

QIE REPORTS

UNICEF in ROMANIA

COST OF COMPLEMENTARY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES (ECEC) IN ROMANIA

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ECEC = Early childhood education and care

GD = Government decision

NGOs = non-governmental organizations

EU = European Union

GEO = Government Emergency Ordinance

INS = National Institute of Statistics

PNRR = National Recovery and Resilience Plan

OECD = Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PEO = Education and Employment Program

PIDS = Program for Inclusion and Social Development

PPP = Public-private partnership

ESF+ = European Social Fund +

UNICEF = United Nations Children's Fund

CJRAE/CMBRAE = county centers of educational resources and assistance/Municipality Center for Educational Resources and Assistance

ARACIIP = Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance and Inspection in Pre-University

ANPDCA = National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption

CSR = Corporate Social Responsibility

SMEs = small and medium enterprises

ISJ/ISMB = county school inspectorate/Bucharest Municipality School Inspectorate

OMMJJS = Order of the Minister of Labour and Social Justice

DGASPC = Social Assistance and Child Protection County Directorates

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1. Context

Based on the findings of the Report on the Evaluation of the Status of Early Childhood Education and Care Services in Romania, developed by Cult Research for the Step by Step Center for Education and Professional Development, within the project carried out in partnership and financially supported by UNICEF Romania, this Report aims to estimate the costs of complementary ECEC services, as regulated by the Romanian legislation, respectively the costs of some complementary ECEC¹ services in the European Union, identified by Cult Research, with the potential to be adapted to the Romanian context. The Report also seeks to identify possible scenarios for the expansion of ECEC complementary services whose costs were previously estimated.

This Report, together with the Report on the Evaluation of the Status of Early Childhood Education and Care Services in Romania, developed by Cult Research, are part of the second pillar of the project funded by the LEGO Foundation in Romania.

The short-term objective of the project funded by the LEGO Foundation in Romania is to respond to the needs of children, from birth to 6 years old, and their mothers/caregivers, by creating play and learning centers at local level, where a large number of refugee families are settled.

In the medium and long term, the objective of the project is to strengthen the systems for the expansion of early childhood education and care (ECEC) services and to ensure access to inclusive and quality early childhood education and care services for Ukrainian refugees, as well as for children from host countries.

The context presented above justifies the need for this Report, which can contribute both to increasing the number of children benefiting from existing ECEC services and to offering new types of complementary ECEC services, in order to meet the needs of all children, from birth to 6 years of age.

2. Study methodology

2.1. General objectives of the study

The present study has two general objectives, namely:

- Estimation of the costs of complementary ECEC services in the education system (pre-university education units with groups of ante-preschoolers and/or preschoolers) and in the protection system (day centers), provided by the Romanian legislation, respectively of the costs of complementary ECEC services in Europe, mapped as potentially suitable for Romania, for children from birth to 6 years old;
- Identify possible scenarios for the expansion of complementary ECEC services.

2.2. Specific objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study consist of:

¹ In accordance with Art. 30, para. (3) of Law 198/2023, in the administrative-territorial units where there are not enough nurseries and kindergartens or in the situation where the number of places in nurseries and kindergartens available is lower than the number of children of preschool or preschool age in the school district or in the administrative-territorial unit, complementary early education services may be developed of the toy library, playgroup, community kindergarten and the like, which will function as structures of the educational units in that administrative-territorial unit or in other administrative-territorial units.

- Planning and budgeting of complementary ECEC services, including similar services offered through day centers:
 - Analysis of existing financing and budgetary mechanisms for complementary ECEC services, including for similar services offered in day centers
 - Development of the costing model for all identified complementary ECEC services
 - Development of alternative costing scenarios for the extension of complementary ECEC services at national level, based on the profile of complementary services existing in Romania or Europe and mapped as potentially suitable for Romania, for children from birth to 6 years, developed within the study focused on education and care services for preschool children (led by the Step by Step Center for Education and Professional Development within the same Project).
- Financing of complementary ECEC services, including similar services provided through day centers: staff/pupil ratio; remuneration and retention of staff; supervision and professional development of staff; initial staff training; cost-sharing agreements between households, service providers, national and sub-national authorities; Structural Funds; Other resources
- Governance and regulation of complementary ECEC services: Regulation of service provision; quality assurance tools and mechanisms to oversee structural and process quality; accountability measures established and followed by different levels of education and protection systems.

2.3. Research methodology

Review of existing literature

- **Purpose:** To identify the most relevant studies, reports and public policies related to complementary ECEC services.
- **Activities:**
 - Collection and analysis of existing documents about ECEC in Romania and Europe.
 - Evaluation of cost models for complementary ECEC services applied in other European countries, with a focus on good practices and lessons learned.

Identification of complementary ECEC services

- **Purpose:** Cataloguing and classifying existing services in Romania and Europe.
- **Activities:**
 - Analysis of the legal provisions regarding the complementary ECEC services existing in Romania.
 - Collection and analysis of existing documents (studies, analyses, reports) on the types of complementary services available², the number of children served, the cost structure, the staff/child ratio and funding.
 - Analysis of the Report on the Evaluation of the Status of Early Childhood Education and Care Services in Romania, developed by Cult Research, to identify complementary ECEC services in Europe, mapped as potentially suitable for Romania, for children from birth to 6 years old.

Development of the cost model

- **Purpose:** To create a cost model adapted to the specifics of complementary ECEC services in Romania.
- **Activities:**
 - Define the direct and indirect costs associated with the provision of complementary ECEC services, including staff, infrastructure, educational materials and training costs.

² An exhaustive description of complementary ECEC services, such as playroom, playgroup, community kindergarten, is included in Section 3.2, on page 16, based on the specific provisions of GD no. 1563/2024 on complementary early childhood education and care services (ECEC)

- Use of the bottom-up costing method (aggregated costs based on activities to calculate the total cost of the services).
- Implement an Excel calculation model to simulate various cost scenarios based on the variables entered.

Service mapping

- **Purpose:** Identification and classification of ECEC services as suitable for implementation in Romania.
- **Activities:**
 - Comparative analysis of complementary ECEC services in Romania and other European countries, based on criteria of efficiency, accessibility and sustainability.
 - Mapping existing and potential complementary ECEC services, including relevant information on the types, costs and sources of funding.

Development of alternative cost scenarios

- **Purpose:** To assess the different scenarios for the expansion of complementary ECEC services at the national level.
- **Activities:**
 - Identify key variables influencing costs, such as the number of children, the type of services, the degree of geographical coverage and the sources of funding.
 - Simulation of several scenarios based on the data collected, including:
 - Scenario I – basic scale-up, in which complementary ECEC services are scaled up at national level using only the three types of complementary ECEC services provided by the Romanian legislation in force at the time of this study: community kindergartens, playhouses/playgroups and day centers.
 - Scenario II – partial scale-up, in which complementary ECEC services are scaled up at national level using family centers (Swedish model), in addition to the three types of complementary ECEC early childhood education services provided by the Romanian legislation in force at the time of this study: community kindergartens, playhouses/playgroups and day centers.
 - Scenario III – advanced scale-up, in which complementary ECEC services are scaled up nationwide using all four types of complementary ECEC services identified in Europe and mapped as potentially suitable for Romania (Family centers, Community Play Libraries, Aistear Kindergartens, Primokiz Kindergartens), in addition to the three types of complementary ECEC services provided by the Romanian legislation in force at the time of this study: community kindergartens, playgrounds/play groups and day centers.
 - Assessment of the impact of each scenario on accessibility, quality, and sustainability of services.

Data analysis and recommendation formulation

- **Purpose:** To synthesize the results obtained from the research and formulate recommendations based on data collected.
- **Activities:**
 - Statistical analysis of data to identify relevant trends and correlations.
 - Prepare a short and concise report summarizing the findings and in-depth case studies.
 - Conduct a workshop to inform about the findings and recommendations of the study

The proposed methodology will allow the development of a robust cost model for complementary ECEC services in Romania and Europe, mapped as potentially suitable for Romania, which will be tailored to the specific needs of children from 3 months to 6 years and their families. By mapping complementary ECEC services and evaluating alternative cost scenarios, the research will contribute to informing policy

decisions and improving access to and quality of complementary ECEC services in Romania.

3. Planning and budgeting of complementary ECEC services

3.1. Analysis of existing funding and budgeting mechanisms for complementary ECEC services, including services provided through day care centers

In order to analyze the financing and budgetary mechanisms for complementary ECEC services, including services of this type offered in day centers, in the current context of the Romanian legislation, we refer to the provisions of the Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, Government Decision no. 1563/2024 for the approval of the Methodology for the organization and functioning of complementary early childhood education and care services and Order of the minister of education no. 4018/2024 for the approval of the Framework Methodology for the enrollment of children in pre-university educational units with legal personality with preschool and/or ante-preschool groups and in complementary early childhood education and care services. These recent regulations outline the funding structure, institutional attributions, educational priorities and existing challenges in the implementation of early education programs.

3.1.1. Legislative context

The Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented, supplemented by Government Decision no. 1563/2024 and Order no. 4018/2024, ensures equitable access to education and improving the quality of early childhood education and care in Romania. In this context:

The Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented:

- It establishes the general framework of pre-university education, including early childhood education and care as an important stage, with the aim of ensuring the harmonious development of children and the educational inclusion of those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Recognises the importance of complementary early childhood education services as part of the education system.
- It provides for the possibility of setting up and financing complementary early education services at local and national level.
- It stresses the collaboration between public authorities, NGOs and the private sector for the development of educational infrastructure.

Government Decision no. 68/2024 on the approval of the methodological norms for determining the standard cost per ante-preschooler/preschooler/pupil, for the basic financing of state pre-university education units:

- Establishes that for children in complementary early education services established as structures of the pre-university education units with legal personality, with pre-school and/or ante-preschool level, the standard cost for expenses with salaries, bonuses, allowances and other salary rights in money, established by law, as well as the contributions related to them, is the same as the standard cost for salary expenses, bonuses, allowances and other salary rights in money, established by law, as well as the related contributions per preschooler with normal schedule (including children aged at least 2 years enrolled in preschool education).
- Establishes that for children in complementary early education services established as structures of pre-university education units with legal personality, with pre-school and/or ante-preschool level, the differentiation coefficients for standard costs and correction coefficients for education in the languages of national minorities, for expenses with salaries, bonuses, allowances and other salary rights in money, established by law, as well as the related contributions, are the same as the

differentiation coefficients for standard costs per pre-school and the correction coefficients for education in the languages of national minorities, for the expenditure on salaries, bonuses, allowances and other salary entitlements in money, established by law, as well as the related contributions.

- Establishes that the basic financing for the expenses with continuous training and the expenses with goods and services, is provided from amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget, through the local budgets of the administrative-territorial units/subdivisions to which they belong, based on and within the limits of the standard cost per preschooler, for all children in complementary early education services established as structures of pre-university education units with legal personality, with preschool and/or ante-preschool level.

Government Decision no. 69/2024 on the approval of methodological norms for determining the standard cost per ante-preschooler/preschooler/student, for the basic financing of accredited and authorized private and confessional pre-university education units, without tax:

- The basic financing for the expenses with salaries, bonuses, allowances and other salary rights in money, established by law, as well as the related contributions, shall be provided from the state budget, through the budget of the Ministry of Education, from amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget, through the local budgets, based on and within the limits of the standard cost per preschooler, for all children in complementary early education services established as structures of the accredited pre-university, private and confessional education, respectively as structures of authorized private and confessional education units, which do not charge study fees from primary beneficiaries.
- The basic financing for the expenses with continuous training and the expenses with goods and services, is provided from amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget, through the local budgets of the administrative-territorial units/subdivisions to which they belong, based on and within the limits of the standard cost per preschooler, for all children in complementary early education services established as structures of pre-university education units, accredited private and confessional education units, respectively as structures of authorized private and confessional education units, which do not charge study fees from primary beneficiaries.

Government Decision no. 566/2022 on the approval of the Methodology for the organization and functioning of nurseries and other ante-preschool early education units:

- It regulates the organization and functioning of ante-preschool early education units, giving priority to localities where there are no or insufficient nurseries and kindergartens, with a focus on isolated/disadvantaged localities.
- It provides a normative framework regarding the educational content of the ante-preschool early education activity.
- It regulates the indicative structure of the staff in pre-university education units with ante-preschool level in terms of human resources that can be employed in pre-school early education units.
- It regulates the relationship with parents and the community.
- It provides a normative framework regarding the monitoring of the activity in ante-preschool early education units.
- It regulates the financing of ante-preschool early education units.

Government Decision no. 1563/2024 for the approval of the Methodology for the organization and functioning of complementary early education services:

- It regulates the establishment and accreditation of complementary early education services, giving priority to localities where there are not enough nurseries and/or kindergartens or in the situation where the number of places in nurseries and kindergartens available is lower than the number of children of ante-preschool or preschool age in the school district or in the respective administrative-territorial unit, with a focus on isolated/disadvantaged localities.

- It regulates the organization and functioning of the complementary early education services established at the initiative of the administrative-territorial units or of the county/Bucharest school inspectorates, they function as structures of the educational units in that administrative-territorial unit or in other administrative-territorial units .
- It provides a regulatory framework regarding the educational content of the activity within the early childhood education.
- It regulates the structure of the staff within the complementary early education services in terms of the human resource that can be employed in the complementary early education services.
- It regulates the relationship with parents and the community.
- It provides a regulatory framework for monitoring the activity in complementary early education services.

Order no. 4018/2024 on the approval of the Framework Methodology for the enrollment of children in pre-university education units with legal personality with preschool and/or ante-preschool level groups and in complementary early education services and the Calendar for the enrollment of pre-school and preschool children in the school year 2024-2025 in pre-university education units with legal personality with pre-school and/or ante-preschool level groups and in complementary ECEC services:

- It regulates the method of choosing the educational unit in which the child will be enrolled and establishes the obligation to inform the public about the procedure for enrolling children in pre-university education units with preschool and/or ante-preschool level groups and within complementary early education services, in the 2024-2025 school year.
- Establishes the procedure for re-enrolling and enrolling children in pre-university education units with preschool and/or ante-preschool level groups, in the 2024-2025 school year.
- Establishes the procedure for enrollment in pre-university education units taught in the languages of national minorities, with preschool and/or ante-preschool level groups, and in complementary early education services, in the 2024-2025 school year.
- It regulates the method of enrolling pre-school children in pre-university education units with ante-preschool level groups for which the local public authority has the status of a founding legal entity, in the 2024-2025 school year.
- It regulates the method of enrolling ante-preschool and preschool children in standard services (nurseries and kindergartens) and complementary ones, in the 2024-2025 school year.
- It regulates the method of enrollment in pre-university education units with preschool and/or ante-preschool level groups that offer a curricular approach organized according to the regulations specific to educational alternatives, in the 2024-2025 school year.
- Establishes the method of coordinating the process of enrolling preschool and preschool children in pre-university education units with preschool and/or ante-preschool level groups and in complementary early education services, in the 2024-2025 school year.

GEO no. 128/2023 for some measures related to the remuneration of education staff and other sectors of budgetary activity:

- Establishes, by way of derogation from the provisions of Framework Law no. 153/2017 on the remuneration of personnel paid from public funds, with subsequent amendments and completions, the remuneration of education personnel, starting with January 1, 2024 as well as the salary increases granted, starting with the salaries related to June 2024, compared to the level of basic salaries payable in December 2023.

Law no. 292/2011 on social assistance:

- It complements the legal framework by regulating social support for vulnerable families, including access to early care services.

Decision no. 1253/2022 on the approval of the cost standards for social services:

- Updates the cost standards for the financing of social services organized and managed, under the

law, by public social service providers, including for children benefiting from the services of day care centers with/without a mobile team.

3.1.2. Sources of funding for complementary ECEC services

Funding mechanisms for early childhood education and complementary ECEC services in Romania come from various public and private sources:

- **State Budget:** Public funding remains the main source for the payment of teaching and non-teaching staff within complementary early education services established as structures of accredited state, private and confessional pre-university education units, respectively as structures of authorized private and confessional education units, which do not charge study fees from primary beneficiaries. The state budget also covers part of the expenditure for parental support programs and integrated early care and education services. According to GD 68/31.01. 2024 and 69/31.01. 2024 on the approval of the methodological norms for determining the standard cost per ante-preschool/preschool/pupil, for the basic financing of state pre-university education units, established that, for children in complementary early education services (including children aged at least 2 years enrolled in pre-school education) the same cost standards apply as for children in pre-school education with a normal schedule. Thus, the standard costs per child benefiting from complementary early education services, both for the expenses with salaries, bonuses, allowances and other salary rights in money, established by law, as well as the related contributions, but also for the expenses with continuous training and for expenses with goods and services, for the year 2024 are specified in Annexes 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of Article 9 of GD 68/31.01. 2024. Also, from some revenues of the state budget, amounts are allocated to local budgets in order to provide social services calculated for children benefiting from day care centers, according to the minimum quality standards and/or other criteria provided by law.
- **Local Budgets:** mainly, the funds intended for the establishment, renovation and endowment of early education units are from the local budgets of the administrative-territorial units to which the educational units belong within which the complementary early education services were established. According to Law no. 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented, capital expenditures are supported by complementary financing that is provided from the local budgets of the administrative-territorial units to which the state pre-university education units belong and from amounts broken down from some state budget revenues, approved annually by the state budget law for this purpose.
- The local authorities have the responsibility to financially and logistically support the day centers, being directly involved in the maintenance of the units and in the co-financing of the activities. However, the financing capacity varies significantly between administrative units, depending on the local resources available.
- **European Funds:** The European Structural and Cohesion Funds remain the main source for educational infrastructure; they are directed towards support programmes for early childhood education and for the improvement of educational infrastructure, especially for vulnerable groups.
 - o The National Recovery and Resilience Program provides funds for the development of a unitary, inclusive and quality early education service system through the construction, equipping and operationalization of 110 nurseries (Investment no. 1), the establishment, equipping and operationalization of 412 complementary services for disadvantaged groups (Investment no. 2) and the development of the framework program for the continuous training of professionals working in education services (Investment No. 3).
 - o Within the National Recovery and Resilience Program, funds are provided for the creation of a network of approximately 150 day centers, the total budget allocated being 50 million euros, and 4,500 children will benefit from social services. Through these investments, three categories of social services can be achieved: Day centers for children at risk of separation from their parents; Recovery day centers for children with disabilities;

Day centers for counselling and support for parents and children Day centers for children at risk of being separated from their families Component 13 – Social Reforms, Investment I1.

