

CYPRUS

Key contextual data

Compiled by

Inge Schreyer and Pamela Oberhuemer

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Early childhood education and care (ECEC)

Please note

In alignment with country-specific usage, the terms chosen in this report for the main forms of centre-based ECEC settings are **nursery** (*vrefikos stathmos*, 0–2), **childcare centre** (*vrefokomi-koi/paidokomikoi stathmoi*, 0–4) and **pre-primary school** (*nipiagogeio* – formerly kindergarten 3–5)¹. Any additional forms of provision are described where appropriate.

Historical milestones in ECEC in Cyprus

1880	Founding of first establishment for young children in Larnaca, shortly after the onset of British dominance
1898	First curricular guidelines for early childhood education issued, following the example of Greece
1920–1930	44 pre-primary groups attached to primary schools are set up and subsidised by the (colonial) government (39 for the Greek community, four for the Turkish and one for the Armenian community).
1933	Following an uprising on the island, only 15 of the centres survive.
1933–1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – All public institutions lose government subsidies and are transferred to the private sector – By 1960 there are 48 centres for 3 to 6 year-olds, mostly unlicensed and staffed by professionally unqualified persons.
1960	Cyprus gained independence from the United Kingdom.
1960s to 1973	Only 10% of children aged 3 years 8 months to 5 years 8 months attend the existing 13 public and 37 private centres.
1974–1979	Following the Turkish invasion, 55 of 133 primary schools and public kindergartens are demolished and only 89 of 121 private institutions remain undamaged.
1975–1976	An Early Childhood Education Department is established at the Pedagogical Academy.
1977	First community kindergarten opened
1979	Government expansion plan to increase number of public sector ECEC centres to 300.
1987–1988	The number of students attending the Pedagogical Academy to become Early Childhood Teachers increases from 30 to 60.
1994	Publication of a pre-primary curriculum part of the elementary school curriculum
1996	Number of community kindergartens reaches 166.
2004	Compulsory and free of charge attendance in an ECEC setting (<i>prodimotiki</i>) accredited by the Ministry of Education and Culture
2008	The official Educational Reform at the Ministry of Education and Culture begins and includes early childhood education.
2013/14	The majority of kindergartens (265/515) are state-maintained, whereas the majority of nurseries and age-integrated childcare centres (108/172) are private for-profit facilities.
2014	The second phase of the Educational Reform begins.
2018	Council of Ministers decides to gradually raise the school entry age
2020/21	School entry age is raised to 5 years 10 months
2021/22	School entry age is raised to 6 years

Sources: Loizou 2018; Eurydice 2023, 4

¹ **Editors' note:** International data sources use varying ways of presenting the age range of children enrolled in ECEC settings. We have chosen the following age-inclusive format for the SEEPRO-3 reports: **0–2** years for children up to 3 years of age and **3–5** years for 3, 4 and 5 year-olds. The relevant formats for Cyprus are **0–2**, **0–4** and **3–5** years.

ECEC system type and auspices²

In Cyprus, the system of early childhood education and care is organised separately and partly in parallel. Nurseries for children under 3 years of age are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance (*Ypurgeio Ergasias, Pronoias kai Koinonikon Asphaliseen*). Kindergartens for 3 to under 6 year-olds come under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MOESY – *Ypourgeiou Paideias, Athlitismou kai Neolaias*). Age-integrated centres for children up to the age of 5 years and 8 months fall under the responsibility of both ministries, each of which oversees the corresponding age group.

General objectives and legislative framework

The government "National Strategy for Lifelong Learning 2014-2020" (*Ethnikä Stratägikä gia tä Dia Biu Mathäsä*) sets out reform goals with regard to all forms of learning (formal, informal, non-formal). These include: Access for all; improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training; promoting research and development activities; improving labour market opportunities.

Since 2014, there has been an action plan for the reform of the education system, which also partially includes the system of early childhood education, upbringing and care (especially with regard to demands for further training and education of staff).

In nurseries for under 3 year-olds (*vrefikos stathmos*) the focus is more on care than on education. For childcare centres for children up to the age of 5 (*vrefokomikoi/paidokomikoi stathmoi*), the Children's Act applies (*O Peri Paidion Nomos tu 1993*, amended in 2011). State kindergartens are regulated by primary education regulations (*O peri Stoicheiodus Ekpaideusäs Nomos 2012*), private and municipal kindergartens by the Law on Private Schools and Institutions (*O peri Idiotikon Scholeion kai Phrontistärion Nomos tu 2012*).

