## Data quality information — Early childhood education and care, chapter 3

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| Data quality information |
| Data quality information (DQI) provides information against the seven Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data quality framework dimensions, for a selection of performance indicators and/or measures in the Early childhood education and care (ECEC) chapter.  Technical DQI has been supplied or agreed by relevant data providers. Additional Steering Committee commentary does not necessarily reflect the views of data providers. |
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### Participation rates for special needs groups in child care

#### The proportion of children aged 0–5, 6–12 and 0–12 years attending Australian Government Child Care Benefit (CCB) approved child care services who are from targeted special needs groups, compared with the representation of these groups in the community

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |  |
| **Element** | Equity — Access | |
| **Indicator** | Participation rates for special needs groups in child care | |
| **Measure/s (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of children aged 0–5, 6–12 and 0–12 years attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services who are from targeted special needs groups, compared with the representation of these groups in the community.  Numerator:  Total children aged 0‑5, 6‑12 and 0‑12 attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services for:   * Children from non‑English speaking backgrounds (NESB) * Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children * Children from low‑income families * Children with disability * Children from regional areas * Children from remote areas   Denominator:  Number of children aged 0–5, 6–12 and 0–12 years attending a CCB approved child care service.  Computation:  The number of children (by special need group) aged 0–5, 6–12 and 0–12 years attending a CCB approved child care service divided by the number of children aged 0–5, 6–12 and 0–12 attending a CCB approved child care service. These data are compared to the representation of children from each age group by each special needs group in the community. | |
| **Data source/s** | Australian Government Department of Education and Training (unpublished).  Various ABS sources for representation of the special needs groups in the community. | |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |  |
| **Institutional environment** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through the Child Care Management System (CCMS) by the Department of Social Services (DSS) under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for this Report by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.  Data on attendance in child care services by children from NESB and children with disability are not available by the CCMS. Rather, they are from the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Workforce Census. These data are also reported by the Department of Education and Training. | |
| **Relevance** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available. | |
| **Timeliness** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis.  Data on children from NESB and children with disability sourced from the National ECEC Workforce Census are only available every three years. | |
| **Accuracy** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through an electronic administrative system and all approved services are represented. | |
| **Coherence** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services have been measured consistently since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged.  Data for this indicator are provided from two different Australian Government sources: CCMS and National ECEC Workforce Census. Data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from low‑income families, children from regional areas and children from remote areas are sourced from the CCMS. Data on children from NESB and children with disability are sourced from the National ECEC Workforce Census. As a result caution should be used if comparing across special needs groups.  Definitions of special needs groups are applied consistently within each special needs group. | |
| **Accessibility** | The Australian Government CCB approved child care data at the service level are protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of this Report. | |
| **Interpretability** | A high or increasing participation rate is desirable. If the representation of special needs groups among child care services users is broadly similar to their representation in the community, this suggests more equitable access. | |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |  |
| **Key data gaps /issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * the data for special needs groups are provided from two different Australian Government sources (CCMS and National ECEC Workforce Census) * data sourced from the National ECEC Workforce Census i.e. for children from NESB and children with disability are only available every three years. | |

### Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool

#### The proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program – Non‑English speaking backgrounds; Disability, compared with the representation of these groups in the community

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the State and Territory governments, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Equity — Access | |
| Indicator | Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program who are from special needs groups – Non‑English speaking backgrounds; Disability.  Numerator:  Number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program who are from Non‑English speaking backgrounds and children with disability.  Denominator:  Number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program.  Computation:  The number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program who are from non‑English speaking backgrounds and children with disability divided by the number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program.  This proportion is reported against the proportion of children in the community by special needs group. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator/denominator:  State and Territory governments (unpublished).  Various ABS sources for representation of the special needs groups in the community. | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool data are collected by individual State and Territory departments. Additional information on the separate institutional environments is outlined below:   * NSW – In NSW preschool data are collected by the Department of Education (DoE) as part of its role in providing and monitoring funding for the community preschool sector. Government funded preschool services are required to participate in the ECEC preschool census each year as part of their funding agreement. NSW DoE also collects data on children who are enrolled in 100 DoE preschools as part of the NSW annual government school census. Data are not collected from the long day care sector. Data on children with disability attending Early Intervention classes at NSW schools have been collected since 2012. * Victoria – Data were collected by the Department of Education and Training (DET) during the August Census Data Collection reported for the census week 28 July – 2 August 2014. Completion of this data collection was compulsory for all funded service providers as part of their service agreement with DET. In 2014, DET collected data from 1067 funded service providers which offered a kindergarten program at 2168 kindergarten services. Funded kindergarten services in Victoria include sessional kindergarten services and long day care services which offer an integrated kindergarten program. Queensland – Data are collected in an annual Early Childhood Education and Care services census (online). Census participants include all Queensland Government approved/licensed ECEC services as well as a small number of services, not requiring approval, that are funded or provided by the Queensland Government to provide education and care to specific groups of children, such as eKindy which delivers an online kindergarten program to isolated children. For services that receive funding under the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme, participation is mandatory. * WA – The organisation responsible is the WA Department of Education (DoE). * SA – Data collected by the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) as part of the termly preschool staffing collection from SA government funded preschool service providers. * Tasmania – Data collected by the Tasmanian Department of Education from 213 preschool providers, using National Minimum Dataset specifications. This number includes services provided by government and non‑government. All receive government funding. * ACT – ACT government preschool data are collected by the Education and Training Directorate. Government managed and funded preschool services are required to participate in the ECEC preschool census each year. From 2013, most non‑government preschools provided ECEC data for submission to the ECEC preschool collection. * NT – Data are collected by the NT Department of Education as part of the annual Age/Grade Census. | |
| Relevance | Information on the relevance of State and Territory preschool data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – The community preschool census and government school census collect a range of data relevant to the funded or government operated segments of the preschool sector such as service operating characteristics, staff employed, gender, disability, language background, low income status, Indigenous status, attendance/enrolment patterns and staff qualifications. * Victoria – Information is collected on: * Service providers and management models * Service level data: early childhood teachers and the other educators delivering the kindergarten program, attendance patterns, and fees paid * Child level data: children enrolled, gender, birthdates, disability, languages aside from English spoken at home, and Indigenous status.   All DET funded service providers are required to undertake the data collection. Therefore, full coverage of kindergarten programs in the year before school delivered through these service providers was achieved. There is no current requirement for unfunded organisations to supply data to DET.   * Queensland – Data collected from the Census enable Queensland Department of Education and Training (DET) to report on a variety of matters, such as the performance of the ECEC sector, to the Queensland and Australian Governments, and the community. The data are used to provide evidence for policy and program development and planning and to monitor outcomes of early childhood initiatives. * WA – The data collected through the School Census by the DoE are used to meet national reporting requirements, including meeting the reporting requirements of the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (NECECC). Full coverage is achieved for all government and non‑government schools and community kindergartens with a preschool program. * SA – collection is mandatory and there is full coverage for DECD funded or provided preschool services. * Tasmania – data collected for preschool providers in a registered kindergarten. * ACT – collection is mandatory and there is full coverage for the Directorates funded or provided preschool services. * NT – Data collected through the Age/Grade Census are used to meet a range of reporting obligations including national reporting to ECEC NMDS. Enrolments are from registered government and non‑government preschool programs. | |
| Timeliness | Information on the timeliness of State and Territory preschool data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – The ECEC preschool census is conducted annually over a representative fortnight. In 2014 the collection period was 28 July to 8 August. The Government School Mid‑Year Census is conducted annually in August. * Victoria – The August Census Data Collection was undertaken for the reference period 28 July – 2 August 2014. * Queensland – The Census is an annual collection, with the most current year data census commencing in the week beginning 28 July 2014. * WA – The collection was undertaken at 1 August 2014 with a reference period of 28 July to 1 August. * SA – Data were collected in late July/August 2014. * Tasmania – Data are collected annually, for a two week reference period in late July to early August 2014. * ACT – The ECEC collection is conducted annually over a representative fortnight. In 2014 the collection period was 29 July to 9 August. The ACT public school census is conducted annually in August which encompasses all school levels from preschool to year 12. * NT – Data are collected through the annual Age/Grade Census which was undertaken on Friday 1 August 2014. Additional preschool data are collected for the one week reference period 28 July – 1 August 2014. | |
| Accuracy | Due to different methods of data collection, not all jurisdictions are able to identify duplicate records of children. Double counting of children may occur due to:   * Children moving interstate during a preschool year * Children attending multiple providers to access an appropriate amount of care * Children attending multiple service types * Children attending preschool for greater than one year.   These factors can lead to an overestimation of children enrolment in some states and territories (for example, where enrolment rates exceed 100 per cent).  There are differences in collection dates, reference periods and age reference dates.  Additional information on the accuracy of State and Territory preschool data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – For the ECEC preschool census, data are collected from government funded community preschools through a web based portal. The web based portal has data validation software to reduce data entry errors. The Department also carries out data verification checks by comparing enrolment and service characteristic variations across years. For the government school mid‑year census, the results on children attending Government preschools or children with disabilities attending Early Intervention classes at NSW schools are validated by a process in which data are extracted from the school enrolment system and presented back to schools for signoff. There is no current requirement for unfunded preschools to supply data to the DoE. Preschool programs are provided in preschools and long day care centres in NSW. However, children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting are not captured in the collection, resulting in an undercount. * Victoria – The August Census data collection was conducted through a web‑based data collection and funding system. The system had in‑built data validation checks to reduce data entry errors (e.g. validation checks on birthdate ranges of children). The system also performed checks to ensure that service providers entered all mandatory data to ensure there are no missing data fields. DET regional staff also performed verification checks on all funded service providers by comparing enrolment variations across years to ensure accuracy of data entry. * Queensland – Data have been adjusted for partial non‑responses at the service and preschool program levels through an imputation process, and incorrect responses corrected via validation and error checking processes. No adjustments for undercounts have been applied and no standard errors are applied to this data item. * SA – Data are collected using a web based data system that includes data validation rules to improve accuracy. Data received by DECD are then subject to further validation checks and corrections where required, primarily to ensure the accuracy of staffing and funding entitlements for SA government funded or provided preschool services. * WA – Data are collected via a system that includes data validation at both the time of submission and is subject to further validation when received. * Tasmania – All kindergartens reported enrolment data for the reference period in 2014. Duplicate students attending more than one kindergarten are identified and allocated the same statistical linkage key. * ACT – Data are collected from government preschools through the Directorate’s information systems and via preschool census returns. The Directorate has defined processes to validate and verify the data by comparing enrolment and service characteristic variations across years. These processes include children with disabilities attending classes at ACT public preschools. There is no current requirement for preschools in receipt of government funding to supply data to the Directorate. However, most independent schools with preschool services provided data to the ECEC. * NT – Data are collected through the annual Age/Grade Census and validated by all schools. The NT is able to report the number of children in preschool programs and enrolled in preschool in the year before full time school within government and non‑government schools. | |
| Coherence | Data for Australia for children from non‑English speaking backgrounds and children with disability are the total of the sum of states and territories for which data are available, and should not be interpreted as national data.  Data on children with disability are not directly comparable because the definition of disability varies across jurisdictions.  Children enrolled in preschool can be counted in more than one special needs group. | |
| Accessibility | Information on the accessibility of State and Territory preschool data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below. Preschool data for all jurisdictions are published by the ABS in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0). Data on children from non‑English speaking backgrounds and children with disability are not available in the ABS publication.   * NSW – Limited data are collected for national and state reporting requirements. * Victoria – Limited data are collected for funding purposes and State and National Reporting requirements. * Queensland – Fact sheets on the sector are available on the Early Childhood Education and Care website. This information includes attendance rates, management types, locations of services and staff qualifications and experience for all services (inclusive of both funded and unfunded services) across the state. * WA – Limited data are collected for national and state reporting requirements. * SA – Limited data are collected for national and state reporting requirements. Summary data are published annually on the department website. Unpublished data can be supplied on request. * Tasmania – Limited data are collected for funding purposes and national and state reporting requirements. * ACT – Limited data are collected for funding purposes and ACT and national reporting requirements. | |
| Interpretability | Limited supporting documentation is available.   * Victoria – Information such as ‘frequently asked questions’ fact sheets were made available on the DET website and on the web‑based data collection and funding system. Help text was also available in the system, to provide clarification of terminology and explanations of the data required to be collected. If service providers required clarification about the collection process, they were also able to contact their regional office.   DET provides information on funding criteria and data collection responsibilities in the publication ‘The Kindergarten Guide 2014’, which is available on the DET website.   * Queensland provided a range of information to assist in the collection and reporting of data, such as explanatory notes for providers. supporting documentation are available from the Queensland DET website. * WA – Comprehensive assistance is provided via the census collection site as well as accompanying user guides and help text popping up during the on line submission | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool * data on children with disability are not directly comparable because the definition of disability varies across jurisdictions * in NSW, preschool programs are provided in preschools and long day care centres. However, children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting are not captured in the collection, resulting in an undercount. There is no current requirement for unfunded preschools in NSW to supply data to the NSW DoE. | |