- Under the Education and Employment Operational Programme and other European programmes, funds are provided for the development of parental support services, staff training and the construction or modernization of day centers.
- **Public-Private Partnerships and private sector funding:** Order no. 4018/2024 allows local authorities to collaborate with NGOs and private entities for the implementation of educational and social support programs in day centers. Private funds and grants, obtained through partnerships, support extra-curricular activities and the necessary facilities for day centers.

3.1.3. Institutional structure and responsibilities

The provisions of the Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented, of GD no. 1563/2024 define the institutional structure and the essential roles of the main institutions involved in the management and financing of early education services in Romania.

The institutions involved in the management and financing of early education services are:

Ministry of Education: Responsible for the national policy on early childhood education and for setting quality standards in pre-university education units, including early education services (standard or complementary). It also coordinates projects financed by European funds for the development of infrastructure and educational programs at the level of pre-university education.

Roles and responsibilities

- Developing national policies and strategies for early childhood education:
 - Creating the normative framework for the organization, functioning and development of early education services, including complementary early childhood education services.
 - Establishing quality standards for infrastructure, personnel and curriculum in pre-university education units, including those with pre-school and/or ante-preschool level groups (kindergartens and nurseries) and in complementary early education services, as structures of pre-university education units with legal personality.
- Coordination of national budget allocations:
 - Distribution of funds for educational infrastructure, salaries, staff training and implementation of educational programs.
 - Administration of funds from the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR) and
 - European Social Fund Plus (ESF+).
- Monitoring and evaluation:
 - Periodic evaluation of the quality and impact of early childhood education services at national level.

Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity: Responsible for the national policy on the protection and safeguarding of children in vulnerable situations and for setting quality standards in day centers

dedicated to children aged from birth to 18 years who benefit from a protection measure. It also coordinates projects financed by European funds for the development of infrastructure and complementary educational programs.

Roles and responsibilities:

- Supporting vulnerable families:

- Implementing social policies to support families with young children, including
- allocation of financial benefits for access to education and care services.
- Managing funds to support refugee children and those in disadvantaged groups.
- Cross-sectoral collaboration:
 - Coordination with the Ministry of Education and local authorities for the integration of services offered to children under 6 years of age into broader social strategies.
 - Complementary financing:
 - Access and use of resources from the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) for social projects related to the education of children under 6 years of age benefiting from a protection measure.

Local public authorities: Local councils and town halls are responsible for the organisation and operation of day centers, partly funding programmes and infrastructure.

Roles and responsibilities:

- Local planning and implementation:
 - Identifying local needs and coordinating the development of educational infrastructure for early childhood education.
 - Administration of kindergartens, nurseries and day centers in their area of competence.
- Local budget management:
 - Financing the operating expenses of early education institutions, including utilities, auxiliary staff and educational materials.
 - Access to government and European funds for projects to expand educational infrastructure.

Cooperation with NGOs and the private sector:

- Creating public-private partnerships to attract additional resources.
- Support for community initiatives such as dedicated play and learning centers.
- vulnerable families.

Social Assistance and Child Protection County Directorates (DGASPC): Involved in ensuring access to day centers for children from disadvantaged families, DGASPC collaborates with local authorities and NGOs for the implementation of integrated educational and social support programs in the counties they operate in.

NGOs and partnerships with the private sector: NGOs actively contribute through educational and parental support programmes in disadvantaged communities.

Roles and responsibilities:

- Supplementation of public resources:
 - Implementation of projects funded by international organizations or private donors to expand access to early childhood education.
- Supporting vulnerable families and refugees:
 - Providing educational services, psychological counseling and social support for children and parents.
- Innovation in complementary services:

- Developing creative solutions, such as play and learning centers, to meet the specific needs of communities.

3.1.4. Methodological norms and financial regulations

Establishment and accreditation of complementary early education services: Government Decision no. 1563/2024 establishes the methodology for the establishment and accreditation of complementary early education services, as structures of pre-university education units with legal personality at preschool and/or ante-preschool level, in localities where there are not enough nurseries and/or kindergartens or in the situation where the number of places in nurseries and kindergartens available is smaller than the number of children of ante-preschool or pre-school age in the school district or in the respective administrative-territorial unit. They function as structures of the educational units in that administrative-territorial unit or in other administrative-territorial units.

Private complementary early education services have organizational and economic-financial autonomy, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented.

Implementation of the process of enrolling children in complementary early education services: Government Decision no. 4018/2024 establishes the methodology for the organization and operation of complementary early education services.

Accreditation norms and quality standards: The Order of the Minister of Education no. 4143/2022 establishes the Standards on teaching-learning materials in early education and the Minimum Endowment Norm for early education services for children from birth to 6 years old, valid including for complementary early education services.

Implementation of the process of enrolling children in complementary early education services: Order no. 4018/2024 establishes a set of rules and methodologies to support the implementation of the process of enrolling children in pre-university education units with legal personality with preschool and/or ante-preschool level groups and in complementary early education services, as their structures.

Budget evaluation and reporting: The Ministry of Education and local authorities are obliged to regularly report on the use of funds to ensure transparency and efficiency in the financing of day care centers.

Prioritization criteria: The funds are directed primarily to centers serving vulnerable communities, as a measure of social inclusion, in accordance with the Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented.

3.1.5. Challenges and limitations

Despite recent legal regulations and multiple sources of funding, there are considerable challenges:

- **Lack of local financial resources:** Local authorities, especially in rural areas, are struggling to sustain the costs of day centers due to low local revenues and other budgetary priorities.
- **Limited institutional capacity:** The shortage of qualified personnel in early childhood education and the management of educational projects affects the quality of services, especially in day centers in rural areas.
- **Insufficient educational infrastructure:** Although European funds contribute to improving infrastructure, the pace of modernization and expansion of day centers is insufficient to cover real needs.
- **Accessibility and inclusion:** Vulnerable groups, including Roma and rural children, continue to have low access to quality services in early childhood education, which maintains and even widens social disparities.

3.1.6. Recommendations for improving financing mechanisms

Coordination mechanisms between institutions

- Inter-ministerial commissions: coordination between the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and other relevant ministries through specialized commissions for early education.
- Collaboration platforms at local level: involving local authorities, NGOs and communities in the planning and monitoring of educational services.
- National reporting and monitoring: implementation of centralised digital systems for monitoring progress in early childhood education.

In order to optimise access to and efficiency of complementary ECEC services, it is recommended that the following measures be implemented:

- Optimising budget allocation: Strengthening a fair mechanism for allocating funds according to local needs could ensure equitable access to early childhood education and care in all regions.
- Regulating the establishment and organization of complementary early education services and at the level of protection services (day centers) in which the beneficiaries are children under 6 years of age.
- Expanding Public-Private Partnerships: The involvement of NGOs and the private sector could complement public resources by providing support for complementary ECEC services set up for children under 6 years of age, especially those from disadvantaged categories.
- Assistance and training for educational staff: Continuous training of staff and support for the employment of qualified specialists are essential to increase the quality of services provided in day care centers.
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation: The implementation of a continuous evaluation system, with specific quality indicators, could increase the efficiency and transparency of the use of public funds.

The recent reforms, through Law no. 198/2023, Law 292/2011, Government Decision no. 566/2022, Government Decision no. 1563/2024 and Order no. 4018/2024, provides an improved framework for the financing and management of early education services in Romania. However, effective implementation depends on fair budget allocation, local institutional capacity development and strengthening collaboration between public institutions and private partners, in order to provide quality complementary ECEC services accessible to all children under 6 years of age.

3.2. Development of the costing model for ECEC services provided by the Romanian legislation

In Romania, complementary ECEC services are regulated by the Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented. This law includes a legislative framework that describes the types of services available, as well as the objectives and principles underlying them. Here is a presentation of the main existing complementary early education services and the specific provisions of the law that regulate them.

a) Community kindergartens

Types:

- **Public community kindergartens:** Public institutions for early education.
- **Private community kindergartens:** Institutions run by private entities that provide early education.

Specific provisions of GD no. 1563/2024 on complementary early education and care services (ECEC) of the community kindergarten type:

- The activity with children is organized in groups; The groups can be homogeneous or

heterogeneous in age and can also contain ante-preschool and preschool children.

- The number of children in the group is on average 15, but not less than 10 and no more than 20.
- The operating program is approved by the Board of Directors of the educational unit with legal personality with preschool and/or ante-preschool level groups that established them and aims to cover the needs of children and their parents; It can be flexible, but it cannot exceed more than 5 hours a day. By exception, the programme of complementary early education services set up within EU-funded projects can be a maximum of 10 hours per day.
- Offers an educational program for children aged 4 to 6 years, starting from the needs and resources identified at the community level.
- Also involves information and counseling services for parents, speech therapy services and psycho-pedagogical assistance services offered, as the case may be, by the teachers of the complementary early education service and by the specialized staff of the Bucharest Municipality Center for Educational Resources and Assistance/county centers of educational resources and assistance, hereinafter referred to as CMBRAE/CJRAE.
- The space must be arranged in a welcoming and attractive way and must be organized so that there are at least two group rooms, an outdoor space, a reception room - changing rooms, a space for dining, in the case of a community kindergarten service, and a room/resource center for parents.
- The children's reception room and the locker room must be naturally lit and ventilated and must be equipped with functional furniture, adapted to the age of the children and easy to sanitize.
- The room must have direct access to a bathroom equipped/equipped with at least one sink and be equipped/equipped with hangers at children's height, lockers for storing children's clothing and benches of appropriate size.
- The space of the group room within the complementary early education service type community kindergarten must be divided into at least two areas: the area for free play, where noisier activities can be carried out, and the area for activity/learning, where activities that require silence and concentration will be carried out, as provided for in the Curriculum for Early Childhood Education, approved by order of the Minister of Education.
- In addition, there are also activities to advise parents on the development of children during early childhood, the types of games and toys used to stimulate their development according to age and the importance of the adult in the social and emotional development of the young child.
- The categories/types of learning activities within the community kindergarten complementary early education service may be the same as those present in the curriculum for the ante-preschool and/or preschool level, provided in the Curriculum for early education, within the limits given by the specificity of the educational program.
- The duration of the activities may vary, depending on the particularities of the children and, implicitly, on the interest shown by the child/group of children in them, their content, as well as the manner of carrying them out.
- The evaluation of the progress of ante-preschool and preschool children in complementary early education services is made on the basis of the specific national standards in the Fundamental Milestones in the learning and development of the child from birth to 7 years, approved by order of the Minister of Education, which is published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I.
- The staff structure of the Community Kindergarten, with two groups, consists of:
 - o Two teachers, respectively it can have the following component:
 - Two teachers for ante-preschool or pre-school education or
 - An ante-preschool teacher and a preschool teacher and a childcare educator for preschool education or
 - A preschool teacher and a school pedagogue/instructor-animator/extracurricular education instructor
 - o Non-teaching staff:
 - A caregiver.

- The provision of teaching staff within the public community kindergarten is carried out by the school inspectorate in collaboration with the respective educational unit.
- The provision of the teaching staff within the private community kindergarten is carried out by the founding legal entity.
- The provision of auxiliary and non-teaching staff in the public and private community kindergarten is the responsibility of the employer.
- The employment of the teaching staff within the community kindergarten is carried out only with an individual employment contract for a fixed term or on an hourly basis for the teaching staff, respectively through job cumulation for the auxiliary teaching staff.
- The teaching staff of the Community Kindergarten has mainly the following attributions:
 - o Carries out activities of care and psychomotor stimulation of children in order to increase the degree of independence, activities aimed at the development of socio-affective behavior, activities aimed at the formation and improvement of verbal behavior, as well as activities aimed at increasing the general receptivity to stimuli for cognitive development, development of capacities and attitudes in learning.
 - o Records the progress made by the child in the observation book and in the assessment sheet of the child's progress before entering preschool education.
 - o Communicates to the parents/legal representatives of the children, by any means of communication, whenever necessary, the following information: the progress made by the children in the 5 areas of development, the emotional and affective state of the children, identified difficulties/deficiencies, any other elements that require measures to be taken or whose knowledge by the parents/legal representatives is necessary for harmonious, optimal development of children.
 - o Actively collaborates with the parents/legal representatives of the children who attend the community kindergarten program and runs information and training programs, in order to develop parental skills.
- The duties of the teachers of the community kindergarten as well as of the specialized staff of the CJRAE/CMBRAE also includes the provision, as appropriate, of:
 - o Information and counseling services for parents
 - o Speech therapy services
 - o Psycho-pedagogical assistance services.
- In order to form community support networks, the management and staff of the community kindergarten can direct the intervention towards:
 - o Guiding and counseling parents
 - o Organizing parental education courses or other courses requested by the parents or legal representatives of the children
 - o Developing support materials, such as: brochures, books, studies, posters, leaflets and the like, to inform parents/legal representatives and other members of the community about the child's development and educational needs
 - o Advising parents/legal representative in order to identify solutions to the problems identified in the case of children with special educational needs.

b) Toy libraries and play groups

Types:

- **Playrooms:** Spaces dedicated to play and the social and cognitive development of children.
- **Playgroups:** More informal activities for interaction between children.

Specific provisions of GD no. 1563/2024 on complementary early education and care services (ECEC) of the toy/playgroup type:

- Complementary early education services such as playroom and/or playgroup offer an educational program for preschool children and, exceptionally, for preschoolers up to 4 years old, with play and recreational activities specific to each age group, which aim at the development of children from a physical, cognitive, socio-emotional point of view, as well as from the point of view of language development in accordance with the minimum level mentioned in the Progress Assessment Sheet the child before entering pre-school education, part of the Early Childhood Education Curriculum;
- The activity with children is organized in groups; The groups can be homogeneous or heterogeneous in age.
- The number of children in the group is on average 15 children, but not less than 10 and not more than 20.
- The operating program is approved by the Board of Directors of the educational unit with legal personality with preschool and/or ante-preschool level groups that established them and aims to cover the needs of children and their parents; It can be flexible, but it cannot exceed more than 5 hours a day.
- It offers an educational program for preschool and preschool children, with play and recreational activities specific to each age group.
- Also involves information and counseling services for parents, speech therapy services and psycho-pedagogical assistance services offered, as the case may be, by the teachers of the complementary early education service and by the specialized staff of the Bucharest Municipality Center for Educational Resources and Assistance/county centers of educational resources and assistance, hereinafter referred to as CMBRAE/CJRAE.
- The space must be arranged in a welcoming and attractive way and must be organized so that there are at least two group rooms, an outdoor space, a reception room - changing rooms, a space for dining, in the case of a community kindergarten service, and a room/resource center for parents.
- The children's reception room and the locker room must be naturally lit and ventilated and must be equipped with functional furniture, adapted to the age of the children and easy to sanitize.
- The room must have direct access to a bathroom equipped/equipped with at least one sink and be equipped/equipped with hangers at children's height, lockers for storing children's clothing and benches of appropriate size.
- In the group room within the complementary early education service such as a playroom and/or playgroup, the furniture must provide enough space for movement and play, but also learning spaces for the children who benefit from this service.
- The daily framework program of activities of a complementary early education service is developed by the management of the educational unit with legal personality within which it operates and is approved by the school inspectorate; it can be flexible, but it cannot exceed more than 5 hours a day; By exception to the provisions of the methodology, the program of complementary early education services established within the projects with European funding can be a maximum of 10 hours per day.
- The categories/types of learning activities within the complementary early education service such as playroom and/or playgroup are aimed at physical, cognitive, socio-emotional and language development and are:
 - Activities and movement games, individual or in groups
 - Social games
 - Sensory games, individual or in group
 - Imitative games, individual or in groups
 - Musical games and games with text and singing, in groups
 - Didactic games and exercise-games, individual or in group
 - Individual games with your favorite toy
 - Artistic-plastic and practical activities, individual or in group
 - Activities with the book, such as stories, readings from pictures, memorizations and

- the like, carried out in groups
 - Routines and transitions.
- In addition, there are also activities to advise parents on the development of children during early childhood, the types of games and toys used to stimulate their development according to age and the importance of the adult in the social and emotional development of the young child.
- The duration of the activities may vary, depending on the particularities of the children and, implicitly, on the interest shown by the child/group of children in them, their content, as well as the manner of carrying them out; The evaluation of the progress of preschool and preschool children in complementary early education services is made on the basis of the specific national standards in the Fundamental Milestones in the Learning and Development of the Child from Birth to 7 Years, approved by order of the Minister of Education, which is published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I.
- The structure of the staff within the playroom/playgroup, with two groups, is formed from:
 - Two teachers, respectively:
 - Two teachers for pre-school education or
 - An educator and a childcare educator for preschool education or
 - An educator and a school pedagogue/instructor-animator/extracurricular education instructor
 - Non-teaching staff:
 - A caregiver.
- The provision of teaching staff within the playroom/public play group is carried out by the School Inspectorate in collaboration with the respective educational unit.
- The provision of the teaching staff within the playroom/private play group is carried out by the founding legal entity.
- Providing auxiliary and non-teaching teaching staff in the public playroom/playgroup and is the responsibility of the employer.
- The provision and standardization of the administrative staff in the public and private complementary early education services are the responsibility of the employer and are done in accordance with Law no. 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented.
- The employment of the teaching staff within the complementary early education services is carried out only with an individual employment contract for a fixed period or on an hourly basis for the teaching staff, respectively cumulation for the auxiliary teaching staff, according to the provisions of art. 181 para. (1) of Law no. 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented, and art. 35 of Law no. 53/2003 - Labor Code, republished, with subsequent amendments and completions.
- The teaching staff within the playroom/play group has mainly the following attributions:
 - Carries out, according to the Curriculum for Early Education, activities of care and psychomotor stimulation of children in order to increase the degree of independence, activities aimed at the development of socio-affective behavior, activities aimed at the formation and improvement of verbal behavior, as well as activities aimed at increasing the general receptivity to stimuli for cognitive development and, additionally, for the community kindergarten type service, for development of learning capacities and attitudes.
 - Records the progress made by the child in the Observations Notebook and in the Child's Progress Assessment Sheet before entering pre-school education or, as the case may be, in the Child's Progress Assessment Sheet before entering primary education.
 - Communicates to the parents/legal representatives of the children, by any means of communication, whenever necessary, the following information: the progress made by the children in areas of development, the emotional and affective state of the children, identified difficulties/deficiencies, any other elements that require measures to be taken or

whose knowledge by the parents/legal representatives is necessary for harmonious, optimal development of children.

