

BULLETIN

A SUMMARY OF THE LATEST NEWS
FROM NATIONAL GOVERNMENT
AND PARLIAMENT

News from parliament

Parliamentary question on the administration costs of the ECD-Employment Stimulus Relief Fund

25th April 2022

Ms Abrahams (DA) asked the Minister of Social Development about how much of the ECD-ESRF budget was used for administration fees. The Minister responded that R6.4 million was budgeted for a once-off administration cost.

[PQ on administration fees for the ECD-ESRF](#)

Parliamentary questions on public servants who applied for the ECD-ESRF

12th May 2022 and 30th June 2022

Ms Abrahams (DA) and Dr M Gondwe (DA) asked the Minister of Social Development about public servants who had applied for the ECD-ESRF. The Minister responded that 3729 staff on the government's PERSAL database were found to have applied for the ECD-ESRF – none of them received payments.

[PQ on public servant applicants for the ECD-ESRF](#)

[PQ2 on public servant applicants for the ECD-ESRF](#)

Children's Amendment Bill – Portfolio Committee on Social Development

May-Sept 2022

The Portfolio Committee on Social Development held various sessions on the Children's Amendment Bill. A new version of the Bill was published which confirmed the splitting out of the ECD provisions into a separate Bill, and which removed many of the other original clauses. The Bill now focuses on giving effect to the High Court's foster care judgment. The Bill has been approved by the National Assembly and transferred to the National Council of Provinces for consideration.

[Children's Amendment Bill B18B-2020](#)

[Children's Amendment Bill - Committee hearings](#)

ABOUT SMARTSTART SmartStart is taking quality and affordable early learning opportunities to tens of thousands of children. Our vision is to achieve population-level change in access to early learning by building an integrated national delivery platform which can unlock system capacity. Our innovative social franchise model harnesses the experience of implementing partners, who license and support a network of early learning practitioners to deliver the same quality programme for 3-5 year-olds. Find out more at smartstart.org.za.

News from parliament

Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill – Portfolio Committee on Basic Education

May-August 2022

The Portfolio Committee on Basic Education issued a call for written submissions on the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill, and subsequently extended the deadline to allow for a longer consultation period. Among other measures, the Bill makes Grade R attendance compulsory and increases the penalties on parents and caregivers for non-attendance.

[Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill](#)

Parliamentary question on DSD underspending

6th June 2022

Ms van der Merwe (DA) asked the Minister of Social Development about DSD underspending in 2021-22. The Minister's response provided figures on ECD underspending by province. Reasons cited by provinces for the underspending on ECD included not enough programmes applying, non-compliance, and challenges with verification for the ECD-ESRF.

[PQ on DSD underspending in 2021-22](#)

Briefing on the ECD Census 2021 and the Thrive by Five Index – Portfolio Committee on Basic Education

7th June 2022

The Portfolio Committee on Basic Education received presentations on the ECD Census and on the Thrive by Five Index, in a meeting that was attended by the Minister for Basic Education. In the ensuing discussion, Members of Parliament raised a range of issues, including nutrition, stunting, subsidies, fees and qualifications.

[Committee meeting on ECD Census and Thrive by Five](#)

Parliamentary question on budget cuts for non-profit organisations (NPOs) in 2021-22

8th June 2022

Ms van der Merwe (DA) asked the Minister of Social Development about budget cuts affecting NPOs in the 2021-22. The Minister's response gave a breakdown of budget cuts to NPOs by programme, including ECD, and provided annexures for some provinces listing all NPOs funded. The response showed ECD NPO budget cuts of R70 million in Limpopo, and R26 million in Eastern Cape, affecting 1319 and 1485 ECD NGOs respectively.

[PQ on budget cuts for NPOs](#)

News from parliament

Parliamentary question on ECD workers

23rd June 2022

Ms van der Walt (DA) asked the Minister of Basic Education about the number of ECD workers in South Africa and the educational requirements for ECD workers. The Minister responded that the 2021 ECD Census found a total of 198,361 staff employed in ECD Programmes, and that NQF level 4 is the minimum qualification for ECD practitioners.

[PQ on ECD workers](#)

Briefing on ECD function shift to DBE – Joint Portfolio Committee meeting

30th August 2022

The DBE provided a comprehensive update on the ECD function shift to the Portfolio Committees on Basic Education and Social Development. The presentation included latest data on the ECD access gap, work underway on the early years curriculum and resources, an update on registration, analysis of ECD infrastructure challenges, progress with the new ECD Management Information System, and an update on the ECD-ESRF.

[Committee meeting on ECD function shift update](#)

Parliamentary question on increases in NPO funding

30th June 2022

Ms van der Merwe (DA) asked the Minister of Social Development about increases in NPO funding in 2021-22, and the number of NPOs that had had their funding cut as a result of DSD taking over or providing the service. The Minister's response gives details of increases in NPO funding by province.

