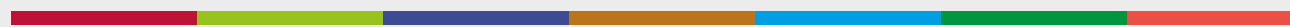


PLAN FOR THE EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING OF LITTLE CHILDREN

Government measure

April 2021



MMG



**Ajuntament
de Barcelona**

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01

Introduction

A plan for all young children

With this Plan for the Education and Upbringing of Little Children 2021-2024, Barcelona City Council aims to focus on the lives of children in the strategic life stage from 0 to 3 years of age, and on the services and support that families need to educate and care for them.

It aims to do so with all the city's youngest children in mind, the 38,377 boys and girls under the age of three. We start from the premise that all families, especially those with fewer family and relational networks and situations of greater social vulnerability, need support for the upbringing of their children.

In Barcelona we have a long tradition of municipal educational services for young children, with a growing network of municipal nursery schools (EBM) that is a pride of the city: it now has 102 quality centres and equal access, key to equal opportunities, with a system of social fees, which caters for 8,500 children.

This corresponds to approximately 2 out of 10 young children in Barcelona and 6 out of 10 of those who request the service. We must continue to expand the network to cover all families who want and need this service, and demand greater co-responsibility from the state and Catalan administrations to make this possible.

This plan situates the network of nursery schools as a key element, but it aims to go further than that: it aims to advance in the task of offering diverse educational environments, services and public support to all the city's young children and their families.

Firstly, it is an education plan. It is based on the recognition of the first cycle of pre-primary education as a meaningful and fully educational stage that is key to guiding with criteria of equity, inclusion and quality.

We know that children from more disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds tend to enter the education system later and leave it earlier, with a career path that is very often limited to the universal and compulsory stage of 3-16 years. This jeopardises their opportunities and projects throughout their lives.

We also know that quality early childhood education is one of the most effective tools for reducing educational inequalities and compensating for *learning deficits*, before it is too late and too expensive. Economists such as Nobel Prize winner James Heckman insist that investment in children, especially in the early stages, has the greatest social return and the capacity to break the cycle of social inequalities.

Secondly, it is a pre-distribution plan, for social cohesion and against child poverty. Inequalities begin to be reproduced in early childhood. This is why there are many recommendations from international organisations, from the United Nations to the EU, as well as from institutions such as the Catalan Ombudsman, on the importance of prioritising this stage and making safe, affectionate and educationally stimulating environments accessible, especially for children in situations of greater social vulnerability.

This is particularly relevant in our context, given that Barcelona, as well as the rest of Catalonia and the rest of Spain, lead the world in child poverty rates and are at the bottom of the European league in terms of child welfare, even before the current crisis.

Thirdly, it is a plan for the democratisation of parenting and gender justice, so that the education and care of the youngest children does not fall exclusively on women and being alone, but is a public service with greater visibility, support and services. The reality of the pandemic and the crisis of care has also made the importance of this task in the organisation of society more visible than ever.

As a feminist politician, she wants to replace an issue considered to be part of the family sphere such as parenting in the sphere of public policy, because “everything personal is also political”. And to do so by fostering spaces and opportunities for community ties, to share

the essential support for the upbringing, reconciliation and socialisation of children beyond their own family.

On the other hand, this plan is part of a broad approach, covering other administrations beyond the municipal one:

As far as the State is concerned, it is necessary to continue extending birth and childcare leave, which currently stands at 16 weeks for each parent and, combined, covers six months of the infant's life; facilitate leave to care for ill or confined young children; increase the coverage and number of weeks of leave to care for ill or confined children; increase the coverage and amounts of the economic benefit for dependent children for families with the lowest incomes, and recover the co-responsibility in the financing of the public offer of early childhood education, provided for in the LOMLOE (Organic Law 3/2020, of 29 December, which amends Organic Law 2/2006, of 3 May, on Education).

With regard to the Generalitat de Catalunya, which last year recovered part of the funding for EBM, it is necessary to progressively increase the contribution until it reaches at least one third of the real cost of the place; recovering the contribution for the creation of new places, and regulating all existing services for the upbringing and education of young children, including nursery services, services that care for children on a non-stable basis, as well as shared upbringing groups.

Finally, it is essential that the main income policies in force, the Spanish government's Minimum Living Income and the Generalitat's Guaranteed Citizen's Income, give adequate weighting to the fact of having young children in their care, both in terms of access and in terms of the amounts, so that families have sufficient resources to be able to act as families and to educate and care for their children.

The Plan for the education and upbringing of little children has tried to bring together the experience, history and knowledge built up over many years of work in the educational world in the city, as well as the reflection process "*Impulsem 0-3*" (Let's boost 0-3) and the Government Measure for a Democratisation of Education, carried out during the 2015-2019 term of office.

The document has been prepared with the contribution of the Municipal Institute of Education (IMEB) team and other municipal services, both from the Area of Social Rights and the

Neighbourhood Plan, professionals from nursery schools and municipal family spaces. It has also included a contrasting process with a group of experts and with the support of the Barcelona Institute of Childhood and Adolescence (IIAB-IERMB) in the diagnosis.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed their views and knowledge for enriching the process and the outcome of this governance measure.

02

Mission and Objectives

Mission

Promote a comprehensive municipal public policy for young children that advances in the universalisation, diversification and structuring of resources for the education and upbringing of children from 0 to 3 years of age, equitable and of quality, with nursery schools and beyond, responding to the diverse needs of families and reinforcing the community perspective and the democratisation of care.

Position early childhood education and upbringing as a key strategy to reduce educational, social and gender inequalities; claiming that sustaining life in this strategic life stage is a common good and a public asset that deserves to be reinforced by all administrations, with permits, benefits, services and various supports.

Strategic goals

1. Guarantee the well-being and development of the city's little children
2. Prevent educational inequalities before they occur
3. Facilitate work-life balance by reducing gender inequalities in child-rearing and work, as well as child poverty
4. Promote positive family bonds, shared responsibility among caregivers and community networks in childcare
5. Prevent loneliness and social isolation of mothers in the upbringing of little children

Focal points

1. Advance in the universalisation of the first cycle of early childhood education, especially the offer for children from 2-3 years old, recognising it as a fully educational stage.
2. Diversify public services and support for the education and upbringing of little children and their families in order to meet the needs of education, reconciliation and community ties, making progress in the democratisation of care in terms of gender justice.
3. Improve equity in access to diverse educational resources for children and families in situations of greater social vulnerability in order to distribute educational opportunities.
4. Territorially structure and disseminate educational and childcare resources, promoting networking and coordinated work between public educational, primary health care and social services, also recognising social, community and private initiative services.
5. Attend to and care for the needs of little children in public spaces, in facilities and in the offer of cultural and sporting activities in order to build social integration and community around children.

03

Framework

Background

The Plan for the education and upbringing of little children aims to contribute to reducing educational, social and gender inequalities, and to promote early childhood education and care as a common good and as a public asset that deserves to be reinforced in all public policies, including at the municipal level.

In this regard, Barcelona City Council, during its previous term of office (2015-2019), promoted various processes and measures in line with the principles of this plan.

These processes are:

- The participatory process “Impulsem 0-3” (Let’s boost 0-3) on the early childhood education model
- Government Measure for Democratising Care Work
- The Plan for Gender Justice
- The strategy for inclusion and reducing social inequalities
- The Children’s and Citizens’ Focus
- The Government Measure on Support Spaces for Families with Children from 0 to 3 years old in the Eixample

The different processes and measures promoted throughout the previous term of office set out the guidelines for this Plan for the education and upbringing of little children:

- Continue to increase the number of places and improve the network of local nursery schools, strive for the recognition of this stage of education and move towards universality and equality for all children.

- Diversify municipal services aimed at young children, expanding the range of family spaces and creating the Network of Municipal Family Childcare Centres (EFCM), and increasing the number of socio-educational EFCMs, paying special attention to children at risk through a network between health, social services and education.
- Look into the collaboration with other non-profit social agents and initiatives, including various means such as the cession of space, subsidies or financial aid, both for community projects in the field of early childhood and for groups of families.
- Promote projects adapted to each territory based on the identification of the different needs of little children and families.

Context and international framework

The competences and policies in the field of early childhood education and care are divided between three levels of government: the General Administration of the State, the Generalitat de Catalunya and the Barcelona City Council.

Status

- Basic social legislation (leaves of absence, unpaid leaves, large families)
- Social Security family benefits (maternity, paternity, dependent children, etc.)
- Tax breaks in personal income tax and other taxes
- Attention to child poverty, concerted plan of Social Services
- Minimum subsistence income.

Autonomous Community

- Autonomous social services.
- Autonomous taxes.
- Large family certificate.

Local Councils

- Early childhood care services (nursery schools, family spaces, etc.)
- Social programmes to support families in difficulties.

The field of policies for little children and their families has been the focus of attention of various international bodies, which have adopted several declarations and documents that embody this Plan for the education and upbringing of little children.

International organisations (UN, UNICEF, EU, OECD)

- Rights-based, systematic and integrated approach to early childhood policies guaranteeing the best interests of the child.
- Access to quality educational services for the educational success and social integration of children, especially the most vulnerable.
- Support services for children, accompanying families in their parental functions.

Background in Barcelona

- The “impulsem” (Boost) process for the education of little children.
- Government Measure for Democratising Care Work.
- The Plan for Gender Justice.
- Strategy for Inclusion and Reducing Social Inequalities.
- The Children’s and Citizens’ Focus.
- Measurement of Government spaces from 0 to 3 years old in the Eixample.

Early Childhood Strategy

- Gender inequalities.
- Educational inequalities.
- Social inequalities.
- ➔ Education and upbringing for the common good.

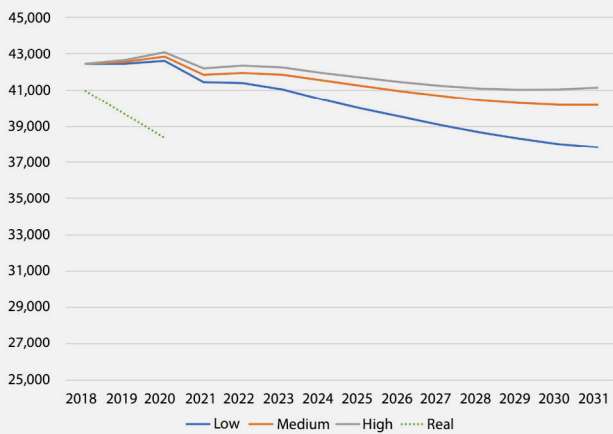
04

Diagnosis

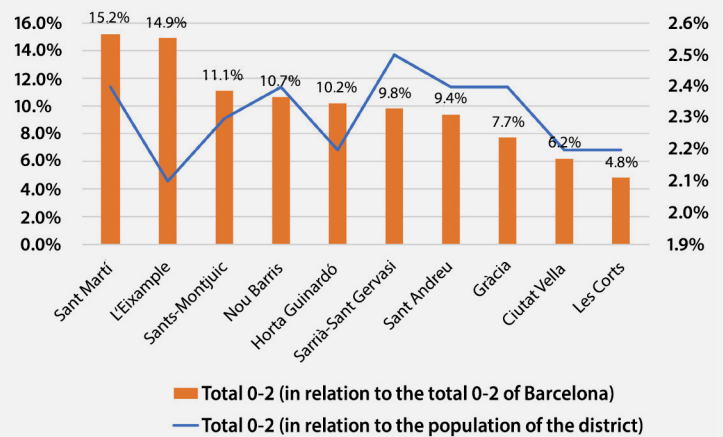
A plan designed for 38,377 children

In Barcelona there are 38,377 children from 0 to 2 years old, who constitute, together with their families, the target population of education and upbringing policies for little children.

