

# LATVIA

## 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 general term used in this report for centre-based ECEC provision is **ECEC centre** (*pirmsskolas izglītības iestādes, 1½–6/7*), comprising **kindergarten** (*bērnudārzs, 1½–5*) and **pre-primary group/s** (*pirmsskolas izglītības vadlīnijas, 6-7*)<sup>1</sup>. Any additional forms are described where appropriate.

### Historical milestones in ECEC in Latvia

1910	The first childcare facilities are established by unions, churches and the State.
1950–1980	Expansion of ECEC provision under the Soviet system
1991	Following the political changes in Europe, many settings are closed as a result of high costs, a low birth-rate and low participation rates.
Since the end of the 1990s	The number of available places in ECEC settings no longer matches local demand.
1999	A new General Education Act comes into force.
2002	Pre-primary enrolment is made obligatory for 5 and 6 year-olds.
Since 2004	Most pre-primary buildings are included in renovation programmes financed by the municipalities and EU structural funds.
2011	Children aged 1½ up to statutory school age (7 years) are entitled by law to a place in an ECEC setting.
2012	National curricular guidelines are introduced for the ECEC sector (pilot programme for pre-primary education - <i>Noteikumi par valsts pirmsskolas izglītības vadlīnijām</i> ).
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Possibilities for becoming a home-based childcare worker are extended as a measure of dealing with the lack of available places.</li> <li>– Municipalities have to bear at least part of the costs of attending a private facility if there are no public places.</li> </ul>
2019/2020	New regulations come into force regarding the national curricular guidelines for the ECEC sector, including home-based ECEC settings.

Sources: Oberhuemer et al. 2010; Splash database 2015; OECD 2016

### ECEC system type and auspices<sup>2</sup>

At the national level, early childhood education and care in Latvia comes under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Science (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija*), which is responsible for developing guidelines for the early education sector. At the local level, public ECEC settings for children aged 1½ to 7 years are the responsibility of the municipalities under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs (*Labklājības ministrija*). Private ECEC settings are also bound by

<sup>1</sup> **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 for countries with a school starting age at 6: **0–2** years for children **up to** 3 years of age and **3–5** years for 3, 4 and 5 year-olds. In Latvia, with a school starting at age 7, the corresponding formats are **1½–5** and **5–6**.

<sup>2</sup> The Eurydice country report on ECEC in Latvia provided orientation for legal and regulatory aspects. All other sources are clearly indicated within the text and in the references section.



the regulations of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Thus, Latvia has a partially integrated ECEC sector, with age-integrated early childhood education centres and a unified curricular (and staffing) framework, but differing responsible bodies for other aspects of the system.

## General objectives and legislative framework

The overarching focus of early education in Latvia is on a child's right to develop and learn, based on the premise that every child has equal rights and opportunities. Overall, the education system gives everyone, according to their needs, the opportunity to develop their moral, aesthetic and intellectual potential as well as to acquire skills in various fields, such as humanities, social, natural or technical, in order to participate in the life of the community as an independent person. From a legal point of view, the General Education Act (*Vispārējās Izglītības likums*) of 1999 (with amendments until 2021) and the Guidelines of the Council of Ministers for Early Childhood Education and Model Programmes for Early Education (*Noteikumi par valsts pirmsskolas izglītības vadlīnijām*, 2012) form the basic framework. In addition, the regulations of the respective institutions have to be observed.

Local government legislation (*Par pašvaldībām*) obliges the municipalities to ensure that children from 1½ years of age in their catchment area can access a place in an ECEC setting.

## ECEC entitlement and compulsory attendance

Children over 1½ years of age have a legal right to a free place in a public ECEC centre. Latvia is currently one of the few European countries to guarantee a place from such a young age (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2019, 45). If a municipality cannot provide a place in a public facility, it has a duty to cover the costs of enrolment in a private ECE setting.

Attending an ECEC setting is compulsory for 5 and 6 year-olds, and voluntary for younger children. The number of hours of early education to be attended is not stipulated by law.

Primary school attendance begins at age 7. A proposal by the Ministry of Education in 2018 to reduce the statutory school starting age to 6 years was not approved by parliament.