The Special Education Act (*O Peri Agogäs kai Ekpaideusäs Paidion me Eidikes Anankes*, 1999, amended in 2001) stipulates that children with special educational needs are to attend mainstream institutions, which must be equipped with the necessary infrastructure and support measures.

ECEC entitlement and compulsory attendance

There is no legal entitlement to a place in an ECEC setting for under 3 year-olds.

Following a decision of the Council of Ministers in January 2018, the maximum age of children attending childcare centres is to be gradually increased from 4 years and 8 months to 5 years. Similarly, the starting age for primary school is to be increased gradually from the current age of 5 years and 8 months to the age of 6 (MOESY 2022a, 2023).

Pre-primary school (formerly kindergarten) is compulsory for children aged 5 and over and free for 26 hours per week. Attendance is voluntary for younger children.

Currently, there is an attempt by the MOESY, supported by all parties, to change the starting age of compulsory pre-primary education to 4 years instead of 5, but this has not as yet been voted on by the House of Representatives (Loizou 2024).

² The Eurydice country report on ECEC in Cyprus provided the main orientation for legal and regulatory aspects. All other sources are indicated within the text and in the references section.

Main types of provision

Nurseries (*vrefikos stathmos*) for children aged 6 weeks to 3 years and **childcare centres** (*vrefokomikoi/paidokomikoi stathmoi*) for children up to the age of 5 years are either independent settings or they are integrated into kindergartens and are then multi-age settings. They are open from 1 September to 30 July; they are closed in August and on 12 public holidays. As a rule, they are open from 7:00 to 17:00. ECEC settings are available in all places where more than 10 children live. Children from places with fewer than 10 children are transported free of charge to the nearest facility. In 2018/19, there were 229 nurseries for children under 3 years of age (CYSTAT 2021, no newer data available at the time of reporting).

Pre-primary schools / kindergartens (*nipiagogeio*) accept children from 3 to 6 years. State-run pre-primary settings, which are open from around mid-September to the end of June, usually have opening hours from 7:45 to 13:05; only a few are open until 16:00. In municipal/community pre-primary settings, the opening hours are usually agreed with the parents' council so that the parents' working hours can be taken into account. Most private settings are open in the afternoon.

In 2022/23, there were 347 pre-primary schools/kindergartens in Cyprus (272 public, 75 community schools) (MOESY 2022b).

Provider structures

There are three kinds of provider of ECEC settings: (1) Public/state-maintained institutions which are established and fully funded by the state; (2) non-profit private institutions which are organised by voluntary initiatives or associations and receive state subsidies; (3) private commercial settings which are founded and financed by a legal entity.

State-maintained **nurseries** are established by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and state-maintained **pre-primary schools/kindergartens** by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth (MoESY). Both are run in cooperation with local authorities. The operation of both private non-profit and private for-profit facilities must be approved by the MoESY. Places in state-run nurseries are limited, since there are few of them compared to private non-profit and private for-profit facilities. Parents have to apply for a place, and these are then allocated according to certain criteria such as the employment of both parents or the number of children in the family. The larger majority of children aged 0–2 years who attend a nursery are in private-commercial settings – 68% in 2018/19 (CYSTAT 2021, no newer data available at the time of reporting). In the same year, just under 3% of children enrolled were in a state-maintained nursery, whereas nearly half of children aged 3 and above were enrolled in a state-run pre-primary school/kindergarten. In the national statistics for 2019/20, there was no breakdown of the ECEC setting types or the types of private settings. Almost two thirds of the children were enrolled in private ECEC settings (see *Table 1*). One year later (2020/21), both the number of settings (734) and the number of children (32,958) decreased slightly (CYSTAT 2023).