In the last decade there has been a gradual and progressive decrease of 5,384 children in this age group, as well as a decrease in their relative weight in the overall population of the city, from 2.7% to 2.3%. The current number of little children is of a similar nature to that of the year 2000.

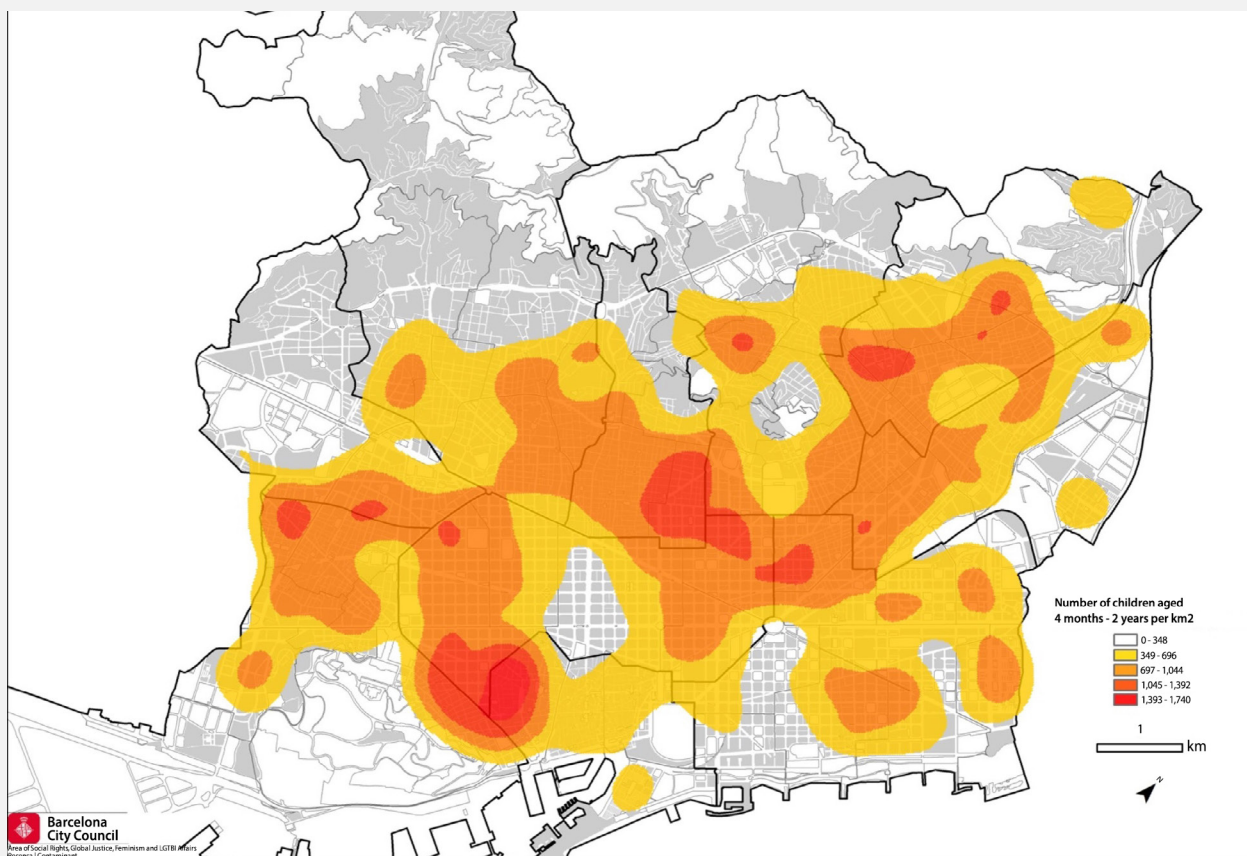


Projected population from 0 to 2 years old in Barcelona (lower, middle and upper stages)



Children under the age of 3 and proportion of total population

The territorial distribution of little children in Barcelona is heterogeneous: there are some “little children’s territories” in the city with a high density of children under 3 years of age, particularly the neighbourhoods of Sant Antoni, Raval and Poble-Sec, and the neighbourhoods of Camp d’en Grassot and Gràcia Nova, Sagrada Família and Camp de l’Arpa del Clot.

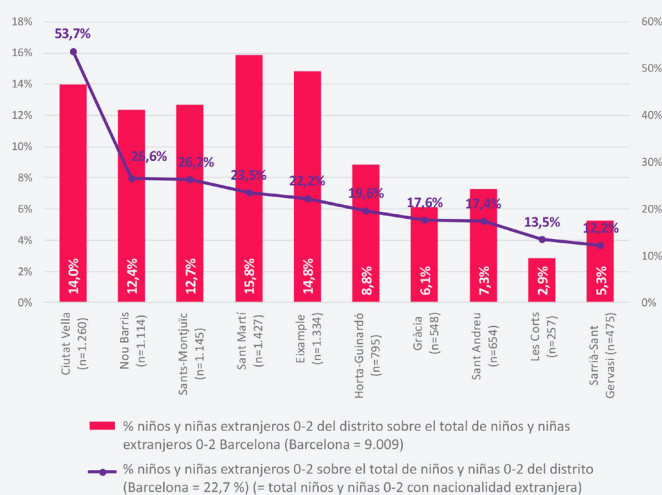


Population density of the population aged 0 to 2 years old registered on 1st January 2019

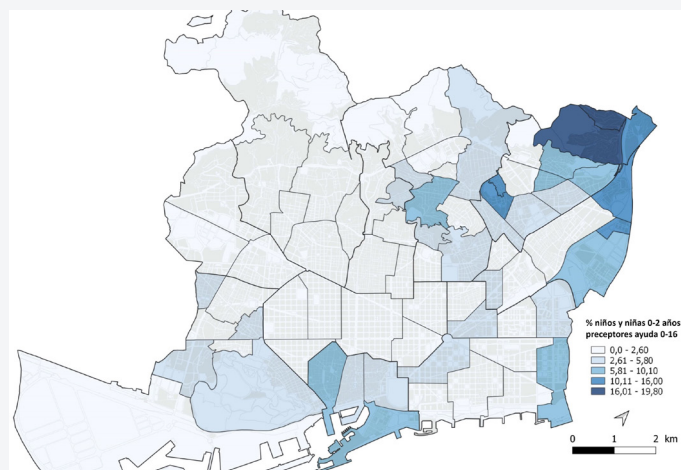
Diverse needs of families

The conditions in which the city's little children grow up are also different:

- Families continue the process of de-standardisation with respect to the traditional model, in which the city's own dynamics are combined with other national and international dynamics. In the case of Barcelona, it should be noted that families tend to have fewer members, both because there are fewer children and because single-parent families are on the rise; and that a growing proportion of families have one or two parents of foreign origin (and/or nationality). Therefore, they are smaller and more culturally diverse families.



Children aged between 0 and 2 of foreign nationality, 2019



Proportion of children from 0 to 2 years old with social emergency aid 0-16 in respect to the total number of registered children aged 0-2, 2019

- The distribution of household income is also very uneven, and the persistence of child poverty is noteworthy: although we do not have specific data on little children, the latest estimates put the number of children living below the poverty line in Barcelona at 30.8% and those living below the severe poverty line at 9.7%. The distribution of social emergency benefits allows us to verify the high concentration in a few neighbourhoods of little children in a situation of severe vulnerability. Because of its potential negative and long-lasting effect on the life trajectory of children, poverty is a very important determinant of the support needs of families.

We also know that the de-stereotyping of young people's working lives, with greater precarity, instability and job insecurity, also alters decisions to have children, the material conditions of families and choices about how to combine parenting with work: the loss of homogeneity of workers has also led to a loss of homogeneity in families.

In the same way that the labour market has been dualised, between those "included" with protected jobs and those "excluded" with temporary jobs, unstable employment statuses or self-employed with difficulties, the reality of families has also been dualised.

In parallel to the diversification of the characteristics and material conditions of families with young children, there are also differing preferences about how to raise young children and how to combine and balance parenting and work.

Because of the same cultural, socio-economic and employment diversity (the work to be reconciled can be as much part of an upward career path as of a precarious and unstable work itinerary, and a second income at home can be peremptory for subsistence or temporarily dispensable), and also because of the different conceptions of parenthood and care, families not only differ in what they need but also in what they want and demand during the years of child rearing prior to schooling.

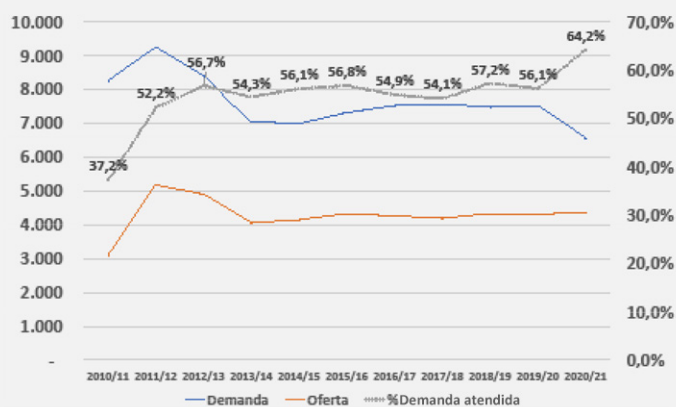
Finally, it is worth highlighting, as was already done in the 2017-2020 Government Measure for Democratising Care Work, that although the organisation of care between families, the market and the administration and within families is diverse, there are two predominant tendencies: the leading role of the family in the provision of care, and that, within the family, care falls fundamentally on women, which can have negative consequences on health and well-being, the relational and social sphere, the availability of time and the capacity to promote their own life projects, including effects on women's working lives and economic autonomy. At the same time, the provision of care is often socially unrecognised and even invisible.

A growing nursery school network

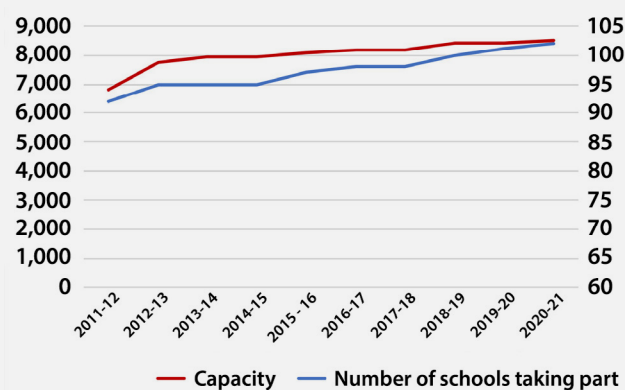
Despite the fact that both the needs and the demands for support have diversified, on the supply side of public services, care policies for little children are characterised by a certain homogeneity, with an eminently educational and scholastic vocation, and a pre-eminent instrument which is the public provision of the nursery school service.