- The duties of the teachers within the playroom/play group as well as of the specialized staff within the CJRAE/CMBRAE also include, as the case may be, the offering of:
 - o Information and counseling services for parents
 - o Speech therapy services
 - o Psycho-pedagogical assistance services.
- In order to form community support networks, the management and staff of the playroom /playgroup can direct the intervention towards:
 - o Guiding and counseling parents
 - o Organizing parental education courses or other courses requested by the parents or legal representatives of the children
 - o Developing support materials, such as brochures, books, studies, posters, leaflets and the like, to inform parents/legal representatives and other members of the community about the child's development and educational needs
 - o Counseling the parents/legal representative in order to identify solutions to the problems identified in the case of children with special educational needs.

c) Day care centers

Types:

- **Daycare Centers:** Provide care and educational activities, especially for children in disadvantaged environments.
- **Family-type day centers:** Provide care in a familiar setting.

Specific provisions according to the Methodology of April 28, 2022, for the organization and operation of nurseries and other ante-preschool early education units, proven by GD no. 566/2022:

- It is the responsibility of local authorities to organize day centers that provide care and early education services, according to the needs of the community.
- Day centers with groups of preschoolers do not have the status of educational units.
- The day center is part of the category of social services without accommodation offered by accredited social service providers, public and private, which has the mission of ensuring the maintenance, restoration and development of the capacities of the child and his parents to overcome the situations that could determine the separation of the child from his family, by ensuring, during the day, both care activities, education, recreation-socialization, counseling, development of independent living skills, school and professional guidance, etc. For children, as well as support, counseling, education, etc. Activities for parents or legal representatives, as well as for other persons who take care of children.
- The day centers in which ante-preschool children are enrolled are part of the national system of social services regulated by the Social Assistance Law no. 292/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented, by providing care and supervision services. They can provide, according to the provisions of GD 566/2022, education services for preschool children, benefiting, based on a partnership, from the advice of school inspectorates.

3.2.1. Elaboration of the costing model for ECEC complementary services Community Kindergarten type

In order to develop a costing model for community kindergarten services in Romania, it is important to include an analysis of the expenditure categories covering the full range of activities and resources involved in providing these services. A well-structured model will help to make the budget more efficient, to set costs per child and to allocate resources in a fair and sustainable way.

Structure of the cost model for community kindergartens

The model will include the following cost categories:

- a) Capital costs (Initial and periodic investments)
- b) Operational costs (Recurring expenses)
- c) Administrative and indirect costs
- d) Long-term costs and sustainability
- e) Unit cost estimation
- f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

a) Capital costs

These costs are upfront and essential for the preparation and equipping of the infrastructure necessary for a community kindergarten:

- **Arrangement or acquisition of spaces:** Rehabilitation/purchase, sanitization of at least 2 group rooms for activities with children, outdoor space, reception room - changing rooms, bathroom, dining space and room/resource center for parents. It is possible to purchase a space for the operation of the complementary community kindergarten service, with locker rooms and a container toilet included.
- According to the provisions of art. 8, para. (2) of GD 1563/2024, the number of children in the group is on average 15 children, but not less than 10 and no more than 20.
- According to the Technical Regulation of September 20, 2022 - Normative on quality requirements specific to constructions for kindergartens - Indicative NP011 -2022, the following requirements are provided:
 - o Minimum 2.5 sqm/preschooler, in the group room for new constructions (the minimum area of a group room being 25 sqm)
 - o Minimum 2 sqm/preschooler, in the group room for existing constructions (the minimum area of a group room being 20 sqm)
 - o The area of the multifunctional spaces is at least 2.0 sqm/user, and the number of users will be equal to at least one quarter of the number of places for children in the group rooms
 - o Minimum 3 sqm/preschooler, on a playground/sports field (the minimum area of the playground/sports field being provided for at least 1/3 of the preschoolers)
 - o The playground has a minimum area of 16 sqm but not only a little 2 sqm for each child.
- As a result of the above provisions, the following minimum areas result for a community kindergarten with an average number of children:
 - o The area of the two group rooms – $2.5\text{sqm} \times 15 \text{ children} \times 2 \text{ rooms} = 75\text{sqm}$
 - o The area related to the multifunctional spaces (reception room - changing rooms, group Sanitary, dining space) – $2\text{sqm} \times 30\text{children} \times 1/4 = 15\text{sqm}$
 - o Area of the play area and room/resource center for parents – $2\text{mp} \times 30\text{children} = 60 \text{ sqm}$

- Area of the playground/sports field – 3sqm x 30 children x 1/3 = 30 sqm
- Total area of community kindergarten 150 sqm plus 30 sqm playground.

Table 3.2.1.1 Capital cost calculation model - arrangement or acquisition of premises

Cost type	Details	Average cost per m ² (lei)	Surface (m ²)	Average initial cost (lei)
Arrangement or Construction of spaces	Space rehabilitation	1.063	150	159.375
	- €50-200/m ² (for basic repairs: painting, flooring, plumbing/heating minimum)	625	150	93.750
	- 200-400 €/m ² (for a complete renovation: thermal insulation, infrastructure upgrade, specific equipment)	1.500	150	225.000
	Purchase of space	3.417	150	512.500
	- Rural: 200-400 €/m ²	1.500	150	225.000
	- Small urban: 400-800 €/m ²	3.000	150	450.000
	- Urban sea/metropolis: 800-1500 €/m ²	5.750	150	862.500
	Construction of space (average cost 5,000 lei/sqm, 150 MP)	5.000	150	750.000
	- Urban / Rural: 1000 €/m ²	5.000	150	750.000
	Container purchase (45.000 € x 5 Lei/ € x 1.19)	267.750	1	267.750
	Arrangement and Equipment:			345.000
	- Amenities rooms, toilets, dining space and resource centre 150m ² - (400 €/m ²)	2.000	150	300.000
	- Outdoor space arrangement: courtyard, playground, Fences 30m ² - (300 €/m ²)	1.500	30	45.000
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			3.750
	- Sanitation and permits - (5 €/m ²)	25	150	3.750
Total average initial expenses for space rehabilitation per community kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				508.125
Total average initial expenses for the purchase of space per community kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				861.250
Total average initial expenses for building space per community kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				1.098.750
Total average initial expenditure for the purchase of a container per community kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				616.500
Average cost of arranging or building spaces				771.156

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Educational furniture and equipment:** Expenses for child-friendly furniture, such as tables, chairs, shelves, storage equipment, and other necessary items.

Table 3.2.1.2 Capital cost calculation model - educational furniture and equipment

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pieces)	Average Initial cost (lei)
Educational furniture and equipment	- Tables and chairs (30 children, 350 lei/sep)	350	30	10.500
	- Cribs and mattresses (30 children, 200 lei/set)	200	30	6000
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (10 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	500	10	5000
	- Bathroom furniture, including diaper changing furniture	5.000	1	5000
	- Furniture for spaces (Set of 2 offices, 4 chairs, 2 cabinets)	3.400	1	3400
	- Kitchen furniture and equipment	10.000	1	10.000
	- Furniture and equipment for playgrounds in the yard; etc.	25.000	1	25.000
Total average annual expenditure on furniture and educational equipment per community kindergarten no. average of 30 preschoolers				64.900

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Play materials and teaching resources:** Purchase of educational toys, materials for artistic activities, books and other essential resources for children's development.

Table 3.2.1.3 Capital cost calculation model - game materials and teaching resources

Cost type	Details	Average cost / set (lei)	Number (set)	Average initial cost (lei)
Game materials and teaching resources	- Educational toys and games	10.000	1	10.000
	- Artistic materials (colors, paper, glue, etc.)	5.000	1	5000
	- Books and teaching resources	5.000	1	5000
Total average annual expenditure on game materials and teaching resources per community kindergarten with no. average of 30 preschoolers				20.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Digital technology and infrastructure:** Laptops, tablets, printers, and educational software.

Table 3.2.1.4 Capital cost calculation model - digital technology and infrastructure

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pcs)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Technology and digital infrastructure	- Laptops (2 x 3,500 lei/unit)	3.500	2	7.000
	- Tablets (30 x 1,500 lei/unit)	1.500	30	45.000
	- Printers & Supplies	3.500	1	3.500
	- Interactive whiteboards (2 x 10,000 lei/unit)	10.000	2	20.000

- Educational software, including licenses for Digital games (subscriptions/year)	2.000	1	2.000
Total average annual expenditure on technology and digital infrastructure, per community kindergarten no. average of 30 preschoolers			77.500

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

b) Operational costs

These costs are recurring and necessary for the daily operation of the community kindergarten:

- **Salaries and benefits for staff:** Educators, administrative staff, psychologists and auxiliary staff. These costs are among the highest and include salaries, social contributions, and other benefits.

Table 3.2.1.5 Operating cost calculation model - salaries and benefits for staff

Cost type	Details	Average salary cost per employee (lei/month)	Average salary cost per employee (lei/year)	Average annual cost (lei)
Salaries and benefits for personal	Teaching staff: Two teachers - educators for education Preschool	7.130 7.130	85.560 85.560	171.120
	Non-teaching staff: - Caregiver	6.314	75.768	75.768
Total average annual salary costs per community kindergarten (with average number of 30 children)				246.888
Total average annual expenses with salaries, bonuses, allowances and other salary rights in money, established by law, as well as their related contributions, per community kindergarten with no. average of 30 preschoolers (average 6,253, 6838) cf. GD 68/31.01.2024			6.545,50	196.365

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - Decision no. 68 /31.01.2024

From the analysis of the data in the table above, it can be seen that, for a community kindergarten with an average number of 30 children, the basic funding is not sufficient to ensure the salary expenses of the staff. The minimum number of children that should be enrolled in a community kindergarten for the basic funding to ensure the salary expenses of the staff is 38.

- Training and professional development for staff: Training courses for staff educational and administrative aspects of the community kindergarten.

Table 3.2.1.6 Operational cost calculation model – training and professional development for personal

Cost type	Details	Number of employees	Average annual cost per employee(lei)	Total average annual cost (lei)
Training and development	- Cost of training courses for educational staff	2	1.250	2.500
professional for staff	- Cost of training courses for administrative staff	1	750	750
Total average annual expenditure on training and professional development for community kindergarten staff (with an average of 30 children)				3.250

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Consumables:** Teaching materials, hygiene items and other consumables for activities daily.

Table 3.2.1.7 Operational cost calculation model – consumables

Cost type	Details	Average monthly cost per child (lei)	Average annual cost per child (lei)	Total Average Annual Cost (lei)
Supplies	- Teaching materials	20	240	7.200
	- Hygiene items	10	120	3.600
	- Other consumables	5	60	1.800
Total average annual expenditure on consumables per community kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				12.600

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Utilities:** Water, sewerage, electricity, heating, sanitation, internet and space maintenance.

Table 3.2.1.8 Operational cost calculation model – utilities

Cost type	Details	Average monthly cost per child (lei)	Average annual cost per child (lei)	Total Average Annual Cost (lei)
Utilities	- Electricity	5,00	60	1.800
	- Heating	10,00	120	3.600
	- Water/sewerage	10,00	120	3.600
	- Internet	0,17	2	60
	- Sanitation	1,00	12	360
Total average annual utility expenses per community kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				9.420

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Safety and hygiene:** Costs for maintaining safety standards, including protective equipment, safety checks, and cleaning products.

Table 3.2.1.9 Operational cost calculation model – safety and hygiene

Cost type	Details	Average cost monthly per child (lei)	Average cost per child (lei)	Total Average Annual Cost (lei)
Safety and hygiene	- Cleaning products	5,00	60	1.800
	- Safety checks and equipment (PSI, fire extinguishers)	1,70	20	600
Total average annual expenditure on safety and hygiene per community kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				2.400

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

In accordance with Decision no. 68/31.01.2024 regarding the approval of the methodological norms for determining the standard cost per ante-preschool/preschool/student, for the basic financing of state pre-university education units, the expenses according to the budgetary classification, provided for in Art. 139, paragraph (2), letter b) "expenses with continuous training, from amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget, through local budgets" and letter c) "expenses with goods and services, from amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget, through local budgets" of Law 198/2023 are provided from the basic financing from the state budget, based on the standard cost per preschooler.

The expenditures on the 6 geographical areas with continuous training and expenditure on goods and services per capita are: 696, 703, 716, 737, 758, 779; the arithmetic average of expenses is 731.50 Lei/capita, the average annual cost at the level of a community kindergarten with 30 children being 21,945 lei.

From the analysis of the above data, it can be seen that, for a community kindergarten with an average number of 30 children, the annual operational costs amount to an average of 26,670 lei, while the basic funding is 21,945 lei/year, not being enough to ensure the expenses with continuous training, consumables, utilities, safety and hygiene. For a minimum number of 37 children enrolled in a community kindergarten, the basic funding could ensure the expenses for continuing education, respectively the expenses for goods and services.

c) Administrative and indirect costs

These costs include management and organisational aspects, as well as expenses for

Community support:

- **Community Kindergarten Management and Coordination:** Coordinators' Salaries, Supervision Costs, and General Administration Costs.

Table 3.2.1.10 Administrative and indirect cost calculation model - management and coordination of the community kindergarten

Cost type	Details	Average monthly unit cost (lei)	Average annual cost (lei)
Management and kindergarten coordination	- Supervision: ISJ/ISMB inspector salary (14,087), 50 supervised units	282	3.384
Community	- Coordination: Coordinating salary (13,486) and general administration	1.349	16.188
Total average annual expenses with the management and coordination of the community kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)			19.572

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Awareness-raising and communication activities:** Expenditure on communication and promotion kindergarten activities to the community and the involvement of families.

Table 3.2.1.11 Model for calculating administrative and indirect costs - Awareness-raising activities and communication

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Average annual cost (lei)
Awareness and communication activities	- Communication and promotion of kindergarten activities	2.000	2.000
	- Family involvement: event organization: 4/year	600	2.400
Total average annual expenditure on awareness and communication activities per community kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)			4.400

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Extracurricular and Community Integration Activities:** Costs for community events, field trips, and activities involving families and the extended community.

Table 3.2.1.12 Model for calculating administrative and indirect costs - extracurricular and community integration activities

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Average annual cost (lei)
Extracurricular activities and community integration	- Community events (4/year)	500	2.000
	- Excursions (2/year)	6.000	12.000
	- Activities involving families and the extended community (2/year)	2.000	4.000
Total average annual expenses with extracurricular activities and community integration per community kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)			18.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

d) Long-term costs and sustainability

In order to ensure the continuity and sustainability of community kindergartens, it is essential to consider the maintenance, depreciation and renewal costs as well:

- **Maintenance of premises:** Budget for the maintenance of rehabilitated, purchased or built premises.

Table 3.2.1.13 Long-term costing and sustainability model - space maintenance

Cost type	Details	Initial cost Medium (lei)	Annual maintenance cost (%)	Average annual cost (lei)
Maintenance of the premises	Space rehabilitation	159.375	2%	3.188
	50–200 €/m ² (for basic repairs: painting, flooring, installations Minimum sanitary/thermal)	93.750	2%	1.875
	200–400 €/m ² (for a complete renovation: thermal insulation, infrastructure upgrade, specific equipment)	225.000	2%	4.500
	Purchase of space	512.500	2%	10.250
	- Rural: 200–400 €/m ²	225.000	2%	4.500
	- Small urban: 400–800 €/m ²	450.000	2%	9.000
	- Urban sea/metropolis: 800–1500 €/m ²	862.500	2%	17.250
	Construction of space (average cost 5,000 lei/sqm, 150 sqm)	750.000	2%	15.000
	- Urban / Rural: 1000 €/m ²	750.000	2%	15.000
	Purchase of container (45.000 € x 5 Lei/ € x 1,19)	267.750	2%	5.355
	Arrangement and Equipment:	345.000	2%	6.900
	Facilities for rooms, toilets, dining space and resource center 150m ² - (400€/m ²)	300.000	2%	6.000
	- Outdoor layout: courtyard, playground, fences 30m ² - (300 €/m ²)	45.000	2%	900
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			
	- Sanitation and authorizations - (5 €/m ²)	3.750	20%	750
Total annual maintenance expenses for rehabilitated space per community kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				10.838
Total annual maintenance expenses for space purchased per community kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				17.900
Total annual maintenance expenses for built space per community kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				22.650
Total annual maintenance expenses for container per community kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				13.005
Average annual maintenance cost for a furnished or built space				16.098

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of educational furniture and equipment:** Budget for furniture repair, replacement of educational equipment and worn materials.

Table 3.2.1.14 Long-term costing and sustainability model - furniture renewal and Educational Equipment

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (lei)
Renewal of educational furniture and equipment	- Tables and chairs (30 children, 350 lei/set)	10.500	5	2.100
	- Cribs and mattresses (30 children, 200 lei/set)	6.000	5	1.200
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (10 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	5.000	5	1.000
	- Bathroom furniture, including diaper changing furniture	5.000	5	1.000
	- Furniture for administrative spaces (2 desks, 4 chairs, 2 cabinets)	3.400	5	680
	- Kitchen furniture and equipment	10.000	5	2.000
	- Furniture and equipment for playgrounds in the yard; etc.	25.000	5	5.000
Total average annual expenses with replacement (depreciation) of furniture and educational equipment per community kindergarten with no. average of 30 preschoolers		64.900		12.980

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of game materials and teaching resources:** Budget for the renewal of game materials and of teaching resources.

Table 3.2.1.15 Long-term costing and sustainability model - renewal of game materials and teaching resources

Cost type	Details	Average initial cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (LEI)
Renewal	- Educational toys and games	10.000	4	2.500
game materials and	- Artistic materials (colors, paper, glue, etc.)	5.000	2	2.500
Teaching resources	- Books and teaching resources	5.000	5	1.000
Total average annual expenses with renewal of play materials and teaching resources per community kindergarten with no. average of 30 preschoolers				6.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Maintenance of technology and digital infrastructure:** Budget for the maintenance of technology and digital infrastructure.

Table 3.2.1.16 Long-term costing and sustainability model – maintenance technology and digital infrastructure

Cost type	Details	Average initial cost (lei)	Maintenance cost (lei)	Average annual cost (lei)
Maintenance technology and infrastructure	- Laptops (2 x 3.500 lei/unit)	7.000	10%	700
	- Tablets (30 x 1.500 lei/unit)	45.000	10%	4.500
	- Printers and supply	3.500	10%	350
	- Interactive whiteboards (2 x 10.000 lei/unit)	20.000	10%	2.000
	- Educational software including licenses for digital games (subscription/year)	2.000	100%	2.000
Total average annual expenses for technology maintenance and digital infrastructure, per community kindergarten with an average of 30 preschoolers				9.550

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

e) Unit cost estimation

Unit costs are essential to assess the efficiency of allocated resources and to establish the basis for a certain number of children.

- **Costs per child:** Determining the total costs divided by the number of children, providing an estimate of the cost per child for each type of activity.

