



Factsheet on Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) in Greece

Key issues to be taken into consideration

Coordination of actions between different actors and sectors is necessary to create a holistic ECI framework. This is needed to define a coherent mechanism that ensures:

- The provision of ECI services for all children and families who need them
- The effective implementation of existing legislation by public authorities
- A clear definition of what family-centered ECI is, understood and valued by policymakers, service providers and families
- Inter-agency work among different Ministries and services and coordination across sectors to prevent overlaps and gaps in the service provision
- Training and re-skilling of professionals with unified protocols and a comprehensive approach
- The development of clearly defined quality standards for (public and private) ECI services
- Adequate and flexible financing mechanisms.

What is family-centred ECI?

The way in which we raise children today, will reflect the world we will live in tomorrow. The first six years are the most formative in children's lives, set the foundations for their lifelong development, and shape their health and quality of life. For children with support needs, these years are even more crucial: early identification of challenges, access to support, and coordination of families and community resources can significantly increase their capabilities and wellbeing.

ECI is economically and socially critical to a prosperous society: investing in the start of life is decisive for inclusion and positive social transformation. Family-centered ECI services design and provide support around the needs of children with disabilities or at risk of developmental delays and their families through coordinated services that promote the child's age-appropriate growth and development. ECI is co-created with and for families and offers them tools to better support their children.

Quality ECI services:

1 – Recognize the central role family plays in a child's life, thus encouraging families to be included and contribute to their child's learning and development;

3 – Promote the engagement of all children, regardless of their needs, in all aspects of life based on each child's strengths. They therefore foster learning in natural environments such as daily routines, at home, and in the community.

2 – Use evidence and outcome-based approaches. Early childhood intervention professionals provide services grounded in research and clinical reasoning.

4 – Work with well-trained professionals from various disciplines and backgrounds to meet the diverse needs of each child and ensure quality teamwork.

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