In Barcelona, the municipal network of municipal nursery schools (EBM) is under continuous expansion, under the pressure of a demand that cannot be met. This academic year (2020-21) has already reached 102 centres and 8,500 places.

However, the network only has the capacity to accommodate about 60% of the families that ask for the service and each new nursery school that is built stimulates demand in the vicinity of the new facility, so the impact on the reduction of unmet demand tends to be relatively small.



Evolution of the coverage in relation to the demand for EBM
(Municipal Nursery Schools)



Evolution of the number and capacity of EBMs
(Municipal Nursery Schools)

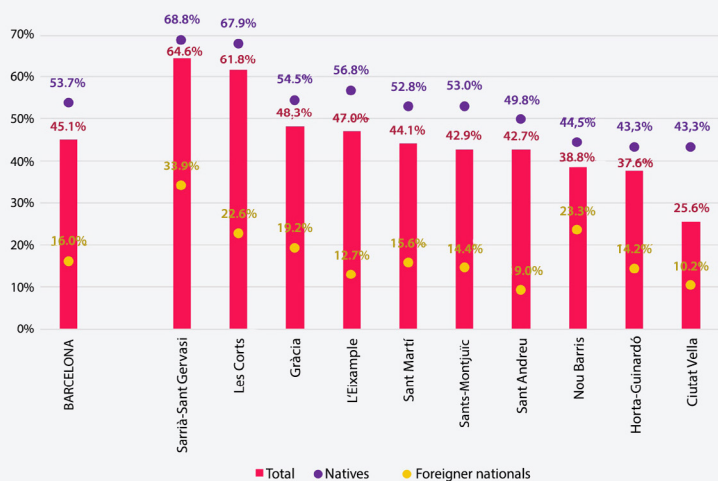
45% of young children in nurseries

Beyond the concern to attend to more children, the EBM (municipal nursery schools) network strives to provide a quality, inclusive service, with the capacity to attend to special needs and to incorporate traditionally absent members of the public, who may not need a conciliation resource but who can benefit most from its educational function.

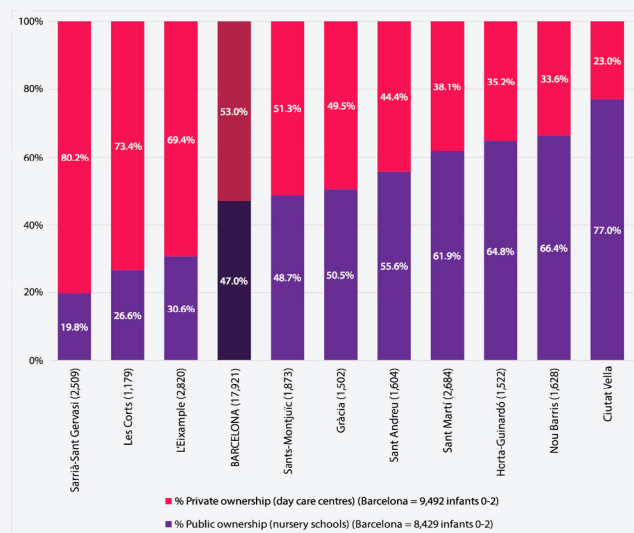
Although significant progress has been made, the challenge of maintaining and improving the quality of service, inclusiveness and equity of access remains high: the school enrolment rate of native little children is 3.5 times higher than that of foreign nationals (53.7% and 16.0%, respectively).

By districts, the schooling rate for little children in Sarrià-Sant Gervasi and Les Corts is more than double that of Ciutat Vella.

Notably, in the lowest income districts, schooling is mainly in public nursery schools (77.0% in Ciutat Vella, compared to 19.8% in Sarrià Sant Gervasi, and 47.0% in the city as a whole).



School enrolment rate of children aged 0-2, by nationality

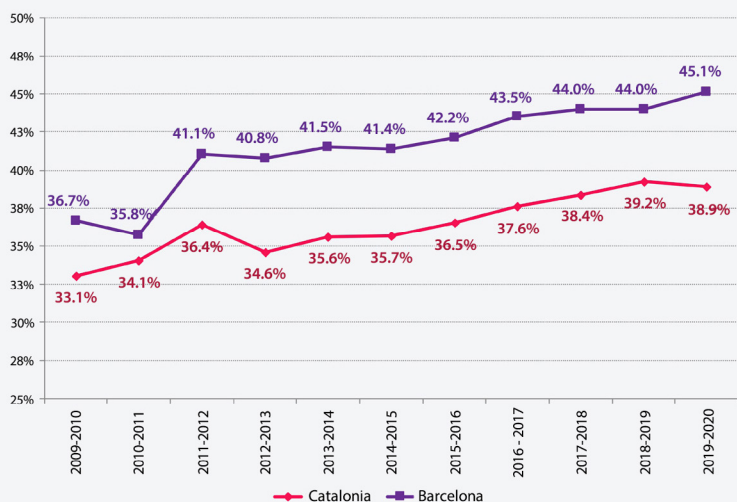


Distribution of enrolment for children aged 0-2, by ownership of the centre

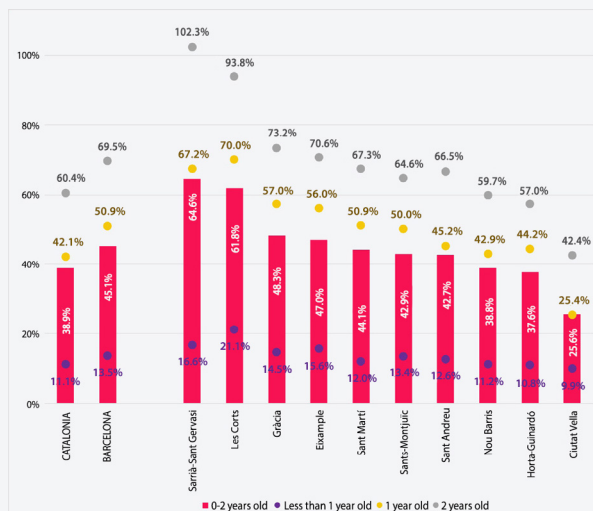
It should be pointed out that, although the municipal nursery school service has and must maintain a crucial role, it only attends 2 out of every 10 little children in the city.

Even if we add private nursery schools, schooling for little children is not a majority option today and only 44.0% of young children attend (academic year 2020-21), although the trend is up from 41.1% since 2011-12. This is 6 percentage points higher than the average for Catalonia.

The school enrolment rate increases by age: it is 13.5% for children under one year old, 50.9% for those between one and two years old, and 69.5% for those between two and three years old.



Evolution of the enrolment rate of 0-2-year-olds including public and private nursery schools



School enrolment rate for children aged 0-2 according to age

An incipient pool of resources

For the majority of little children who do not attend school, the offer of services and support is still incipient and underdeveloped: this includes 16 public family spaces where a stable group of children and adults share a space for playing and conversation, accompanied by professionals, who provide guidance to stimulate and enhance learning, children's socialisation and autonomy, the positive bond between adults and children, confidence and parenting skills, and helps them to build social isolation and foster community networks.

It also includes a territorially unequal offer of stable meeting places and activities and workshops for families with little children in municipal facilities (libraries, civic centres, children's centres, toy libraries, museums, municipal music schools and primary care centres).

And, very significantly, it also includes a series of programmes, services and projects, some of which are specific to the City Council but in most cases are social initiatives with municipal support, providing comprehensive and sometimes intensive support to families with small children at risk of serious social exclusion, and generally aimed at meeting basic needs and enhancing parental skills at a crucial time in their children's lives.

They constitute a range of instruments with innovative elements, but they are not yet integrated into a network like other services for vulnerable citizens.

Barcelona therefore has a network of nursery schools, which is one of the reasons for the pride of education in the city, and which needs to be strengthened and expanded, as well as various programmes, activities and projects for young children, with different objectives, orientations and intensities, but which are limited in scope.

The city does not yet have an early childhood policy that incorporates a range of educational and childcare services that is diverse enough to adapt to the heterogeneous needs and demands of families, and broad enough to be able to offer rich and stimulating educational environments for all young children and support for all families who need it; to incorporate services in which to delegate the care and education of little children, but also to accompany families in their responsibility for care, as well as the provision of meeting places and community services for support and socialisation of care, and places, streets and facilities that are more child-friendly for the upbringing of little children.

Districts	Public nursery schools			Private nursery centres	Municipal family spaces	Provisions for families in socially disadvantaged situations	Community Initiative Children's Groups	Day care centres: Day mums/dads
	Municipal Nursery Schools 2019-2020	Generalitat's nursery centres 2019-2020	Total public nursery schools	Total Private nursery centres	Municipal family centres (2019-2020)	Projects of social entities with subsidies and agreements, 2019	Children's groups belonging/ related to The <i>Xarxa d'Educació Lliure</i> (Free Education Network) 2020	Day care centres (day mums/dads) belongig to the Associació Llars de Criança (Day Care Centre Association), 2020
Ciutat Vella	8	0	8	4	2	5	0	2
Eixample	11	0	11	38	5	1	1	4
Sants-Montjuïc	11	1	12	24	1	0	4	2
Les Corts	4	0	4	16	1	0	1	0
Sarrià-Sant Gervasi	6	0	6	41	2	1	1	4
Gràcia	9	0	9	11	1	2	2	5
Horta-Guinardó	13	0	13	16	0	0	2	7
Nou Barris	13	1	14	10	1	2	0	0
Sant Andreu	10	1	11	17	1	0	0	2
Sant Martí	17	2	19	18	2	1	4	1
BARCELONA	102	5	107	195	16	12	15	27

**Resources and support for the education and upbringing of little children (0-3)
and their families available in Barcelona, 2020**

Districts	Meeting and recreational areas	0-3 Cultural activities				0-3 Activities - sports	0-3 health activities			0-3 Total of cultural, sporting and health activities
	0-3 play and meeting spaces in municipal facilities 2019-2020	0-3 Activities in Libraries 2019	0-3 Activities in Civic Centres 2019	0-3 Activities in Museums 2019 -2020	0-3 Activities in other cultural spaces 2019-2020	0-3 Activities in sports facilities 2019	"Barcelona Salut als barris" (Barcelona Health in the neighbourhoods) family skills programme 2018	Groups (infant, breastfeeding and postpartum) carried out in primary care 2019-2020	Workshops/talks (children's health) carried out for primary care 2019-2020	
Ciutat Vella	2	5	0	12	13	15	4	5	5	59
Eixample	2	10	60	1	7	21	0	10	2	111
Sants-Montjuïc	3	5	18	4	9	7	1	11	3	58
Les Corts	2	17	24	0	1	17	0	2	5	66
Sarrià-Sant Gervasi	2	18	33	0	4	2	0	0	4	61
Gràcia	1	11	0	0	11	31	0	2	2	57
Horta-Guinardó	6	18	15	0	1	4	0	5	5	48
Nou Barris	5	36	4	0	1	18	4	14	12	89
Sant Andreu	4	43	73	0	4	13	0	6	14	153
Sant Martí	8	28	12	15	2	39	2	12	19	129
BARCELONA	35	191	239	32	53	167	11	67	71	831

Resources and support for the education and upbringing of little children (0-3) and their families available in Barcelona, 2020 (Continued)

05

Action Plan

More quality nursery schools

The network of municipal nursery schools has been growing over the last decade, from 92 schools in 2011-12 to 102 in 2020-21.