Table 3.2.1.17 Calculation model of the average cost per child for a community kindergarten with no. average of 30 preschoolers

Cost type	Details	Total average cost (lei)	Number of children	Average cost per child (lei)
Costs per child	Capital costs	933.556	30	31.119
	Operational costs	272.158	30	9.072
	Administrative and indirect costs	44.372	30	1.479
	Long-term costs and sustainability	44.628	30	1.488
Total average expenses in the first year per community kindergarten with no. average of 30 preschoolers		1.250.086	30	41.670
Total average expenditure in the following years per community kindergarten with No. average of 30 preschoolers		361.158	30	12.039

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Table 3.2.1.18 Detailed model for calculating the average cost per child for a community kindergarten with no. average of 30 preschoolers

Structure of the cost model for community kindergartens		Initial/Annual average cost per child (lei)	No. of Children	Initial/Annual average cost (lei)
a	Capital costs	31.119	30	933.556
	1 Arrangement or construction of spaces	25.705		771.156
	2 Educational furniture and equipment	2.163		64.900
	3 Game materials and teaching resources	667		20.000
	4 Digital technology and infrastructure	2.583		77.500
b	Operational costs	9.072		272.158
	5 Salaries and benefits for staff	8.230		246.888
	6 Training and professional development for staff	108		3.250
	7 Supplies	420		12.600
	8 Utilities	314		9.420
c	Administrative and indirect costs	1.479		44.372
	9 Safety and hygiene	80		2.400
	10 Management and coordination of the community kindergarten	652		19.572
	11 Awareness and communication activities	147		4.400
	12 Extracurricular and community integration activities	600		18.000
d	Long-term costs and sustainability	1.488		44.628
	13 Maintenance of spaces	537		16.098
	14 Renewal of educational furniture and equipment	433		12.980
	15 Renewal of game materials and teaching resources	200		6.000
	16 Renewing technology and digital infrastructure	318		9.550
e	Unit cost estimation			
	17 Costs per child in the first year of operation			41.670
	18 Costs per child in the following years of operation			12.039

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

The sources of funding available to support community kindergartens are:

- **State budget:** through the budget of the Ministry of Education, for expenses with salaries, bonuses, allowances and other salary rights in money, established by law, as well as the contributions related to them, according to the provisions of Law 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented.
- **State budget:** amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget to balance local budgets.
- **Local budget:** own revenues of local budgets.
- **Local budget:** amounts broken down from some state budget revenues, through local budgets, according to the provisions of Law 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented.
- **European funds:** Possibility to access European funds through dedicated programs early

education and social inclusion (PNRR, PIDS, POR, PEO).

- **Partnerships with NGOs and the private sector:** donations and sponsorships based on partnerships created to finance and develop infrastructure and resources.

3.2.2. Elaboration of the costing model for ECEC complementary services playroom/playgroup type

In order to develop a cost calculation model for playroom or playgroup services in Romania, it is important to include an analysis of the categories of expenses that cover the full range of activities and resources involved in providing these services. A well-structured model will help to make the budget more efficient, to set costs per child and to allocate resources in a fair and sustainable way.

Playrooms are essential for children's early development through play and interactive activities, which involves both initial set-up costs and recurring costs for keeping activities and materials updated and attractive.

Cost model structure for toys/playgroups

For a comprehensive model, the structure can be divided into the following categories:

- a) Capital Costs (Initial Investments)
- b) Operational Costs (Recurring Expenses)
- c) Administrative and Organizational Costs
- d) Long-term costs and sustainability
- e) Unit cost estimation
- f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

a) Capital Costs (Initial Investments)

These costs are necessary at the beginning for the endowment of the toy spaces:

- **Arrangement or acquisition of spaces:** Rehabilitation/purchase, sanitation of at least 2 group rooms for activities with children, outdoor space, reception room - locker rooms, bathroom, room/resource center for parents. It is also possible to purchase a modular facility for the operation of the complementary toy/playgroup service, with locker rooms and a container toilet included.
- According to the provisions of art. 8, para. (2) of GD 1563/2024, the number of children in the group is on average 15 children, but not less than 10 and no more than 20.
- According to the Technical Regulation of September 20, 2022 - Normative on quality requirements specific to constructions for kindergartens - Indicative NP011 - 2022, the following requirements are provided:
 - o Minimum 2.5 sqm/preschooler, in the group room for new constructions (the minimum area of a group room being 25 sqm)
 - o Minimum 2 sqm/preschooler, in the group room for existing constructions (the minimum area of a group room being 20 sqm)
 - o The area of the multifunctional spaces is at least 2.0 sqm/user and the number of users will be equal to at least a quarter of the number of places for children in the group rooms
 - o Minimum 3 sqm/preschooler, on a playground/sports field (minimum area of playground/sports field)
 - o Being provided for at least 1/3 of the preschoolers)
 - o The playground has a minimum area of 16 sqm but not only a little 2 sqm for each child.

- As there are no technical regulations regarding quality requirements specific to constructions for playgrounds/play groups, those valid for kindergartens will be assimilated.
- Following the above provisions, the following minimum surfaces for a toy library/playgroup result:
 - o Area of the two group rooms – 2.5 sqmx15 childrenx2 rooms = 75sqm
 - o Area related to the multifunctional spaces (reception room - changing rooms, bathroom) – 2mpx30childrenx1/4 = 15sqm
 - o Area of the play area and room/resource center for parents – 2mpx30children = 60 sqm
 - o Area of the playground/sports field – 3mpx30childrenx1/3 = 30 sqm
 - o Total area of the community kindergarten 150 sqm plus 30 sqm playground.

Table 3.2.2.1 Capital cost calculation model - arrangement or acquisition of premises

Cost type	Details	Average cost per m ² (lei)	Surface (m ²)	Average initial cost (lei)
Arrangement or Acquisition of premises	Space rehabilitation	1.063	150	159.375
	- 50–200 €/m ² (for basic repairs: painting, flooring, minimum plumbing/heating)	625	150	93.750
	- 200–400 €/m ² (for a complete renovation: thermal insulation, infrastructure upgrade, specific equipment)	1.500	150	225.000
	Purchase of space	3.417	150	512.500
	- Rural: 200–400 €/m ²	1.500	150	225.000
	- Small urban: 400–800 €/m ²	3.000	150	450.000
	- Urban sea/metropolis: 800–1500 €/m ²	5.750	150	862.500
	Construction of space (average cost 5,000 lei/sqm, 150 sqm)	5.000	150	750.000
	- Urban / Rural: 1000 €/m ²	5.000	150	750.000
	Purchase of container (45.000 € x 5 Lei/ € x 1,19)			267.750
	Arrangement and Equipment:			345.000
	- Facilities for rooms, toilets, dining space and resource centre 150m ² - (400 €/m ²)	2.000	150	300.000
	- Outdoor layout: courtyard, playground, fences 30m ² - (300 €/m ²)	1.500	30	45.000
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			3.750
	- Sanitation and authorizations - (5 €/m ²)	25	135	3.750
Total average initial expenses for the rehabilitation of space per playroom/playgroup (with an average number of 30 children)				508.125
Total average initial expenses for the purchase of space per playroom/playgroup (with an average of 30 children)				861.250
Total average initial expenses for building space per playroom/playgroup (with an average of 30 children)				1.098.750

Total average initial expenses for the purchase of a container per playroom/playgroup (with an average of 30 children)	616.500
Average cost of arranging or building spaces	771.156

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Specific furniture and equipment:** Purchase of children's furniture (tables, chairs, shelves), storage spaces and appropriate play equipment (e.g. construction areas, drawing equipment, mattresses and pillows).

Table 3.2.2.2 Capital cost calculation model - specific furniture and equipment

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pieces)	Average initial cost (lei)
Furniture and Equipment	- Tables and chairs (30 children, 350 lei/set)	350	30	10.500
	- Cribs and mattresses (30 children, 200 lei/set)	200	30	6.000
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (10 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	500	10	5.000
	- Bathroom furniture, including furniture for changing diapers	5.000	1	5.000
	- Furniture for administrative spaces (2 desks, 4 chairs, 2 cabinets)	3.400	1	3.400
	- Kitchen furniture and equipment	10.000	1	10.000
	- Furniture and equipment for games in yard; etc.	25.000	1	25.000
Total average annual expenditure on furniture and educational equipment per playroom/playgroup (with an average of 30 children)				63.250

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Educational resources and toys:** Investments in educational games and toys, materials for creative activities (puzzles, board games, art supplies, children's books).

Table 3.2.2.3 Capital cost calculation model - educational resources and toys

Cost type	Details	Average cost / set (lei)	Number (set)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Resource	- Educational toys and games	10.000	1	10.000
Educational	- Artistic materials (colors, paper, glue, etc.)	5.000	1	5.000
Toys and Toys	- Books and teaching resources	5.000	1	5.000
Total average annual expenditure for educational resources and toys per playroom/playgroup (with an average number of 30 children)				20.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **IT and multimedia equipment:** Laptops, tablets, audio-video equipment for multimedia activities, if included in the program.

Table 3.2.2.4 Capital cost calculation model - IT and multimedia equipment

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pcs)	Average initial cost (lei)
IT equipment and multimedia	- Laptops (3 x 3,500 lei/unit)	3.500	3	10.500
	- Tablets (10 x 1,500 lei/unit)	1.500	10	15.000
	- Printers & Supplies	3.500	1	3.500
	- Interactive whiteboards (2 x 10,000 lei/unit)	10.000	2	20.000
	- Educational software, including licenses for digital games (subscriptions/year)	2.000	1	2.000
Total average annual expenditure for IT and multimedia equipment per playroom/playgroup (with an average of 30 children)				51.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

b) Operational costs

These costs are recurring and necessary for carrying out daily activities:

- **Salaries and benefits for staff:** Staff responsible for supervising and organising gaming activities, activity coordinators and auxiliary staff. Expenses include salaries, taxes, and social contributions.

Table 3.2.2.5 Operating cost calculation model - salaries and benefits for staff

Cost type	Details	Average salary cost per employee (lei/month)	Average salary cost per employee (lei/year)	Total cost (lei/year)
Salaries and benefits for staff	Teaching staff:			
	Type I			
	- o educator/teachers for Preschool education	7.130	85.560	171.120
	- o educator/teachers for Preschool education	7.130	85.560	
	Type II			
	- o educator/teachers for Preschool education	7.130	85.560	178.896
	- a childcare educator for Ante-preschool education	7.778	93.336	
	Type III			
	- o educator/teachers for Preschool education	7.130	85.560	161.412
	- a school pedagogue/instructor-animator /Extracurricular Education Instructor	6.321	75.852	
Non-teaching staff:				

- carer	6.314	75.768	75.768
Total average annual salary expenditure per toy library/playgroup (with an average number of 30 children)			246.244
Total average annual expenditure on salaries, bonuses, allowances and other entitlements			
salary in money, established by law, as well as the related contributions, per community kindergarten with no. average of 30 preschoolers (average 6,253, 6,838) cf. GD 68/31.01.2024		6.545,50	196.365

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - Decision no. 68 /31.01.2024

From the analysis of the data in the table above, it can be seen that, for a toy library with an average number of children, the basic funding is not sufficient to ensure the salary expenses of the staff. The minimum number of children who should be enrolled in a toy library in order for the basic funding to ensure the salary expenses of the staff is 38 (246,244 lei/ 6,545.50 lei/capita).

- **Staff training:** Trainings and professional development courses for staff working with children, in particular for the training of the skills of animators or educators.

Table 3.2.2.6 Operational cost calculation model — staff training

Cost type	Details	Number of employees	Average annual cost per employee (lei)	Average annual cost Total (lei)
Training professional for staff	- Cost of training courses for staff Educational	2	1.250	2.500
	- Cost of training courses for administrative staff	1	750	750
Total average annual expenditure on continuous training of playroom/playgroup staff (with an average number of 30 children)				3.250

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Consumables and educational materials:** Expenses for necessary consumables daily activities (e.g. paper, colours, glue, objects for manual work).

Table 3.2.2.7 Operational cost calculation model — Educational supplies and materials

Cost type	Details	Monthly average cost per child (lei)	Average annual cost per child (lei)	Total Average Annual Cost (lei)
Consumables and Materials Educational	- Teaching materials (e.g. paper, colours, glue, handicrafts)	30	360	10.800
Total average annual salary expenditure per playroom/playgroup (with an average number of 30 children)				10.800

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Utilities:** Water, electricity, heating, internet and other maintenance expenses to ensure the operation of the space.

Table 3.2.2.8 Operating cost calculation model – utilities

Cost type	Details	Average monthly cost per child (lei)	Average annual cost per child (lei)	Total average annual cost (lei)
Utilities	- Electricity	5	60	1.800
	- Heating	10	120	3.600
	- Water/sewerage	10	120	3.600
	- Internet	0,19	2	60
	- Sanitation	1	12	360
Total average annual expenses with utilities per playroom/playgroup (with an average number of 30 children)				8.478

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Safety and hygiene:** Costs for cleaning products, safety equipment, including products for child hygiene and maintenance of safety standards.

Table 3.2.2.9 Operational cost calculation model – safety and hygiene

Cost type	Details	Average monthly cost per child (lei)	Average annual cost per child (lei)	Total average annual cost (lei)
Safety and hygiene	- Cleaning & Hygiene Products	5	60	1.800
	- Safety equipment (fire extinguishers)	1,7	20	600
Total average annual expenditure on safety and hygiene per playroom/playgroup (with an average number of 30 children)				2.400

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

In accordance with Decision no. 68/31.01.2024 on the approval of the methodological norms for determining the standard cost per ante-preschool/preschool/student, for the basic financing of state pre-university education units, expenses according to the budget classification, provided for in Art. 139, paragraph (2), letter b) "expenses with continuous training, from amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget, through local budgets" and letter c) "expenses with goods and services, from amounts broken down from some state budget revenues, through local budgets" of Law 198/2023 are provided from the basic funding from the state budget, based on the standard cost per preschooler.

The expenditures on the 6 geographical areas with continuous training and expenditure on goods and services per capita are: 696, 703, 716, 737, 758, 779; the arithmetic average of expenses is 731.50 Lei/capita, the average annual cost at the level of a toy library with 30 children being 21,945 lei.

From the analysis of the above data, it can be seen that, for a toy library with an average number of 30 children, the annual operational costs amount to an average of 25,870 lei (3,250 lei + 10,800 lei + 9,420 lei + 2,400 lei), while the basic funding is 21,945 lei/year, not being sufficient to ensure the expenses with continuous training, consumables, utilities, safety and hygiene. At a minimum of 36 children enrolled in a toy library, basic funding could cover the costs of continuing education, respectively the expenses with goods and services.

c) Administrative and organisational costs

These include all expenses related to the administration and promotion of the activities in the toy library:

- **Coordination and management:** Salaries for the management staff who supervise the activities of the toy library and organize the program of activities.

Table 3.2.2.10 Calculation model of administrative and indirect costs - coordination and Toy Library Management

Cost type	Details	Average monthly unit cost (lei)	Annual average cost (LEI)
Coordination and management	- Supervision: ISJ/ISMB inspector salary (14,087), 50 supervised units	282	3.384
	- Coordination: Coordinator salary (13,486) and general administration	1.349	16.188
Total average annual expenses with the management and coordination of the toy library (with an average number of 30 children)			19.572

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Communication and promotion:** Costs for information materials, posters and marketing activities promotion in the community, in order to attract beneficiaries.

Table 3.2.2.11 Calculation model of administrative and indirect costs - communication and promotion

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Annual average cost (lei)
Communication and promotion	- Costs for information materials, Posters	1.000	1.000
	- Promotion activities in the community, to attract beneficiaries	2.000	2.000
Total average annual expenses with awareness and communication activities per playroom/playgroup (with an average number of 30 children)			3.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Community Activities and Special Events:** Event Funding special for families and children, such as holidays, birthdays, interactive shows.

Table 3.2.2.12 Calculation model of administrative and indirect costs - Community activities and Special Events

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Annual average cost (LEI)
Community activities and special events	Organizing special events for Families and children:		
	- Celebrate (4/year)	500	2.000
	- Anniversary days (30/year)	300	9.000
	- Shows interactive (2/year)	2.000	4.000
Total average annual expenditure on extracurricular and integration activities per playroom/playgroup (with an average of 30 children)			15.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

d) Long-term costs and sustainability

In order to ensure the continuity and sustainability of toy libraries/playgroups, it is essential to also consider maintenance, depreciation, and renewal costs:

- **Maintenance of premises:** Budget for the maintenance of rehabilitated, purchased or built premises.

Table 3.2.2.13 Long-term costing and sustainability model - space maintenance

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Annual maintenance cost (%)	Annual average cost (lei)
Maintenance of the premises	Space rehabilitation	143.438	2%	3.188
	- 50-200 €/m ² (for basic repairs: painting, flooring, installations Minimum sanitary/thermal)	84.375	2%	1.875
	- 200-400 €/m ² (for a complete renovation: thermal insulation, infrastructure upgrade, specific equipment)	202.500	2%	4.500
	Purchase of space	461.250	2%	10.250
	- Rural: 200-400 €/m ²	202.500	2%	4.500
	- Small urban: 400-800 €/m ²	405.000	2%	9.000
	- Urban sea/metropolis: 800-1500 €/m ²	776.250	2%	17.250
	Construction of space (average cost 5,000 lei/sqm, 150 sqm)	675.000	2%	15.000
	- Urban / Rural: 1000 €/m ²	675.000	2%	15.000
	Purchase of container (45.000 € x 5 Lei/ € x 1,19)	267.750	2%	5.355
	Arrangement and Equipment:	310.500	2%	6.900
	- Amenities rooms, toilets, dining space and resource center 135m ² - (400 €/m ²)	270.000	2%	6.000
	- Outdoor layout: courtyard, playground, fences 30m ² - (300 €/m ²)	40.500	2%	900
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations	3.375	2%	75
	- Sanitation and authorizations - (5 €/m ²)	3.375	20%	750
Total annual maintenance expenses for rehabilitated space per playroom (with an average number of 30 children)				10.838
Total annual maintenance expenses for space purchased per playroom (with an average number of 30 children)				17.900
Total annual maintenance expenses for built space per playroom (with an average number of 30 children)				22.650
Total annual maintenance expenses for container per toy library (with an average number of 30 children)				13.005
Average annual maintenance cost for landscaped or built space				16.098

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of furniture and specific equipment:** Budget for furniture repair, replacement specific equipment and used materials.