## Main types of provision

**ECEC centres** (*pirmsskolas izglītības iestādes*) for 1½ to 7 year-olds consist of **kindergartens** (*bērnudārzs*) and **pre-primary groups** (*pirmsskolas izglītības grupas*). For children aged 4 and younger, attendance is voluntary whereas 5 and 6 year-olds attend a compulsory two-year pre-primary programme which takes place either in an ECE centre or within a school (*pirmsskolas izglītības grupas pie skolām*). ECEC centres are either self-contained or integrated into school premises.

As a rule, ECEC centres are closed for one month during the summer. However, depending on the needs of the parents, flexible opening times can be arranged. Most ECEC settings are open from 7:00 or 7:30 until 18:00 or 18:30. Some also have 24-hour groups where children can stay overnight.

Subsidised **home-based ECEC** settings (*bērnu uzraudzības pakalpojuma sniedzēji / aukles*) were introduced in 2013 as a measure to reduce the shortage of places.

In 2022, there were 631 early childhood educational settings attended by 98,031 children (OSP 2023a).

## Provider structures

In 2021, the majority of children attended a public early childhood educational setting: 90.7% of the children over 3 years of age and 80.5% of those under 3 years (see *Table 1*). Most private facilities are located in Riga or other larger cities, where there is often a lack of places in public ECEC settings (OECD 2016).

Table 1

Latvia: Children in ECEC centres by provider type, 2021

Provider type	Number of under 3 year-olds	Proportion, in %	Number of children from 3 years to statutory school age	Proportion, in %
Public	14,044	80.5	75,149	90.7
Private, non-subsidised	3,395	19.5	7,704	9.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,439</b>		<b>82,853</b>	

Source: Eurostat 2023e

## Participation rates in regulated ECEC settings

According to Eurostat data, the proportion of children under 3 years of age attending an early childhood educational setting has doubled: from 17% in 2005 to 34.5% in 2022. In the 3–6 age group, the participation rate rose from 79% in 2005 to 89.7% in 2022. In particular, the proportion of children attending a setting for more than 30 hours a week increased from 59% (2005) to 88.4% (2022).

Both under 3 year-olds and older children spend a relatively large amount of time in ECEC settings (see *Table 2*).

Table 2

Latvia: Participation 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	2	7
	Over 30 hours	15	59
	No enrolment in ECEC	84	34
2010	1 to 29 hours	2	6
	Over 30 hours	16	60
	No enrolment in ECEC	82	34
2015	1 to 29 hours	0.9	3.1
	Over 30 hours	22.0	79.2
	No enrolment in ECEC	77.2	17.7
2022	1 to 29 hours	2.3	1.3
	Over 30 hours	32.2	88.4
	No enrolment in ECEC	65.6	10.3

Source: Eurostat 2023b, deviations in the sums due to rounding

According to national statistics, very few children under 1 year of age (0.1%) attended an ECEC centre in 2022/23. The overall attendance rate of under 3 year-olds was just one third (33,1%).

Over three quarters (75.7%) of 3 to over 7 year-olds were enrolled in an early childhood educational setting.

Table 3

Latvia: Number of children and enrolment rates in ECEC centres by age, 2022

Age	Number of children in ECEC settings	Population, beginning of 2022	Enrolment rates in %
<b>Under 1 year</b>	18	17,273	0.1
1 year-olds	3,472	17,500	19.8
2 year-olds	14,243	18,782	75.8
<b>Under 3 years</b>	<b>17,733</b>	<b>53,555</b>	<b>33.1</b>
3 year-olds	17,615	19,374	90.9
4 year-olds	18,772	20,861	90.0
5 year-olds	20,794	22,005	94.5
6 year-olds	21,098	22,005	95.9
7 year-olds and older	2,019	21,819	9.3
<b>3 to over 7 year-olds</b>	<b>80,298</b>	<b>106,064</b>	<b>75.7</b>
<b>total</b>	<b>98,031</b>	<b>159,619</b>	<b>61.4</b>

Source: OSP 2023a, c

## Financing and costs for parents

According to OECD data, total public expenditure on early childhood education and care amounted to 0.80% of GDP in 2019, 0.2% of which for the childcare sector (OECD 2023).

The General Education Act stipulates that public (state or municipal) early childhood education centres are financed through the state or municipal budget. Municipalities finance staff salaries, equipment and building maintenance; the salaries of staff working with 5 to 6 year-olds are paid from the state budget. Private settings operating under the National Curriculum receive state subsidies for staff salaries and set their own fees for parents.