However, the public supply is still insufficient to meet the demand: in recent years, the coverage rate has been between 52% and 64%, i.e., between one in two and one in three children who apply for an EBM (municipal nursery school) course do not get a place. In absolute terms, there have been between 2,175 and 3,250 children in the last three years.

One part of the population not served by municipal nursery schools can turn to alternatives such as private nurseries, alternative services or family support, but there is another, especially in the case of families in a situation of social vulnerability, who find themselves without the possibility of reconciliation and without an educational service that can be very important for their children.

The current demographic trend points to a gradual and gradual decline in the number of little children in the city, both as a result of a lower birth rate and a fall in mobility to the city.

Likewise, the development of alternative care and education services, the possible incorporation of 2-year-old groups into nursery and primary schools by the Generalitat de Catalunya, taking advantage of the reduction in the school population due to demographic decline, and the extension of paid parental leave could contribute to a reduction in demand in the medium and long term.

On the other hand, there is no fixed reserve of unattended families, but rather each new school stimulates new demand in the surrounding area and, therefore, the creation of new places still has a relatively small effect on reducing the number of unattended demands.

Therefore, the need for new nursery schools in the city remains urgent, and that is why we propose to continue working to expand the network of nursery schools with the aim of expanding opportunities for all children and universalising access, prioritising those aged 2 to 3 years.

The measure foresees the expansion of the EBM (municipal nursery school) network from 102 in the 2019-20 academic year to 115 in the 2024-25 academic year, increasing the offer in those areas with greater social vulnerability and lack of public offer

The 13 additional nursery schools are distributed as follows: 8 newly built nursery schools and 5 nursery schools that are currently owned by the Generalitat de Catalunya and that will be incorporated into the municipal network. In addition, at least one private nursery school is expected to be incorporated into the municipal network.

This will mean an increase in the capacity of the nursery school network to 9,500 children, a thousand places more than the current capacity.

1. Construction of 8 new EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)

Decisions on the location of newly built nursery schools combine, on the one hand, criteria of need (both current and expected density of the population from 0 to 2 years of age, and territorial indicators of social risk), and on the other hand, the opportunities for the location of new buildings, which are scarce in the city of Barcelona.

Municipal nursery school	Planned groups	Neighbourhood	District
Roger	7	Sants-Badal	Sants-Montjuïc
Can Rosés	5	Les Corts	Les Corts
Pere Calafell	6	Sant Martí de Provençals	Sant Martí
Palamós	7	Trinitat Nova	Nou Barris
Can Carreras	7	Guineueta	Nou Barris
Teixonera	7	La Teixonera	Horta-Guinardó
Casernes	7	Sant Andreu	Sant Andreu
Encarnació	6	Vila de Gràcia	Gràcia

2. Studying the feasibility of incorporating the 5 nursery day centres of the Generalitat into the municipal network

The five nursery day centres in the city that belong to the Generalitat and could be integrated into the municipal network in the framework of an agreed transfer are:

Nursery Day Centres	Planned groups	Neighbourhood	District
Cascavell	6	El Besòs i el Maresme	Sant Martí
El Mar	5	Sant Andreu	Sant Andreu
El Vuit	4	La Verneda i La Pau	Sant Martí
La Gavina	3	El Poble-sec	Sants-Montjuïc
L'Airet	8	Trinitat Nova	Nou Barris

3. Analysing and generating a city framework for the possible incorporation of private nurseries into the municipal network

Work towards a regulatory framework that makes possible a case-by-case analysis of possible incorporations into the EBM (Municipal Nursery School) network of private nursery centres, as an innovative strategy to continue growing the municipal offer.

In all cases, the selected centres must be located in a neighbourhood with a shortage of places, a high density of children from 0 to 2 years of age and/or high social risk indicators; and the premises of the new nursery school must meet the pedagogical, material, space, staff qualifications and working conditions criteria determined by the IMEB (Barcelona Municipal Institute of Education), in order to guarantee the quality of the service.

4. Planning and carrying out technical work for the construction of future EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) to further expand the network

The construction and implementation of new nursery schools requires prior actions to identify spaces and land in areas where there is a need, as well as the preparation of basic and executive projects and the tendering of construction tenders. For this reason, the primary schools inaugurated in a given term of office generally respond to projects initiated in the previous term of office.

In order to make it possible to extend the network of municipal primary schools in the period 2024-2027, during the period of validity of this plan, the following will be carried out:

- a joint prospection of locations between the IMEB (Barcelona Municipal Institute of Education) and the districts in the neighbourhoods of greatest need (taking into account criteria of density of small children, forecasts of child population growth and territorial indicators of social risk). It is also necessary to combine the availability of space and the need in some cases for planning procedures due to the availability of sunshine.
- 10 municipal nursery school projects, for which the Municipal Investment Plan has a budget of 3 million euros.

5. Establishing the size of the groups from 2 to 3 years of EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) to 19 children

In 2012-13 the Barcelona City Council increased the size of the EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) groups to the maximum allowed by the regulations governing the service in Catalonia (Decree 282/2006): 8 children in the 0-1 year groups; 13 for the 1-2 year groups and 20 for the 2-3 year groups.

The group size has been the subject of special attention because, on the one hand, it is an important input for the quality of educational care, and on the other hand, it is a determinant of the capacity of the EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) network: reducing the group size means attending to fewer children, when the capacity of the network is lower than the demand from families and it is not a universal service.

It is proposed to apply a general criterion for all EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) of 8 children for groups of 0-1 years; 13 for groups of 1-2 years and 19 for groups of 2-3 years, with the following exceptions: 18 children for groups of 2-3 when there are three in the same EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools), and to reduce the size of the groups by one child when the size of the classroom is smaller than the standard..

6. Encouraging more innovative pedagogical practices and projects

Educational practices in EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) are historically based on pedagogical renovation and innovation, as stated in the framework “The educational model of the municipal nursery schools of Barcelona” updated in 2019.

This model also takes the form of pedagogical projects in each school that are shared with the rest of the EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) to promote collaborative learning and adapt organisational and pedagogical practices on the basis of the results.

Among others, the “*Quiric*” project on new technologies; the “*cos i moviment*” (body and movement) project in collaboration with the Mercat de les flors; “*Descoberta de la matemàtica en el 0-3*” (Discovering maths at ages 0-3); “*Escoles bressol per a la igualtat i la diversitat*” (Nursery Schools for Equality and Diversity), in collaboration with the Feminism and LGBTI

Department, and the “*Projecte intergeneracional*” (Intergenerational project), with the Rella association of retired teachers.

It is proposed to extend these projects and practices to all participating EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools), and to encourage support in the design of projects, methodologies for documenting and evaluating the results and processes for sharing learning.

7. Consolidating healthy, organic and local menus in EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)

Barcelona’s EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) have been pioneers in offering children balanced, healthy menus in which almost all the food is organically produced and/or locally sourced.

Organic produce includes dairy products, apples, pears, oranges, bananas, bread, rice, potatoes, pasta, tomatoes, vegetables during the months when they are in season (e.g., lettuce, onions, carrots and pumpkin throughout the year), poultry and crayfish. The fish the children are given is hake, cod, monkfish or sole. At nursery school they do not eat pork or pork products, nor perch or halibut. Every meal is accompanied by salad.

All municipal nursery schools have their own kitchen where they prepare daily menus. The school provides the programmed menus to the families so that they can plan the dinner in a complementary way at home.

On the basis of our experience in the practice of the clauses on organic and local food in the food contracts, we propose to consolidate these criteria, extend them to new foods when possible, and adapt them to the new recommendations of the Barcelona Public Health Agency when they become available.

8. Promoting dual vocational training in all EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)

The EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) Network welcomes students of the Higher Degree in Early Childhood Education within the framework of the Dual Vocational Training Programme, which includes a training grant and a four-hour day during the whole school year.

Based on the positive evaluation of the experience and with the aim that the entire EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) network is both an educational service for children and a training service for future professionals, we propose:

- To increase the number of hours students spend on work experience from 20 to 25 hours per week
- Progressively increase the number of participating pupils
- Increase the number of nursery schools participating in the programme, so that the whole network develops this training function as part of the service.

9. Reinforcing coherence and continuity between the two cycles of early childhood education

The configuration of early childhood education in two separate cycles in different educational centres and institutions represents a risk to the coherence of educational intervention.

In order to avoid discontinuities and sudden changes in the transition between the early childhood education and pre-schools, and to bring the two cycles of early childhood education closer together, it is proposed:

- Reinforce support for families in the transition from the first to the second cycle of pre-primary education
- Promote regular meetings between professionals from the two cycles in the same area to share visions, criteria and strategies for educational intervention. In this sense, reinforce and extend the IMEB's 0-6 *Modelatge* (Modelling) project to more districts.
- Promote in some EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) applications in groups with reserved places in P3, in accordance with the provisions of Decree 11/2021 on the programming of the educational offer and the admission procedure to reduce school segregation in pre-primary and primary schools.
- Incorporate the IDALU pupil identifier and registration in the Pupil Register (RALC) into the EBM to facilitate the monitoring of children's educational careers

10. Working for the recognition of early childhood education as an educational, universal and adequately funded stage

Historically, early childhood care has seen tensions and balances between the educational, care, social care and work-life balance functions. The progressive inclusion of the early childhood stage in education laws has tended to make the educational function more explicit and developed.

Although all the functions of nursery schools are important, compatible and can be carried out simultaneously, the EBM (Municipal Nursery School) model in Barcelona has been and is primarily educational. Its sustainability requires both the vindication and defence of the educational function, as well as sufficient resources to be able to carry it out with quality and with a tendency towards universalisation.

As far as the State is concerned, it is necessary to recover funding for the public provision of early childhood education, already provided for in the LOMLOE. Moreover, with regard to the Generalitat, which last year recovered part of the funding for the functioning of the EBM, it is necessary to progressively increase the contribution until it reaches at least one third of the real cost of the place, as well as to recover the contribution for the creation of new places.

La “casa de la petita infància” (The “home for little children”)

EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) combine the educational and socialisation function of young children with support for their families.

This support has focused, above all, on facilitating the reconciliation of raising children with paid work, but has progressively extended to other areas, such as guidance and support for the child, the development of parenting skills, and attention to various needs at the request of the families.

Progressively, EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) have been incorporating a community outlook, creating opportunities for families to meet, sometimes accompanied by educators, to share experiences and challenges, and to create a network of community links that facilitates access to information and resources and prevents lone parenting. These opportunities are generally offered at the EBM's (Municipal Nursery Schools) own premises and after hours, from 5 p.m. onwards.

Some initiatives have been developed at the initiative and with the support of the IMEB, such as the family leisure programme, while others have been born from the bottom up, at the initiative of the school's educational teams or at the request of families, such as the cession of indoor space for free play, the creation of communal vegetable gardens accessible in August and at weekends, or the use of the nursery school as a distribution hub for a consumer cooperative.

