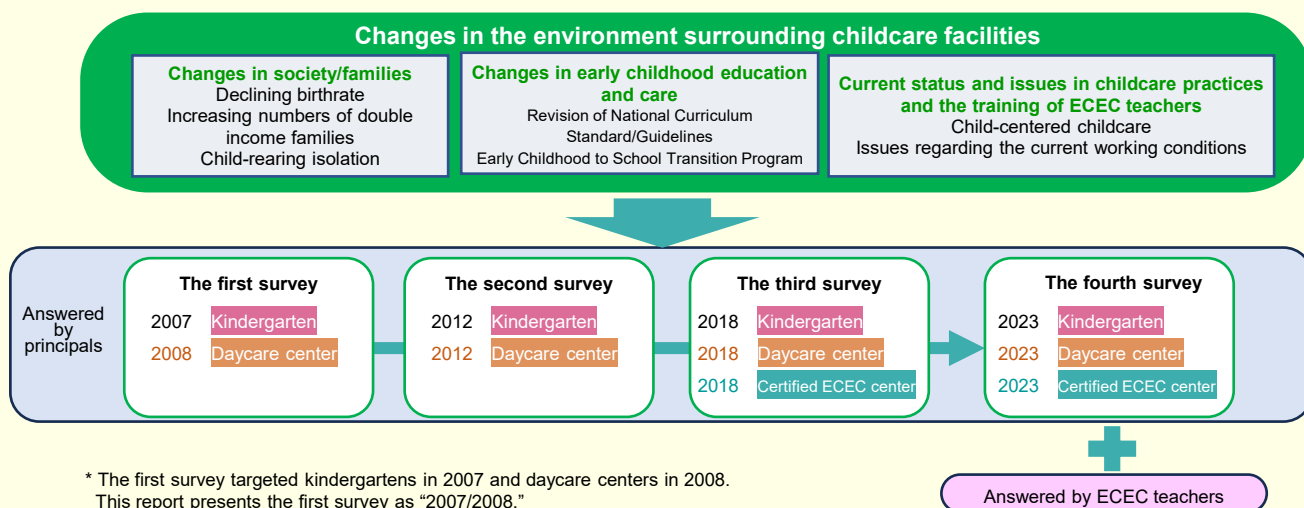


# About the survey

## Background and purpose

As the number of dual-income households with infants and young children rises and isolated child-rearing becomes more prevalent, the role of childcare facilities as an environment for early childhood development is becoming increasingly significant. Early childhood education and care structures are also evolving in response to social changes. In 2017, the "National Curriculum Standard/Guidelines" were revised to emphasize the importance of fostering "attitudes of learning to learn, humanity, and similar qualities," as well as "integrated instructions through play" from infancy and early childhood. Furthermore, initiatives are being undertaken through the Early Childhood to School Transition Program to create a seamless connection between early childhood education and elementary schools. It is important to understand how these developments in early childhood education and care have affected practices in childcare facilities.

This survey includes two components -one for principals and another for ECEC teachers. The survey for principals serves as a framework to understand the current situation and issues within various types of childcare facilities nationwide, allowing comparisons with past data. In this fourth survey (2023), we also included ECEC teachers from kindergartens, daycare centers, and certified ECEC centers. By gathering these voices who interact directly with children and parents, we aimed to capture the current situation and issues of childcare practices and the training of ECEC teachers. In this report, we clarify the state of early childhood education and childcare efforts in kindergartens, daycare centers, and certified ECEC centers, particularly in light of changes in social and family environments following the revision of the National Curriculum Standard/Guidelines. Furthermore, we reflect on the challenges faced today.

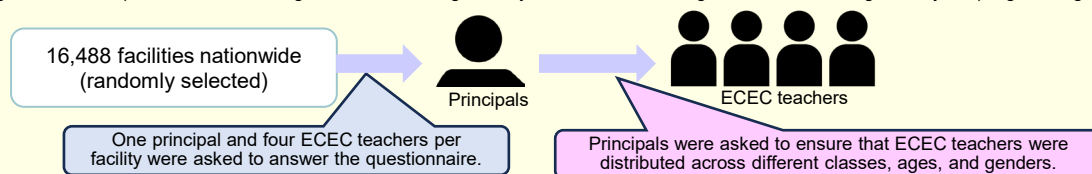


## Outline of the survey

- **Themes:** Environment/structure of childcare facilities, current status of educational/childcare activities, awareness of facility principals and ECEC teachers
- **Sampling method:**

**Sampling of childcare facilities:** Samples were randomly selected from a national list of childcare facilities in each prefecture (national/public/ private kindergartens, public/private certified daycare centers, and public/certified private ECEC centers). Facilities with 29 or fewer children and those without children aged 3 to 5 years were excluded from this selection.