#### The proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; Regional areas; Remote areas, compared with the representation of these groups in the community

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Equity — Access | |
| Indicator | Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in preschool – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander; Regional areas; Remote areas, compared with the representation of these groups in the community.  Numerator:  Number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in preschool who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children; children from regional areas and children from remote areas.  Denominator:  Number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program.  Computation:  The number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from regional areas and children from remote areas divided by the number of children aged 3–5 years enrolled in a preschool program.  This proportion is reported against the proportion of children in the community by special needs group. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator/denominator:  ABS (unpublished) *Microdata:* *Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0.55.003).  Various ABS sources for representation of the special needs groups in the community. | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (NP UAECE) and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  Regional and remote areas are based upon the ABS’ Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) 2011. The ASGS replaced the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) 2006. The ASGS is based on the 2011 Census of Population and Housing and represents a more comprehensive, flexible and consistent way of defining Australia’s statistical geography than the previous classification. | |
| Timeliness | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period. | |
| Accuracy | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparisons across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the collection include:   * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * there is a level of imputation undertaken to address non‑response by service providers in administrative collections and/or surveys * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Care needs to be taken interpreting data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children due to reporting issues associated with both the identification and reporting of Indigenous status.  Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available ‑ that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area is assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) .  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| Coherence | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  Children enrolled in preschool can be counted in more than one special needs group.  Regional and remote areas are determined by the ASGS 2011. | |
| Accessibility | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the NECECC.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| Interpretability | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * the data may not have captured all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting, particularly in NSW. | |

#### The proportion of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full time schooling (YBFS) who are disadvantaged, compared with the representation in the community

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Equity — Access | |
| Indicator | Participation rates for special needs groups in preschool | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are disadvantaged, compared with the representation of children who are disadvantaged in the community.  Numerator:  Number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who reside in an area with a Socio‑Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Relative Socio‑Economic Disadvantage (IRSD) quintile of 1.  Denominator:  Number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS.  Computation:  The number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are disadvantaged divided by the number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS.  This proportion is reported against the proportion of children in the community who are disadvantaged | |
| Data source/s | Numerator/denominator:  ABS (2015) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0).  Unpublished ABS data from *Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 3235.0) are used for the representation of children who are disadvantaged in the community. | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (NP UAECE) and the *National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care* (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  Children who are disadvantaged are defined as residing in an area with a SEIFA IRSD quintile of 1 (based on the 2011 Census of Population and Housing). The SEIFA IRSD summarises a range of information about the economic and social resources of people and households within an area. The use of SEIFA IRSD as a proxy for disadvantage needs to be interpreted with care as it pertains to the area in which the child resides, rather than to the child specifically. | |
| Timeliness | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period. | |
| Accuracy | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparisons across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the collection include:   * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * there is a level of imputation undertaken to address non‑response by service providers in administrative collections and/or surveys * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available ‑ that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area is assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) .  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| Coherence | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions. | |
| Accessibility | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the NECECC.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| Interpretability | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * the data may not have captured all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting, particularly in NSW * use of SEIFA IRSD to define children who are most disadvantaged needs to be interpreted with care as it pertains to the area in which the child resides, rather than to the child specifically. | |

### Children using child care

#### The proportion of children who are attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services by age group

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |  |
| **Element** | Effectiveness — Access | |
| **Indicator** | Children using child care | |
| **Measure/s (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of children by age group (0–5, 6–12 and 0‑12 years) who are attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services.  Numerator:  Number of children attending Australian Government CCB approved and State and Territory government funded and/or provided child care by age group (0–5, 6–12,  0–12 years).  Denominator:  Estimated resident population (ERP) as at 31 December by age group (0–5, 6–12,  0–12 years).  Computation:  The number of children attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services divided by the total ERP, by age group (0–5, 6–12, 0–12 years). | |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/s:  Australian Government Department of Education and Training (unpublished)  Denominator/s:  ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics, Dec 2014* (Cat. no. 3101.0). | |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |  |
| **Institutional environment** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through the Child Care Management System (CCMS) by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for this Report by the Department of Education and Training.  ERP data are obtained from the ABS. For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, which cover this collection, please see the ABS website. | |
| **Relevance** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available.  Rates of the population are based on as a proportion of the ERP collected by the ABS. | |
| **Timeliness** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis.  ABS population estimates used for the denominator of population rates are available each year. | |
| **Accuracy** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through an electronic administrative system and all approved services are represented.  In addition, the proportion of children attending child care in the population is based on an ERP denominator at 31 December, | |
| **Coherence** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services have been measured consistently since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged.  Rates of the population may differ from those released in previous editions of this publication due to scheduled revisions of the ERP by the ABS. These differences are likely to be very small. | |
| **Accessibility** | The Australian Government CCB approved child care data at the service level are protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of this Report. | |
| **Interpretability** | A higher or increasing proportion of children using services can indicate a higher level of service availability. | |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |  |
| **Key data gaps /issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * this indicator does not provide information on parental preferences for using child care, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of child care. | |