Table 1

Cyprus: Number of children enrolled in ECEC settings (nurseries, childcare centres and pre-primary schools) according to provider type, 2019/20

	Public	Private non-profit and for-profit	Total
Number of ECEC settings	277	466	743
Number of children	12,137	21,192	33,329
Share of children, in %*	36.4	63.6	

Source: CYSTAT 2021 (no newer data available at the time of reporting), *own calculations

Participation rates in regulated provision

The majority of under 3 year-olds are not enrolled in institutions (see *Table 2*), although the proportion fell from 81% to approximately 70% between 2005 and 2019. This is partly due to the fact that informal care provided by grandparents and other relatives is still very common in Cyprus. In contrast, by 2022, three quarters (74.5%) of children between the ages of 3 and school entry were enrolled in institutions. While this proportion rose from 2005 to 2015, it had fallen slightly by 2022.

Table 2

Cyprus: Enrolment rates in ECEC centre-based settings by age and duration of attendance, 2005-2022

Year	Weekly attendance	0 to under 3 years, in %	3 years to minimum compulsory school age in %
2005	1 to 29 hours	7	40
	Over 30 hours	12	38
	No enrolment in ECEC	81	22
2010	1 to 29 hours	10	34
	Over 30 hours	16	45
	No enrolment in ECEC	75	21
2015	1 to 29 hours	9.4	49.4
	Over 30 hours	11.4	32.0
	No enrolment in ECEC	79.2	18.6
2022	1 to 29 hours	5.8	19.6
	Over 30 hours	23.7	54.9
	No enrolment in ECEC	70.5	25.4

Source: Eurostat 2023b

According to national statistics, 24.7% of 0 to 2 year-olds attended an ECEC setting in 2018, and 90% of 3 to 5-year olds (CYSTAT 2021, no newer data available at the time of reporting). In 2021, Eurostat reported that two thirds of 4 year-olds (67.8%) and almost all (97.1%) 5 year-olds attended a kindergarten/childcare centre (see *Table 4*).

Table 3

Cyprus: Number of children in ECEC settings by age, 2018/19

Children's age	Number of children
Under 1 year	501
1 year-olds	1,681
2 year-olds	5,007
Under 3 year-olds	7,189
3 year-olds	7,087
4 year-olds	8,637
5 year-olds	9,442
3 to under 6 year-olds	25,166
0 to under 6 year-olds	32,355

Source: CYSTAT 2021 (no newer data available at the time of reporting)

Table 4

Cyprus: Number and enrolment rates of children in ECEC settings, by age, 2021

Age	Number of children in nurseries/ childcare centres	Enrolment rates in nurseries/ childcare centres in %	Number of children in kindergartens/ childcare centres	Enrolment rates in kindergartens/ childcare centres in %
Under 2 years	1,448	7.5	536	2.8
2 year-olds	2,282	24.5	1,859	19.9
3 year-olds	2,589	27.7	3,784	40.5
4 year-olds	1,893	19.9	6,450	67.8
5 year-olds	313	3.3	9,189	97.1
6 year-olds	81	0.8	2,434	25.5

Source: Eurostat 2023h, i

Financing and costs for parents

In 2020, the government spent 13.4% of its budget on education as a whole, which corresponded to 6% of GDP (CYSTAT 2023, 2). For each child in the early childhood and pre-primary sector, €5,204 were spent during the same year.

State-maintained nurseries and kindergartens are primarily funded by the government – either directly or through local school authorities. Public institutions are not allowed to accept any other funds.

While kindergarten attendance in a public setting has been free of charge since 2021 for children aged 5 years and older for 26 hours a week, parents of younger children in public kindergartens must pay a monthly flat fee of €42. In nurseries or childcare centres, parental fees are income-related. Under certain circumstances, depending on the criteria of the institution, a reduced amount may also be charged. Private commercial kindergartens do not receive subsidies from the government and set their own fees, which can vary considerably.

2022 gab ein Paar mit zwei Kindern für die Betreuungskosten etwa 16% des Netto-Haushaltseinkommens für die Kinderbetreuung aus³ (OECD.Stat 2023).

The government, through the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance, is proposing to subsidise the families with a sum of €100–350 for every child under 4 years of age who is attending a nursery/child care or pre-primary setting, starting in 2022-2023. This subsidy depends on the family's wages, children's ages and the number of children in the family. The money will go directly to the ECEC setting the child is attending (Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance 2022).

Staff to child ratios and group size

The heads of **nurseries** and **childcare centres** decide on the group structure; legally binding regulations do not exist. However, the following are recommendations regarding the maximum number of children per qualified staff member (see *Table 5*).

³ The calculation is based on: full-time working parents (average wage); two children aged 2 and 3 years in full-time childcare; childcare benefits included.