Table 3.2.2.14 Long-term costing and sustainability model - furniture renewal and specific equipment

Cost type	Details	Average initial cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Annual average cost (LEI)
Renewal of specific furniture and equipment	- Tables and chairs (30 children, 350 lei/set)	10.500	5	2.100
	- Cribs and mattresses (30 children, 200 lei/set)	6.000	5	1.200
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (10 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	5.000	5	1.000
	- Bathroom furniture, including diaper changing furniture	5.000	5	1.000
	- Furniture for administrative spaces (2 desks, 4 chairs, 2 cabinets)	3.400	5	680
	- Kitchen furniture and equipment	10.000	5	2.000
	- Furniture and equipment for playgrounds in the yard; etc.	25.000	5	5.000
Total average annual expenses with replacement (depreciation) of specific furniture and equipment per toy library (with an average number of 30 children)				12.980

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of game materials and teaching resources:** Budget for the renewal of game materials and of teaching resources.

Table 3.2.2.15 Long-term costing and sustainability model - renewal of game materials and teaching resources

Cost type	Details	Average initial cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Annual average cost (LEI)
Resource Renewal	- Educational toys and games	10.000	4	2.500
Educational Toys and Toys	- Artistic materials (colors, paper, glue, etc.)	5.000	2	2.500
	- Books and teaching resources	5.000	5	1.000
Total average annual expenditure on renewal of educational resources and toys per playroom (with an average of 30 children)				6.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **IT and multimedia equipment maintenance:** Budget for the maintenance of technology and digital infrastructure.

Table 3.2.2.16 Long-term costing and sustainability model – maintenance IT and multimedia equipment

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Maintenance cost (%)	Annual average cost (lei)
Maintenance IT equipment and multimedia	- Laptops (3 x 3,500 lei/unit)	10.500	10%	1.050
	- Tablets (10 x 1,500 lei/unit)	15.000	10%	1.500
	- Printers & Supplies	3.500	10%	350
	- Interactive whiteboards (2 x 10,000 lei/unit)	20.000	10%	2.000
	- Educational software, including licenses for digital games (subscriptions/year)	2.000	100%	2.000
Total average annual expenses with maintenance of IT and multimedia equipment per toy library (with an average of 30 children)		51.000		6.900

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

e) Unit cost estimation

Unit costs are essential to assess the efficiency of allocated resources and to establish the basis for a certain number of children.

Costs per child: Determining the total costs divided by the number of children, providing an estimate of the cost per child for each type of activity.

Table 3.2.2.17 The model for calculating the average cost per child for a toy library with no. average of 30 children

Cost type	Details	Total average cost (lei)	Number of children	Average cost per child (lei)
Costs per child	Capital Costs (Initial Investments)	907.056	30	30.235
	Operational costs	269.714	30	8.990
	Administrative and indirect costs	39.972	30	1.332
	Long-term costs and sustainability	41.978	30	1.399
Total average expenses in the first year per toy library (with an average of 27 children)		1.216.742	30	40.558
Total average expenditure in the following years per toy library (with an average number of 30 children)		351.664	30	11.722

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Table 3.2.2.18 Detailed model for calculating the average cost per child for a toy library with no. environment 30 children

Structure of the cost model for toy libraries		Average initial cost /yearly per child (lei)	No. of Children	Initial/Annual average cost (lei)
a	Capital Costs (Initial Investments)	30.235	30	907.056
1	Arrangement or acquisition of spaces	25.705		771.156
2	Specific furniture and equipment	2.163		64.900

3	Educational resources and toys	667	20.000
4	IT & Multimedia Equipment	1.700	51.000
b	Operational costs	8.990	269.714
5	Salaries and benefits for staff	8.208	246.244
6	Staff training	108	3.250
7	Educational supplies and materials	360	10.800
8	Utilities	314	9.420
c	Administrative and indirect costs	1.332	39.972
9	Safety and hygiene	80	2.400
10	Coordination and management	652	19.572
11	Communication and promotion	100	3.000
12	Community activities and special events	500	15.000
d	Long-term costs and sustainability	1.399	41.978
13	Maintenance of spaces	537	16.098
14	Renewal of educational furniture and equipment	433	12.980
15	Renewal of game materials and teaching resources	200	6.000
16	Renewing technology and digital infrastructure	230	6.900
e	Unit cost estimation (Cost per child)		
17	Costs per child in the first year of operation		40.558
18	Costs per child in subsequent years of operation		11.722

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

It is important to plan for the long term to ensure the continuity of the activities of toy libraries:

- **Periodic replacement of resources:** Toys and materials wear out, so a reserve is required for the purchase of new materials.
- **Renovations and maintenance:** Ensuring that the space remains attractive and safe for children by regular repairs and maintenance.
- **Impact assessment:** Funds for periodic assessments of beneficiaries' satisfaction and the impact of activities on children's development.

3.2.3. Elaboration of the cost calculation model for similar services provided through day centers

For the development of a costing model for complementary ECEC-like services in day centers in Romania, the model should cover all aspects necessary for their operation, from initial investments to recurring expenses and administrative costs. This model is useful both for budget planning and to provide a baseline for allocating the necessary funds at local and national level.

Several types of day centers have been identified:

- Day centers for children at risk of separation from parents: social service code 8891CZC-II
- Rehabilitation day centers for children with disabilities: social service code 8891CZ-C III
- Day centers for counseling and support for parents and children: social service code 8899CZ-F-I.

Cost model structure for day centers.

The cost model should be divided into the following main categories:

- a) Capital Costs (Initial Investments)
- b) Operational Costs (Recurring Expenses)
- c) Administrative and Indirect Costs
- d) Long-term costs and sustainability
- e) Unit cost estimation
- f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

a) Capital costs

These initial costs are essential for the opening and equipping of day centers:

Construction or renovation of the space: Expenses for the arrangement of the physical space to meet the rules of safety and hygiene for children.

In accordance with OMMJS no. 27/2019 approving the minimum quality standards for social services organized as day centers for children in the family and/or separated children or children at risk of separation from their parents, there is no specified minimum age at which a child can become a beneficiary of a day center. The day centers are intended for children at risk, including those with disabilities, without specifying age limits in the mandatory minimum standards. Regarding the capacity of day centers, the above-mentioned Order does not set strict minimum or maximum values for the number of children that can be accommodated in such a centre. However, quality standards recommend that the number of children be adapted according to the type of services provided and the individual needs of the beneficiaries, in order to ensure adequate and effective care.

It is important that each day center complies with the mandatory minimum standards on social services, ensuring a safe and conducive environment for the development of children, according to the regulations in force.

Table 3.2.3.1 Capital cost calculation model - construction or renovation of space

Cost type	Details	Average cost per m ² (lei)	Surface (m ²)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Construction or Renovation Space	Space rehabilitation	1.063	150	159.375
	- €50–200/m ² (for basic repairs: painting, flooring, installations Minimum sanitary/thermal)	625	150	93.750
	- 200–400 €/m ² (for a renovation complete: thermal insulation, infrastructure modernization, specific equipment)	1.500	150	225.000
	Construction of space (average cost 5,000 lei/sqm, 150 sqm)			
	- Urban / Rural: 1000 €/m ²	5.000	150	750.000
	Purchase of container (45.000 € x 5 Lei/ € x 1,19)			267.750
	- Arrangement and Equipment:			300.000
	- Equipment for rooms, toilets, space for table and resource center 150m ² - (400 €/m ²)	2.000	150	300.000
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			

- Sanitation and authorizations - (5 €/m ²)	25	150	3.750
Total average initial expenditure on space renovation per centre day (with an average of 40 children)			463.125
Total average initial expenditure for the construction of space per centre day (with an average number of 40 children)			303.750
Total average initial expenditure for container purchase per day center (with an average number of 40 children)			571.500
Average cost of building or renovating space for day center (with an average number of 40 children)			446.125

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Basic furniture and equipment:** Specific children's furniture, play equipment, mattresses, tables and chairs.

Table 3.2.3.2 Capital cost calculation model - furniture and basic equipment

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pieces)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Furniture and Equipment educational	Tables and chairs (40 children, 350 lei/set)	350	40	14.000
	Cribs and mattresses (40 children, 200 lei/set)	200	40	8.000
	Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (10 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	500	10	5.000
	Bathroom furniture, including furniture for changing diapers	5.000	1	5.000
	Furniture for administrative spaces (2 offices, 4 chairs, 2 cabinets)	3.400	1	3.400
	Kitchen furniture and equipment	10.000	1	10.000
	Furniture and equipment for playgrounds in the yard etc.	25.000	1	25.000
	Total average annual expenditure on furniture and equipment educational / day center (with an average number of 40 children)			70.400

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Play materials and teaching resources:** Invest in teaching materials, toys and other essential educational resources for daily activities.

Table 3.2.3.3 Capital cost calculation model - game materials and teaching resources

Cost type	Details	Average cost / set (lei)	Number (set)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Game materials and teaching resources	- Educational toys and games	10.000	1	10.000
	- Artistic materials (colors, paper, glue, etc.)	5.000	1	5.000
	- Books and teaching resources	5.000	1	5.000
	Total average annual expenses with play materials and teaching resources / day center (with an average number of 40 children)			20.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Technology and digital infrastructure:** Laptops, tablets, internet and other equipment necessary for administrative and educational activities.

Table 3.2.3.4 Capital cost calculation model - digital technology and infrastructure

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pcs)	Average initial cost (lei)
Technology and digital infrastructure	- Laptops (3 x 3,500 lei/unit)	3.500	3	10.500
	- Tablets (10 x 1,500 lei/unit)	1.500	10	15.000
	- Printers & Supplies	3.500	1	3.500
	- Interactive whiteboards (2 x 10,000 lei/unit)	10.000	2	20.000
	- Educational software, including licenses for digital games (subscriptions/year)	2.000	1	2.000
Total average annual expenditure on digital technology and infrastructure for the day center (with an average number of 40 children)				51.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

b) Operational costs

These represent the recurring costs for the operation of day centers:

- **Salaries and benefits for staff:** Educators, caregivers, administrative and medical staff.

It includes salaries, social contributions and additional benefits.

Table 3.2.3.5 Operational cost calculation model - salaries and benefits for staff

Cost type	Details	Average salary cost per employee (lei/month)	Average salary cost per employee (lei/year)	Total cost (lei/year)
Salaries and benefits for staff	Management staff:			
	- Day center manager	8.802	105.624	105.624
	Specialized personnel:			
	- Chief Accountant/Specialty Coordinator	7.874	94.488	94.488
	- Social worker	5.933	71.196	71.196
	- Psychologist	5.933	71.196	71.196
	- Speech therapist	5.491	65.892	65.892
	- Physiokinetotherapist	5.888	70.656	70.656
	- Educator	5.648	67.776	67.776
	- Nurse	5.648	67.776	67.776
	- Child Educator	5.356	64.272	64.272
	- Education Instructor	5.234	62.808	62.808
	- Occupational Therapy Instructor	5.302	63.624	63.624
	Administrative staff:			
	- Two caregivers	4.143	49.716	99.432

- Cook	4.143	49.716	49.716
Total average annual salary expenses/day center (with an average number of 40 children)			954.456
Total standard cost per child benefiting from the services of day centers with/without a team furniture, cf. GD 1253/12.10.2022 (average 22,538; 29,777)		26.157,50	1.046.300

Data source: calculation based on applicable legal regulations

- **Consumables:** Materials for educational activities, hygiene items, personal hygiene products and other consumables.

Table 3.2.3.6 Operational cost calculation model – consumables

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total annual average cost Total (lei)
Supplies	- Materials for educational activities	240	40	9.600
	- Hygiene items	120	40	4.800
	- Other consumables	60	40	2.400
Total average annual expenditure on consumables per day center (with an average of 40 children)				16.800

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Utilities:** Water, electricity, heating, internet and other costs related to the maintenance of the premises.

Table 3.2.3.7 Operational cost calculation model – utilities

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total annual average cost Total (lei)
Utilities	- Electricity	60	40	2.400
	- Heating	120	40	4.800
	- Water/sewerage	120	40	4.800
	- Internet	1,5	40	60
	- Sanitation	12	40	480
Total average annual expenditure on utilities per day center (with an average number of 40 children)				12.540

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Safety & Health:** Includes safety equipment, regular checks of installations, and first aid equipment.

Table 3.2.3.8 Operational cost calculation model – safety and health

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total annual average cost Total (lei)
Safety and hygiene	- First Aid Equipment	24	40	960
	- Safety equipment	12	40	480
	- Periodic checks of installations	6	40	240
Total average annual expenditure on safety and hygiene per day center (with an average of 40 children)				1.680

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

c) Administrative and indirect costs

They cover the costs for the management and coordination of day centers:

- **Management and coordination of the center:** Salaries for the management team and coordinators, responsible for the administration and supervision of activities.

Table 3.2.3.9 Calculation model of administrative and indirect costs - management and coordination of the Centre

Cost type	Details	Average monthly unit cost (lei)	Average annual cost (lei)
Management and coordination of the center	- Supervision: ISJ/ISMB inspector salary (14,087), 50 supervised units	282	3.384
	- Coordination: Coordinator salary (13,486) and general administration	1.349	16.188
Total average annual expenses with the management and coordination of the day center (with an average number of 40 children)			19.572

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Training for staff:** Training courses for educational and administrative.

Table 3.2.3.10 Operational cost calculation model – staff training

Cost type	Details	Number of employees	Average annual cost per employee (lei)	Total average annual cost (lei)
Training Professional for staff	- Cost of training courses for staff Educational	2	1.250	2.500
	- Cost of training courses for administrative staff	1	750	750
Total average annual expenditure on continuous staff training day center (with an average number of 40 children)				3.250

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Community Promotion and Involvement:** Costs for Parent Information Activities and community events.

Table 3.2.3.11 Administrative and indirect cost calculation model - promotion and engagement community

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	No. units	Average annual cost (lei)
Promotion and Involvement Community	- Organization of parent information activities (4/year)	500	4	2.000
	- Organization of community events (2/year)	2.000	2	4.000
Total average annual expenditure on promotion and engagement activities of the community per day center (with an average number of 40 children)				6.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

d) Long-term costs and sustainability

In order to ensure the continuity and sustainability of day centers, it is essential to consider and maintenance, depreciation and renewal costs:

- **Maintenance of premises:** Budget for the maintenance of rehabilitated, purchased or built premises.

Table 3.2.3.12 Long-term costing and sustainability model - space maintenance

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Annual maintenance cost (%)	Average annual cost (lei)
Maintenance of the premises	Space rehabilitation	159.375	2%	3.188
	- 50-200 €/m ² (for basic repairs: painting, flooring, installations Minimum sanitary/thermal)	93.750	2%	1.875
	- 200-400 €/m ² (for a renovation Complete: Thermal Insulation, Retrofit infrastructure, specific facilities)	225.000	2%	4.500
	Construction of space (average cost 5,000 lei/sqm, 150 sqm)			
	- Urban / Rural: 1000 €/m ²	750.000	2%	15.000
	Purchase of container (45.000 € x 5 Lei/ € x 1,19)	267.750	2%	5.355
	Arrangement and Equipment:	300.000	2%	6.000
	- Facilities for rooms, toilets, dining space and resource centre 150m ² - (400 €/m ²)	300.000	2%	6.000
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			
	- Sanitation and authorizations - (5 €/m ²)	3.750	20%	750
Total average initial expenditure on space renovation per centre day (with an average of 40 children)				9.938
Total average initial expenditure for the construction of space per center day (with an average number of 40 children)				6.750
Total average initial expenditure for the purchase of a container per day center (with an average of 40 children)				12.105
Average cost of building or renovating space for day center (with an average number of 40 children)				9.598

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of furniture and educational equipment:** Budget for furniture repair, replacement of specific equipment and worn materials.

Table 3.2.3.13 Long-term costing and sustainability model - furniture renewal and Educational Equipment

Cost type	Details	Average initial Cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (LEI)
Renewal of educational furniture and equipment	- Tables and chairs (40 children, 350 lei/set)	14.000	5	2.800
	- Cribs and mattresses (40 children, 200 lei/set)	8.000	5	1.600
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (10 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	5.000	5	1.000
	- Bathroom furniture, including diaper changing furniture	5.000	5	1.000
	- Furniture for administrative spaces (2 desks, 4 chairs, 2 cabinets)	3.400	5	680
	- Kitchen furniture and equipment	10.000	5	2.000
	- Furniture and equipment for playgrounds in the yard; etc.	25.000	5	5.000
Total average annual expenditure on furniture and equipment educational / day center (with an average number of 40 children)				14.080

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of game materials and teaching resources:** Budget for the renewal of game materials and of teaching resources.

Table 3.2.3.14 Long-term costing and sustainability model - renewal of game materials and teaching resources

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Amortization period (years)	Average annual cost (lei)
Renewal game materials and Teaching resources	Educational toys and games	10.000	4	2.500
	Artistic materials (colors, paper, glue, etc.)	5.000	2	2.500
	Books and teaching resources	5.000	5	1.000
Total average annual expenses with renewal of play materials and teaching resources per day center (with an average of 40 children)				6.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **IT and multimedia equipment maintenance:** Budget for the maintenance of technology and digital infrastructure.

Table 3.2.3.15 Long-term costing and sustainability model – maintenance IT and multimedia equipment

Cost type	Details	Average initial Cost (lei)	Maintenance cost (%)	Average annual cost (LEI)
Maintenance IT equipment and multimedia	Laptops (3 x 3,500 lei/unit)	10.500	10%	1.050
	Tablets (10 x 1,500 lei/unit)	15.000	10%	1.500
	Printers & Supplies	3.500	10%	350
	Interactive whiteboards (2 x 10,000 lei/unit)	20.000	10%	2.000
	Educational software, including licenses for Digital games (subscriptions/year)	2.000	100%	2.000
	Total average annual expenditure on technology maintenance and digital infrastructure for the day center (with an average number of 40 children)	51.000		6.900

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

e) Unit cost estimation

Unit costs are essential to assess the efficiency of allocated resources and to establish the basis for a certain number of children.

Costs per child: Determining the total costs divided by the number of children, providing an estimate of the cost per child for each type of activity.