#### The proportion of children who are attending Australian Government CCB approved and State and Territory government funded child care services by age group

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training and State and Territory governments with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Access | |
| Indicator | Children using child care | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of children who are attending Australian Government CCB approved and State and Territory government funded child care services by age group (0–5, 6–12 and 0–12 years).  Numerator:  Number of children attending Australian Government CCB approved and State and Territory government funded child care services by age groups (0–5; 6–12;  0–12 years).  Denominator:  Estimated resident population (ERP) as at 31 December by age groups (0–5; 6–12;  0–12 years).  Computation:  The number of children attending Australian Government CCB approved and State and Territory government funded child care services divided by the ERP, by age groups (0–5; 6–12; 0–12 years) | |
| Data source/s | Numerator/s:  Australian Government Department of Education and Training (unpublished); State and Territory governments (unpublished)  Denominator/s:  ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics, Dec 2014* (cat. no. 3101.0). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through the Child Care Management System (CCMS) by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for this Report by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.  State and Territory child care data are collected by individual State and Territory departments. Additional information on the separate institutional environments is outlined below:   * NSW – NSW does not collect data on child care use. * Victoria – In 2014, Victoria funded 94 organisations to enable access to occasional care for eligible parents enrolled in and attending Government funded education and training at an Adult, Community and Further Education Board registered Learn Local organisation. No data were collected on funded places or staff characteristics for these services in 2014. * Queensland – Data are collected in an annual Early Childhood Education and Care services census (online). Census participants include all Queensland Government approved/licensed ECEC services, as well as a small number of services, not requiring approval, that are funded or provided by the Queensland Government to provide education and care to specific groups of children, such as eKindy which delivers an online kindergarten program to isolated children. For services that receive funding under the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme, participation is mandatory. * SA – Data are collected by DECD as part of the annual children’s services census from sites operating a playcentre program or are providing rurual care or occasional care. The census is mandatory for rural care and occasional care. * Tasmania – Data are compiled by the Department of Education for recurrently‑funded child care services. Through their funding agreement, these services are required to provide data in August of each year. Data are not provided for licensed but unfunded services. * NT – the NT Department of Education administers an electronic reporting procedure for the collection of relevant data from services eligible for funding and approved under the *Education and Care Services (National Uniform Legislation) Act*.   ERP data are obtained from the ABS. For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, which cover this collection, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available.  The relevance of State and Territory child care data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – Data are not available for child care use. * Queensland – Data are collected from the Census enable Queensland DET to report on a variety of matters, such as the performance of the ECEC sector, to the Queensland and Australian Governments, and the community. The data are used to provide evidence for policy and program development and planning and to monitor outcomes of early childhood. * SA – As the census is mandatory there is full coverage for playcentres, rural and occasional care services. Data for rural care services are not in scope of RoGS because they are CCB approved and already reported by the Australian Government. * Tasmania – Data are provided for each child care service recurrently‑funded by the State Department of Education. Services provide the data for each of the children attending in the data week. * NT *–* the NT Department of Education collects utilisation data at the service level from long day care, kindergarten and family day care services eligible for funding.   Rates of the population are calculated using ERP. | |
| Timeliness | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis.  State and Territory child care data are collected by individual State and Territory departments through various independent data collections. Data are collected in the first half of the financial year reported in this Report and therefore are collected approximately 18 months prior to publication. Additional information is outlined below.   * Queensland – The census is an annual collection, with the most current year data census commencing Monday 28 July 2014. Data relating to vacation care was collected during a separate period. * SA – Data are collected annually with reference period usually July/August of financial year. * Tasmania – Data are collected annually in August of the financial year. * NT – Approved services that are eligible to receive funds, are required to provide data quarterly to the NT Department of Education.   ABS population estimates used for the denominator of population rates are available each year. | |
| Accuracy | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through an electronic administrative system and all approved services are represented.  Additional information on the accuracy State and Territory child care data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * Queensland – Data have been adjusted for partial non‑responses at the service level through imputation, and incorrect responses corrected through a validation and error checking process. No adjustments for undercounts have been applied and no standard errors are applied to this data item. It is possible that due to the aggregate nature of the collection, there may be an issue of duplicate records (that is children being counted in multiple child care services either multiple providers or multiple service types) within the reference week which could lead to an overestimation of children using child care. * SA – Data are collected in a paper based survey from playcentres, rural care and submitted electronically by occasional care services. Duplicate records or undercounts are not identifiable as the information is either aggregate or de‑identified and cannot be matched across sites. * Tasmania – Data are completed by staff in each recurrently‑funded service to the Department of Education and includes all child care services recurrently‑funded by the State. Services report on actual age of each child attending during the data week. Services provide attendance records with data collection sheets and these are used for validation. However as dates of birth of the children are not provided age validations cannot be made. * ACT – The ACT does not collect data on the number of children using child care services. * NT – Utilisation data comprising two sample weeks from each financial quarter is collected by the NT Department of Education from services eligible for the allocation of funding.   In addition, across each data collection, the proportion of children attending child care in the population are based on ERP denominator at 31 December, and therefore a variation between the jurisdiction data collection period for the numerator and the denominator may exist. | |
| Coherence | Australian Government CCB approved child care services have been measured consistently since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged.  Additional information on the coherence of State and Territory child care data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – Does not collect data from child care services * Queensland – Age range scope of the data for the numerator and denominator are comparable. * SA – The method of collection from occasional care services has changed from paper based to using a web based data system, but the data collected and definitions remain unchanged. * Tasmania – Data collection in place for over 10 years and data appear to be consistent, taking into account changes in number of services each year (significant given the small number of services). * NT – the collection of data from eligible services has been consistent and without definition change since funding commencement. | |
| Accessibility | The Australian Government CCB approved child care data at the service level are protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of this Report.  Additional information on the accessibility of State and Territory child care data collected by individual State and Territory departments is outlined below.   * NSW – There is limited data collected for national and state reporting requirements. * Queensland – Fact sheets on the sector are produced each year available on the Early Childhood Education and Care website containing information on attendance rates, management types, locations of services and staff qualifications and experience for all services (inclusive of both funded and unfunded services) across the state. * SA – Unpublished data can be requested. There are some published data available online. * Tasmania – Data provided through internal process within the Department of Education as part of its recurrently‑funding agreement with these services. There are no other processes to collect these data. Currently, these data are not made available publicly apart from this Report. * NT – Some data are published in the Department of Education’s Annual Report following the end of each financial year. | |
| Interpretability | Limited supporting documentation is available.   * Queensland – Queensland provided a range of information to assist in the collection and reporting of data, such as explanatory notes for providers. Supporting material are available from the Queensland DET website.   A higher or increasing proportion of children using services can indicate a higher level of service availability. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are reported for the March quarter 2015. State and Territory government data for Queensland, SA and Tasmania data refer to July/August 2014. Due to these differences in data reference periods caution should be used when using the child care attendance totals. * this indicator does not provide information on the parental preferences for using child care, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of child care. | |

#### Average hours of attendance per week for 0–12 year olds at Australian Government CCB approved child care services by service type

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |  |
| **Element** | Effectiveness — Access | |
| **Indicator** | Children using child care | |
| **Measure/s (computation)** | Definition  Average hours of attendance per week for 0–12 year olds at Australian Government CCB approved child care services by service type.  Numerator:  Total hours attended by each service type.  Denominator:  Number of 0–12 year old children who attended in the reference week (excluding allowable absences) by each service type  Computation:  Total hours of attendance at Australian Government CCB approved child care services divided by the total number of children who attended each service type (per week during the March quarter for 0‑12 year olds). | |
| **Data source/s** | Australian Government Department of Education and Training (unpublished) | |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |  |
| **Institutional environment** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through the Child Care Management System (CCMS) by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for this Report by the Department of Education and Training. | |
| **Relevance** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available. | |
| **Timeliness** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis. | |
| **Accuracy** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through an electronic administrative system and all approved services are represented. | |
| **Coherence** | Australian Government CCB approved child care services have been measured consistently since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged. | |
| **Accessibility** | The Australian Government CCB approved child care data at the service level are protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of this Report. | |
| **Interpretability** | A higher or increasing average number of hours attended can indicate a higher level of service availability. | |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |  |
| **Key data gaps /issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * this indicator does not provide information on the parental preferences for using child care, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of child care. | |