Parents – also those with children under 3 years of age – therefore only pay for meals in public institutions (approx. €44 per month; Eurydice 2023, 3.3), and for any additional services such as language classes or dance lessons. Since 2013, if a municipality cannot provide enough places in public institutions, it has to pay at least part of the costs of attending a private institution (OECD 2016).

The costs can be reduced for low-income parents. In private, government-independent facilities, fees average €300 per month. If parents have to enrol their child in a private setting because there are no places available in the public ECEC centre, they are entitled to state and municipal subsidies.

According to Riga City Council's information in 2022, the municipality paid a co-financing of €307.85 per month for each child from 1½–4 years of age in a private setting, while the co-financing was €229.27 per month for children of compulsory education age. Municipal co-financing for home-based ECEC providers was €181.09 per month. In 2023, the municipality pays a subsidy of €328.54 per month for each child from 1½–4 years old, while the co-financing is €242.48 per month for children of compulsory education age (Riga 2023). The state support programme for the co-financing of private preschool educational institutions and home-based childcare providers (nannies) ended on May 31, 2016.

In 2022, a couple with two children spent 0% of net household income on childcare costs<sup>3</sup> (OECD.Stat 2023).

### Staff to child ratios and group size

There are no binding regulations regarding staff to child ratios (except for special education settings). However, hygiene regulations as well as the size of the group rooms must be taken into account, for which there are mandatory guidelines: 2.5m<sup>2</sup> for each child under 3 years of age and 3m<sup>2</sup> for each child over 3 years of age. As a rule, one ECEC Teacher and two Assistants work in a group. Children may be grouped in same-age or mixed-age groups (Eurydice 2023, 4.2).

### Curricular framework

2019/2020 saw the start of the implementation of new, mandatory curricular guidelines for early childhood educational settings developed by a group of experts known as Skola 2030. Based on the “Regulations Regarding the State Guidelines of the Council of Ministers for Early Childhood Education and Model Programmes for Early Education”, a template was developed for centre-specific education plans, which also includes recommendations on assessment and evaluation. This template provides guidelines and support for teachers, methodologists<sup>4</sup> and lead staff.

The content is based on cross-cutting competences that promote knowledge, understanding and basic skills in different contexts and learning areas. Seven learning areas are highlighted: language; social and civic aspects; cultural awareness and artistic expression; science; mathematics; technology; health and motor activities.

The National Centre for Education structures the specifications for learning processes and intended outcomes into three levels corresponding to the age of the children: (1) from 1½ to 3 years, (2) from 3 to 5 years and (3) from 5 years to school entry. However, the staff are expected to also take into account the individual development of the children when planning the learning activities. They can choose the methods that seem most appropriate for their purposes, but are encouraged to use play as the main pedagogical approach (OECD 2016). In cooperation with experts, they are expected to implement the curriculum as an integrated learning process.

### Digital education

In the 2018 curriculum guidelines, the development of digital skills is mentioned as one of the goals of early education). The mandatory content of early education is that a child should learn to distinguish between the virtual and the real world and to understand the role of digital technologies. In addition, they are expected to understand the rules to be observed when using digital devices or information media (Ministry of Education and Science 2015).

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> Methodologists are responsible for deciding on pedagogical approaches to be used in the ECEC centres.



## Monitoring – evaluation

### *Child-related assessment*

Within the framework of the national curricular guidelines, assessment is an integral part of the learning process. Diagnostic, formative and summative assessment procedures are all used for planning and evaluation purposes. A main goal is to involve the children in the evaluation of their own learning as well as that of other children. Towards the end of each curricular stage (see chapter on *Curricular Framework*), learning outcomes are summarised.

At the end of the time in pre-primary education, the professional assesses the child's achievements on a four-point scale: (1) has started to learn but still needs support, (2) has partially achieved the intended outcomes but they are not yet stable, (3) has fully achieved the intended outcomes and can apply them in other situations, (4) can independently apply and justify the outcomes in various situations.

The professionals prepare a written report on the child's achievements for the parents. The experts (Skola 2030) who designed the 2018 curriculum also provide support materials for professionals.