Table 3.2.3.16 The model for calculating the average cost per child for the day center with no. average of 40 children

Cost type	Details	Total average cost (lei)	Number of children	Average cost per child (lei)
Costs per child	Capital Costs (Initial Investments)	587.525	40	14.688
	Operational costs	985.476	40	24.637
	Administrative and indirect costs	28.822	40	721
	Long-term costs and sustainability	36.578	40	914
Total average expenditure in the first year per day centre (with an average number of 40 children)		1.601.823	40	40.046
Total average expenditure in the following years per day centre (with an average number of 40 children)		1.050.876	40	26.272

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Table 3.2.3.17 Detailed model for calculating the average cost per child for the day center with no. average of 40 children

Cost model structure for day centers		Initial/Annual average cost per child (lei)	No. of Children	Initial/Annual average cost (lei)
a	Capital Costs (Initial Investments)	14.688	40	587.525
	1 Construction or renovation of the space	11.153		446.125
	2 Educational furniture and equipment	1.760		70.400
	3 Game materials and teaching resources	500		20.000
	4 Digital technology and infrastructure	1.275		51.000
b	Operational costs	24.637		985.476
	5 Salaries and benefits for staff	23.861		954.456
	6 Supplies	420		16.800
	7 Utilities	314		12.540
	8 Safety and hygiene	42		1.680
c	Administrative and indirect costs	721		28.822
	9 Management and coordination of the center	489		19.572
	10 Staff training	81		3.250
	11 Community Promotion and Engagement	150		6.000
d	Long-term costs and sustainability	914		36.578
	12 Maintenance of premises	240		9.598
	13 Renewal of educational furniture and equipment	352		14.080
	14 Renewal of game materials and teaching resources	150		6.000
	15 Renewing technology and digital infrastructure	173		6.900
is	Unit cost estimation (Cost per child)			
	17 Costs per child in the first year of operation			40.046
	18 Costs per child in subsequent years of operation			26.272

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

The sources of funding available to support day care centers are:

- **State budget:** amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget to balance local budgets.
- **Local budget:** own revenues of local budgets.
- **European funds:** Possibility to access European funds through dedicated programs early childhood education and social inclusion.
- **Partnerships with NGOs and the private sector:** donations and sponsorships based on partnerships created to finance and develop infrastructure and resources.

It is important to plan for long-term costs to ensure the sustainability of day care centers:

- **Renewal of equipment and resources:** Budget for replacing furniture, toys, and other equipment as they wear out.
- **Infrastructure upgrades and improvements:** Funds for periodic renovations and upgrades of spaces and facilities.
- **Evaluations and monitoring:** Costs for periodic evaluation of services, monitoring of beneficiary satisfaction and impact on children's development.

3.3. Development of the ECEC complementary services costing model from the European Union and mapped as potentially suitable for Romania

Within the Assessment Report on the status of early childhood education and care services in Romania developed by Cult Research, four types of complementary ECEC services in Europe were identified with the potential to be adapted to the Romanian context: the Swedish model (Family daycare), the French model (playrooms and playgroups), the Irish model (Aistear Program), the Swiss model (Primokiz Program).

3.3.1. Development of the costing model for complementary ECEC family daycare services (Swedish model)

In order to develop a cost calculation model for complementary services of the "Family Daycare" type inspired by the Swedish model, it is necessary to adapt it to the specifics of Romania. Family centers provide early care and education in a family-like setting, often run by qualified educators or carers in their own homes, making them cost-attractive by reducing initial investment in infrastructure. These services are ideal for young children, ensuring a smooth transition to formal education.

Structure of the cost model for family centers (Family daycare – Swedish model)

The cost model will be structured in the main categories of expenses specific to these services:

- a) Capital and landscaping costs
- b) Operating costs
- c) Administrative and support costs
- d) Long-term costs and sustainability
- e) Unit cost estimation
- f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

a) Capital and landscaping costs

Although family centers do not require investment in large buildings, there are still initial costs for arranging a suitable space:

- **Arrangement of the care space:** Adjusting the home to comply with child safety standards. This may include renting a suitable space or adapting the existing home (e.g. safety measures for stairs, windows) for an average of 7 children.

Table 3.3.1.1 Capital Cost Calculation Model - Care space layout

Cost type	Details	Average cost per m ² (lei)	Surface (m ²)	Average initial cost (lei)
Arranging space Care	Space arrangement:			
	- Room facilities, bathroom (30 €/m ²)	150	70	10.500
	- Outdoor layout: courtyard, 20sqm playground (50 €/m ²)	250	20	5.000
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			
	- Sanitation and authorizations - (5 €/m ²)	25	70	1.750
Total average annual expenses with the arrangement of the care space/family center (with an average number of 7 children)				17.250

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Equipment and furniture:** Children's furniture (tables, chairs, cots), playgrounds, spaces storage, mattresses and pillows.

Table 3.3.1.2 Capital cost calculation model - equipment and furniture

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pieces)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Equipment and furniture	- Tables and chairs (7 children, 350 lei/set)	350	7	2.450
	- Cribs, mattresses and pillows (7 children, 200 lei/set)	200	7	1.400
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/shelves bookcase type (1 pc, 500 lei/pc)	500	1	500
	- Bathroom furniture, including furniture for changing diapers	1.000	1	1.000
Total average annual expenditure on equipment and furniture per family centre (with an average of 7 children)				5.350

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Toys and educational materials:** Educational toys, art materials, and other resources needed to stimulate children's development.

Table 3.3.1.3 Capital cost calculation model - toys and educational materials

Cost type	Details	Average cost / set (lei)	Number (set)	Average initial cost (lei)
Toys and Materials Educational	- Educational toys	10.000	1	10.000
	- Art Supplies (colors, paper, glue, etc.)	5.000	1	5.000
	- Books and teaching resources	5.000	1	5.000
Total expenditure on toys and educational materials average annually/centre family (with an average number of 7 children)				20.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Basic IT equipment:** Laptop or tablet for administrative and educational activities, if it is necessary.

Table 3.3.1.4 Capital Cost Calculation Model - Basic IT Equipment

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pcs)	Average initial cost (lei)
IT Equipment Basic	- Laptop (1 x 3,500 lei/unit)	3.500	1	3.500
Total average annual expenditure on Basic IT equipment for Family center (with an average number of 7 children)				3.500

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

b) Operating costs (recurring expenses)

Operational costs are those constant expenses for the daily performance of activities:

- **Carer Salaries and Benefits:** Monthly compensation for caregivers and educators, including social contributions and benefits, to attract and retain qualified staff.

Table 3.3.1.5 Operational cost calculation model - salaries and benefits for carers

Cost type	Details	Salary cost per employee (lei/month)	Average salary cost per employee (lei/year)	Total cost (lei/year)
Salaries and benefits for caregivers	A caregiver: - Preschool educators	7.130	85.560	85.560
Total average annual salary expenses for the family center (with an average number of 7 children)				85.560

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Daily supplies:** Hygiene items, materials for creative activities, products for preparation of snacks.

Table 3.3.1.6 Operational cost calculation model – supplies

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total average annual cost (lei)
Supplies	- Hygiene items	600	7	4.200
	- Creative Activities	1.200	7	8.400
	- Snack products	4.800	7	33.600
Total average annual expenditure on supplies for the family center (with an average number of 7 children)				46.200

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Utilities:** Water, electricity, heating, water/sewerage, sanitation and internet, which may increase due to the number of children present daily.

Table 3.3.1.7 Operating cost calculation model – utilities

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total average annual cost (lei)
Utilities	- Electricity	240	7	1.680
	- Heating	360	7	2.520
	- Water/sewerage	120	7	840
	- Internet	72	7	504
	- Sanitation	48	7	336
Total average annual utility expenses per center family (with an average number of 7 children)				5.880

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Insurance and safety:** Costs for maintaining a safe environment, including cleaning products, safety equipment, and liability insurance.

Table 3.3.1.8 Operational cost calculation model – insurance and safety

Table 5.5.1.5 Operational cost calculation model – Insurance and safety					
Cost type	Details		Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total Average Annual Cost (lei)
Insurance & Safety	-	Civil liability insurance	36	7	252
	-	Cleaning and hygiene products	60	7	420
	-	Safety equipment	24	7	168
	-	(fire extinguishers)			
Total average annual utility expenses per family center (with an average number of 7 children)					840

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

c) Administrative and support costs

These costs include the management and monitoring of family centers, ensuring compliance standards and programme coordination:

- **Coordination and monitoring:** Costs for coordinating centers at local level, including supervising activities and staff.

Table 3.3.1.9 Administrative and support cost calculation model - Coordination and monitoring

Cost type	Details	Average monthly unit cost (lei)	Average annual cost (lei)
Coordination and monitoring	- Supervision: ISJ/ISMB inspector salary (14,087), 50 supervised units	282	3.384
	- Coordination: Coordinator salary (13,486) 50 coordinated units	270	3.240
Total average annual expenses with the coordination and monitoring of the family center (with an average number of 7 children)			6.624

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Professional training and certification:** Expenditure on the continuous training of caregivers in educational methodologies, safety and care.

Table 3.3.1.10 Operational cost calculation model – training and certification

Cost type	Details	Number of employees	Average annual cost per employee (lei)	Total Average Annual Cost (lei)
Training	- Cost of continuous training of caregivers in Educational methodologies, safety and care	1	1.250	1.250
Professional and Certification	- Certification cost	1	450	450
Total average annual expenses with continuous training of caregivers and certification of the family center (with an average number of 7 children)				1.700

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Promotion of services:** Costs for informing the community, organizing information events for parents and attracting beneficiaries.

Table 3.3.1.11 Calculation model of administrative and indirect costs - promotion of services

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	No. Properties	Average annual cost (lei)
Promotion of services	- Costs for community information	1.000	1	1.000
	- Organization of information events for parents and attracting beneficiaries (4/year)	500	4	2.000
Total average annual expenses with the promotion of the services of the family center (with an average number of 7 children)				3.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Communication materials:** Expenditure on informing parents about activities and children's progress, including digital or print resources.

Table 3.3.1.12 Operational cost calculation model — Communication materials

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of Children	Average annual cost (lei)
Communication materials	- Expenditure on informing parents about children's activities and progress	120	7	840
	- Cost of digital or printed resources	60	7	420
Total average annual expenses with communication materials related to the family center (with an average number of 7 children)				1.260

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

d) Long-term costs and sustainability

In order to ensure the continuity and sustainability of family centers, it is essential to take into account the maintenance, depreciation and renewal costs as well:

- **Maintenance of premises:** Budget for the maintenance of rehabilitated, purchased or built premises.

Table 3.3.1.13 Long-term costing and sustainability model - space maintenance

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Annual maintenance cost (%)	Average annual cost (lei)
Maintenance of the premises	Space arrangement:			
	- Gym facilities, bathroom (30 €/m ²)	10.500	2%	210
	- Outdoor layout: courtyard, 20sqm playground (50 €/m ²)	5.000	2%	100
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			
	- Sanitation and authorizations - (5 €/m ²)	1.750	20%	350
Total average annual expenses with maintenance of the care space /family center (with an average number of 7 children)				660

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Equipment and furniture renewal:** Budget for furniture repair, replacement of specific equipment and worn materials.

Table 3.3.1.14 Long-term costing and sustainability model - equipment and furniture renewal

Cost type	Details	Average initial cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (LEI)
Renewal of equipment and furniture	- Tables and chairs (7 children, 350 lei/set)	2.450	5	490
	- Cribs and mattresses (7 children, 200 lei/set)	1.400	5	280
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/shelves bookcase type (1 pc, 500 lei/pc)	500	5	100
	- Bathroom furniture, including diaper changing furniture	1.000	5	200
Total average annual expenses with renewal of equipment and furniture per family center (with an average of 7 children)				1.070

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of game materials and teaching resources:** Budget for the renewal of game materials and of teaching resources.

Table 3.3.1.15 Long-term costing and sustainability model - renewal of game materials and teaching resources

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (lei)
Renewal of toys and materials Educational	- Educational toys	10.000	4	2.500
	- Art supplies (colors, paper, glue, etc.)	5.000	2	2.500
	- Books and teaching resources	5.000	5	1.000

Total average annual expenses with renewal of toys and educational materials per family center (with an average of 7 children)	6.000
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Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Maintenance of basic IT equipment:** Budget for the maintenance of technology and infrastructure Digital.

Table 3.3.1.16 Long-term costing and sustainability model - maintenance of basic IT equipment

Cost type	Details	Average initial cost (lei)	Maintenance cost (%)	Average annual cost (LEI)
Maintenance of basic IT equipment	- Laptop (1 x 3,500 lei/unit)	3.500	10%	350
Total average annual expenses with maintenance of basic IT equipment for a family center (with an average number of 7 children)		3.500		350

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

e) Unit cost estimation

Unit costs are essential to assess the efficiency of allocated resources and to establish the basis for a certain number of children.

Costs per child: Determining the total costs divided by the number of children, providing an estimate of the cost per child for each type of activity.

Table 3.3.1.17 Calculation model of the average cost per child for the family center (with an average number of 7 children)

Cost type	Details	Total average cost (lei)	Number of children	Average cost per child (lei)
Costs per child	Capital Costs (Initial Investments)	46.100	7	6.586
	Operational costs	138.480	7	19.783
	Administrative and indirect costs	12.584	7	1.798
	Long-term costs and sustainability	8.080	7	1.154
Total average expenditure in the first year per family centre (with an average of 7 children)		197.164	7	28.166
Total average expenditure in the following years per family centre (with an average number of 7 children)		159.144	7	22.735

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Table 3.3.1.18 Detailed model for calculating the average cost per child for the family centre (with an average number of 7 children)

Cost model structure for family centers		Initial/Annual average cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Initial/Annual average cost (lei)
a	Capital Costs (Initial Investments)	6.586	7	46.100
1	Arrangement of the care space	2.464		17.250
2	Equipment & Furniture	764		5.350

3	Toys and educational materials	2.857	20.000
4	Basic IT equipment	500	3.500
b	Operational costs	19.783	138.480
5	Salaries and benefits for caregivers	12.223	85.560
6	Supplies	6.600	46.200
7	Utilities	840	5.880
8	Insurance & Safety	120	840
c	Administrative and indirect costs	1.798	12.584
9	Coordination and monitoring	946	6.624
10	Training and certification	243	1.700
11	Promotion of services	429	3.000
12	Communication materials	180	1.260
d	Long-term costs and sustainability	1.154	8.080
13	Maintenance of the premises	94	660
14	Renewal of equipment and furniture	153	1.070
15	Renewal of toys and educational materials	857	6.000
16	Maintenance of basic IT equipment	50	350
is	Unit cost estimation (Cost per child)		
17	Costs per child in the first year of operation		28.166
18	Costs per child in subsequent years of operation		22.735

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

The sources of funding available to support family centers are:

- **State budget:** amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget to balance local budgets.
- **Local budget:** own revenues of local budgets.
- **European funds:** Possibility to access European funds through dedicated programs early childhood education and social inclusion.
- **Partnerships with NGOs and the private sector:** donations and sponsorships based on partnerships created to finance and develop infrastructure and resources.

It is important to plan for long-term costs to ensure the sustainability of the family centers:

- **Renewal of equipment and resources:** Budget for replacing furniture, toys, and other equipment as they wear out.
- **Infrastructure upgrades and improvements:** Funds for periodic renovations and upgrades of spaces and facilities.
- **Evaluations and monitoring:** Costs for periodic evaluation of services, monitoring of beneficiary satisfaction and impact on children's development.

3.3.2. Development of the costing model for complementary ECEC services such as toy libraries and playgroups (French model)

In order to develop a costing model for complementary early childhood education and care services such as toy libraries and play groups (in the style of the French model), it is essential to include all the expenses necessary for the operation of such interactive and early development spaces. The French model of toy libraries and play groups emphasizes the social and cognitive development of children through structured activities, but also through supervised free play.

Cost model structure for toy libraries and playgroups (French model)

For a comprehensive analysis, the cost structure should be broken down as follows:

- a) Capital costs
- b) Operational costs
- c) Administrative and organisational costs
- d) Long-term costs and sustainability
- e) Estimating unit costs (costs per child)
- f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

a) Capital Costs (Initial Investments)

The initial costs are essential for the arrangement and equipping of toy libraries and playgroups:

- **Arrangement and security of the space:** Renting or arranging an appropriate space, which includes facilities for the safety of children and compliance with hygiene and safety norms.

Table 3.3.2.1 Capital cost calculation model - arranging and securing the space

Cost type	Details	Average cost per m ² (lei)	Surface (m ²)	Average initial cost (lei)
Landscaping and Securing Space	Space arrangement:			
	- Facilities room, reception, kitchen, bathroom 150m ² (400 €/m ²)	2.000	150	300.000
	- Exterior design of 60m ² (50 m ²) €/m ²)	250	60	15.000
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			
	- Cleaning, safety systems and permits - (10 €/m ²)	50	150	7.500
Total average expenses with the arrangement and security of the space community toy library (with an average number of 50 children)				322.500

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Furniture and play equipment:** Purchase of special furniture for children, interactive play equipment, construction areas, places to read and relax.

Table 3.3.2.2 Capital cost calculation model - furniture and play equipment

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pieces)	Average initial cost (lei)
Furniture & Play Equipment	- Tables and chairs (50 children, 350 lei/set)	350	50	17.500
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (5 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	500	5	2.500
	- Bathroom furniture	1.000	1	1.000
	- Playground equipment	10.000	1	10.000
Total average expenditure on furniture and playground equipment for the community playroom (with an average number of 50 children)				31.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Educational and recreation materials:** Educational toys, construction games, puzzles, books, handicraft materials, basic musical instruments.

Table 3.3.2.3 Capital cost calculation model - educational and recreation materials

Cost type	Details	Average cost / set (lei)	Number (set)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Educational and recreation materials	- Educational toys	5.000	1	5.000
	- Construction games, puzzles	3.000	1	3.000
	- Books	4.000	1	4.000
	- Handwork materials	2.000	1	2.000
	- Basic musical instruments	4.000	1	4.000
Total expenditure on toys and educational materials per community playroom (with an average number of 50 children)				18.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Multimedia and IT equipment:** Tablets, laptops and audio-video equipment for supporting interactive and multimedia activities, if necessary.

Table 3.3.2.4 Capital cost calculation model - multimedia and IT equipment

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pcs)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Multimedia & IT Equipment	- Laptop (5 x 3,500 lei/unit)	3.500	5	17.500
	- Tablets (10 x 1,500 lei/unit)	1.500	10	15.000
	- Overhead projector (2 x 2,000 lei/unit)	2.000	2	4.000
Total expenditure on multimedia and IT equipment per community playroom (with an average of 50 children)				36.500

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

b) Operational costs (Recurring expenses)

Operating costs reflect the recurring expenses for the daily operation of a community toy library:

- **Salaries and benefits for educational and care staff:** Qualified staff for supervision, activity facilitators, game coordinators, possibly support staff.

