11	Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report: 2005/06:UbU12: Preschool	2006	3	1	4	0	8
12	Equality in the Preschool	2006	4	1	0	0	5
13	Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2008/09:UbU11: Childcare grant and Public Preschool also for Three Year Olds	2009	1	0	2	0	3
14	Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2011/12:UbU13: Preschool	2012	1	0	1	0	2
15	Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report	2013	2	1	2	0	5

	2012/13:UbU4: Preschool						
16	Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2014/15:UbU8: Preschool	2015	2	1	2	0	5
17	Government bills 2017/18:9: Obligatory Preschool with Compulsory Attendance for Students from the Fall of 2018	2018	0	2	8	0	10
18	Parliamentary committee of Department of Education Report 2017/18:UbU13: Preschool	2018	0	2	2	0	4
19	SOU 2020:67: Report on more Children in Preschool for Better Language Development in Swedish	2020	4	2	3	0	9
20	SOU 2020:28: Report A more Equal School: Decreased School Segregation and Better Resource Distribution	2020	4	0	2	0	6
21	Committee terms of reference: A Ten Year Public School	2020	0	1	3	0	4
Total			34	15	52	0	101

Table 8: The rationales per document in Ireland

No	Document	Year	Frame				Total
			Economic	Feminist	Social Equality	Demographic	
1	White Paper on Early Childhood Education, Ready to Learn	1999	8	1	1	0	10
2	Programme for Prosperity and Fairness	1999	0	2	2	0	4
3	National Childcare Strategy Report of the Partnership 2000 Expert Working Group on Childcare	1999	2	0	4	0	6
4	The National Children's Strategy: Our Children - Their Lives	2000	2	0	5	3	10
5	Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme	2000	1	0	0	0	1
6	Social Welfare Law Reform and Pensions Bill	2006	0	0	1	0	1
7	Síolta - The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education	2006	0	2	1	0	3
8	Seanad Éireann debate: Community Child Care Subvention Scheme	2007	5	6	3	1	17
9	Mission Statement of Department of Children and Youth Affairs	2010	3	0	2	1	7

10	Right from the Start: Report of the Advisory Group on the Early Years Strategy	2013	3	1	7	0	11
11	Ministers Speech for the Launch of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures	2014	3	0	4	1	8
12	Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People	2014	4	1	0	1	6
13	Dáil Éireann debate: Children First Bill 896(1)	2015	2	0	0	0	2
14	Report [summary] on Open Policy Debate: Future Investment in Early Years and School Age Care and Education	2015	0	1	3	0	6
15	End of Year Review: Action Plan for Education 2016-2019	2016	4	0	1	1	5
16	Action Plan on School Age Childcare	2017	6	0	3	0	9
17	Speech by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs at the 2019 Early Childhood Ireland Conference	2019	1	0	0	0	1
18	Draft Childminding Action Plan	2019	3	0	0	0	3

19	First 5 - A Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028	2019	0	3	2	0	5
Total			47	17	39	8	118