### Children enrolled in preschool

#### The proportion of 4 year old children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Access | |
| Indicator | Children enrolled in preschool | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of 4 year old children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS.  Numerator:  Number of children aged 4 and 5 years who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS.  Denominator:  ERP of 4 year old children, as at 30 June.  Computation:  The number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS divided by the estimated number of children aged 4 years. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator:  ABS (2015) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0).  Denominator:  ABS (2014) *Australian Demographic Statistics, Jun 2014* (cat. no. 3101.0). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (NP UAECE) and the *National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care* (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  Rates of the population are based on the proportion of the ERP collected by the ABS | |
| Timeliness | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period.  ABS population estimates used for the denominator are available each year. | |
| Accuracy | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparisons across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the collection include:   * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * there is a level of imputation undertaken to address non‑response by service providers in administrative collections and/or surveys * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available ‑ that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area is assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) .  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| Coherence | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  The proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS can exceed 100 per cent because the numerator is based on the number of 4 and 5 year old children in the population, whereas the denominator is the 4 year old population. | |
| Accessibility | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the NECECC.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| Interpretability | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * the data may not have captured all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting, particularly in NSW. | |

#### The proportion of 4 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Access | |
| Indicator | Children enrolled in preschool | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of 4 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS.  Numerator:  Number of 4 and 5 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS.  Denominator:  Estimated number of 4 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, as at 30 June.  Computation:  The number of 4 and 5 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS divided by the estimated number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 years. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator:  ABS (2015) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0).  Denominator:  ABS (2014) *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2021 to 2026* (cat. no. 3238.0). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  Population estimates are obtained from the ABS.  Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2026 (cat. no. 3238.0) is compiled based on experimental population estimates derived from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing and Post Enumeration Survey, and assumptions derived from analysis of data sourced from a variety of institutional environments. Detailed quality information for this product is available via the ABS website, see Data Quality Statement.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (NP UAECE) and the *National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care* (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes | |
| Timeliness | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period. | |
| Accuracy | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparisons across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the collection include:   * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * there is a level of imputation undertaken to address non‑response by service providers in administrative collections and/or surveys * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Care needs to be taken interpreting data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children due to reporting issues associated with both the identification and reporting of Indigenous status.  Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available ‑ that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area is assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) .  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| Coherence | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  The proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS can exceed 100 per cent because the numerator is based on the number of 4 and 5 year old children in the population, whereas the denominator is the 4 year old population. | |
| Accessibility | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the NECECC.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| Interpretability | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * the data may not have captured all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting, particularly in NSW. | |

#### The proportion of 4 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS by remoteness area (national data only)

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Access | |
| Indicator | Children enrolled in preschool | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of 4 and 5 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS by remoteness area (national data only).  Numerator:  Number of 4 and 5 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS by remoteness area.  Denominator:  Estimated number of 4 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, as at 30 June by remoteness area.  Computation:  The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS divided by the estimated number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 years by remoteness area. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator:  ABS (2015) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0).  Denominator:  ABS (2014) *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2021 to 2026* (cat. no. 3238.0). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  Population estimates are obtained from the ABS.  Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2026 (cat. no. 3238.0) is compiled based on experimental population estimates derived from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing and Post Enumeration Survey, and assumptions derived from analysis of data sourced from a variety of institutional environments. Detailed quality information for this product is available via the ABS website, see Data Quality Statement.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (NP UAECE) and the *National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care* (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  Remoteness area is based upon the ABS’ ASGS. The ASGS is based on the 2011 Census of Population and Housing. | |
| Timeliness | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period. | |
| Accuracy | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparisons across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the collection include:   * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * there is a level of imputation undertaken to address non‑response by service providers in administrative collections and/or surveys * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Care needs to be taken interpreting data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children due to reporting issues associated with both the identification and reporting of Indigenous status.  Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available ‑ that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area is assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) .  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| Coherence | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  The proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS can exceed 100 per cent because the numerator is based on the number of 4 and 5 year old children in the population, whereas the denominator is the 4 year old population. | |
| Accessibility | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the NECECC.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| Interpretability | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * data for this measure are not available on a jurisdiction basis (i.e. State and Territory proportions by remoteness area are not available). | |

### Children attending preschool

#### The proportion of 4 year old children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Access | |
| Indicator | Children attending preschool | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of 4 year old children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS.  Numerator:  Number of 4 and 5 year old children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS.  Denominator:  ERP of 4 year old children, as at 30 June.  Computation:  The number of children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the YBFS divided by the estimated number of children aged 4 years. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator:  ABS (2015) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0).  Denominator:  ABS (2014) *Australian Demographic Statistics, Jun 2014* (cat. no. 3101.0). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (NP UAECE) and the *National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care* (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  Rates of the population are based on the proportion of the ERP collected by the ABS. | |
| Timeliness | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period.  ABS population estimates used for the denominator are available each year. | |
| Accuracy | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparisons across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the collection include:   * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * there is a level of imputation undertaken to address non‑response by service providers in administrative collections and/or surveys * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available ‑ that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area is assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) .  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| Coherence | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  The proportion of children attending a preschool program in the YBFS can exceed 100 per cent because the numerator is based on the number of 4 and 5 year old children in the population, whereas the denominator is the 4 year old population. | |
| Accessibility | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the NECECC.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| Interpretability | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * participation in preschool is not compulsory. This measure does not provide information on parental preferences for using preschool, or other factors, such as school starting age, which can affect use of preschool * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * the data may not have captured all children undertaking a preschool program in a long day care setting, particularly in NSW. | |

#### The proportion of 4 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS by remoteness area (national data only)

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Access | |
| Indicator | Children attending preschool | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of 4 and 5 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS by remoteness area (national data only).  Numerator:  Number of 4 and 5 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS by remoteness area.  Denominator:  Estimated number of 4 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, as at 30 June by remoteness area.  Computation:  The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the YBFS divided by the estimated number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 4 years by remoteness area. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator:  ABS (2015) *Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0)  Denominator:  ABS (2014) *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2021 to 2026* (cat. no. 3238.0). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  Population estimates are obtained from the ABS.  Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2026 (cat. no. 3238.0) is compiled based on experimental population estimates derived from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing and Post Enumeration Survey, and assumptions derived from analysis of data sourced from a variety of institutional environments. Detailed quality information for this product is available via the ABS website, see Data Quality Statement.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (NP UAECE) and the *National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care* (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  Remoteness area is based upon the ABS’ ASGS. The ASGS is based on the 2011 Census of Population and Housing. | |
| Timeliness | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period. | |
| Accuracy | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparisons across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the collection include:   * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * there is a level of imputation undertaken to address non‑response by service providers in administrative collections and/or surveys * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Care needs to be taken interpreting data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children due to reporting issues associated with both the identification and reporting of Indigenous status.  Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available ‑ that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area is assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) .  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| Coherence | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions.  The proportion of children attending a preschool program in the YBFS can exceed 100 per cent because the numerator is based on the number of 4 and 5 year old children in the population, whereas the denominator is the 4 year old population. | |
| Accessibility | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the NECECC.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| Interpretability | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * data for this measure are not available on a jurisdiction basis (i.e. State and Territory proportions by remoteness area are not available). | |

#### The proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are attending by Indigenous status

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Access | |
| Indicator | Children attending preschool | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS who are attending by Indigenous status.  Numerator:  Number of 4 and 5 year old children who are attending a preschool program in the YBFS by Indigenous status.  Denominator:  Number of 4 and 5 year old children who are enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS by Indigenous status.  Computation:  The number of children aged 4 and 5 years attending a preschool program in the YBFS divided by the number of children aged 4 and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program in the YBFS by Indigenous status. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator/denominator:  ABS (unpublished) *Microdata:* *Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0.55.003). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (NP UAECE) and the *National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care* (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  Rates of the population are based on the proportion of the ERP collected by the ABS. | |
| Timeliness | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period.  ABS population estimates used for the denominator of population rates are available each year. | |
| Accuracy | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparisons across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the collection include:   * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * there is a level of imputation undertaken to address non‑response by service providers in administrative collections and/or surveys * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Care needs to be taken interpreting data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children due to reporting issues associated with both the identification and reporting of Indigenous status.  Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available ‑ that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area is assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) .  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| Coherence | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions. | |
| Accessibility | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the NECECC.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| Interpretability | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * enrolment and attendance data are very similar for some jurisdictions because enrolment requires the child to have attended that program for at least one hour during the reference period, or were absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and are expected to return. A child is considered to be attending a preschool program if the child is enrolled and has attended for at least one hour during the reference period. | |

### Non‑standard hours of care in child care services

#### The proportion of Australian Government CCB approved child care services that provide non‑standard hours of care by service type

