



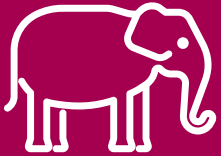
**Access to quality early childhood services for every child
How many elephants do we have in the room?**

Mihaela Ionescu | Program Director | ISSA



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*Everything around children impacts
their development and learning.*



Low awareness of the importance of early years

The risk of a narrow understanding of what matters in child's development

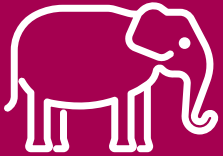
There are no more 'villages to raise the child'...





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**Every time a child is
born, a parent is born.**



Family support - a private concern / societal
issue

Primary focus on family financial support

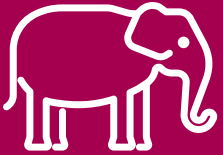
Staff preparation (across services)





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Parents' wellbeing determines children's wellbeing.



Coordinated family support policies

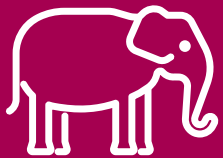
Are parenting support programs part of
the early childhood system?





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**It is not about ‘educating parents’,
it’s about providing effective and
coordinated ways to support
them, building on their strengths
and in line with their needs.**



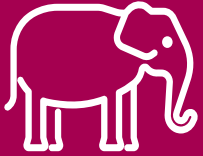
Siloed approach to family support
A narrative of naming and blaming
Deficit approach





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No policy and service regarding young children can disregard children's and families' choices and needs, their involvement and participation.



Relevance of the early childhood services to children and families

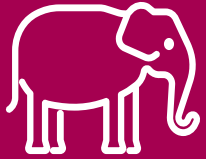
Democratic services?





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Policy measures and quality services must reach children and families where they live.



Hard to reach children and families / hard to reach services

Local leadership and responsibility





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**Complex problems require
comprehensive solutions
both at the local and
country level.**



The connection between practice-research-policy

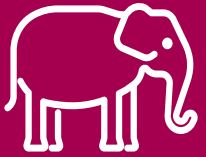
The eco-system view - constellation of coordinated
services





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**Prioritizing early
childhood development is
a political choice.**



Are we not loud enough or are we too few or...?



first years
first priority

European Campaign for prioritizing ECD

co-led by ISSA and Eurochild

10 countries



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first years
first priority

AAA

THE CAMPAIGN

NEWS

ACROSS EUROPE

TAKE ACTION

RESOURCES

IN EUROPE

First Years First Priority is a Europe-wide campaign set up to advocate for prioritization of early childhood development in public policies, with a particular focus on families and children who are at greater risk of discrimination and exclusion.

We aim to ensure that all young children aged 0 to 6 have equal opportunities to safe, healthy and optimal development.

Join our community of followers and supporters to advocate for more political visibility and resource allocation to early childhood.

[Join the ECD Community](#)

[Share on social media](#)

ACROSS EUROPE

Early Childhood Development in the countries where the campaign operates. [Learn more](#)



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

first years
first priority



- A comprehensive and holistic approach to ECD across early years – pre-birth up to primary school (6 years)
- A comprehensive approach to key areas of factors impacting ECD
- Strong focus on the most vulnerable children
- Strong focus on cross-sectoral coordination

9 country profiles with recommendations (2021) and cross-country analysis – recommendations at EU and country level

3 thematic papers (2022):

- Prioritizing the professionalization of ECEC staff
- Putting early childhood at the heart of the Child Guarantee
- Universal access to maternal health care

3 thematic papers (2023):

- Young refugee and immigrant children
- Young Roma children
- Young children with disabilities



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FirstYearsFirstPriority.eu

KEY FINDINGS AND CHALLENGES (2021)

first years
first priority

1

The scarcity of data on almost all policy areas impacting ECD - especially children under three and the most vulnerable

2

Limited or non-existent disaggregated data on the lives of young children under six – especially those under three

3

Across countries there is a need to guarantee universal access to ECEC services for the entire age range (birth to 6)

4

There is a need for an integrated multi-sectoral approach to early childhood, with leadership and coordination that addresses children's and families' needs in a comprehensive way



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FirstYearsFirstPriority.eu



<https://www.issa.nl/primokiz>

An ISSA licensed program:

- targeting local governments
- mobilizing local participation
- harvesting local expertise
- bridging/modeling cross-sectoral dialogue and coordination
- creating local ownership on developing local early childhood strategies, informed by local situation analysis

local political will + local needs + local expertise



360° view on the local early childhood system



access to quality early childhood services
for each child

However, much is
happening at
municipality level
where children live...



www.issa.nl



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Dankjewel!

Bedankt voor je aandacht.