### *Centre-level self-evaluation*

ECEC institutions are required to prepare a self-evaluation report and a development plan. Both are included in the external evaluations. Every two years, the self-evaluation reports are sent to the responsible body, which then assesses the institution (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2019, 128).

### *External evaluation*

The State Agency for Education Quality is responsible for safeguarding quality in education. According to the Education Act, all educational institutions must be officially accredited. This certification (external evaluation) must take place within the first five years following the establishment of the institution. The educational plan of each early childhood educational setting is reviewed during the two years following publication, after that at least once every six years. The professional activities of the staff are also evaluated.

The external evaluations are carried out by a specially trained team of experts approved by the Ministry of Education. Seven areas are evaluated: curriculum, teaching and learning, children's achievements, children's support, environment, resources, work organisation, and management and quality assurance. A total of 22 criteria are assessed and result in a final report.

## Inclusion agenda

The Latvian National Development Plan 2014–2020 identifies inclusion as a particularly important aspect. In general, an inclusive education policy is in place that emphasises taking into account the individual needs of all children. According to these “Education Development Guidelines 2014–2020”, approved by the Council of Ministers, the target groups are mainly children with developmental or health risks, with a socially vulnerable or minority community background such as Roma children.

### *Children with special educational needs and with disabilities*

The 2018 amendments to the General Education Act stipulate that from September 2020, children of nursery age with learning or language difficulties, physical disabilities or long-term illnesses should attend mainstream institutions.



Children with delayed language development will be supported in the compulsory pre-primary programme with an adapted preparation programme for primary school (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice 2019, 113).

However, there are also special education settings for children who, despite additional measures, cannot attend a mainstream institution and who have a diagnosis from a national or municipal educational-medical commission. In 2019/20, there were 28 such public support facilities (Eurydice 2023, 2.8).

#### *Children with a migration background and from ethnic minority groups – children from Roma communities*

In Latvia, persons from minority groups are identified either (1) by their ethnic background (ethnicity) or (2) by their nationality (citizenship).

The project "TOY for inclusion" focuses primarily on younger children from Roma families, from families with a migration background or from ethnic minorities. It aims to find flexible solutions to reach these families and their children through low-threshold meeting centres (European Commission 2020, 92). In order to integrate more Roma children into early education programmes, training modules for professionals and parents are available in Latvian under the Khe-taun project (European Commission 2020, 139).

Although there are groups in some ECEC settings where only one minority language is spoken, Latvian is compulsory in all centre-based settings from the age of 5 (OECD 2016).

In 2022, 86% of children in ECEC institutions were taught in Latvian, 13.1% in Russian, 0.2% in Polish and 0.7% in other languages (OSP 2023a, own calculations).

Table 4 shows data on persons with a non-Latvian ethnic background. In 2022, these persons made up 37.6% of the total population. Persons with a Russian background comprise the largest group at 23.7%. Also among the under 4 year-olds and the 5 to 9 year-olds, a quarter and more than a quarter, respectively, came from a family with a migration background.

Table 4

**Latvia: Number and share of persons with a Latvian and non-Latvian ethnic background, 2023**

	Total		0 to 4 years		5 to 9 years	
	Number	Share, in %*	Number	Share, in %*	Number	Share, in %*
<b>Latvia, total</b>	1,883,008		90,245		109,480	
<b>Ethnic backgrounds:</b>						
<b>Latvia</b>	1,175,902	62.4	68,120	75,5	78,230	71.5
<b>Russia</b>	445,612	23.7	10,229	11,3	16,643	15.2
<b>Ukraine</b>	56,675	3.0	1,533	1,7	2,310	2.1
<b>Belarus</b>	55,929	3.0	368	0,4	589	0.5
<b>Poland</b>	35,446	1.9	428	0,5	777	0.7
<b>Lithuania</b>	20,530	1.1	259	0,3	359	0.3
<b>Roma</b>	4,677	0.2	217	0,2	266	0.2
<b>Estonia</b>	1,478	0.1	15	0,0	21	0.0
<b>Other backgrounds</b>	86,759	4.6	9,076	10.1	10,285	9.4

Source: OSP 2023b, \*own calculations

According to Eurostat data, the share of non-Latvian citizenship in the population looks somewhat different because the data are based on citizenship rather than ethnicities. In 2022, 13.1% of the total population had a non-Latvian citizenship. Of these, almost all (97.2%) came from non-EU27 countries. In the age-group of under 5 year-olds, only 0.9% had a non-Latvian citizenship, of which 86.4% were from countries outside the EU. For the age-group of the 5- to 9 year-olds, these shares were 11.7% and 88.3% respectively (Eurostat 2023c).