Table 3.3.2.5 Operational cost calculation model - salaries and benefits for education and care staff

Cost type	Details	Average salary cost per employee (lei/month)	Average salary cost per employee (lei/year)	Total cost (lei/year)
Salaries and benefits for staff Educational and Care	Community playroom staff:			
	- Salary cost of two extracurricular education instructors	6.321	75.852	151.704
	- Salary cost of two instructors-animators	6.321	75.852	151.704
	- Salary cost of a caregiver	6.314	75.768	75.768
Total average annual salary expenditure per community toy library (with an average number of 50 children)				379.176

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Supplies:** Handicrafts, hygiene materials, cleaning materials and other daily supplies necessary for activities with children.

Table 3.3.2.6 Operational cost calculation model – Consumables

Cost type	Details	Average cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total annual average cost (lei)
Supplies	- Handwork materials	240	50	12.000
	- Hygiene and cleaning materials	120	50	6.000
	- Other consumables	60	50	3.000
Total average annual salary expenditure per community toy library (with an average number of 50 children)				21.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Utilities:** Water, electricity, heating, sanitation, internet, all necessary for carrying out activities.

Table 3.3.2.7 Operating cost calculation model – utilities

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total average annual cost (lei)
Utilities	- Electricity	60	50	3.000
	- Heating	120	50	6.000
	- Water/sewerage	120	50	6.000
	- Internet	1,5	50	75
	- Sanitation	12	50	600
Total average annual expenditure on utilities per community playground (with an average of 50 children)				15.675

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Safety and hygiene:** Expenses for maintaining a safe environment, first aid equipment, cleaning and sanitary products.

Table 3.3.2.8 Operational cost calculation model – safety and hygiene

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total Average annual cost Total (lei)
Safety and hygiene	- First Aid Equipment	24	50	1.200
	- Safety equipment	12	50	600
	- Cleaning & Sanitary Products	60	50	3.000
Total average annual expenditure on safety and hygiene per community toy library (with an average number of 50 children)				4.800

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Space rental:** Expenses for renting the space necessary to carry out the activities community toy library.

Table 3.3.2.9 Operating cost calculation model – space rental

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per m ² (lei)	No. m ²	Total Average Annual Cost (lei)
Space rental	- Urban: 10 €/m ² per month	600	150	90.000
	- Rural: 5 €/m ² per month	300	150	45.000
Total average annual expenses with renting space per community playground (with an average number of 50 children)				67.500

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

c) Administrative and organisational costs

These are the costs related to the administration and coordination of activities in a community toy library:

- **Coordination and management of the community toy library:** Salaries for administrative staff and coordinator, who is in charge of managing and organizing activities and programs.

Table 3.3.2.10 Calculation model of administrative and indirect costs - management and coordination of the toy library

Cost type	Details	Average monthly unit cost (lei)	Average annual cost (lei)
Management and coordination of the toy library	- Supervision: ISJ/ISMB inspector salary (14,087), 50 supervised units	282	3.384
	- Coordination: Coordinator salary (13,486) and general administration	1.349	16.188
Total average annual expenses with the management and coordination of the community toy library (with an average number of 50 children)			19.572

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Vocational training:** Training and refresher courses for care and care staff supervision, to ensure that they apply modern methods of education through play.

Table 3.3.2.11 Operational cost calculation model – vocational training

Cost type	Details	Number of employees	Average annual cost per employee (lei)	Total average annual cost (lei)
Training Professional	- Cost training courses for staff care and supervision	4	1.250	5.000
	- Cost of training courses for administrative staff	1	750	750
Total average annual expenditure on continuous training of the community toy library staff (with an average number of 50 children)				5.750

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Promotion and community involvement:** Promotional materials, organization of events information campaigns for parents.

Table 3.3.2.12 Administrative and indirect cost calculation model - promotion and engagement community

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	No. units	Average annual cost (LEI)
Community	- Promotional materials	1.000	1	1.000
Promotion	- Organizing information campaigns for parents (4/year)	500	4	2.000
and Engagement	- Organization of open events (2/year)	2.000	2	4.000
Total average annual expenditure on awareness-raising and communication activities per community toy library (with an average of 50 children)				7.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Communication materials with parents:** Updates and reports on children's activities and progress, accessible through digital or physical channels.

Table 3.3.2.13 Operational cost calculation model – communication materials with parents

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Average annual cost (lei)
Communication materials with parents	- Expenditure on reporting on children's activities and progress, accessible through digital or physical channels	120	50	6.000
Total average annual expenditure on communication materials related to the community toy library (with an average number of 50 children)				6.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

d) Long-term costs and sustainability

In order to ensure the continuity and sustainability of community toy libraries, it is essential to also take into account the costs of maintenance, depreciation and renewal:

- **Space maintenance:** Budget for the maintenance of rehabilitated, purchased or built spaces.

Table 3.3.2.14 Long-term costing and sustainability model - space maintenance

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Annual maintenance cost (%)	Average annual cost (lei)
Maintenance of the premises	Space arrangement:			
	- Facilities room, reception, kitchen, bathroom 150m ² (400 €/m ²)	300.000	2%	6.000
	- Exterior design of 60m ² (50 m ²) €/m ²)	15.000	2%	300
Sanitation Costs and Authorizations				

- Cleaning, safety systems and permits - (10 €/m ²)	7.500	20%	1.500
Total average annual expenses with the maintenance of the toy library space community (with an average number of 50 children)			7.800

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of furniture and play equipment:** Budget for furniture repair, replacement of specific equipment and worn materials.

Table 3.3.2.15 Long-term costing and sustainability model - renewal of furniture and play equipment

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (lei)
Renewal of furniture and equipment Play	- Tables and chairs (50 children, 350 lei/set)	17.500	5	3.500
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (5 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	2.500	5	500
	- Bathroom furniture	1.000	5	200
	- Playground equipment	10.000	5	2.000
Total average annual expenditure on renewal of furniture and equipment play per community playroom (with an average of 50 children)				6.200

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of educational and recreation materials:** Budget for the renewal of game materials and teaching resources.

Table 3.3.2.16 Long-term costing and sustainability model - renewal of educational and recreation materials

Cost type	Details	Average initial cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (lei)
Renewal of educational and recreation materials	- Educational toys	5.000	4	1.250
	- Handwork materials	2.000	2	1.000
	- Basic musical instruments	4.000	5	800
Total average annual expenditure on renewal of educational and recreation materials per community toy library (with an average of 50 children)				3.050

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Maintenance of multimedia and IT equipment:** Budget for the maintenance of technology and digital infrastructure.

Table 3.3.2.17 Long-term costing and sustainability model – maintenance multimedia and IT equipment

Cost type	Details	Average initial cost (lei)	Maintenance cost (%)	Average annual cost (LEI)
Multimedia and IT equipment maintenance	- Laptop (5 x 3,500 lei/unit)	17.500	10%	1.750
	- Tablets (10 x 1,500 lei/unit)	15.000	10%	1.500
	- Overhead projector (2 x 2,000 lei/unit)	4.000	10%	400
Total average annual expenses with equipment maintenance multimedia and IT for the community toy library (with an average number of 50 children)				3.650

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

e) Unit cost estimation

Unit costs are essential to assess the efficiency of allocated resources and to establish the basis for a certain number of children.

Costs per child: Determining the total costs divided by the number of children, providing an estimate of the cost per child for each type of activity.

Table 3.3.2.18 Calculation model of the average cost per child for the community toy library (with an average number of 50 children)

Cost type	Details	Total average cost (lei)	Number of children	Average cost per child (lei)
Costs per child	Capital costs	408.000	50	8.160
	Operational costs	488.151	50	9.763
	Administrative and indirect costs	38.322	50	766
	Long-term costs and sustainability	20.700	50	414
Total average expenditure in the first year per community toy library (with an average number of 50 children)		934.473	50	18.689
Total average expenditure in the following years per community playroom (with an average of 50 children)		547.173	50	10.943

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Table 3.3.2.19 Detailed model for calculating the average cost per child for the community toy library (with an average number of 50 children)

Structure of the cost model for community toy libraries		Average initial cost /yearly per child (lei)	No. of Children	Average initial cost /annual (lei)
a	Capital costs	8.160	50	408.000
1	Arrangement and security of the space	6.450		322.500
2	Furniture & Play Equipment	620		31.000
3	Educational and recreation materials	360		18.000
4	Multimedia & IT Equipment	730		36.500
b	Operational costs	9.763		488.151
5	Salaries and benefits for educational and care staff	7.584		379.176

6	Supplies	420	21.000
7	Utilities	314	15.675
8	Safety and hygiene	96	4.800
9	Space rental	1.350	67.500
c	Administrative and indirect costs	766	38.322
10	Management and coordination of the toy library	391	19.572
11	Training	115	5.750
12	Community Promotion and Engagement	140	7.000
13	Communication materials with parents	120	6.000
d	Long-term costs and sustainability	414	20.700
14	Maintenance of the premises	156	7.800
15	Renewal of furniture and playground equipment	124	6.200
16	Renewal of educational and recreation materials	61	3.050
17	Multimedia and IT equipment maintenance	73	3.650
e	Unit cost estimation (Cost per child)		
18	Costs per child in the first year of operation		18.689
19	Costs per child in subsequent years of operation		10.943

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

The sources of funding available to support community toy libraries are:

- **State budget:** amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget to balance local budgets.
- **Local budget:** own revenues of local budgets.
- **European funds:** Possibility to access European funds through dedicated programs early childhood education and social inclusion.
- **Partnerships with NGOs and the private sector:** donations and sponsorships based on partnerships created to finance and develop infrastructure and resources.

It is important to plan long-term costs to ensure the sustainability of community toy libraries:

- **Renewal of equipment and resources:** Budget for replacing furniture, toys, and other equipment as they wear out.
- **Infrastructure upgrades and improvements:** Funds for periodic renovations and upgrades of spaces and facilities.
- **Evaluations and monitoring:** Costs for periodic evaluation of services, monitoring of beneficiary satisfaction and impact on children's development.

3.3.3. Development of the costing model for ECEC complementary services of the Aistear type (Aistear Programme - Irish Model)

In order to develop a costing model for complementary early childhood education and care services of the Aistear type (according to the Irish model), it is important to understand the specificity of this program. Aistear is a curriculum oriented towards the holistic early development of children aged 0 to 6 years, focused on play, learning experiences through exploration, networking and communication. This model places a special emphasis on the personal, social and emotional development of children, through interactive and personalized activities. The programme is implemented in nurseries, nurseries and day centers across Ireland and provides guides and resources for educators to support children's learning and

development in a holistic and integrated way.

Cost model structure for Aistear services (Aistear Programme - Irish Model)

The cost model will comprise the following categories:

- a) Capital costs
- b) Operating costs
- c) Administrative and support costs
- d) Long-term costs and sustainability
- e) Unit cost estimation
- f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

a) Capital Costs (Initial Investments)

Aistear emphasizes a welcoming learning space, equipped with equipment and resources that makes it easy to explore:

- **Arrangement of the educational space:** Arrangement of a diverse space, with play areas, thematic corners, reading spaces, areas for group and individual activities. The space should be adapted to facilitate collaborative exploration and learning.

Table 3.3.3.1 Capital cost calculation model - design of educational space

Cost type	Details	Average cost per m ² (lei)	Surface (m ²)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Arranging educational space	Space arrangement:			
	- Facilities reception room, kitchen, bathroom 25m ² (400 €/m ²)	2.000	25	50.000
	- Arrangement of playgrounds of 20 m ² (150 €/m ²)	750	20	15.000
	- Arrangement of themed corners of 10 m ² (150 €/m ²)	750	10	7.500
	- Arrangement of reading spaces of 15 m ² (150 €/m ²)	750	15	11.250
	- Arrangement of group activity areas of 30m ² (100 €/m ²)	500	30	15.000
	- Arrangement of areas for individual activities from 20m ² - (100 €/m ²)	500	20	10.000
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			
	- Cleanliness, safety systems and permits (€10/m ²)	50	120	6.000
Total average expenses with the arrangement and security of the space of the Aistear kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				114.750

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Children's furniture and equipment:** Specific furniture for small children (tables, chairs, shelves toys and books), as well as play equipment and educational activities.

Table 3.3.3.2 Capital cost calculation model - children's furniture and equipment

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pieces)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Furniture and Equipment for children	- Tables and chairs (30 children, 350 lei/set)	350	30	10.500
	- Cribs and mattresses (30 children, 200 lei/set)	200	30	6.000
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (10 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	500	10	5.000
	- Bathroom furniture, including diaper changing furniture	5.000	1	5.000
	- Furniture for administrative spaces (2 desks, 4 chairs, 2 cabinets)	3.400	1	3.400
	- Kitchen furniture and equipment	10.000	1	10.000
Total average annual expenditure on furniture and equipment for children in an Aistear kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				39.900

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Educational materials and interactive toys:** Toys and teaching materials such as construction games, musical instruments, craft materials, tools for exploring nature and other materials that stimulate creativity and critical thinking.

Table 3.3.3.3 Capital cost calculation model - educational materials and interactive toys

Cost type	Details	Average cost / set (lei)	Number (set)	Average initial cost (lei)
Materials educational and interactive toys	- Educational toys	4.000	1	4.000
	- Construction games, puzzles	2.000	1	2.000
	- Books	3.000	1	3.000
	- Handwork materials	1.500	1	1.500
	- Basic musical instruments	3.000	1	3.000
Total expenditure on toys and educational materials per kindergarten Aistear (with an average of 30 children)				13.500

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Basic technology:** Audio and video equipment, laptops, tablets, for interactive activities and presentation of educational resources.

Table 3.3.3.4 Capital Cost Calculation Model - Core Technology

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pcs)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Technology	- Laptops (3 x 3,500 lei/unit)	3.500	3	10.500
	- Tablets (30 x 1,500 lei/unit)	1.500	30	45.000
	- Printers & Supplies	3.500	1	3.500

base	- Interactive whiteboards (2 x 10,000 lei/unit)	10.000	2	20.000
	- Educational software, including licenses for digital games (subscriptions/year)	3.000	1	3.000
Total average annual expenditure on technology and digital infrastructure per Aistear kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				82.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

b) Operating costs (Recurring expenses)

These are expenses for day-to-day operation and include:

- **Salaries and benefits for educators and auxiliary staff:** in kindergartens Aistear emphasizes the quality of staff, so salaries must be competitive (including the 30% increase provided for in the salary law), including continuous training and benefits for teaching staff.

Table 3.3.3.5 Operational cost calculation model - salaries and benefits for educators and auxiliary staff

Cost type	Details	Average salary cost per employee (lei/month)	Average salary cost per employee (lei/year)	Total cost (lei/year)
Salaries and benefits for educators and auxiliary staff	Teaching staff:			
	Two teachers			
	- Teachers for preschool education	9.269	111.228	222.456
	Non-teaching staff:			
	- Caregiver	8.209	98.508	98.508
Total average annual salary costs per kindergarten Aistear kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				320.964

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - Decision no. 68 /31.01.2024

- **Consumables for activities:** Handicraft materials, products for various experiments and hands-on activities.

Table 3.3.3.6 Operational cost calculation model – consumables for activities

Cost type	Details	Average cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total average annual cost (lei)
Supplies for activities	- Handicraft materials (paints, paper, brushes, textiles)	240	30	7.200
	- Products for various experiments and hands-on activities	480	30	14.400
Total average annual salary expenditure per kindergarten Aistear (with an average number of 30 children)				21.600

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Cleaning and hygiene products:** Expenditure on adapted cleaning and hygiene products used in the presence of young children.

Table 3.3.3.7 Operational cost calculation model – cleaning and hygiene products

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total average annual cost (lei)
Products of cleanliness and hygiene	- Cleaning and hygiene products	60	30	1.800
Total average annual expenditure on safety and hygiene per kindergarten Aistear (with an average number of 30 children)				1.800

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Utilities:** Expenses for water, electricity, heating, sanitation, internet, all of which are necessary in carrying out daily activities.

Table 3.3.3.8 Operational cost calculation model – utilities

Cost type	Details	Average cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total average annual cost (lei)
Utilities	- Electricity	60	30	1.800
	- Heating	120	30	3.600
	- Water/sewerage	120	30	3.600
	- Internet	2	30	60
	- Sanitation	12	30	360
Total average annual expenses with utilities per kindergarten Aistear (with an average number of 30 children)				9.420

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Space rental: Expenses for renting the space necessary to carry out the kindergarten activities.

Table 3.3.3.9 Operating cost calculation model – space rental

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per m ² (lei)	No. m ²	Total Average Annual Cost (lei)
Space rental	Urban: 10 €/m ² per month	600	120	72.000
	Rural: 5 €/m ² per month	300	120	36.000
Total average annual expenses with space rental per Aistear kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				54.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

c) Administrative and support costs

In order to effectively manage daily activities and ensure quality, administrative resources are needed:

- **Coordination and supervision of the Aistear kindergarten:** Administrative staff who manage and coordinate the activities, daily schedules and monitoring of the children's progress.

Table 3.3.3.10 Administrative and indirect cost calculation model - coordination and supervision of the Aistear kindergarten

Cost type	Details	Average monthly unit cost (lei)	Average annual cost (lei)
Coordination and Supervision	- Supervision: ISJ/ISMB inspector salary (14,087), 50 supervised units	282	3.384
Aistear kindergarten	- Coordination: Coordinator salary (13,486) and general administration	1.349	16.188
Total average annual expenses with the management and coordination of the Aistear kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)			19.572

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Continuing professional training:** Staff must undergo continuous training in Aistear pedagogy, participate in workshops and professional development sessions for the correct application of the program.

Table 3.3.3.11 Operational cost calculation model – continuing vocational training

Cost type	Details	Number of employees	Average annual cost per employee (lei)	Total average annual cost (lei)
Training continuous professional	- Cost of continuing education courses in Aistear pedagogy (89 €)	3	445	1.335
	- Cost of participation in at least 4 workshops and professional development sessions for the correct application of the program per year (89 €/workshop)	3	1780	5.340
Total average annual expenses with continuous professional training of the staff of the Aistear kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				6.675

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Promotion of the Aistear program and informing parents:** Promotional materials, organization of open events for parents, as well as costs for regular communication and feedback with parents.

Table 3.3.3.12 Model for calculating administrative and indirect costs - promotion of the programme Aistear and informing parents

Cost type	Details	Unit cost medium (lei)	No. of units	Average annual cost (LEI)
Aistear program and informing parents	- Promotional materials	1.000	1	1.000
	- Organizing information campaigns for parents (4/year)	500	4	2.000
	- Organization of open events (2/year)	2.000	2	4.000
Total average annual expenditure on awareness-raising and communication activities per kindergarten Aistear (with an average of 30 children)				7.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Digital and administrative support:** Technologies and applications necessary for administrative management and for informing parents about children's activities and progress.