Table 5

Cyprus: Maximum staff to child ratios in nurseries and childcare centres by age

Age	Staff to child ratio
Under 2 years	1 : 6
2 to 3 years	1 : 16
3 to 4 years	1 : 24
Over 4 years	1 : 28

Source: Eurydice 2023, 4.2

In both public and private **kindergartens**, there should be no more than 25 children in a group or the number should correspond to the room size (Eurydice 2023).

In 2018/19, the average staffing ratio in nurseries and childcare centres was 1: 10.9 (9.4 in public, 11.6 in private non-profit and 10.7 in private for-profit). In kindergartens the average ratio was 1: 14.2 (15.5 in public, 16.5 in private-non-profit and 12.5 in private for profit (CYSTAT 2021, no newer data available at the time of reporting). In 2019/20, the overall staffing ratio in the early childhood and pre-primary sector was 1:12.8 – a slight improvement compared to the previous year (1:13.4) (CYSTAT 2023).

Curricular frameworks

There is no official educational plan for the work in **nursery** settings for children under 3 years of age. The activities are usually planned by the centre head and the staff choose the appropriate didactic-methodical approaches. The main goals are the safety of the children and age-appropriate activities.

The curricular framework (*Analytika Programmata*) for **kindergartens** is mandatory for all state and municipal kindergartens and is part of an overarching curriculum for primary and secondary education. In 2020 it was revised, but has been implemented since 2011.

There are four developmental areas: (1) personal and social understanding, (2) emotional empowerment, (3) motor skills, and (4) mental strengthening. In addition to planned structured activities, there is also room for spontaneous activities and play. Furthermore, emphasis is placed on cultural, linguistic and religious pluralism (European Commission 2020, 76).

The curriculum follows the philosophy that every child is unique and should be involved in a democratic way in the decisions that affect them. Learning should be holistic, cross-cutting and based on individual potential. It is child-centred, play-based and emphasises problem-solving skills as well as the development of social skills. The professionals are free to choose how they translate the curricular goals into practice.

In state kindergartens, there is a fixed daily schedule by the state but the teacher is free to revise it based on the children's needs. Private and private non-profit institutions develop their own schedules, which has to be approved by the Ministry of Education, or they can follow the curriculum of the public institutions.

Digital education

The kindergarten curriculum emphasises the pedagogical benefits of digital technologies as a support for learning without specifying the digital competences to be developed (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2019, 100). "Technology" is seen as an integral part of the learning process and as a tool for both professionals and children. Digital media should be integrated



"appropriately" in kindergartens and used in an age-related way. It is pointed out that this should not replace real-life experiences, but rather strengthen and enrich them. It is up to the professionals to decide when and how to use which tools. However, professionals should continuously educate themselves so that they are able to offer children experiences with current technologies.

Monitoring – evaluation

Overall, the evaluation of the education system has not yet been regulated. However, the newly established Centre for Educational Research and Evaluation (CERE) is expected to conduct evaluation studies of the entire system.

Child-related assessment

In **nursery** settings, a personal file is kept for each child, in which the professionals record the child's progress. The first documentation takes place 15 days after entry into the setting and is updated at least every three months.

The assessment of children in **kindergarten**, which is considered an integral part of the curriculum, is done by means of portfolios, photographs, first efforts at writing, etc. At the beginning of the kindergarten year, the child is closely observed and both a diagnostic report (regarding cognitive, emotional and psychomotor development) and an informal report (describing the child's behaviour) are written.

Formative evaluations take place throughout the year through random or planned observations of the child's behaviour. A summative evaluation at the end of the kindergarten year provides the professionals with information for their own self-evaluation as well as for the evaluation and further development of the kindergarten-specific educational programme.

In terms of the transition to school, kindergartens work together with the primary schools. For this purpose, mutual visits take place and information about the children is exchanged. In addition, emphasis is also placed on cooperation with the parents.

The School Progress Report (*Sxoliki Ekthesi Proodou*) should be completed by the teacher for each child twice a year, in January and in June. It is considered to be a useful tool for evaluating progress across the school year and assessing the degree of success of the basic intended outcomes per class and child (MOESY 2019). Nevertheless, it can be restrictive, as it narrows down elements assessed for each child, sometimes losing the bigger picture of the child's overall abilities and potential.