## Parental leave arrangements<sup>5</sup>

**Maternity leave** (*grūtniecības un dzemdību atvaļinājums*), which is optional, lasts 56 days before the due date and 56 days after the actual birth date of the child. 80% of the average salary for which insurance contributions were paid for 12 calendar months is remunerated. In 2021, this was an average of €2,257.96 per month for the first part and €1,960.19 for the second part of the leave.

Under the same conditions, fathers can take 10 days of **Paternity leave** (*atvaļinājums bērna tēvam*) during the first six months of the child's life.

**Parental leave** (*bērna kopšanas atvaļinājums*) can be taken by either parent for a duration of 18 months per parent, either in one block or in parts, up to the child's eighth birthday. But only one parent may receive payment. There are three types of allowances:

(1) *Parental benefit*, which can only be claimed by parents with social insurance. In this case, either 60% of the previous earnings are paid for 13 months until the child is 1 years old (in 2022 this was on average €725.11 per month) or for 19 months 43.75% of the previous earnings until the child is 18 months old.

(2) *Childbirth benefit*: This lump sum of €421.17 is paid to all parents (including uninsured parents) for six months from the child's first day of life.

(3) *Childcare allowance*: A lump sum of €171 per month is paid up to the age of 18 months and a lump sum of €42.69 per month is paid up to the age of 24 months. In addition, a parent is entitled to a state family allowance of €25 for one child (€100 for two children, €225 for three and €100 per each child from four children). This allowance is paid until the child is 16 years old (or 20 years old if the child is still in education).

In terms of the take-up of parental leave, in 2022 it was mostly women (83,9%) who chose to do so – although most of the working parents who received parental benefits were men (77% in 2022). In 2022, the proportion of fathers taking paternity leave decreased by 7% compared to 2021.

## Current challenges for the ECEC system in Latvia

### Country expert assessment by Inese Šūpule

Potential challenges that Latvia is likely to face in the near future are related to a gradual transition within three years to **tuition in the national language** (i.e. Latvian) at all levels of education, as envisaged in the amendments to the Education Law prepared by the Ministry of Education and Science. Currently, at the secondary school stage, minority students are learning all subjects in Latvian, except minority language and culture and other languages, but in grades 1–

<sup>5</sup> The brief overview in this section is based mainly on the country note for Latvia by Inese Upite in the *International Review of Leave Policies and Research 2023* (see References).



6, students learn only half of the curriculum in Latvian (another half in a minority language, which may be Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Lithuanian, and Hebrew; however, for the majority it is Russian) while from 7th to 9th grade - at least 80%. These are formal requirements and practices tend to vary. ECEC institutions have a system of two streams: Latvian language groups and Russian language groups. Often in practice, despite the existence of the appropriate language proficiency document (the Education Law requires knowledge of the national language at C level 1), teachers do not know the national language at the highest level. This policy change is based on the conclusion that the current approach to the language of instruction in minority education programmes has not fully ensured high-quality learning of the national language. However, the shortage of teachers who can qualitatively hold classes in the Latvian language creates a significant risk for a successful transition. According to the data available in the State Education Information System, in the school year 2021/2022, 15,553 children were involved in minority ECEC institutions, and 195 educational institutions provided pre-primary education programmes in minority languages. This constitutes 17% of the total number of ECEC institutions (Laganovskis 2022). The largest number of minority settings are in the biggest cities Riga and Daugavpils. Although there are no comprehensive statistics on the level of Latvian language skills among minority ECEC Teachers, usually the young teachers do not have a problem with the national language skills. The government has planned support measures for teachers by offering Latvian language and methodological improvement courses to ECEC Teachers, as well as experience exchange events.

## 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 total population in Latvia was 1,875,757. For about 20 years, the population has thus continuously decreased (2000: 2,381,715; 2010: 2,120,504; 2020: 1,907,675) (Eurostat 2023a).