In this context, the challenge is twofold:

- Firstly, to develop these community initiatives in a more systematic way, respecting the autonomy and specificities of each nursery school and neighbourhood, including the architectural structure of the school and playground, the characteristics and needs of the population of each area, and the availability of other services, resources and facilities in the neighbourhood.
- Secondly, to ensure that the opportunities for meeting and accompaniment are open to families who do not use the nursery school service, so that any family with a child from 0 to 3 years old in the neighbourhood thinks of the nursery school as a “home for little children”, and know that they have a reference point where they can find support,

guidance and opportunities to do activities or spend time with their child in the company of others.

The plan proposes to reinforce the role of EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) as reference facilities for young children, open to their environment and with a community outlook.

11. Programming community activities for young children open to the neighbourhood

A working group will be created with headmasters/mistresses and educators from municipal nursery schools to formulate proposals for community activities for EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) and identify the necessary resources to develop them.

12. Leasing internal and external EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) spaces to companies

The working group will also formulate proposals for cessions of the use of indoor and outdoor spaces in nursery schools to organisations and/or informal groups for uses related to children and young children (free play, family spaces, workshops and training, etc.).

Once the implementation of the agreed proposals begins, mechanisms will be put in place to share and disseminate experiences and to carry out a shared reflection on community practices.

The target is that, by the end of the plan period, 50% of the EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) will have undertaken some community practice in strand 11 and/or 12 and mechanisms for sharing and reflecting on the experiences will have been put in place.

13. Including EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) in the programme “*Patis oberts al barri*” (Playgrounds open to the neighbourhood)

The schools’ playgrounds open so that local families, children and teenagers can enjoy them outside school hours, at weekends and during school holidays. This makes it possible to

optimise the use of the centres, strengthen their educational and social aspect, and provide an alternative for children, young people and families to have fun in a safe and close context.

Each “open playground” has a monitoring service that opens and closes the playground at the scheduled times, oversees its proper use and facilitates interrelation between children and young people. It also carries out educational activities of a sporting, artistic and family nature. The activities are open to the public and are free.

On the other hand, in the framework of the “*Patis en família*” (Family playground) programme, some EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) offer families the possibility of using the playground outside school hours, through the cession of space in the playground or garden of the nursery school to the AMPAs/AFA/AFI (Parents Teachers Associations).

It is proposed to incorporate EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) into the “*Patis oberts*” (open playgrounds) programme, with activities adapted to young children in those neighbourhoods with the greatest need for open-air play areas.

14. Promoting EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) as a community node through pilot projects in different territories

The Area of Social Rights aims to improve the quality of life of people in need of care and the people who provide it, based on a better coordination of services and resources in the territory, closer and more community-based, also in the area of early childhood.

The main idea behind this line of action, which has already been implemented with the care services for dependency, is that a reduced territorial unit can facilitate this orientation towards care and foster caring communities. The project is inspired by the 15-minute city model and the desire to generate an imaginary «village».

The project will be applied on a pilot basis to four territorial units of the city and among the planned lines of action are to bring existing care services closer to the public; to strengthen and energise spaces for collective relations and to promote working spaces between professionals, services and organisations linked to care.

It is proposed that the EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) of reference in the four territories in which this project will be implemented should become nodes in the field of early childhood care, through the promotion of and participation in community projects and initiatives..

15. Extending support to EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) family associations

Shared responsibility in education between the family and the school is a determining factor for the proper functioning of schools and for the achievement of educational success. Family associations are a key player, because:

- They participate voluntarily, openly and actively in the life of the school to make it more dynamic and promote complementary projects for children and education.
- They contribute ideas and collaborate with the management and the team of educators at the centre with whom they act as an interlocutor to deal with issues that affect the whole group of families.
- They encourage networking with other educational agents and facilitate the provision of services and activities outside school hours.

They encourage the participation of the EBM (Municipal Nursery School) educational community through the deployment of a series of proposals to support family associations by means of public subsidies to promote activities, resources and advice for the development of their projects, particularly those that are community-oriented and open to all families and young children in the neighbourhood.

New network of municipal family childcare centres

The Municipal Family Childcare Centres (EFCM in Catalan) are a care service for children under the age of three and their families.

They consist of group sessions of children accompanied by an adult reference person, who meet regularly (generally for 2 to 3 hours, between 1 and 2 times a week), combining free play for the children with a group dynamic for the adults, which, in a relatively informal way, they talk and share doubts, strategies and experiences about the process of growing up, with the accompaniment and guidance of two or more professionals.

The function of the EFCMs (Municipal Family Childcare Centres) is to facilitate an educational and childcare environment in which children's learning, socialisation and autonomy are stimulated and developed; the positive bond between adults and children; adults' confidence and parenting skills; and informal community networks that prevent lone parenting.

Barcelona currently has 16 EFCMs (Municipal Family Childcare Centres) managed by various municipal bodies: IMEB (Barcelona Municipal Institute of Education) manages 6; IMSS (Municipal Institute of Social Services) manages 2, and 8 more have been created in the districts of Eixample, Sarrià-Sant Gervasi, Sant Martí and Gràcia in neighbourhood facilities.

The combined capacity of the EFCMs (Municipal Family Childcare Centres) is around 650 children and families.

This capacity is low, considering that in the city of Barcelona there are some 21,000 children under the age of three who do not attend school.

On the other hand, the territorial distribution of the current capacity is very unequal and there are still many neighbourhoods in the city with no family space in the same neighbourhood or in a neighbouring one.

It should be emphasised that EFCMs (Municipal Family Childcare Centres) are a particularly valuable resource for families and children in vulnerable situations, especially for those who for cultural reasons and/or because they do not have the need for work-life balance do not send their children to school, and where peer learning and professional accompaniment can reinforce the capacity of families to care for and protect their children. At the same time, it

provides an educationally stimulating environment for children's learning and socialisation outside the home and with other adults..

16. Promoting a shared model of EFCM (Municipal Family Childcare Centres) in the city, with common standards

In recent years the districts of Eixample, Sarrià-Sant Gervasi, Sant Martí and Gràcia have created EFCM (Municipal Family Childcare Centres), while others are considering it.

The districts are thus responding to the demand for local support and guidance services for young children and their families, generally taking advantage of space in pre-existing facilities, such as children's homes or toy libraries, at times when they were not being used, and therefore with relatively low running costs.

The growth of this type of service is undoubtedly good news, as it meets specific needs that have not been met until now, especially those of families and children who are not users of the public or private nursery school service.

However, this also raises the challenge of ensuring that families know what kind of service they can expect under the same name and offered by the same administration, regardless of which municipal body is responsible.

This requires the agreement of minimum common standards, on which each body or district can then make different and flexible adaptations according to its priorities, the characteristics of the area and the specificities of the families it serves.

Based on previous reflection processes, in 2019 a working group was created between the bodies that manage EFCMs (Municipal Family Childcare Centres) or have responsibilities in the promotion of children (IMEB (Barcelona Municipal Institute of Education), IMSS (Municipal Institute of Social Services), Department for the Promotion of Children, Directorate of Community Action Services and districts) to agree on common minimum standards for the creation and operation of EFCMs, (Directorate of Community Action Services and districts), as well as other recommendations to be adopted voluntarily. Once the framework document has been approved by the working group, the following process will begin:

- Validation of the document
- Carrying out a cost study and determining a public price range
- Presentation of the document to the shared responsibility table with the district service managers
- Presentation to the children's technicians and project coordinators of each district, starting with those where EFCM already exists

17. Doubling the number and capacity of the EFCMs (Municipal Family Childcare Centres) so that they reach half of the city's neighbourhoods and some 1,500 families

The 16 existing family centres in the city have a combined capacity for some 650 children and families, which is low in relation to the small number of children who do not attend school and with an unequal territorial distribution.

The number of EFCMs will be progressively increased to double the number and capacity of two-track EFCMs:

1. Create 3 which are managed by the IMEB linked to newly built EBMs where there is sufficient space to locate them, specifically in:

EFCM (Municipal Family Childcare Centres)	Neighbourhood	District
Roger	Sants-Badal	Sants-Montjuïc
Pere Calafell	Sant Martí de Provençals	Sant Martí
Teixonera	La Teixonera	Horta-Guinardó

2. Create at least 13 district-run centres, in local facilities, with support from the IMEB and the Neighbourhood Plan, to adapt spaces and provide them with the necessary materials, as well as to get them up and running. To do this, following the process of disseminating the minimum standards document, the following steps will be taken:
 - Specify the criteria, quantities and procedure for the adaptation of centres and supports to the operation
 - Select the districts, neighbourhoods and facilities in which to locate the new EFCMs (Municipal Family Childcare Centres) from among those that apply

for funding from the Neighbourhood Plan and IMEB (Barcelona Municipal Institute of Education). Priority will be given to criteria of need (number of out-of-school children and social risk indicators), as well as ensuring that each district has at least 2 EFCMs (Municipal Family Childcare Centres)..

The aim is to double the number of family childcare centres in the city so that there are about half of the neighbourhoods and to increase the capacity to 1,500 families and children with more than 32 EFCM.

18. Creating the EFCM (Municipal Family Childcare Centres) network

As part of the strategy of growth with a shared model, it is necessary to set up a network that facilitates the sharing of learning, strategies and resources between the various EFCM.

It is proposed to create the EFCM network with the services managed by IMEB, IMSS and districts, as well as with other entities in the city and neighbourhoods that work with young children and their families.

In the first phase, the network's reference points and operational working formulas will be determined, including the specification of the forms of facilitation and support. We suggest that:

- The IMEB contributes with a facilitating role in the network (communication and promotion, technical advice, creation of meeting spaces, training offers, itinerant workshops and facilitation of connections with other services, etc.).
- The IMSS, Health and Community Action contribute by promoting and/or prescribing participation, and by providing advice, training, itinerant workshops, and links, where available, with their own services for a comprehensive approach to the needs of young children and their families.