Centre-level internal assessment

Internal assessments usually consist of a report on work of the institution. This is prepared by the kindergarten head, together with the team, and determines whether the self-imposed goals have been achieved.

The Ministry of Education recommends an annual informal report for kindergartens, which is submitted to the Inspector General at the end of the school year.

External evaluation

Quality assurance in **nurseries** and **home-based settings** is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance. Both the facilities and the professionals are inspected by inspectors from the Ministry's Social Welfare Service.

The responsibility for quality assurance in public **kindergartens** lies with the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth which inspects the quality of education as well as the professionals. Professionals are usually observed at work and evaluated once a year for their first three years of work and once every three years thereafter. Three supervisors are responsible for the evaluations. In addition, administrative and training aspects, equipment and rooms are evaluated. All observations result in a comprehensive report.

Inclusion agenda

There is no clear inclusion agenda, although the majority of children with special needs and disabilities attend mainstream institutions where care is taken to ensure that they receive appropriate support. Also, there is dual system where some children with disabilities attend special schools. Even though the MOESY initiated a reform for special education starting in 2018, it is still nevertheless considered as distinct and children with disabilities tend to end up being segregated (Symeonidou 2022).

Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Children with specific support needs are either placed in a separate room of a mainstream institution, where a maximum of six children are supervised by a specialist support worker, or they attend a separate institution for children with disabilities (only 5 to 6% attend the latter). An Individualised Education Programme (IEP) is designed by specialists for each child, emphasising psychological, social and other areas of education. The IEP is approved by the Ministry of Education.

Children from deprived socio-economic backgrounds are given priority for admission to public kindergartens (European Commission 2020, 43).

For the school year 2020/2021, 6,836 children with disabilities attended public pre-primary and primary settings, specifically 657 attended 116 special units located in the settings. For the same school year, 498 children attended separate special schools (MOESY 2021).

Children with a migration background – Children from Roma communities

There are no regulatory procedures regarding the enrolment of children with a migrant background in an ECEC setting. According to the "Strategy Report of the Ministry of Education for Multi-Cultural Education", the languages and cultures of children who do not speak Greek as their first language should be taken into account and the children should receive special support, such as learning Greek through intensive courses or materials in other languages.

In 2018/19, there were also (private-commercial) institutions where the language of instruction was not Greek: 1,398 children attended English-speaking, 58 French-speaking and 13 Armenian-speaking kindergartens. 824 under 3 year-olds were enrolled in English-speaking, 220 in Russian-speaking and 49 in Armenian-speaking nurseries. Out of a total of 33,108 children in ECEC settings, 3,195 were from EU countries and 2,250 from non-EU countries, i.e. 16.4% of under 6 year-olds had a non-Cypriot background (CYSTAT 2021, no newer data available at the time of reporting).

2019/20 a total number of 5.798 children with a non-Cypriot background attended an ECEC setting (CYSTAT 2023).

Eurostat data indicate that in 2022, 18.8% of the total population had a non-Cypriot citizenship, more than half of them (55.4%) were from other EU27(2020) countries. In the under 5 age-group, these shares were 9.6% and 63.1% respectively (Eurostat 2023c).



As the Roma population in Cyprus is very small (Council of Europe estimates 0.15% of the population), policies are integrated in the strategy for social inclusion of disadvantaged groups (European Commission 2021).

There is a specific guide (published in 2020) that supports children whose language is not Greek through a list of proposed activities and materials to support them to communicate and develop relationships. It is called “The Guide to welcoming children with an immigrant background” (MOESY 2020).

Parental leave arrangements⁴

Maternity leave lasts 18 weeks, including two weeks before the birth. These two and nine weeks after birth are compulsory. Employed mothers receive 72% of their salary (without upper limit), Employees of the public sector receive their full salary for the first 12 weeks and later 72%.

Fathers receive two consecutive weeks of **Paternity leave**, which is remunerated in the same way as Maternity leave.

Working parents (both parents) can also take an additional 18 weeks of **Parental leave**, two weeks of which can be transferred to the other parent. However, no more than five weeks can be taken in a calendar year. Six weeks (or eight in the case of a transfer) are remunerated at 72% of salary, the rest of the time is unpaid. Parental leave can be taken until the child is 8 years old.

There is no systematically compiled statistical data on the take-up of parental leave.