**Sampling of ECEC teachers:** We asked the principals of the selected facilities to choose and distribute a questionnaire survey to four ECEC teachers, considering their classes (two teachers in charge of infant class aged 0-2 years and two in charge of toddler class aged 3-5 years), age, and gender.



- **Survey methods**  
**Request by mail:** Requests were sent asking to complete the questionnaire by the principal and four ECEC teachers per facility.  
**Online answers:** Participating principals and ECEC teachers answered the questionnaire by accessing the website.
- **Subjects:** Principals\*1 and ECEC teachers from national/public/private kindergartens, public/private certified daycare centers, and public/private certified ECEC centers nationwide.

\*1 Including principals, directors, facility chiefs, vice principals, vice directors, vice facility chiefs, and supervisors.

- **Survey period:** November to December 2023
- **Survey items:** Environment and facilities, education and childcare goals, education and childcare activities, ECEC teacher training, circumstances of children with disabilities, cooperation/collaboration with elementary schools, circumstances and efforts of childcare facilities, challenges in childcare practices and management of childcare facilities.

The survey items were designed for time comparison, with modifications such as additions and deletions made to adapt to contemporary changes.

# About the survey

## Number of valid Answers by principals and ECEC teachers (2023)

The fourth survey (2023)	Principals		ECEC teachers	
	Number of questionnaires sent	Number of valid responses	Maximum number of questionnaires distributed	Number of valid responses
National/public kindergarten	1,433	449	5,732	1,011
Private kindergarten	2,592	401	10,368	1,411
Public daycare center	4,354	874	17,416	3,021
Private daycare center	4,556	919	18,224	4,221
Public certified ECEC center	821	279	3,284	1,044
Private certified ECEC center	2,732	916	10,928	4,255
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,488</b>	<b>3,838</b>	<b>65,952</b>	<b>14,963</b>

## Number of valid Answers by principals (chronological comparison)

	The first survey 2007 (survey on kindergartens) 2008 (survey on daycare centers)	The second survey 2012	The third survey 2018	The fourth survey 2023
National/public kindergarten	401	456	606	449
Private kindergarten	1,203	921	888	401
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,604</b>	<b>1,377</b>	<b>1,494</b>	<b>850</b>
Public daycare center	1,540	1,362	840	874
Private daycare center	1,478	2,343	1,481	919
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>3,018</b>	<b>3,705</b>	<b>2,321</b>	<b>1,793</b>
Public certified ECEC center	-	-	201	279
Private certified ECEC center	-	-	830	916
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,031</b>	<b>1,195</b>
<b>Total number of valid responses</b>	<b>4,622</b>	<b>5,082</b>	<b>4,846</b>	<b>3,838</b>

## Data bias and analytical framework

- Data bias in facility types and locations:  
When compared to the "School Basic Survey" conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and the "Survey on Social Welfare Facilities, etc." by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, there is little bias and the overall data collected is generally well-balanced.
- Chronological comparison:
  - ① Responses categorized as "Other" regarding the type of childcare facilities (national, public, private, and publicly or privately operated) were included in the overall analysis of three facility types --kindergarten, daycare center, and certified ECEC center. However, these "Other" responses were excluded from the analysis of each facility type.
  - ② In the 2018 preliminary report, the analysis focused exclusively on the "kindergarten-daycare integrated type" for certified ECEC centers. However, this report includes additional types of certified ECEC centers other than the "kindergarten-daycare integrated type." Hence, the findings from this report differ from those presented in the 2018 preliminary report.