[PQ on increases in NPO funding](#)



News from parliament

Report on the Fourth Quarterly Report on the Performance of the DBE in 2021/22 – Portfolio Committee on Basic Education

6th September 2022

The Portfolio Committee on Basic Education issued a report in response to the Fourth Quarterly Report on the performance of the DBE in meeting its strategic objectives for 2021/22. Section 3.2 of the report includes updates on various ECD targets, including legislation, a new funding model, EMIS and a human resource development plan.

[Committee report on DBE performance](#)

ECD Conditional Grant expenditure in 2021/22 – NCOP Select Committee on Appropriations

7th September 2022

The Select Committee on Appropriations received presentations from DSD and National Treasury on the spending of the ECD Conditional Grant in 2021/22. The presentations confirmed a large underspend of R416 million, some of which was related to the ECD-ESRF. While R201 million has been rolled over, R215 million was surrendered. The presentations show the breakdown of ECD underspending by province.

[Committee meeting on ECD Conditional Grant expenditure](#)



News from government

Review of local government regulations – Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA)

20th May 2022

COGTA announced the review of the Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001, and issued a call for comments. The draft regulations include amendments regarding what must be included in a municipality's Integrated Development Plan.

[Draft revised Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations](#)

Speech by Minister on ECD

2nd June 2022

The Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, delivered a speech on ECD, during a post-function shift community engagement with ECD practitioners in Vereeniging.

[Ministerial speech on ECD](#)

Consultation on draft Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) Policy – Department of Public Works and Infrastructure

16th September 2022

The DPWI has published a draft EPWP Policy for public comment. The draft Policy sets out six policy positions to provide strategic direction for stakeholders involved in the planning and implementation of the EPWP (which includes the ECD Programme), towards better alignment with the government's refocused public employment programme agenda. Comments should be submitted within 30 working days.

[Consultation on draft EPWP Policy](#)



News from government

General Household Survey 2021 – Statistics South Africa

23rd June 2022

Statistics South Africa published the General Household Survey for 2021. Some of the key findings relating to ECD were:

- The percentage of 0-4 year-olds who attended grade R, pre-school, and crèche decreased from 37% in 2019 to 28.5% in 2021 (but this was slightly up on 2020 figure of 24%).
- The percentage of children aged 0–4 years that remained at home with a parent, guardian, other adults or children increased from 58% in 2019 to 65% in 2021 (the 2020 figure was 67%).

- The percentage of children aged five years old who did not attend any ECD or school provision increased from 11% in 2019 to 38% in 2020, before dropping to 19% in 2021.
- The small recovery in ECD attendance overall between 2020 and 2021 was not distributed equally between provinces. While attendance in Western Cape has now recovered to pre-pandemic levels, in Limpopo and Mpumalanga attendance stayed about the same between 2020 and 2021, and still much lower than 2019. In North West attendance continued to decline steeply between 2020 and 2021.

General Household Survey 2021

Table 4.1: Percentage of children 0-4 years using different child care arrangements by province, 2021

Care arrangements for children aged 0-4 years	WC	EC	NC	FS	KZN	NW	GP	MP	LP	RSA
Grade R, Pre-school, nursery school, crèche, educare centre	39,8	25,4	16,4	39,6	18,8	18,6	38,1	23,7	27,7	28,5
Day mother	8,4	1,7	7,1	8,3	6,8	0,0	6,5	2,5	8,0	5,6
At home with parent or guardian	44,0	67,0	66,3	43,3	58,7	73,2	51,8	64,5	55,5	57,3
At home with another adult	5,4	4,4	7,8	8,2	15,3	6,2	2,7	6,9	8,2	7,3
At home with someone younger than 18 years	0,4	0,0	0,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,1
At someone else's dwelling	2,0	1,5	1,0	0,7	0,3	2,0	0,7	2,4	0,3	1,1
Other	0,0	0,0	1,2	0,0	0,1	0,0	0,2	0,0	0,3	0,1
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Source: General Household Survey 2021, Stats SA, p.13

From around the world

The potential role of systems thinking in accelerating and scaling promotion of ECD
February 2022

This evidence review considers the failures and successes in applying systems thinking across sectors, and potential lessons for ECD. The authors suggest that *'systems thinking might offer new insights into longstanding challenges in promotion of ECD at scale, including sustainability and equity'*.