Current challenges for the ECEC system in Cyprus

Country expert assessment by Eleni Loizou

Lack of staff due to the low paid salaries in the private sector

In the light of current economic changes and the increase in the cost of living in Cyprus, it has been hard for ECEC teachers to keep a job that provides for their living expenses. Most of the ECEC graduates end up working for many years in private childcare and pre-primary settings before they get the chance to be considered for a post in the public sector. The wages in most of these private settings range from €650-850 per month. Thus, due to this low pay and the long hours they have to work, it is often the case that ECEC teachers change jobs or they leave the field completely to do something else that provides a better salary.

Lack of governmental support of public pre-primary schools

The Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth recently introduced a proposal for compulsory pre-primary education to start at 4 years of age. In order to provide and accommodate for all 4 year-olds, the MOESY proposed to subsidise private pre-primary settings instead of building new public pre-primary schools to respond to the demand needs. It is evident that the provision of public ECEC is not a priority for the government, but instead aims to support private schools.

⁴ The brief summary in this section is based on the country note for Cyprus by Maria Angeli in the *International Review of Leave Policies and Research 2023*

A limited number of early childhood education supervisors and policy makers with no ECEC specialist knowledge

It is a fact that ECE is under-represented in the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth. There are only three ECEC Supervisors for the whole island, whose duties are to supervise, assess and support teachers in all public and community settings. This ratio is inappropriate and does not allow for quality support. Moreover, policy makers are often politicians who are not informed about ECEC and do not seem to have a vision for the field, thus their decision making is based on economic and other political variables only.

Demographic data

Please note: For reasons of comparability, data on children are always reported up to 6 years of age, even if compulsory schooling starts earlier or later in some countries.

Total population

In 2022, the population in Cyprus totalled 904,705 This represents a steady rise over the past 20 years (2000: 690.497; 2005: 733.067; 2020: 819.140; 2015: 847.008; 2020: 888.005) (Eurostat 2023a).

Total fertility rate

In 2021, the average total fertility rate in the EU27 (from 2020) was 1.53. The highest total fertility rate of the 33 SEEPRO-3 countries was in France (1.84), the lowest in Malta (1.13). At 1.39, Cyprus was significantly below the EU27 average (Eurostat 2023d)⁵.

Children under 6 years of age

Table 6

Cyprus: Number of children under 6 years of age, 2022

Age	Number of children
under 1 year-olds	10,275
1 year-olds	9,874
2 year-olds	9,522
3 year-olds	9,313
4 year-olds	9,327
5 year-olds	9,648
Total 0 to under 6 year-olds	57,959

Source: Eurostat 2023a

In 2022, 3.3% of the total population were children under the age of 3, and 6.4% were children under 6 years of age. As in the last 20 years, these shares were above the respective EU averages

⁵ Data for **Ukraine** and the **UK** (2021) are from Statista (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/296567/fertility-rate-in-ukraine/> and <https://www.statista.com/statistics/284042/fertility-rate-in-the-united-kingdom-uk/>). Data for the **Russian Federation** (2021) are from WorldBankData (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.TFRT.IN?locations=RU>).

Table 7

Cyprus: Children under 6 years of age – share in total population from 2000 to 2022, in %*

Year	Comparison Cyprus/EU	Under 3 year-olds	3 to under 6 year-olds	0 to under 6 year-olds
2000	Cyprus	4.0	4.4	8.4
	∅ EU15 ⁶	3.2	3.2	6.4
2005	Cyprus	3.3	3.5	6.9
	∅ EU25	3.1	3.1	6.2
2015	Cyprus	3.4	3.5	6.8
	∅ EU28	3.0	3.2	6.2
2022	Cyprus	3.3	3.1	6.4
	∅ EU27	2.7	2.9	5.7

Source: Eurostat 2023a, * own calculations, deviations due to roundings

Single households with children under age 6

More than two thirds (69.7%) of all households with children under 6 are couple households. Single parent households accounted for only 2.2% of all households in Cyprus in 2022 – the statistical data show almost only single mothers (2.1%).