### Total fertility rate

In 2021, the average total fertility rate in the EU27 (as of 2020) was 1.53. The highest total fertility rate among the 33 SEEPRO-3 countries was in France (1.84), and the lowest in Malta (1.13). At 1.57, Latvia was slightly above the EU27 average (Eurostat 2023d)<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> 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>).



## Children under age 6

Table 5

Latvia: Number of children under age 6 in the population, 2022

Age	Number of children
Under 1 years old	17,273
1 year-olds	17,500
2 year-olds	18,782
3 year-olds	19,374
4 year-olds	20,861
5 year-olds	22,005
<b>Total 0 to under 6 year-olds</b>	<b>115,795</b>

Source: Eurostat 2023a

In 2022, 2.9% of the total population were children under the age of 3, and 6.2% were children under the age of 6 who were not yet in school. Thus, the shares of under 3 year-olds were slightly, those of 3–6 year-olds more clearly above the EU average. In the last seven years the shares of the under 3s fell while those of the older children rose.

Table 6

Latvia: Share of children under 6 years compared with the EU averages, 2000 to 2022, in %\*

Year	Comparison Latvia/EU	Under 3 year-olds	3 to under 6 year-olds	0 to under 6 year-olds
2000	Latvia	2.3	2.7	5.0
	Ø EU15 <sup>7</sup>	3.2	3.2	6.4
2005	Latvia	2.7	2.8	5.3
	Ø EU25	3.1	3.1	6.2
2015	Latvia	3.1	2.9	6.1
	Ø EU28	3.0	3.2	6.2
2022	Latvia	2.9	3.3	6.2
	Ø EU27(2020)	2.7	2.9	5.7

Source: Eurostat 2023a, \* own calculations, deviations in the sums due to rounding

## Single households with children under age 6

About half (50.7%) of households with children under 6 in Latvia in 2022 were couple households. Single-parent households accounted for 11.2% - the majority of which were single mothers (9.1%).

Table 7

Latvia: Households with children under age 6, 2022

Household type	Total households	Share of all households, in % <sup>+</sup>
Total households	208,900	
Couple households	105,900	50.7
Other types of households	79,500	38.1

<sup>7</sup> 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.



Household type	Total households	Share of all households, in %*
Total single households	23,500	11.2
Single households, women	19,000	9.1
Single households, men	4,500	2.2

Source: Eurostat 2023e, \*Own calculations

## Employment rates of parents with children under 6 years of age

In Latvia, in 2022, the overall employment rate for men (15-64 years) was 79.1% and for women 74.5% (Eurostat 2023i).

In 2022, 65.4% of women and 82.3% of men (18-64 years) with children under 6 were employed. Among the 27 EU countries (2020), the shares of employed fathers were thus above the average (EU-average 87.2%) and those of mothers only slightly above (63.6%) (Eurostat 2023f).

Table 8a

**Latvia: Employment rates of parents with children under 6 compared with other EU countries, 2010 and 2022**

	2010	
	Mothers in %	Fathers in %
<b>Latvia</b>	60.5	74.8
Highest rate of employment in 27 EU countries <sup>8</sup>	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 %
<b>Latvia</b>	65.4	82.3
Highest rate of employment in 27 (2020) EU countries <sup>9</sup>	Luxembourg: 81.9	Sweden: 95.1
Lowest rate of employment in 27 (2020) EU countries	Czech Republic: 42.5	Romania: 78.5

Source: Eurostat 2023f

For the SEEPRO-3 countries that were not part of the EU27(2020) in 2021/2022, data are displayed in *Table 8b*

Table 8b

**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)

<sup>8</sup> 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

<sup>9</sup> 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

Countries	Parents with children under 6 years		Overall employment rate	
	Mothers in %	Fathers in %	Women in %	Men in %
*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 2023f, 2023i

\*\*[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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## Children at risk of poverty or social exclusion<sup>10</sup>

In 2022, 18.9% of children under 6 were at risk of poverty or social exclusion. This proportion was 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 26% (EU: 21.6%). In 2020, 13% of children under 6 and 11.5% of the total population suffered from severe material deprivation (EU average 6.1% and 4.3% respectively) (Eurostat 2023g, h).

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<sup>10</sup> '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](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Material_deprivation))

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