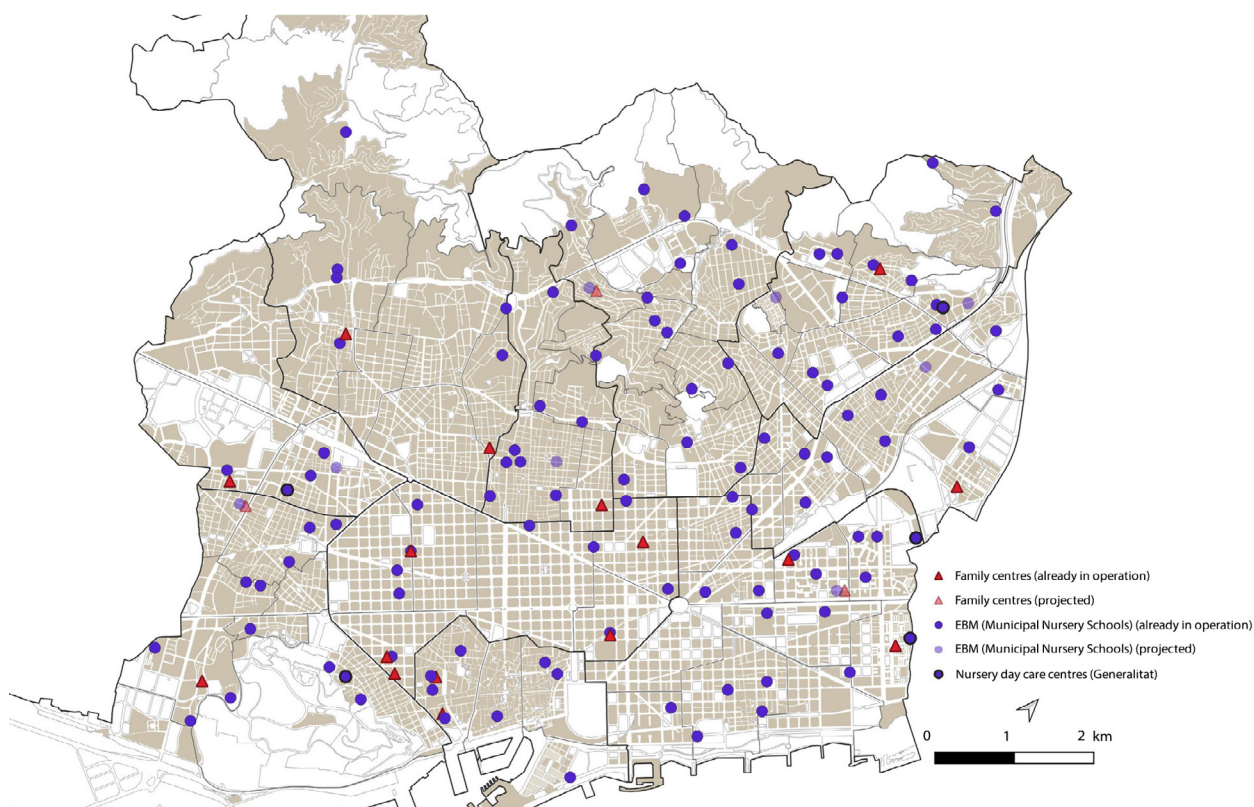
19. Bringing the “*Nadons en família*” (newborns in the family) programme to all the EBM and EFCM schools

The IMEB offers the *Nadons en Família* (newborns in the family) programme, aimed at families with little kids, from birth to the first year of life. It is carried out at the EFCM of the IMEB and at various Primary Care Centres (CAP) in the city.

The programme provides families with a centre for meeting and exchange where they can share their experiences, strengthen their bond with their child and have a positive perception of motherhood and fatherhood.

Two professionals, one from the field of education and the other from the field of health, share the management and monitoring of each group and the evaluation and coordination of other professionals in the area, from an interdisciplinary approach. The IMEB has two educators assigned to the programme.

The aim is to broaden the scope of the programme and extend it to the rest of the city's EFCMs and the EBM network



* EBM and EFCM network by 2024. Of the 16 EFCMs planned, only the 3 linked to EBM that already have a definitive location are located on the map, the rest of the 13 EFCMs planned are not located on the map.

More equity

International scientific evidence indicates that quality early childhood education and care has a significant and important impact on children's development and later educational success.

When this education and care is provided through early childhood schooling, the positive impacts are concentrated on children from lower socio-economic and/or migrant backgrounds.

On the other hand, nursery schools are an instrument of conciliation that facilitates the participation in the labour market of the adults in the family, particularly the mothers, who have historically been the main carers of the children at home. This second function is also particularly relevant for low-income and single-parent households, as the income from work in households with children is a determining factor in preventing child poverty, and therefore has a direct effect on the well-being of the children.

In Barcelona, access to municipal nursery schools for children from lower socio-economic families has increased significantly in recent years as a result of the social tariff system, which modulates the public price of the service according to family income.

Thus, among the children enrolled in nursery schools in the 2020-21 academic year, 36% belong to the first bracket of the tariff, which corresponds to family incomes below the sufficiency income indicator (IRSC in Catalan, currently €569.12 per month).

However, beyond the price, there may be other barriers for which certain families do not even ask for a service from which they and their children could benefit. These are both objective and symbolic barriers, with cultural, bureaucratic or physical distance determinants in relation to nursery schools.

In order to improve access for these families and achieve greater equity, efforts are needed to try to overcome these barriers, with better information and support for pre-enrolment in EBM and EFCM, as well as other services and resources that meet their needs and specificities.

20. Revising the criteria for access to the EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) to make them more equitable

The priority criteria for the ordering of applications (when there are more applications than vacancies available in a given EBM) will be updated in accordance with Decree 11/2021 on the programming of the educational offer and the admissions procedure.

In the case of EBM, local councils can specify some of the criteria of the Decree, establish additional criteria, and decide how many points are assigned to each criterion.

In order to take advantage of the opportunity to improve equity in access to the EBM, a working group will be created to analyse and formulate a proposal for new criteria for the prioritisation of applications in line with the Decree, including:

- The redefinition of the areas of influence of nursery schools
- The definition of the criteria for determining the income of the family unit
- The addition of additional criteria specific to the city of Barcelona, if necessary
- The scoring scale of the criteria

21. Improving information and support for families in pre-enrolling in EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)

Inequalities in access to nursery school are not only to be found in the pre-enrolment process and access criteria, but also in the fact that some families with young children do not apply for the service.

Not applying does not necessarily indicate a lack of need, but may be due to a lack of knowledge of the service and may be associated with access barriers.

For this reason, it is proposed to improve the procedures for informing and accompanying families during the process of information and pre-enrolment in EBM, by means of:

- The diagnosis of access barriers and the groups that suffer them, with special emphasis on groups with functional diversity, families in situations of social vulnerability or families of different origins.

- The design of a procedure to inform and accompany these families in the pre-enrolment process.
- The implementation of a linguistic translation and interpretation service.

22. Strengthening joint work with paediatrics as prescribers of EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) and EFCM (Municipal Family Childcare Centres)

Primary health care is the first point of access to medical care. Primary care services, including paediatrics, form part of the basic common portfolio, which are the care services fully covered by public funding.

For this reason, paediatrics and paediatric nursing professionals at primary care centres (CAP) attend practically the entire population, maintain a trusting and stable relationship with families, especially in the first years of a child's life, and deal with a wide range of queries and consultations.

Within the framework of this broad coverage and stable relationship with families, it is proposed that paediatrics professionals at the CAPs provide basic information and recommend municipal services for young children and their families, particularly EBM and EFCM, including socio-educational ones, to those families who may need them most and who are most likely to be unaware of them in other ways.

23. Looking into a municipal babysitting programme for small children in situations of vulnerability

October 2020 saw the launch of the pilot trial of the Concilia programme, which offers six municipal babysitting centres for single-parent families with few resources, women who are victims of gender violence and families with no community network.

It is offered in different facilities in six neighbourhoods that form part of the Neighbourhood Plan with services seven days a week outside school hours. Each municipal babysitting service can take in around eight children from 4 to 12 years old every hour.

The intention is that these children have an educational environment and quality playtime, with educational activities adapted to different ages and based on values such as coeducation, participation, environmental education, interculturalism, emotional education and art.

In the process of extending the project following the pilot phase of the project, we propose that the programme should extend the ages of the target population and include children under 3 years of age, especially the younger siblings of children who are already there, reinforcing the conditions to ensure that they are appropriate in terms of early childhood education.

24. Reserving places in EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) for little children in exceptional circumstances

There are little children who, due to family circumstances, live in exceptional conditions.

Since the 2011-12 academic year, the IMEB has had an agreement with the *Centre Penitenciari de Dones Barcelona* (Women's Penitentiary Centre of Barcelona) to reserve places in the EBM pre-enrolment and enrolment resolution, and for the 2021-22 academic year it has signed another agreement with the *Residència Maternal Maria Reventós* (Maria Reventós Maternal Residence), aimed at pregnant teenagers or children under 3 years of age in situations of social, personal and economic difficulty.

The reservation of places for children under 3 years of age in exceptional situations will be maintained, and the need for other reservation agreements will be explored with the Municipal Institute of Social Services and the Service of Social Intervention with Families with Minors in order to break down the barriers to access to EBM and attend to children and families with exceptional needs.

25. Looking into support in the enrolment and reservation of EBM (Municipal Nursery School) places for children in situations of social vulnerability linked to the Plan against school segregation

The **Plan against school segregation** in Barcelona has been running for two years from P3 to ESO (High School), promoted by the Barcelona Education Consortium. Its objectives are to detect, improve the balanced distribution between schools and accompany students in vulnerable situations.

The Plan includes various measures, including the detection of socially vulnerable pupils by the Municipal Institute of Social Services (IMSS), which carries out an assessment at the time of enrolment.

As a result of this effort to detect children in compulsory education (3-16), their siblings from 0 to 2 years of age, with whom they share the same situation, are also identified.

Tools will be used, from personalised information and support in pre-enrolment to the possible reservation of places, to encourage the schooling of these children in EBM, seeking a balanced distribution between schools.

26. Studying the feasibility of grants for the schooling of children from 2 to 3 years old in a situation of social vulnerability

An analysis of economic and technical feasibility will be carried out to explore the possibilities of a grant that would allow children in a situation of social vulnerability to access, in the event of not having obtained a place in an EBM, private nursery schools in similar conditions to those that would allow them to access an EBM.

This measure would make it possible:

- To advance in the universalisation of 2 to 3-year-olds, guaranteeing the schooling of those children who most need it for their educational trajectories and that the public service does not have the capacity to attend.
- To focus scarce public resources on children in situations of severe poverty and accredited social vulnerability, avoiding school segregation in municipal nursery schools.

The participating private nursery centres must comply with the pedagogical, material, space, staff qualifications and working conditions criteria determined by the IMEB, in order to guarantee the quality of the service.

27. Assessing the impact of social tariffs on equity in access to EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)

The nursery school service does not have the status of universal and free education, and is subject to the payment of a public fee that can act as a barrier to access for families with lower incomes. Moreover, the need for reconciliation is greater in households where all adults work, which tend to have a higher income.

To prevent the school service from being regressive, from 2017-18 the social tariff modulates the public price to be paid according to the family income, in a range of 10 steps that goes from €50 per month for schooling and food, up to €395 (which is equivalent to a range of between 6.3% and 50.0% of the real cost of the school place).

Since its application, several adjustments have been introduced, especially to make it more sensitive to unexpected situations (such as a sudden drop in income, the birth of a new child, or the death of one of the parents).

An assessment will be made of the effects of social tariffs on equity in access to EBM, in order to identify opportunities to improve the system.

28. Reinforcing the “*Barcelona Cuida*” (Barcelona takes care) programme in the area of early childhood care and education

Barcelona Cuida (Barcelona takes care) is a pioneering centre aimed at showcasing all the city’s existing care resources and making them available to everyone.

The task of caring is incorporated into many of the city’s programmes, actions and facilities, and the variety of people and groups that are involved in it is very broad.

For this reason, the centre aims to develop:

- A service with updated information and comprehensive guidance on all the programmes, actions and facilities that exist in the territory, both publicly owned by the various administrations and privately or community owned.
- A place where everyone involved in care work in the city can meet and interact.
- A place where individuals, professionals and organisations can coordinate and network with each other.
- A centre that informs city residents and raises awareness about care work.

The centre is one of the actions envisaged in the Government’s Measure for the democratisation of care (2017-2020) and in the City Strategy to support family carers.