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Access | |
| Indicator | Non‑standard hours of care in child care services | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of Australian Government CCB approved child care services that provide non‑standard hours of care by service type.  Numerator:  Number of Australian Government CCB approved child care services providing non‑standard hours of care by child care service type.  Denominator:  Number of Australian Government CCB approved child care services by child care service type.  Computation:  The number of Australian Government CCB approved child care services providing non‑standard hours of care divided by the total number of Australian Government CCB approved services by service type. | |
| Data source/s | Australian Government Department of Education and Training (unpublished) | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | CCMS data are collected by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. Data from CCMS is compiled by the Department of Education and Training. | |
| Relevance | Approved CCB child care service data, collected at a service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available. | |
| Timeliness | Data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a weekly basis on MyChild.gov.au. | |
| Accuracy | Data sourced from CCMS are collected via an electronic administrative system. | |
| Coherence | Data sourced from the CCMS are based on the operating hours of services | |
| Accessibility | Data at the service level are protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. To date data have only been released for purposes of this Report. | |
| Interpretability | A high or increasing proportion of services providing non‑standard hours of care can suggest a greater flexibility of services to meet the needs of families. Care should be taken when interpreting results because information is not provided on the demand for non‑standard hours of care or whether available non‑standard hours services meet the needs of users. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * this indicator does not provide information on the demand for non‑standard hours of care or whether available non‑standard hours services meet the needs of users. | |

### Child care service costs

#### The median weekly cost for 50 hours of Australian Government CCB approved long day care and family day care

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Access — Service affordability | |
| Indicator | Child care service costs | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The median weekly cost for 50 hours of Australian Government CCB approved long day care and family day care. | |
| Data source/s | Australian Government Department of Education (unpublished). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through the CCMS by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for this Report by the Department of Education and Training. | |
| Relevance | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available. | |
| Timeliness | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis. | |
| Accuracy | Median costs are based on 50 hours of care in the reference week. | |
| Coherence | Australian Government CCB approved child care services has been consistent since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged. | |
| Accessibility | The Australian Government CCB approved child care data at the service level are protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of this Report. | |
| Interpretability | Median costs represent the middle value of the range of costs.  Provided the service quality is held constant, lower service costs are desirable.  Cost data need to be interpreted with care because fees are independently set by service providers. Charging practices, including fees, are commercial decisions made by individual services, so there is significant variation in the fees charged across services. Variation in costs occurs as a result of factors including state and territory licensing requirements, award wages, and whether fees include charges for additional services such as nappies and meals. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * cost data need to be interpreted with care, because fees are independently set by service providers. Charging practices, including fees, are commercial decisions made by individual services, so there is significant variation in the fees charged across services. Variation in costs occurs as a result of factors including state and territory licensing requirements, award wages, and whether fees include charges for additional services such as nappies and meals. | |

### Preschool service costs

#### The median hourly cost of a preschool program (after subsidies), per child enrolled aged 4 and 5 years

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Access — Service affordability | |
| Indicator | Preschool service costs | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The median hourly cost of a preschool program (after subsidies) per child enrolled aged 4 and 5 years. | |
| Data source/s | ABS (unpublished) *Microdata:* *Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0.55.003). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (NP UAECE) and the *National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care* (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes. | |
| Timeliness | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period. | |
| Accuracy | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparisons across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the collection include:   * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors, particularly programs delivered to three year olds * comprehensive child unit record level data are not currently available for all jurisdictions, particularly for the non‑government sector or unfunded preschools * there is a level of imputation undertaken to address non‑response by service providers in administrative collections and/or surveys * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to national data standards across jurisdictions.   Where information on the child’s usual place of residence is not available ‑ that is, where insufficient information on the child’s address was collected or, where no address details have been provided, remoteness area is assigned using the address of the service at which the child is enrolled. For more information on the collection methodologies and current data limitations for each state and territory, see Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) .  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| Coherence | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions. | |
| Accessibility | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) contains estimates of children enrolled in, and attending preschool in Australia collected through the NECECC.  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| Interpretability | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * preschool services are provided by a mix of providers (community, private and government). Differences in charging practices, including fees, can be due to commercial or cost recovery decisions made by individual services. Some preschool programs, particularly those offered at government preschools have no tuition fees * fees can reflect higher land values and rental fees charged in major cities * some jurisdictions provide targeted fee relief that lowers fees for some children * cost information is not collected for all preschool programs. Caution should therefore be used when interpreting median costs. | |

### Staff quality in ECEC

#### The proportion of workers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Quality — Staff | |
| Indicator | Staff quality in ECEC | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of workers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified.  Numerator:  Number of episodes of workers (all roles) delivering a preschool program who are at least three year university trained (includes Bachelor degree [3 years or equivalent], Bachelor degree [4 years pass and honours] and Graduate diploma/certificate and above) and early childhood qualified (includes teaching [early childhood related], teaching [primary], teaching [other] and other early childhood related.  Denominator:  Number of episodes of workers (all roles) delivering a preschool program (i.e. irrespective of workers level and field of qualifications).  Computation:  The number of episodes of workers delivering a preschool program who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified divided by the total number of episodes of workers delivering a preschool program. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator/denominator: ABS (unpublished) *Microdata:* *Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0.55.003). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new *National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education* (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (NP UAECE) and the *National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care* (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  The operational collection scope of worker information for the NECECC consists of all paid contact employees who have delivered, or assisted in delivering, a preschool program at an in‑scope service provider during the reference period. A uniform and consistent identifier for workers was not collected and consequently worker data are available only as episode counts. | |
| Timeliness | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period. | |
| Accuracy | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparison across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the 2014 collection include:   * worker level data in the NECECC do not include a unique identifier and as a consequence they can only be reported as episodes of workers delivering preschool programs * incomplete and inconsistent reporting of workers and worker qualifications * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to National data standards across jurisdictions.   A uniform and consistent identifier for workers was not collected and consequently worker data are available only as episode counts.  Worker level data should be used with caution as there is a high likelihood of worker duplication across and within source data files, due to the same worker delivering preschool programs at multiple service providers during the reference period.  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| Coherence | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions. | |
| Accessibility | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia, 2014 (cat. no. 4240.0) does not contain information on workers delivering preschool programs. These data are available in the ABS’ TableBuilder product as part of Microdata: Preschool Education, Australia (cat.no. 4240.0.55.003).  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| Interpretability | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * worker level data in the NECECC are not considered comparable across jurisdictions. Data do not include a unique identifier and as a consequence they can only be reported as episodes of workers delivering preschool programs. These data should be used with caution as there is a high likelihood of worker duplication across and within source data files, due to the same worker delivering preschool programs at multiple service providers during the reference period. | |

#### The proportion of teachers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| **Indicator definition and description** | |  |
| **Element** | Effectiveness — Quality — Staff | |
| **Indicator** | Staff quality in ECEC | |
| **Measure/s (computation)** | Definition  The proportion of teachers delivering preschool programs who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified.  Numerator:  Number of episodes of teachers (includes principal/director/coordinator/teacher in charge and group leader/teacher roles) delivering a preschool program who are at least three year university trained (includes Bachelor degree [3 years or equivalent], Bachelor degree [4 years pass and honours] and Graduate diploma/certificate and above) and early childhood qualified (includes teaching [early childhood related], teaching [primary], teaching [other] and other early childhood related.  Denominator:  Total number of episodes of teachers (includes principal/director/coordinator/teacher in charge and group leader/teacher roles) delivering a preschool program (i.e. irrespective of level and field of qualifications).  Computation:  The number of episodes of teachers delivering a preschool program who are at least three year university trained and early childhood qualified divided by the total number of teachers of teachers delivering a preschool program. | |
| **Data source/s** | Numerator/denominator: ABS (unpublished) *Microdata: Preschool Education, Australia, 2014* (cat. no. 4240.0.55.003). | |
| **Data Quality Framework Dimensions** | |  |
| **Institutional environment** | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) is compiled from data from the NECECC. The NECECC is mainly derived from administrative and supplementary survey data provided by state and territory and Australian Government departments with responsibility for ECEC. A data quality statement for each jurisdiction can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see the ABS website. | |
| **Relevance** | In 2008, the importance of education in the early years of a child’s development was formally acknowledged through the Council of Australian Governments’ endorsement of a new National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 as part of data improvement projects under the updated National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (NP UAECE) and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC). The aim of the NECECC is to provide comparable state and territory statistics on early childhood education. Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) presents counts of children enrolled and attending preschool programs and episodes of enrolment and attendance at preschool programs across Australia.  The scope of the collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program. A preschool program for the NECECC is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Long day care centres that do not operate a preschool program are considered out of scope.  The operational collection scope of child information for the NECECC is all children who at 1 July were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) and were enrolled during the reference period at a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.  The collection date for the NECECC is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2014, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 1 August 2014, with a reference period of 28 July 2014 – 3 August 2014. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to better reflect their preschool program delivery model. A summary of jurisdictional collection reference periods for 2014 can be found within the ABS’ explanatory notes.  The operational collection scope of worker information for the NECECC consists of all paid contact employees who have delivered, or assisted in delivering, a preschool program at an in‑scope service provider during the reference period. A uniform and consistent identifier for workers was not collected and consequently worker data are available only as episode counts. | |
| **Timeliness** | The NECECC was conducted for the fifth time in 2014 and will continue to be conducted annually. Information from the 2014 collection was released within 8 months of the August 2014 reference period. | |
| **Accuracy** | Data for the NECECC have been compiled according to the National standards outlined in the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS in order to maximise consistency of data across the various jurisdictional collections. However, alignment with these standards has not been completely achieved by all jurisdictions and care should be taken when comparison across jurisdictions are made. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements as specified in the ECEC NMDS.  Data limitations for the 2014 collection include:   * worker level data in the NECECC do not include a unique identifier and as a consequence they can only be reported as episodes of workers delivering preschool programs * incomplete and inconsistent reporting of workers and worker qualifications * a small level of under‑coverage of the preschool programs in some sectors * differences between data element collection methodologies and alignment to National data standards across jurisdictions.   A uniform and consistent identifier for workers was not collected and consequently worker data (and therefore teacher data component) are available only as episode counts.  Worker level data should be used with caution as there is a high likelihood of worker duplication across and within source data files, due to the same worker delivering preschool programs at multiple service providers during the reference period.  More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website. | |
| **Coherence** | Due to the differing levels of coverage, collection methodologies and alignment with the ECEC NMDS across jurisdictions, the data presented in Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be directly comparable across all jurisdictions. | |
| **Accessibility** | The ABS publication Preschool Education, Australia, 2014 (cat. no. 4240.0) does not contain information on workers delivering preschool programs. These data are available in the ABS’ TableBuilder product as part of Microdata: Preschool Education, Australia (cat.no. 4240.0.55.003).  If the information required is not available as a standard product or service, then ABS Consultancy Services can assist with customised services to suit specific needs. Inquiries should be made to the National Information and Referral Service on 1 300 135 070. | |
| **Interpretability** | Preschool Education, Australia (cat. no. 4240.0) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods, 2013 (cat. no. 4240.0.55.001) contain detailed information on the data sources, terminology and other technical aspects associated with the NECECC data. | |
| **Data Gaps/Issues Analysis** | |  |
| **Key data gaps /issues** | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * worker (which includes teacher roles) data in the NECECC are not considered comparable across jurisdictions. Data do not include a unique identifier and as a consequence they can only be reported as episodes of workers delivering preschool programs. These data should be used with caution as there is a high likelihood of worker duplication across and within source data files, due to the same worker delivering preschool programs at multiple service providers during the reference period. | |