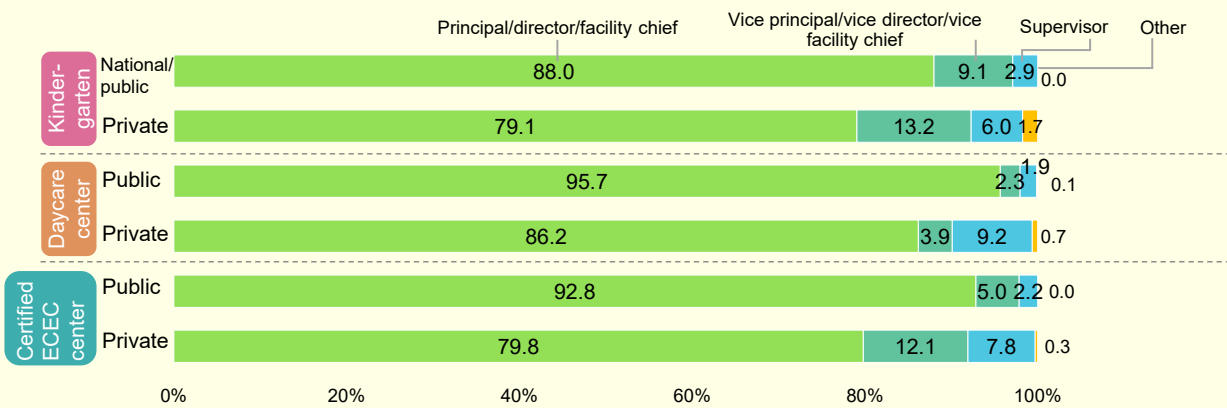
## Notes concerning the data

- In this report, the survey years are presented using abbreviations; for example, the third survey (2018) is abbreviated as "2018" and the fourth survey (2023) as "2023."
- **Answered by principals** represent the questions directed to principals, while **Answered by ECEC teachers** represent the questions directed to ECEC teachers.
- For childcare facility types, publicly established and publicly operated facilities are categorized as "public," while publicly established but privately operated facilities as well as privately established and privately operated facilities are categorized as "private."
- The percentages (%) in this report are calculated according to the method for each item, and are displayed as numbers rounded to two decimal places. Hence, the total may not add up to 100.

# Basic attributes

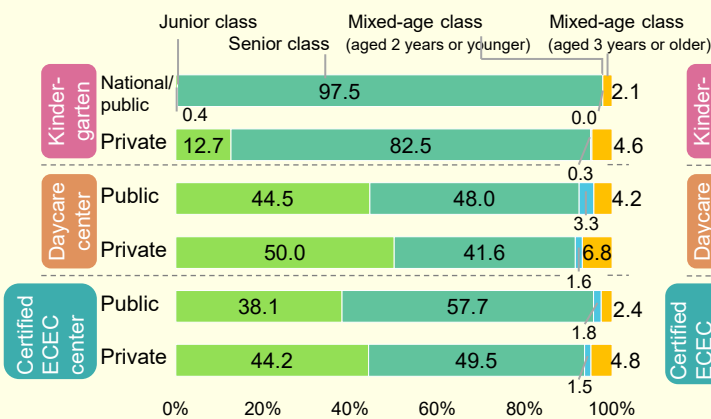
## Position of respondents (2023)

Answered by principals



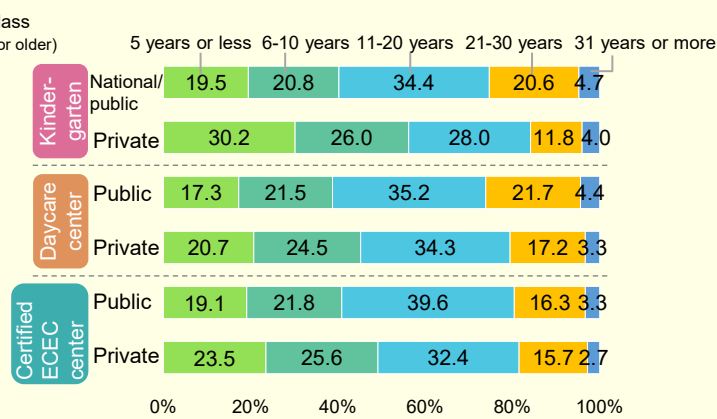
## Class in charge (2023)

Answered by ECEC teachers



## Years of experience (2023)

Answered by ECEC teachers



※ "Junior class" refers to the combined percentage of teachers in charge of the 0-2-year-old class, while "Senior class" refers to the combined percentage of teachers in charge of the 3-5-year-old class.

※ A kindergarten's "Junior class" refers to a kindergarten that accepts 2-year-olds.

## Age groups of ECEC teachers (2023)

Answered by ECEC teachers