The programme will be strengthened to ensure that it has up-to-date information on resources, programmes and actions related to early childhood care, as well as to extend its guidance, counselling, training, exchange and networking services.

More inclusion

29. Incorporating the figure of the social educator in the EBM educational teams

EBMs offer priority attention to children in vulnerable situations, with a comprehensive response to all the needs of children and their families, to strengthen their ability to care for, protect and educate them.

As part of the Neighbourhood Plan, in 2017-18 a social educator joined the EBMs in the northern area of Nou Barris, with the aim of preventing, detecting and accompanying situations of families of children at risk, and linking them to the Social Services in the area.

On the other hand, the EBM Aurora, in the Raval neighbourhood, which incorporates a socio-educational family space where families with children in situations of vulnerability and social risk have a reserve of one third of the places and receive the support and accompaniment of two professionals from the educational field and one from the social area, was put into operation in January 2019.

The evaluation of these experiences has shown that teamwork between professionals from the educational and social fields reinforces the socio-educational approach and intervention, strengthens the inclusive nature of the services and improves community work.

It is proposed to extend this initiative and incorporate 5 new social educators to reinforce and improve the socio-educational intervention in 10 EBM located in 4 territories with a high proportion of families at risk of social vulnerability, at a rate of one social worker for every two nursery schools, with a weekly dedication of approximately four days to the EBM and one at the Social Services Centre of reference.

They will join the CSS of Ciutat Meridiana-Torre Baró and Vallbona and its 2 EBMs, which have already had a social educator in the municipal nursery schools since the 2017-18 school year:

CSS	EBM (Municipal Nursery School)
Raval Sud	EBM Aurora, EBM Cadí, EBM Mont Tàber, EBM Canigó
La Marina	EBM Collserola, EBM Niu d'Infants
Carmel	EBM Xarlot, EBM Tris-Tras
Franja Besòs	EBM El Caminet del Besós, EBM El Tren
Ciutat Meridiana-Torre Baró-Vallbona	EBM Aqüeducte, EBM La Muntanya

30. Extending the pilot trial of family social and educational centres to 5 districts

The socio-educational family centre model integrates the different needs of families and incorporates the socio-educational aspect of intervention, with special support for families in situations of severe risk, facilitating their integration into the services and activities of family spaces, and working in a network with other services (education, social services, health).

The 2018-2019 academic year saw the launch of the Aurora socio-educational family centre pilot project in the Raval neighbourhood, integrated into the municipal nursery school and co-managed by the IMEB and the IMSS.

The family centre has its own separate area in the EBM Aurora with the same characteristics as the other family centres in the IMEB, to which there is a support area for basic hygiene and food care, with an office area, a washing machine/dryer area and a shower area.

In a unique way compared to the other family areas of the IMEB, the educational team includes, in addition to the children's educators, a socio-educational family worker and a psychologist, who offers individual and family sessions of psychological care and support.

Of all the places offered, 33% of places are reserved for families in a situation of risk referred by Social Services in the area of influence with a specific referral report.

To access the care service of the socio-educational centre, families can go directly to the centre or they can go by referral from primary care centres (CAP), social services or other

resources such as the Centre de Desenvolupament Infantil i Atenció Precoç de Ciutat Vella (Child Development and Early Care Centre of Ciutat Vella).

As a result of the positive evaluation of the experience by the IMEB, the IMSS and the management of the EBM and EFCM Aurora, it is proposed to extend the socio-educational family centre model to four more family centres (existing or newly built) in the districts of Sant Andreu, Sants-Montjuic, Eixample and Nou Barris. The specific centres will be chosen on the basis of indicators of need and the characteristics of the spaces.

31. Reinforcing early detection and care for EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools)

EBMs have the Special Needs Education Team (EEAEN in Catalan) which offers an itinerant service of detection, diagnosis, accompaniment and intervention of an interdisciplinary nature, in an inclusive environment.

The environment of the EBM as the first place for socialisation after the family facilitates the detection of developmental difficulties of the child by the educators, and promotes prevention and early care, and work with families.

The EEAEN coordinates with the paediatric services of the CAPs, the Basic Social Services and the CDIAPs (8 Child Development and Early Childhood Care Centres)/EIPI (The Interdisciplinary Team for Little Children) /EAPs (Psychopedagogic assessment and guidance team) to guarantee quality care with the appropriate intervention tools and strategies for each case.

In order to reinforce this task, a working group will be set up with the aim of designing a protocol of action between the different educational, social and health services to provide better care for children with special needs.

32. Strengthening collaboration with organisations and projects for young children at risk of exclusion

The latest estimates show that in 2019, 30.8% of children and adolescents in the city were living in poverty and 9.7% in severe poverty, with a foreseeable upward trend due to the effects of the pandemic.

Child poverty is structural in nature and is associated with multiple forms of disadvantage and exclusion, which have lasting effects on young children throughout their lives.

The Municipal Institute of Social Services establishes agreements and grants subsidies to social organisations that offer educational and childcare services and programmes for families with children in situations of social vulnerability. They are characterised by carrying out socio-educational, specialised and often intensive intervention with families in situations of serious risk.

It is proposed to increase economic support through municipal subsidies, as well as to advance in the structuring of a support network, including public and social entities, for small children at risk and their families.

33. Increasing the diversity of origins, languages and cultures of the teaching and educational support staff

In the 2019-20 school year, 23.5% of the young children enrolled in municipal nursery schools lived in families in which all the parents (one in the case of single-parent families and all two in the case of two-parent families) were foreign nationals. This represents only one part of the families of diverse cultural origin, as some of them have acquired Spanish nationality.

This fact underlines the importance of deepening the intercultural perspective in the first cycle of early childhood education.

In this sense, as well as continuing to work on awareness-raising and sensitisation, and training in intercultural education, we suggest increasing the diversity of origin, language and culture of the staff of nursery schools (both in-house and external staff), in order to:

- Improve the ability of EBMs and ECFMs to relate to and care for families and children from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Make the staff of the nursery schools more representative of the city's population.

More diversity

34. Extending the experiences of timetable diversification in the EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)

The EBMs have to respond and adapt to the diverse needs of the city's families.

For this reason, two experimental projects have been carried out, one from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the other from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., which adapt to the specific needs of reduced or part-time working hours, late working hours and preferences for shorter schooling, while increasing the number of places available in the same school.

The first study was carried out at EMB Aurora (2018-19 and 2019-20 school years), in the Raval neighbourhood. Although both timetables were filled, it did not meet the demand of the families in the neighbourhood, who preferred full timetables in 85% of the cases and opted for part-time as a second option.

The second study was carried out at the new EBM Germanetes (academic year 2020-21), in a different context, which once again has morning and afternoon shifts. The demand has been high and there is a waiting list for both sessions.

In accordance with the suitability criteria that are determined on the basis of the two studies carried out,

the offer of partial tournaments will be progressively expanded every year to at least one more EBM.

35. Reinforcing the offer of “Bressols d’Estiu” (Summer Schools)

Since 2008, the municipal Summer Holiday Campaign has included the “Bressol d’Estiu” (Summer Schools), aimed at children between 1 and 3 years old who have been attending a public or private nursery school. It can be held between 16 and 31 July. The EBM family associations are responsible for requesting approval and organising these activities.

Generally, the majority of participants are children from the same EBM or group of EBMs that organise the activity, although 20% of places are reserved for other children.

Given the importance of having opportunities for reconciliation in the summer in an educational environment and a pedagogical programme adapted to the first years of life, it is proposed:

- Supporting family associations to organise “Summer Schools” at more EBMs
- Extend the offer of “Summer Schools” to the month of August to all the districts of the city with the option of the “Campanya de Vacances d’Estiu” (summer holiday campaign)
- Complement the “Summer Schools” with a varied offer of summer activities for young children in facilities and in public spaces

36. Extending family activities aimed at children 0-3 in municipal facilities

Activities aimed at the 0-3 age group in municipal facilities (libraries, civic centres, museums, municipal sports centres, municipal music schools, etc.) are important in order to:

- Guarantee the right to play and learn
- Promote cultural, artistic and scientific participation from a very young age
- Induce sensations, emotions and awaken children’s interest in discovery and experimentation
- Offer opportunities for socialisation to children and their families
- Link children and families with facilities that can offer them important services at other stages of life

A working group will be created between the different facilities in the city to expand and improve the range of activities on offer for children from 0 to 3 years old and their families, with the support of the Council for Educational Innovation, which has long experience in ensuring the pedagogical quality of the educational proposals of the institutions.

More Coordination

37. Promoting early childhood care networks in all districts

EBM professionals coordinate and work with other services and facilities in the area that deal with children, in the educational, social and health fields, in order to ensure adequate care for children and families, building up prevention and care networks. These networks make it possible to share different knowledge among professionals, agree on common actions and give coherence to the actions of each service.

With the aim of having early childhood networks in all districts and creating a space for city networks:

- Promote early childhood networks with the participation of health services, social services and other territorial entities in districts where they do not exist
- Promote the use of shared work models among the networks
- Facilitate resources, knowledge and criteria to dynamise and improve the functioning of the networks

A city for little children

38. Extending opportunities for outdoor play

Play and physical activity in the open air improve the physical and mental wellbeing and health of children and adults, because play enriches community life and because quality playgrounds help to naturalise, pacify and make public spaces safer.

Specific activities for children 0-3 and their families are included in the “Juguem a les Places” (Let’s play in the square) project, which proposes play activities to promote family and neighbourhood activity and coexistence in neighbourhood squares.

Likewise, as part of the strategy towards a playable city and the Plan for play in public spaces, children from 0 to 3 years old and their families will be involved in the provision of play areas and activities in public spaces in order to guarantee the right of young children to play and read.

39. Adapting municipal facilities to meet the daily needs of children in a gender perspective

The study on gender mainstreaming in municipal facilities, produced by the Barcelona City Council’s Directorate of Gender Services and Time Policies, identified elements, both inside and outside the facilities, which could lead to gender-differentiated uses and different user experiences, that could generate differential uses by gender, as well as different user experiences, and put forward recommendations for a future Measure for the governance of feminist municipal facilities, which is currently being drawn up.

On the basis of these recommendations, it is proposed to adapt local facilities (such as civic centres, libraries, or nursery and primary schools) to make them friendly to young children and their families, reserving, among other things, a corner or space for children to stay and play with appropriate material, changing mats and a space for breastfeeding.

More support for social initiatives

40. Exploring public support for shared parenting groups

In recent years, many shared childcare groups have developed in Barcelona. These are self-managed initiatives that are based on the ability and willingness of families to cooperatively meet their shared needs.

In general, they combine the logic of the common good with the ideology of free education, and give priority to the preference of some families for care and education formulas with smaller groups, greater family participation and inspired by new pedagogical trends.

One of the main challenges faced by these initiatives is the lack of a clear regulatory framework adapted to the specificities of a community-based educational service, and they generally only operate with a municipal activity licence.

On the other hand, districts receive requests from shared childcare groups to use spaces in facilities such as neighbourhood halls or civic centres, and do not have clear guidelines on how to respond.

A working group will be created which, with legal advice, will draw up city criteria to guide districts in supporting community shared childcare projects, and which will include aspects such as support and guidance in obtaining municipal licences, access to subsidies, the cession of space in municipal facilities, and the dissemination of their activities.