### Achievement of the National Quality Standard(NQS)

#### The proportion of National Quality Framework (NQF) approved services with a quality rating, whose overall rating is Meeting NQS or Exceeding NQS

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Effectiveness — Quality — Standards | |
| Indicator | Achievement of the NQS | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition:  The proportion of NQF approved services with a quality rating, whose overall rating is Meeting NQS or Exceeding NQS  Numerator:  Number of NQF approved services with an overall quality rating of Meeting NQS or Exceeding NQS  Denominator:  Number of NQF approved services with a quality rating.  Computation:  The number of NQF approved services with an overall quality rating of Meeting NQS or Exceeding NQS overall divided by all NQF approved services with a quality rating. | |
| Data source/s | ACECQA NQF Snapshot Q2 2015. | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | The NQF was introduced on 1 January 2012, with the assessments beginning in mid‑2012. The NQF operates under an applied law system, comprising the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations. The NQS is schedule 1 to the National Regulations.  The NQS is a key aspect of the NQF and sets a national benchmark for ECEC, and outside school hours care services in Australia. The NQS also promotes continuous quality improvement.  ACECQA guides the implementation of the NQF nationally and ensures consistency in delivery.  SA has set up a new independent regulatory authority for children’s education and care services, while other regulatory authorities mainly operate within existing state and territory government departments. | |
| Relevance | The NQF applies to most long day care, family day care, outside school hours care and preschools in Australia. NQF information is entered into the national database – the NQAITS.  The data cover services with a quality rating. At 30 June 2015, 62.7 per cent of services have a quality rating. Future reports will incorporate quality ratings data for an increasing proportion of services.  SA and WA have relatively lower proportions of quality rated services than other jurisdictions. The assessment and rating process started later in WA because the law only came into effect there in August 2012. | |
| Timeliness | Updated quality ratings are published weekly through the NQAITS national register, and after a 14 day review period has elapsed. A quarterly report is also published which provides analysis on children’s education and care services assessed and rated against the NQS in Australia at the end of each quarter.  As the NQF progresses, every service in the country will be assessed against the new quality standard.  Reporting is based on services rated up to the most recent point in time  (30 June 2015). Any service that received a final quality rating within 14 days of the report cut‑off data (30 June 2015) was excluded from the total reported population of approved and rated services. This means that reported data are consistent with the data that was available from the national register at 30 June 2015. | |
| Accuracy | Some jurisdictions have rated only a small number of services and the services rated are not selected randomly so may not be representative of all services. | |
| Coherence | Every service receives a rating for seven quality areas and an overall rating. There are five rating levels within the national quality rating and assessment process. The lower four rating levels are administered by state and territory regulatory authorities. The highest rating level ‘excellent’ is administered by ACECQA, and on application.  Some jurisdictions have rated only a small number of services and the services rated are not selected randomly so may not be representative of all services. | |
| Accessibility | A quarterly snapshot report is published by ACECQA which provides analysis on children’s education and care services assessed and rated against the NQS in Australia at the end of each quarter.  Ratings for services against each quality area and an overall rating are published weekly on the national register of services on the ACECQA website and on the MyChild website. | |
| Interpretability | The ACECQA website contains detailed information on the NQS and assessment and ratings. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * regulatory authorities in each jurisdiction differ in their approach to selecting services for quality rating data. The implication of quality rating services based on different approaches is that data are not representative of all education and care services nationwide. Therefore, care must be taken in drawing conclusions about education and care services that are yet to be rated based on those that have been rated to date * reporting is based on services rated up to the most recent point in time (30 June 2015). As more services are assessed reporting will become increasingly comprehensive. It is currently based on the 62.7 per cent of services that have received a quality rating since the start of the assessment and ratings process in June 2012. | |

### Total government recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child in the community

#### Combined Australian Government and State and Territory government recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child aged 0–12 in the community

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training and State and Territory governments, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Efficiency — Inputs per output unit — Dollars per child | |
| Indicator | Total government recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child in the community. | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  Combined Australian Government and State and Territory government recurrent expenditure on ECEC per child aged 0–12 years in the community.  Numerator:  Combined Australian Government and State and Territory government recurrent expenditure on ECEC.  Denominator:  ERP of 0–12 year old children, as at 31 December  Computation:  Australian Government and State and Territory recurrent expenditure on ECEC divided by the ERP of 0–12 year old children. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator:  Australian Government Department of Education and Training and State and Territory governments (unpublished).  Denominator:  ABS (unpublished) *Australian Demographic Statistics, Dec 2014* (cat. no. 3101.0). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Australian Government child care expenditure data are collected by the Department of Education and Training.  State and Territory child care and preschool expenditure data are collected by individual state and territory departments.  ERP data are obtained from the ABS. For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, which cover this collection, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | Government recurrent expenditure includes one‑off, non‑capital payments to peak agencies who support child care and preschool service providers.  Rates of the population are based on as a proportion of ABS ERP as at 31 December.  State and Territorydata include all expenditure on State and Territory government funded and/or provided ECEC services. For services which receive both Australian Government and State and Territory government funding, only the State and Territory’s contribution is includedin theState and Territorydata.  State and Territory expenditure include any expenditure funded from the National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (NP UAECE). | |
| Timeliness | Government recurrent expenditure is available annually on a financial year basis.  ABS population estimates used for the denominator are available each year. | |
| Accuracy | Australian Government data include expenditure for some children aged greater than 12 years, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children with special needs. Children can use more than one type of care. Children are counted once for each type of care they use but only once in the total. | |
| Coherence | Australian Government recurrent expenditure includes only child care service types (i.e. not preschool), whereas State and Territory government recurrent expenditure covers all ECEC services (child care and preschool service types).  Expenditure data per child are reported separately for the Australian Government and each State and Territory government, as well as total expenditure per child. | |
| Accessibility | To date government recurrent expenditure data are unpublished and released for purposes of this Report. | |
| Interpretability | All efficiency data need to be interpreted with care. Changes in expenditure per child could represent changes in government funding policy. While high or increasing unit costs can reflect deteriorating efficiency, they can also reflect increases in the quality or quantity of service provided. Similarly, low or declining expenditure per child can reflect improving efficiency or lower quality or quantity. Provided the level and quality of, and access to, services remain unchanged, lower expenditure per child can indicate greater efficiency of government expenditure. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * all Australian Government recurrent expenditure reported for this indicator includes only child care service types. All State and Territory government recurrent expenditure reported is for all ECEC services (i.e. child care and preschool service types). * government expenditure includes recurrent expenditure on ECEC services. Unit cost data for ECEC do not yet contain an estimate of user cost of capital. | |

### Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child attending CCB approved child care

#### Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Efficiency — Inputs per output unit — Dollars per child | |
| Indicator | Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child attending CCB approved child care | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  Australian Government recurrent expenditure per child aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services.  Numerator:  Australian Government recurrent expenditure on CCB approved child care services.  Denominator:  Number of children aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services.  Computation:  Australian Government recurrent expenditure on CCB approved child care services divided by the number of children aged 0–12 years attending Australian Government CCB approved child care services. | |
| Data source/s | Australian Government Department of Education and Training (unpublished) | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through the CCMS by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for this Report by the Department of Education and Training. | |
| Relevance | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available. | |
| Timeliness | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis. | |
| Accuracy | Includes expenditure for some children aged greater than 12 years, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children with special needs. Children can use more than one type of care. Children are counted once for each type of care they use, but only once in the total. | |
| Coherence | Australian Government CCB approved child care services has been consistent since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged. | |
| Accessibility | The Australian Government CCB approved child care data at the service level are protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of this Report. | |
| Interpretability | All efficiency data need to be interpreted with care. Changes in expenditure per child could represent changes in government funding policy. While high or increasing unit costs can reflect deteriorating efficiency, they can also reflect increases in the quality or quantity of service provided. Similarly, low or declining expenditure per child can reflect improving efficiency or lower quality or quantity. Provided the level and quality of, and access to, services remain unchanged, lower expenditure per child can indicate greater efficiency of government expenditure. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * all Australian Government recurrent expenditure reported for this indicator is provided for child care services * government expenditure includes recurrent expenditure on child care. Unit cost data for ECEC do not yet contain an estimate of user cost of capital. | |

### Family work‑related needs for child care

#### The proportion of children aged 0–12 years in families for whom additional formal child care was currently required for work‑related reasons

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Outcomes | |
| Indicator | Family work‑related needs for child care | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition:  The proportion of children aged 0–12 years in families for whom additional formal child care was currently required for work‑related reasons  Numerator:  Number of children aged 0–12 years who currently required additional formal child care where the main reason for care was ‘work‑related’.  Denominator:  All children aged 0–12.  Computation:  The number of children aged 0–12 years who currently required additional formal child care for mainly work‑related reasons, divided by all children aged 0–12. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator/denominator:  ABS (unpublished) *Microdata:* *Childhood Education and Care, Australia, June 2014* (cat. no. 4402.0.55.001). | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Data are collected and compiled by the ABS through the Childhood Education and Care Survey (CEaCS), conducted throughout Australia in June 2014 as a supplement to the ABS monthly Labour Force Survey. Information was obtained through interviews conducted over a two‑week period between 8‑21 June 2014, with some additional follow up of just over 500 outstanding households to increase sample numbers conducted in September 2014.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, which cover this collection, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | The proportion of children aged 0–12 years who currently required additional formal child care for mainly work related reasons are available by state/territory disaggregation.  All data are collected to standard classifications as stated in the CEaCS see ABS Explanatory notes. | |
| Timeliness | The reference period for the 2014 CEaCS data is June 2014 and was published in April 2015. From 1969 to 2005 the ABS conducted 12 Child Care Surveys and from 1993 the survey has been run every three years. | |
| Accuracy | Approximately 83 per cent of selected households were fully responding to the CEaCS in 2014, resulting in 4635 household records and 7126 children records.  Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. That is, they may differ from those estimates that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey.  Data that have relative standard errors above 25 per cent are indicated (by italics), and need to be used with caution. Data with relative standard errors greater than 50 per cent are considered too unreliable for general use and are not published here. The 95 per cent confidence interval (a reliability estimate) associated with each proportion estimate is reported (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). See section 2.5 of the ‘Statistical context’ for more information on confidence intervals and relative standard errors.  The survey is conducted in both urban and rural areas in all states and territories but excluded people living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The exclusion of people living in these areas is unlikely to impact on state and territory estimates, except in the NT where they account for approximately 15 per cent of the total population aged 15–74 years.  Non‑sampling errors include inaccuracies that occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and interviewers, and errors made in coding and processing data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non‑sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient processing procedures | |
| Coherence | Both the numerator and denominator are from CEaCS.  People living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or in very remote parts of Australia were excluded from CEACS in 2011 whereas in 2014 only people living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities were excluded. | |
| Accessibility | A range of national and state and territory level information are published in the CEaCS (cat. no. 4402.0) on the ABS website. The ABS also offers users a for‑fee TableBuilder product which is used for compilation of RoGS data. Additional data can also be requested from the ABS. Costs are associated with additional data and vary depending on the type of request. | |
| Interpretability | CEaCS (cat. no. 4402.0) includes Explanatory notes and a Glossary available on the ABS website.  A low or decreasing proportion may indicate more families’ work‑related needs for additional formal child care, are being met. Caution should be used when interpreting these data as they are not intended to represent the ‘unmet demand’ for formal child care. Expressed need for additional formal child care currently does not necessarily indicate whether the current additional need has been met or will be met. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * these data as they are not intended to represent the ‘unmet demand’ for formal child care. Expressed need for additional formal child care currently does not necessarily indicate whether the current additional need has been met or will be met. * the survey excludes people living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The exclusion of people living in these areas is unlikely to impact on state and territory estimates, except in the NT where they account for approximately 15 per cent of the total population aged 15–74 years. * since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. | |

#### The proportion of people aged 15 years and over not in the labour force due to caring for children, by child care service related reasons

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Outcomes | |
| Indicator | Family work‑related needs for child care | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition:  The proportion of persons aged 15 years and over not in the labour force due to caring for children, by child care service related reasons.  Numerator:  Number of persons aged 15 years and over not in the labour force due to caring for children by child care service related reasons. Child care service related reasons are considered by this Report to be ‘cost or too expensive’; ‘no child care in locality, ‘no child care available at all’; ‘booked out or no places at all’; ‘quality of child care unsuitable’ and ‘other child care reasons.  Denominator:  Persons aged 15 years and over not in the labour force due to caring for children.  Computation:  The number of persons not in the labour force due to caring for children by child care service related reasons divided by all persons not in the labour force due to caring for children. | |
| Data source/s | ABS(2015) *Persons Not In the Labour Force, Underemployed Workers and Job Search Experience, Australia, February 2014* (cat. no. 6226.0.55.001) | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Data are compiled from the Persons not in the labour force (PNILF), Underemployed workers (UEW) and Job search experience (JSE) topics that were conducted throughout Australia in the February 2014 Monthly Population Survey. These topics were conducted in February 2014 as part of a transition to a new Participation, Job Search and Labour Mobility survey, to be conducted annually from February 2015.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, which cover this collection, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | The scope of people captured in these data are persons aged 15 years and over who are not in the labour force because they were caring for children.  Estimates of the number of people not in the labour force because they were caring for children include people whose youngest child was aged 12 years and under. | |
| Timeliness | The reference period for this survey was February 2014. Data were published in February 2015. | |
| Accuracy | Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. That is, they may differ from those estimates that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey.  The sample for PNILF, UEW and JSE are a sub‑sample of 33 641 private dwelling households and special dwelling units included in the ABS monthly labour force survey in February 2014. The final sample on which estimates of PNILF are based is composed of 14 389 persons aged 15 years and over.  The survey was conducted in both urban and rural areas in all states and territories, but excluded persons living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in very remote parts of Australia.  The data are based on information collected in the survey month (February) and, due to seasonal factors, may not be representative of other months of the year.  Data that have relative standard errors above 25 per cent are indicated (by italics), and need to be used with caution. Data with relative standard errors greater than 50 per cent are considered too unreliable for general use and are not published here. The 95 per cent confidence interval (a reliability estimate) associated with each proportion estimate is reported (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). See section 2.5 of the ‘Statistical context’ for more information on confidence intervals and relative standard errors.  Non‑sampling errors include inaccuracies that occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and interviewers, and errors made in coding and processing data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non‑sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient processing procedures. | |
| **Coherence** | Both the numerator and denominator are from the survey. | |
| **Accessibility** | The ABS publishes data from this survey on its website. The release includes time series data cubes by state and territory. Additional data can also be requested from the ABS. Costs are associated with additional data and vary depending on the type of request. | |
| **Interpretability** | *Persons Not In the Labour Force, Underemployed Workers and Job Search Experience, Australia, February 2014* (cat. no. 6226.0.55.001) includes Explanatory notes and a Glossary available on the ABS website.  A relatively small or decreasing proportion of people not in the labour force due to caring for children who report the main reason for not being in the labour force as child care service related may indicate that services are meeting the needs of families. However, there are a number of factors which affect the labour force participation decisions of people responsible for caring for children, of which child care service related reasons are only some. Also, due to the subjective nature of self‑reporting, care should be taken when interpreting the data, particularly for child care service related reasons. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * there are a number of factors which affect the labour force participation decisions of people responsible for caring for children, of which child care service related reasons are only some * due to the subjective nature of self‑reporting, care should be taken when interpreting the data, particularly for child care service related reasons. | |