Table 8

Cyprus: Households with children under age 6, 2022

Household type	Total households	Total households, in %*
All households	101,500	
Couple households	70,700	69.7
Other household type	28,600	28.2
Single households, total	2,200	2.2
Single households, women	2,100	2.1
Single households, men	100**	0.1

Source: Eurostat 2023k, *own calculations, **data computed

Employment rates of parents with children under 6 years of age

In Cyprus, in 2022, the overall employment rate for men (15-64 years) was 83.7% and for women 73.0% (Eurostat 2023j).

In 2022, 71.3% of women and 92.7% of men (18-64 years) with children under 6 were employed. Among the 27 EU-countries (2020), the shares of employed fathers were above the EU-average (87.2%) as were those of mothers (EU-average 63.6%) (Eurostat 2023e, own calculations).

⁶ The data for 2000 include the EU15-Länder at that time (AT, BE, DK, DE, IE, EL, ES, F, FI, IT, LU, NL, PT, SE, UK). The 2005 data (EU25) include CY, CZ, EE, HU, LV, LT, MT, PL, SI, SK. Data for 2015 include the additional EU28 countries BG, RO und HR. Data for EU27 (from 2020) comprise the countries of the EU28 without the UK.

Table 9a

Cyprus: Employment rates of parents with children under 6 compared with other EU countries, 2010 und 2021

	2010	
	Mothers, in %	Fathers, in %
Cyprus	72.3	91.1
Highest rate of employment in 27 EU countries ⁷	Denmark: 82.7	Netherlands: 93.4
Lowest rate of employment in 27 EU countries	Hungary: 31.7	Latvia: 72.7
	2022	
	Mothers, in %	Fathers, in %
Cyprus	71.3	92.7
Highest rate of employment in 27 (2020) EU countries ⁸	Luxembourg: 81.9	Sweden: 95.1
Lowest rate of employment in 27 (2020) EU countries	Czech Republic: 42.5	Romania: 78.5

Source: Eurostat 2023e

For the SEEPRO-3 countries that were not part of the EU27(2020) in 2021/2022, data are displayed in *Table 9b*.

Table 9b

Employment rates in non-EU SEEPRO-3 countries, 2021/2022/2023

Countries	Parents with children under 6 years		Overall employment rate	
	Mothers in %	Fathers in %	Women in %	Men in %
*Norway (2022)	82.9	94.3	75.4	80.1
***Russia (2021/2022)	67.1 (2021)	k.A.	55.6 (2022)	70.4 (2022)
*Serbia (2022)	64.4	78.3	57.9	71.0
**Switzerland (2022/2023)	46.9	95.3	60.0 61.1 (2023)	83.5 84.2 (2023)
+Ukraine (2021)	n.d.	n.d.	60.7	69.9
+++United Kingdom (2021/2023)				
with dependent children	75.6	92.1	++72.3	++79.2
with children under 2 years	72.4	93.1	++72.1 (2023)	++79.4 (2023)
with children 3–4 years	70.7	95.0		

*Eurostat 2023e, 2023j

**[BFS] Bundesamt für Statistik. 2023. *Erwerbsquoten in Vollzeitäquivalenten nach Geschlecht, Nationalität, Altersgruppen, Familientyp* [Full-time equivalent employment rates by gender, nationality, age groups, family type]. <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/asset/de/je-d-03.02.00.01.03>

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+ [SSSU] State Statistics Service of Ukraine. 2022. *Employed population in 2021, by age group, sex and place of residence*. <https://ukrstat.gov.ua/operativ/operativ2017/rp/eans/eanse/Archznsnmve.htm>

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⁷ AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DK, DE, EE, EL, ES, F, FI, IE, IT, HU, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK

⁸ AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DK, DE, EE, EL, ES, F, FI, IE, IT, HR, HU, LV, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK

+++Office for National Statistics. 2023. *Families and the labour market, UK: 2021*. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/articles/familiesandthelabourmarketengland/2021>

Children at risk of poverty or social exclusion⁹

In 2022, 18.8% of children under 6 were at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This proportion was well below the EU27 average (23.3%) for this age group. The share of all persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the total population was 16.7% (EU: 21.6%). In 2020, 1.9% of children under 6 and 1.6% of the total population suffered from severe material deprivation (EU average 6.1% and 4.3% respectively) (Eurostat 2023f, g).

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⁹ 'At risk of poverty or social exclusion' refers to the situation of people either at risk of poverty (threshold set at 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income after social transfers), or severely materially deprived or living in a household with a very low work intensity. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Material_deprivation

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