At the same time, talks will be held with the Generalitat de Catalunya to approve a framework regulation governing this type of activity and determining the minimum requirements to be recognised as a nursery centre.

41. Exploring public support for nurseries (day mums/dads)

Childcare centres offer a care and education service to a small number of children in the home of a qualified carer-educator, within the framework of a self-employment formula.

In Catalonia, this activity is not regulated, although in 2017 the Generalitat drew up a draft decree on childcare services for young children, which was not approved.

On the other hand, this type of day-care service for young children is a regulated resource and it is widely available in countries with care systems as diverse as Australia, Canada, England, Wales, Scotland, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, France and the USA.

The Childcare Centre Association was founded in 2013 with the main objective of raising awareness of this figure and leading the initiative for its legal recognition.

In the absence of a regulatory framework on which to base itself, the association has approved standards to be followed by the associated nurseries, which it proposes as a base model for the decree, including criteria on housing, the adequacy of the space and the necessary professional qualifications.

Formulas for supporting nurseries will be explored, subject to the development of a set of regulations by the Generalitat de Catalunya to regulate this type of activity and to determine the minimum requirements.

42. Facilitating the access of private nurseries to support and grants for SMBs from Barcelona Activa and the Area of Economic Promotion

Private nurseries serve a significant number of families in the city and play an important educational and work-life balance role.

Within the framework of COVID-19, they have suffered a drop in demand, both due to the economic crisis and the health crisis, combined with higher operating costs, in compliance with health regulations.

Moreover, this is a sector made up of mostly small businesses and organisations with very limited economic and financial capacity.

In order to facilitate this activity in the context of the pandemic, Barcelona Activa and the Area of Economic Promotion, within the framework of the new grants for the local economy,

have incorporated lines with significant economic allocations to which private nurseries can have access.

In the coming years we will continue to offer support, advice, training and accompaniment to small businesses in the educational field.

Likewise, once the new government of the Generalitat is constituted, the City Council will recover the dialogue with the Department of Education to address the needs of the private nursery sector and try to extend the grants allocated to private nurseries until 2020.

More knowledge

43. Drawing up a catalogue of local resources and support to welcome children to the city

The birth of a child involves an adaptation at all levels for the parents. Often the birth of an infant is lived with happiness, but also with moments of anguish and loneliness.

For this reason, it is important at the very moment of birth, especially of the first child, to make the family feel that they are accompanied and to make them aware of all the resources and services available to them in the areas of health, education, social care and childcare, especially close to their home.

It will update the catalogue and map of resources, services and initiatives existing in the territories in the field of early childhood care and education and will be disseminated within the framework of the communication campaign for families with a new swim “Welcome to life, welcome to the city”, in collaboration with the district early childhood networks.

44. More monitoring and evaluation, more shared learning

The aim of evaluation is to generate knowledge to improve policies and programmes and increase their capacity to meet social needs; to link the knowledge generated with decision-making processes, both at a macro (public management) and micro level (the daily practices and decisions taken by educators or other front-line public workers); and to be accountable to the public. With these aims in mind, the proposal is to:

- Structure a system for generating and sharing knowledge and organisational learning
- Structure a procedure for dissemination and dialogue on knowledge within the framework of the Education Council
- Collaborate with universities and research centres to promote evaluations and analyses on young children and the municipal services they receive

45. Extending support and training to EBM and EFCM teams

Lifelong learning is an opportunity to update and broaden knowledge, share reflections and revitalise educational work.

In early childhood education it is especially important so that the professionals are continually familiarised with methodologies, strategies and resources for quality educational intervention. onal support and training in the context of pandemic fatigue.

An annual, broad and plural offer of training activities will be designed to contribute to the professional development of the EBM and EFCM teams in all areas of their activity, taking into account the demands and needs of the teams, and including surviving needs, such as emotional support and training in the context of pandemic fatigue.

46. Periodically evaluate the EBM protocol for action and prevention of child abuse and violence

In 2016, the IMEB approved the protocol for action and prevention of violence and sexual abuse of children. This protocol aims to establish guidelines for detecting and preventing situations of violence or sexual abuse of children that may occur at EBMs. It also aims to coordinate the various educational centres with the IMEB and to define the circuit of action in cases where it is necessary to intervene.

An external evaluation of the protocol will be commissioned at the end of the 2020-21 school year in order to assess its correct implementation and, if necessary, to propose the necessary improvements to ensure that it is a useful instrument for protecting children enrolled in the EBM in Barcelona from situations of violence or sexual abuse that could affect them, violating their rights and causing them serious harm in their development.

06

Budget

The plan's actions involve a budget of €24.9 million in investment in new equipment and refurbishments and €9.3 million in annual operating expenditure, once fully deployed.

The total operating cost of the EBM and EFCM networks once the measures envisaged in the plan have been implemented will be €69.8 million per year.

Initiatives	Investment 2021-2024	Cost of running current services (annual)	Cost increase per plan measures (annual)	Operating cost (annual, with full deployment)
Xarxa d'Escoles Bressol Municipals (municipal nursery school network)	23.400.000,00 €	59.141.246,00 €	8.050.155,00 €	67.191.401,00 €
Xarxa d'Espais Familiars de Criança Municipals (Municipal Network of Family Centres for Children)	1.492.000,00 €	1.320.731,00 €	1.256.864,00 €	2.577.595,00 €
Total	24.892.000,00 €	60.461.977,00 €	9.307.019,00 €	69.768.996,00 €

07

Monitoring and management

Structure of the implementation of the plan

The Plan for the education and upbringing of young children in Barcelona envisages a 4-year timetable for action with a cross-cutting vision. The structure for implementing the plan will include the following areas:

- The Technical Office of the Plan, which will act as the technical and operational secretariat with the IMEB team and will be responsible for the deployment, coordination and communication of the Plan's actions.
- The transversal promoter group of the City Council, as the area responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the different lines of action of the Plan, will include the IMEB's educational centres department, the IMEB-ICUB's educational and cultural city in the neighbourhoods department, the IMSS Department of Children and Families, the Department of Childhood Promotion, the Health and Care Department of the Department of Social Rights and City Development, as well as the Plan's Technical Office and the Education Policy Officer.
- The City Council's Early Childhood Education and Childcare Committee, as a space for contrast and monitoring, will be chaired by the person responsible for education policy and will be made up of social and educational agents and the different public bodies and organisations involved, academic and professional organisations, and experts committed to promoting an early childhood education and childcare policy.

Follow-up of the plan

The following mechanisms and actions are envisaged:

- The technical office will draw up an annual monitoring report, which will be presented and approved in plenary session to the panel, which will assess the achievement of the planned objectives, the detection of new demands and the creation of synergies to meet them.
- At the end of the plan implementation period, a final evaluation will be carried out. This will mark the orientation, priorities and lines of action to be carried out in subsequent action plans.

Action	Promoter	Other units
More quality nursery schools		
1	Construction of 8 new EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)
2	Incorporation of the 5 nurseries of the Government of Catalonia	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB) Resources and General Services Directorate (IMEB), Barcelona Education Association (Consoci d'Educació de Barcelona)
3	Analysing and generating a city framework for the possible incorporation of private nurseries into the municipal network	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB) Department of Resources and General Services (IMEB)
4	Planning and carrying out technical work for the construction of future EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools) to further expand the network	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB) Districts
5	Establishing the size of the groups from 2 to 3 years of EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools) to 19 children	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)
6	Encouraging more innovative pedagogical practices and projects	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)
7	Consolidating healthy, organic and local menus in EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)	Department of Resources and General Services (IMEB) Department of Educational Centres (IMEB), Barcelona Public Health Agency
8	Promoting dual vocational training in all EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB) Professional Training BCN Foundation, Barcelona Education Consortium.
9	Reinforcing coherence and continuity between the two cycles of early childhood education	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB) Department of Education, Consorci d'Educació de Barcelona
10	Working for the recognition of early childhood education as an educational, universal and adequately funded stage	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB) Department of Education

Action	Promoter	Other units
La “casa de la petita infància” (The “home for little children”)		
11	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	Directorate for the Educating City and Culture in the Neighbourhoods (IMEB/ICUB), Directorate for Welfare and Health Services, Directorate for Community Action Services, Districts
12		
13		
14	Foment de Ciutat	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB), Departament de Promoció d'Infància, Districtes
15	Department of Educating City and Culture in the Neighbourhoods (IMEB/ICUB)	Districts
New network of municipal family childcare centres		
16	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	Department of Social Attention to Families and Children (IMSS), Department of Community Action Services, Department of Children's Promotion, Districts
17		
18		
19		
More equity		
20	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	
21	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	Department of Publications and Communication
22	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	
23	Neighbourhood Plan	Department of Social Care for Families and Children (IMSS)
24	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	Department of Social Care for Families and Children (IMSS)

25	Looking into support in the enrolment and reservation of EBM (Municipal Nursery School) places for children in situations of social vulnerability linked to the Plan against school segregation	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	Department of Social Care for Families and Children (IMSS), Consorci d'Educació de Barcelona (Barcelona Education Consortium)
26	Studying the viability of grants for the schooling of children aged 2-3 years in a situation of social vulnerability	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	Department of Social Care for Families and Children (IMSS)
27	Assessing the impact of social tariffs on equity in access to EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)	Department of Resources and General Services (IMEB)	Department of Education
28	Reinforcing the "Barcelona Cuida" (Barcelona takes care) programme in the area of early childhood care and education	Department of Ageing and Carer Services	Department of Education

Action		Management/Department	Other units
More inclusion			
29	Incorporating the figure of the social educator in the educational teams of the EBM	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	Department of Territorial and Community Social Services (IMSS), Neighbourhood Plan
30	Extending the pilot trial of socio-educational family spaces to 5 districts	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	Department of Territorial and Community Social Services (IMSS)
31	Reinforcing early detection and care for EBM (Municipal Nursery Schools)	Department of Educational Centres - Educational Team for Special Needs Care (IMEB)	Child and Adolescent Care Teams (EAIA) and Social Services Centres (IMSS), Early Childhood Development and Care Centre (CDIAP), Psychopedagogical Counselling and Guidance Team (EAP) and Catalan Health Service (Servei Català de Salut-Centres de la Salut)Catalan Health Service - Primary Health CareCentres (CAP)
32	Strengthening collaboration with organisations and projects for young children at risk of exclusion	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	IMSS (Municipal Institute of Social Services)
33	Increasing the diversity of origins, languages and cultures of the teaching and educational support staff	Department of Resources and General Services (IMEB)	Departament d'Interculturalitat i Pluralisme Religios (Department of Interculturality and Religious Pluralism)
More diversity			
34	Extending the experiences of timetable diversification in the EBMs (Municipal Nursery Schools)	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)	
35	Reinforcing the offer of "Bressols d'Estiu" (Summer Schools)	Department of Children's, Youth and Senior Citizen's Services	Department of Educational Centres (IMEB)
36	Extending family activities aimed at children 0-3 in municipal facilities	Department of Educating City and Culture in the Neighbourhoods (IMEB/ICUB)	Department of Community Action Services, Consortium of Libraries, Department of Children's Promotion