### Demand for ECEC

#### The proportion of children aged 0–12 years for whom additional formal child care or preschool services were currently required

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the ABS, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Outcomes | |
| Indicator | Demand for ECEC | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of children aged 0–12 years for whom additional formal child care or preschool services were currently required  Numerator:  All children aged 0–12 years who currently required additional formal child care or preschool services.  Denominator:  All children aged 0–12 years.  Computation:  The number of children aged 0–12 years who currently required additional formal child care or preschool divided by all children aged 0–12 years. | |
| Data source/s | Numerator/denominator:  ABS (unpublished) *Microdata:* *Childhood Education and Care, Australia, June 2014* (cat. no. 4402.0.55.001) | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Data are collected and compiled by the ABS through the Childhood Education and Care Survey (CEaCS), conducted throughout Australia in June 2014 as a supplement to the ABS monthly Labour Force Survey. Information was obtained through interviews conducted over a two‑week period between 8‑21 June 2014.  For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, which cover this collection, please see the ABS website. | |
| Relevance | The proportion of children aged 0–12 years who currently required additional formal care or preschool services are available by state/territory disaggregation.  All data are collected to standard classifications as stated in the CEaCS see ABS Explanatory notes. | |
| Timeliness | The reference period for the 2014 CEaCS data is June 2014 and data were published in April 2015. From 1969 to 2005 the ABS conducted 12 Child Care Surveys and from 1993 the survey has been run every three years. | |
| Accuracy | Approximately 83 per cent of selected households were fully responding to the CEaCS in 2014, resulting in 4635 household records and 7126 children records.  Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. That is, they may differ from those estimates that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey.  Data that have relative standard errors above 25 per cent are indicated (by italics), and need to be used with caution. Data with relative standard errors greater than 50 per cent are considered too unreliable for general use and are not published here. The 95 per cent confidence interval (a reliability estimate) associated with each proportion estimate is reported (for example, 80.0 per cent ± 2.7 per cent). See section 2.5 of the ‘Statistical context’ for more information on confidence intervals and relative standard errors.  The survey is conducted in both urban and rural areas in all states and territories but excluded people living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The exclusion of people living in these areas is unlikely to impact on state and territory estimates, except in the NT where they account for approximately 15 per cent of the total population aged 15–74 years.  Non‑sampling errors include inaccuracies that occur because of imperfections in reporting by respondents and interviewers, and errors made in coding and processing data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non‑sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient processing procedures. | |
| Coherence | Both the numerator and denominator are from CEaCS.  People living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or in very remote parts of Australia were excluded from CEACS in 2011 whereas in 2014 only people living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities were excluded. | |
| Accessibility | A range of national and state and territory level information are published in the CEaCS (cat. no. 4402.0) on the ABS website. The ABS also offers users a for‑fee TableBuilder product which is used for compilation of RoGS data. Additional data can also be requested from the ABS. Costs are associated with additional data and vary depending on the type of request. | |
| Interpretability | CEaCS (cat. no. 4402.0) includes Explanatory notes and a Glossary available on the ABS website.  Caution should be used when interpreting these data as they are not intended to represent the ‘unmet demand’ for formal child care or preschool services. Expressed need for additional formal child care or preschool services currently does not necessarily indicate whether the current additional need has been met or will be met. An increasing proportion of children with expressed need for additional ECEC may suggest that additional service availability will be required in the future. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * these data as they are not intended to represent the ‘unmet demand’ for formal child care or preschool. Expressed need for additional formal child care or preschool services currently does not necessarily indicate whether the current additional need has been met or will be met * the survey excludes people living in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The exclusion of people living in these areas is unlikely to impact on state and territory estimates, except in the NT where they account for approximately 15 per cent of the total population aged 15–74 years * since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings, they are subject to sampling variability. | |

### Out‑of‑pocket costs of child care

#### The proportion of weekly disposable income that families spend on long day care and family day care before and after the payment of child care subsidies

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Outcomes | |
| Indicator | Out‑of‑pocket costs of child care | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  Out‑of‑pocket costs of child care is the proportion of weekly disposable income that families spend on long day care and family day care before and after the payment of child care subsidies, for families with a 60:40 income split and gross annual income of $35 000; $55 000; $75 000; $95 000; $115 000, $135 000, $155 000, $175 000, $195 000 and $215 000). This proportion is reported for families with one child attending 50 hours (full time) long day care or family day care per week and for families with one child attending 30 hours per week long day care or family day care.  Numerator:  Average weekly amount paid  Denominator:  Weekly disposable income  Computation:  Out‑of‑pocket costs before child care subsidies are derived by dividing the average weekly amount paid by the weekly disposable income for each reported annual disposable income level, multiplied by 100. Out‑of‑pocket costs after child care subsidies are derived by deducting subsidies from the average weekly amount paid and dividing by the weekly disposable income for each reported annual disposable income level, multiplied by 100. Costs before and after subsidies are derived on the basis of 50 hours care and 30 hours care, respectively. Income is assumed to be split between 2 people on a 60:40 basis. | |
| Data source/s | Australian Government Department of Education and Training (unpublished) | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected through the CCMS by the DSS under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act. These data are compiled for this Report by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training. | |
| Relevance | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected at the service level and geocoded and boundary tagged, so all geographies are available. | |
| Timeliness | Australian Government CCB approved child care services data are collected weekly, available since services transitioned to reporting under the CCMS between 2008 and June 2009. Data are reported on a quarterly basis. | |
| Accuracy | Data sourced from CCMS are collected via an electronic administrative system. | |
| Coherence | Australian Government CCB approved child care services has been consistent since the introduction of the CCMS. The definitions remain unchanged. | |
| Accessibility | The Australian Government CCB approved child care data at the service level are protected under the Family Assistance (Administration) Act legislation. To date data have only been released for purposes of this Report. | |
| Interpretability | Lower out‑of‑pocket costs for child care as a proportion of weekly disposable income (after child care subsidies) represents more affordable child care. Similar percentages across income groups suggest a more equitable outcome. Care needs to be exercised when interpreting results, because a variety of factors (including for example rates, rental costs, localised living costs) can influence child care costs. Also, data reflect particular scenarios of child care use and family income level so do not reflect out‑of‑pocket costs by families with different levels of income or care usage. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * lower out‑of‑pocket cost for child care as a proportion of weekly disposable income (after child care subsidies) represents more affordable child care. Similar percentages across income groups suggest a more equitable outcome * care needs to be exercised when interpreting results, because a variety of factors (including for example rates, rental costs and localised costs of living) can influence child care costs * data reflect particular scenarios of child care use and family income level so do not reflect out‑of‑pocket costs by families with different levels of income or care usage. | |

### ECEC outcomes

#### The proportion of children with ECEC experience who are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)

Data quality information for this indicator has been developed by the Secretariat in consultation with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, with additional Steering Committee comments.

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| Indicator definition and description | |  |
| Element | Outcomes | |
| Indicator | ECEC outcomes | |
| Measure/s (computation) | Definition  The proportion of children with ECEC experience who are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDC.  Numerator  The number of children with a valid domain score who have had ECEC experience that are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains of the AEDC.  Denominator  The number of children with at least one valid domain score on the AEDC who had ECEC experience.  Computation  The number of children who have had ECEC experience and are developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains divided by the number of children with at least one valid domain score who had ECEC experience. | |
| Data source/s | Australian Government Department of Education and Training (unpublished) *AEDC* | |
| Data Quality Framework Dimensions | |  |
| Institutional environment | AEDC data are reported by teachers in the first year of full time school. It is a national collection of all children in the first year of primary school. | |
| Relevance | Data are available on the basis of a specific AEDC local communities and communities, as well as by state and territory. | |
| Timeliness | Data were collected between May and July 2012. | |
| Accuracy | Teachers completed a checklist for each child in the first year of school. This was a census, which assessed almost 290 000 children. | |
| Coherence | The numerator and denominator are from the same collection. | |
| Accessibility | Unpublished data can be requested from the AEDC Data Manager, as long as requests meet the requirements of the AEDC data protocol. This is on a fee for service basis. The AEDC data protocol details the requirements for public release of data. | |
| Interpretability | User guides and explanatory material are available on the AEDC website. | |
| Data Gaps/Issues Analysis | |  |
| Key data gaps /issues | The Steering Committee notes the following issues:   * a range of factors have an impact on the AEDC results including parental and family circumstances and the availability and take‑up of services such as allied health, ECEC and parenting support. ECEC is just one factor contributing to results * not all children in the AEDC data set have a completed response for whether or not they attended ECEC. | |