[Accelerating promotion of ECD through systems - Executive summary](#)

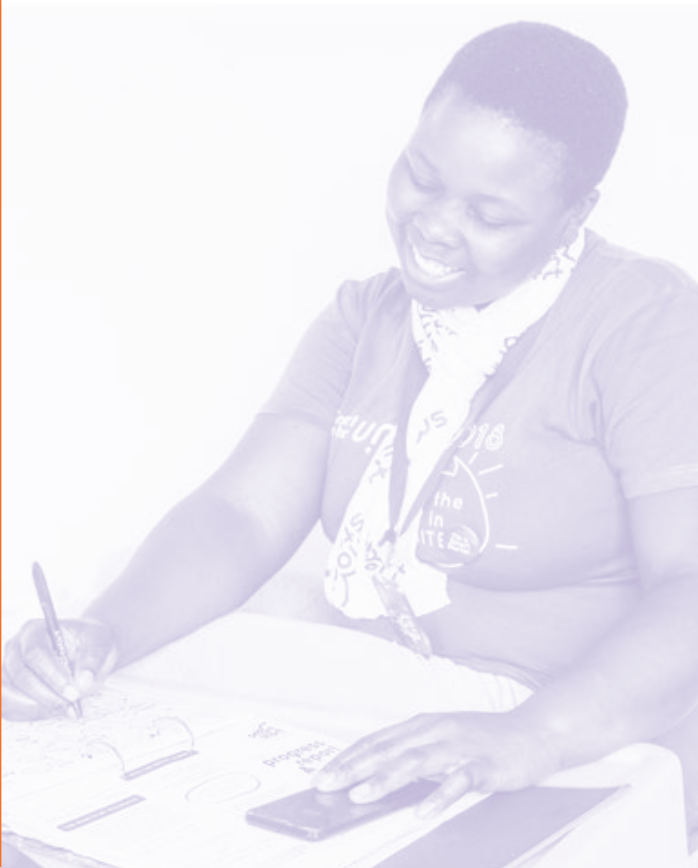
Invest in Childcare initiative – World Bank May 2022

The World Bank launched the Invest in Childcare initiative, which seeks to drive *'more and better-quality investments in childcare to improve outcomes for women, children, families, businesses and economies'*. The World Bank will work with targeted countries to develop a pipeline of investments in quality childcare, using a whole-of-government approach and bringing together a wide range of stakeholders. The initiative will encompass research, new data collection, policy changes and new operational approaches that can work at scale.

'At the country level, our activities will focus on making the case for childcare and supporting countries to design and implement quality projects that can maximize the benefits for women and children (through catalytic country grants, match funding for projects, technical assistance to teams, and capacity building).'

[World Bank Invest in Childcare initiative](#)

[World Bank Invest in Childcare summary note](#)



From around the world

New grant for the Global Parenting Initiative

May 2022

The LEGO Foundation announced the award of a £11 million five-year grant to the Global Parenting Initiative, for research on developing and providing free, evidence-based, playful parenting support. The GPI grant is led by the University of Oxford with partner universities, organisations and implementers around the world, including in South Africa, Malaysia, Philippines, Tanzania, Thailand, and Uganda.

'The GPI aims rapidly to develop and evaluate playful parenting programmes to improve at-scale child learning outcomes and reduce violence against children. These will be delivered through in-person, remote, digital, multimedia and hybrid platforms and have been co-developed by Parenting for Lifelong Health with children and families in the Global South.'

New grant for Global Parenting Initiative

Interventions that matter start with local cultures: Issues and strategies in early childhood care and education interventions in Africa – University of Botswana

June 2022

This report draws from desk research, workshops and interviews to propose guiding principles for ensuring cultural relevance in ECCE programming.

'This resource calls on practitioners and policy makers to respect culture on a deeper level by understanding and incorporating community values and priorities around child development, and by working within and alongside local implementers.'

Interventions that matter start with local cultures



In case you missed it

Ilifa-Resep ECD Working Paper Series

2021 – 2022

Ilifa Labantwana and Research on Socio-Economic Policy (Resep) at Stellenbosch University have collaborated on an ECD Working Paper Series, which supports research on the major systemic issues facing the ECD sector in South Africa. To date, key themes of the series include stunting, financing, enrolment and impact.

[Ilifa-Resep ECD working paper series](#)

Thrive by Five data

August 2022

The Thrive by Five Index and the ECD Baseline Audit datasets have been made open access and are available on the Datafirst website. The Thrive by Five website has also been updated with the correct stunting figures.

[Datafirst - Thrive by Five Index and ECD Baseline Audit 2021](#)

[Thrive by Five website](#)

How overstated scientific claims undermine ethical principles in parenting interventions

2021

This short article discusses how parenting interventions in low and middle income countries are overwhelmingly based on research and standards from Euro-American settings, resulting in a Western bias which may prevent full recognition of local ways, needs and strengths which have intrinsic value.

[Ethical considerations in parenting interventions](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION

Useful links:

[Government of RSA](#)
[Parliament of RSA](#)
[Parliamentary Monitoring Group](#)

Useful resources:

[Children's Act](#)
[National Integrated ECD Policy](#)
[Children Count \(UCT\)](#)