Table 3.3.3.13 Operational cost calculation model – digital and administrative support

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child(lei)	No. of children	Average annual cost (lei)
Digital support and administrative	Expenditure on technologies and applications necessary for administrative management and for informing parents about children's activities and progress	600	30	18.000
Total average annual expenditure on communication materials related to kindergarten Aistear (with an average of 30 children)				18.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

d) Long-term costs and sustainability

In order to ensure the continuity and sustainability of Aistear kindergartens, it is essential to take into account the Maintenance, depreciation and renewal costs as well:

- **Maintenance of the educational space:** Budget for the maintenance of the rehabilitated spaces, purchased or built.

Table 3.3.3.14 Long-term costing and sustainability model - maintenance of the educational space

Cost type	Details	Average initial cost (lei)	Annual maintenance cost (%)	Annual average cost (lei)
	Space arrangement:			
	- Facilities reception room, kitchen, bathroom 25m ² - (400 €/m ²)	50.000	2%	1.000
	- Arrangement of playgrounds of 20 m ² - (150 €/m ²)	15.000	2%	300
	- Arrangement of thematic corners of 10 m ² - (150 m ² €/m ²)	7.500	2%	
	- Arrangement of reading spaces of 15 m ² - (150 m ² €/m ²)	11.250	2%	225
	- Arrangement of areas for group activities from 30m ² - (100 €/m ²)	15.000	2%	300
	- Arrangement of areas for activities 20m ² - (100 €/m ²)	10.000	2%	200
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			
	- Cleaning, safety systems and permits - (10 €/m ²)	6.000	20%	1.200
Total average annual expenses with the maintenance of the kindergarten space Aistear (with an average of 30 children)				3.225

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of furniture and equipment for children:** Budget for furniture repair, replacement of specific equipment and worn materials.

Table 3.3.3.15 Long-term costing and sustainability model - furniture renewal and children's equipment

Cost type	Details	Initial average cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (lei)
Renewal of children's furniture and equipment	- Tables and chairs (30 children, 350 lei/set)	10.500	5	2.100
	- Cribs and mattresses (30 children, 200 lei/set)	6.000	5	1.200
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (10 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	5.000	5	1.000
	- Bathroom furniture, including diaper changing furniture	5.000	5	1.000
	- Furniture for administrative spaces (2 desks, 4 chairs, 2 cabinets)	3.400	5	680
	- Kitchen furniture and equipment	10.000	5	2.000
Total average annual expenditure on furniture and equipment renewal for children per kindergarten Aistear (with an average number of 30 children)				7.980

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of educational materials and interactive toys:** Budget for the renewal of game materials and teaching resources.

Table 3.3.3.16 Long-term costing and sustainability model - material renewal educational and interactive toys

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (lei)
Material renewal educational and interactive toys	- Educational toys	4.000	4	1.000
	- Construction games, puzzles	2.000	2	1.000
	- Books	3.000	5	600
	- Handwork materials	1.500	2	750
	- Basic musical instruments	3.000	5	600
Total average annual expenditure on renewal of educational materials and interactive toys for the Aistear kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				3.950

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Multimedia and IT equipment maintenance:** Budget for the maintenance of technology and digital infrastructure.

Table 3.3.3.17 Long-term costing and sustainability model – maintenance multimedia and IT equipment

Cost type	Details	Initial average cost (lei)	Maintenance cost (%)	Annual average cost (LEI)
Maintenance Technology base	- Laptops (3 x 3,500 lei/unit)	10.500	10%	1.050
	- Tablets (30 x 1,500 lei/unit)	45.000	10%	4.500
	- Printers & Supplies	3.500	10%	350
	- Interactive whiteboards (2 x 10,000 lei/unit)	20.000	10%	2.000
	- Educational software, including licenses for digital games (subscriptions/year)	3.000	100%	3.000
Total average annual expenses with basic technology maintenance for the Aistear kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				10.900

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

e) Unit cost estimation

Unit costs are essential to assess the efficiency of allocated resources and to establish the basis for a certain number of children.

Costs per child: Determining the total costs divided by the number of children, providing an estimate of the cost per child for each type of activity.

Table 3.3.3.18 Calculation model of the average cost per child for Aistear kindergarten (with average number of 30 children)

Cost type	Details	Total average cost (lei)	Number of children	Average cost per child (lei)
Costs per child	Capital costs	250.150	30	8.338
	Operational costs	407.784	30	13.593
	Administrative and indirect costs	51.247	30	1.708
	Long-term costs and sustainability	26.055	30	869
Total average expenses in the first year per kindergarten Aistear (with an average number of 30 children)		709.181	30	23.639
Total average expenditure in the following years per kindergarten Aistear (with no. 30 children)		485.086	30	16.170

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Table 3.3.3.19 Detailed model for calculating the average cost per child for the Aistear kindergarten (with no. 30 children)

Structure of the cost model for Aistear kindergartens		Initial/Annual average cost per child (lei)	No. of Children	Initial/Annual average cost (lei)
a	Capital costs	8.338	30	250.150
	1 Arrangement of the educational space	3.825		114.750
	2 Children's furniture and equipment	1.330		39.900
	3 Educational materials and interactive toys	450		13.500
	4 Core technology	2.733		82.000

b	Operational costs	13.593	407.784
	5 Salaries and benefits for educators and auxiliary staff	10.699	320.964
	6 Activity supplies	720	21.600
	7 Cleaning and hygiene products	60	1.800
	8 Utilities	314	9.420
	9 Space rental	1.800	54.000
c	Administrative and indirect costs	1.708	51.247
	10 Coordination and supervision of the Aistear kindergarten	652	19.572
	11 Continuing professional training	223	6.675
	12 Promoting the Aistear program and informing parents	233	7.000
	13 Digital and administrative support	600	18.000
d	Long-term costs and sustainability	869	26.055
	14 Maintenance of the educational space	108	3.225
	15 Renewal of children's furniture and equipment	266	7.980
	16 Renewal of educational materials and interactive toys	132	3.950
	17 Basic technology maintenance	363	10.900
e	Unit cost estimation		
	18 Costs per child in the first year of operation		23.639
	19 Costs per child in subsequent years of operation		16.170

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

The sources of funding available to support Aistear kindergartens are:

- **State budget:** amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget to balance local budgets.
- **Local budget:** own revenues of local budgets.
- **European funds:** Possibility to access European funds through dedicated programs early childhood education and social inclusion.
- **Partnerships with NGOs and the private sector:** donations and sponsorships based on partnerships created to finance and develop infrastructure and resources.

It is important to plan for long-term costs to ensure the sustainability of Aistear kindergartens:

- **Renewal of equipment and resources:** Budget for the replacement of furniture, toys and other equipment as it wears out.
- **Infrastructure upgrades and improvements:** Funds for periodic renovations and upgrades of spaces and facilities.
- **Evaluations and monitoring:** Costs for periodic evaluation of services, monitoring beneficiaries' satisfaction and impact on children's development.

3.3.4. Development of the costing model for complementary ECEC services of the Primokiz type (Primokiz Programme - Swiss Model)

The development of a costing model for complementary early childhood education and care services of the Primokiz type, inspired by the Swiss model, involves the integration of a systemic approach, in which children, parents and the community are actively involved. Primokiz focuses on developing an integrated service network that sustainably supports early child development. The Swiss Primokiz model promotes a collaborative approach, emphasizing the social and cognitive development of the child through the

involvement of local resources and continuous training of staff.

Structure of the cost model for Primokiz services (Swiss model)

For a complete model, the costs are divided into the following categories:

- a) Capital costs
- b) Operational costs
- c) Administrative and coordination costs
- d) Long-term costs and sustainability
- e) Unit cost estimation
- f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

a) Capital Costs (Initial Investments)

The capital costs are necessary for the configuration of the infrastructure and equipping the spaces dedicated to Primokiz kindergartens:

- **Spatial planning and safety:** Setting up the appropriate space for early childhood education, with children's activity areas, meeting rooms for families, spaces for staff training.

Table 3.3.4.1 Capital cost calculation model - arrangement and security of the space

Cost type	Details	Average cost per m ² (lei)	Surface (m ²)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Arranging space and safety	Space arrangement:			
	- Facilities reception room, kitchen, bathroom 25 m ² - (400 €/m ²)	2.000	25	50.000
	- Arrangement of children's activity areas of 40 m ² - (150 €/m ²)	750	40	30.000
	- Fitting out a meeting room for families of 40 m ² - (100 €/m ²)	500	40	20.000
	- Arrangement of training spaces 15 m ² staff - (100 €/m ²)	500	15	7.500
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			
	- Cleaning, safety systems and permits - (10 €/m ²)	50	120	6.000
Total average expenses with the arrangement and security of the space of the Primokiz kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				113.500

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Specific furniture and equipment:** Purchase of furniture adapted to young children and play and learning equipment.

Table 3.3.4.2 Capital cost calculation model - specific furniture and equipment

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pieces)	Average initial cost (lei)
Specific furniture and equipment	- Tables and chairs (30 children, 350 lei/set)	350	30	10.500
	- Cribs and mattresses (30 children, 200 lei/set)	200	30	6.000
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (10 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	500	10	5.000
	- Bathroom furniture, including diaper changing furniture	5.000	1	5.000
	- Furniture for administrative spaces (2 desks, 4 chairs, 2 cabinets)	3.400	1	3.400
	- Kitchen furniture and equipment	10.000	1	10.000
Total average annual expenditure on furniture and equipment for children in a Primokiz kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				39.900

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Educational materials:** Purchase of various educational materials, including cognitive development toys, tools for interactive activities, and creativity.

Table 3.3.4.3 Capital cost calculation model - educational materials

Cost type	Details	Average cost / set (lei)	Number (set)	Average Initial Cost (lei)
Materials Educational	- Various educational materials	4.000	1	4.000
	- Cognitive Development Toys	2.000	1	2.000
	- Tools for interactive activities and creativity	3.000	1	3.000
Total expenditure on toys and educational materials per kindergarten Primokiz (with an average number of 30 children)				9.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **IT and multimedia equipment:** Audio-video systems and digital equipment for communication and collaboration with parents and community members, but also for the presentation of educational materials.

Table 3.3.4.4 Capital cost calculation model - IT and multimedia equipment

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	Number (pcs)	Average initial Cost (lei)
IT equipment and multimedia	- Laptops (3 x 3,500 lei/unit)	3.500	3	10.500
	- Tablets (30 x 1,500 lei/unit)	1.500	30	45.000
	- Printers & Supplies	3.500	1	3.500
	- Interactive whiteboards (2 x 10,000 lei/unit)	10.000	2	20.000
	- Educational software, including licenses for digital games (subscriptions/year)	3.000	1	3.000

- Audio-video systems and digital equipment for communication and collaboration with parents and community members and for Presentation of educational materials	25.000	1	25.000
Total average annual expenditure on technology and digital infrastructure per Primokiz kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)			107.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

b) Operational costs (Recurring expenses)

The operational costs include the operating expenses of the Primokiz program:

- **Salaries and benefits for educational and coordination staff:** Salaries for qualified early care and education staff, including staff responsible for implementing Primokiz strategies.

Table 3.3.4.5 Operating cost calculation model - salaries and benefits for staff educational and coordination

Cost type	Details	Average salary cost per employee (lei/month)	Average salary cost per employee (lei/year)	Total cost (lei/year)
Salaries and benefits for educational and coordination staff	Coordination staff:			
	- Directory	13.486	161.832	161.832
	Teaching staff:			
	Two teachers			
	- Preschool educators	7.130	85.560	171.120
	Non-teaching staff:			
	- Caregiver	6.314	75.768	75.768
Total Average Annual Salary Costs per Primokiz Kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				408.720

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - Decision no. 68 /31.01.2024

- **Consumables for activities:** Handicrafts, hygiene products and others consumables used daily in activities.

Table 3.3.4.6 Operational cost calculation model – consumables for activities

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total average annual cost (lei)
Supplies for activities	- Handwork materials (paints, paper, brushes, textiles)	240	30	7.200
	- Products for various experiments and hands-on activities	480	30	14.400
Total average annual salary expenditure per kindergarten Primokiz (with an average number of 30 children)				21.600

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Utilities:** Costs for water, electricity, heating and internet, necessary to carry out activities in optimal conditions.

Table 3.3.4.7 Operational cost calculation model – utilities

Cost type	Details	Average cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total average annual cost (lei)
Utilities	- Electricity	60	30	1.800
	- Heating	120	30	3.600
	- Water/sewerage	120	30	3.600
	- Internet	2	30	60
	- Sanitation	12	30	360
Total average annual utility expenses per kindergarten Primokiz (with an average number of 30 children)				9.420

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Cleaning and hygiene products:** Expenditure on cleaning and hygiene products adapted for use in the presence of young children.

Table 3.3.4.8 Operational cost calculation model – cleaning and hygiene products

Cost type	Details	Average cost per child (lei)	No. of children	Total average annual cost (lei)
Products of Cleanliness and hygiene	- Cleaning and hygiene products	60	30	1.800
Total average annual expenditure on cleaning and hygiene products per Primokiz kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				1.800

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Space rental:** Expenses for renting the space necessary to carry out the kindergarten activities.

Table 3.3.4.9 Operating cost calculation model – space rental

Cost type	Details	Average annual cost per m ² (lei)	No. m ²	Total average annual cost (lei)
Space rental	- Urban: 10 €/m ² per month	600	120	72.000
	- Rural: 5 €/m ² per month	300	120	36.000
Total average annual expenses with space rental per Primokiz kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				54.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

c) Administrative and supervisory costs

For optimal operation, Primokiz requires effective management and constant communication with parents and community partners:

- **Supervision of the Primokiz kindergarten:** Costs of the supervising staff, responsible for monitoring the progress of the children.

Table 3.3.4.10 Administrative and indirect cost calculation model - kindergarten supervision Primokiz

Cost type	Details	Average monthly unit cost (lei)	Average annual cost (lei)
Supervision kindergarten Primokiz	Supervision: ISJ/ISMB inspector salary (14,087), 50 supervised units	282	3.384
Total average annual expenses with the management and coordination of the Primokiz kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)			3.384

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Continuous training:** Training sessions for staff, workshops and professional trainings to ensure the correct implementation of the Primokiz approach and the adoption of good practices.

Table 3.3.4.11 Operational cost calculation model – continuing education

Cost type	Details	Number of employees	Average annual cost per Employee (lei)	Total average annual cost (lei)
Training continuous professional	- Cost of professional training courses in Primokiz pedagogy (80 €)	4	400	1.600
	- Cost of participating in at least 4 workshop sessions per year (80 €/workshop)	4	1600	6.400
Total average annual expenses with continuous professional training of the staff of the Primokiz kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				8.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Communication and relationship with parents:** Budget for regular communication with parents through meetings, periodic reports and special events for parents and children.

Table 3.3.4.12 Operational cost calculation model – communication and relationship with parents

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	No. of units	Average annual cost (lei)
Communication and relationship with parents	- Organizing regular meetings with parents (2/year)	1.800	2	3.600
	- Organizing special events for parents and children (4/year)	500	4	2.000
Total average annual expenditure on awareness and communication activities per Primokiz kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				5.600

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Information and promotion materials:** Costs for promoting the program in the community, for the involvement and information of local partners.

Table 3.3.4.13 Calculation model of administrative and indirect costs - information materials and promotion

Cost type	Details	Average unit cost (lei)	No. of units	Average annual cost (lei)
Information and promotion materials	- Costs with materials for promoting the program in the community	200	12	2.400
	- Costs of information materials for the involvement of local partners	300	12	3.600
Total average annual expenditure on communication materials related to kindergarten Primokiz (with an average of 30 children)				6.000

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

d) Long-term costs and sustainability

In order to ensure the continuity and sustainability of Primokiz kindergartens, it is essential to take into account the maintenance, depreciation and renewal costs as well:

- **Maintenance of the educational space:** Budget for the maintenance of rehabilitated, purchased or built spaces.

Table 3.3.4.14 Long-term costing and sustainability model - maintenance of the educational space

Cost type	Details	Average initial cost (lei)	Annual maintenance cost (%)	Average annual cost (LEI)
Space maintenance	Space arrangement:			
	- Facilities reception room, kitchen, bathroom 25 m ² - (400 €/m ²)	50.000	2%	1.000
	- Arrangement of children's activity areas of 40 m ² - (150 €/m ²)	30.000	2%	600
	- Arrangement of a meeting room for families from 40 m ² - (100 €/m ²)	20.000	2%	400
	- Arrangement of training spaces 15 m ² staff - (100 €/m ²)	7.500	2%	150
	Sanitation Costs and Authorizations			
	- Cleaning, safety systems and permits - (10 €/m ²)	6.000	20%	1.200
Total average annual expenses with the maintenance of the Primokiz space (with an average number of 30 children)				3.350

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of furniture and specific equipment:** Budget for furniture repair, replacement specific equipment and used materials.

Table 3.3.4.15 Long-term costing and sustainability model - furniture renewal and specific equipment

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (lei)
Renewal of furniture and equipment specific	- Tables and chairs (30 children, 350 lei/set)	10.500	5	2.100
	- Cribs and mattresses (30 children, 200 lei/set)	6.000	5	1.200
	- Cabinets for materials and toys/bookcase shelves (10 pcs, 500 lei/pcs)	5.000	5	1.000
	- Bathroom furniture, including diaper changing furniture	5.000	5	1.000
	- Furniture for administrative spaces (2 desks, 4 chairs, 2 cabinets)	3.400	5	680
	- Kitchen furniture and equipment	10.000	5	2.000
Total average annual expenditure on furniture and equipment renewal specific for Primokiz kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)				7.980

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Renewal of educational materials:** Budget for the renewal of game materials and teaching resources.

Table 3.3.4.16 Long-term costing and sustainability model - renewal of educational materials

Cost type	Details	Average initial Cost (lei)	Depreciation period (years)	Average annual cost (LEI)
Renewal of educational materials	- Various educational materials	4.000	4	1.000
	- Cognitive Development Toys	2.000	2	1.000
	- Tools for interactive activities and creativity	3.000	5	600
Total average annual expenditure on renewal of educational materials per Primokiz kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)				2.600

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

- **Maintenance of multimedia and IT equipment:** Budget for the maintenance of technology and digital infrastructure.

Table 3.3.4.17 Long-term costing and sustainability model – maintenance multimedia and IT equipment

Cost type	Details	Average Initial Cost (lei)	Maintenance cost (%)	Average annual cost (lei)
Basic technology maintenance	- Laptops (3 x 3,500 lei/unit)	10.500	10%	1.050
	- Tablets (30 x 1,500 lei/unit)	45.000	10%	4.500
	- Printers & Supplies	3.500	10%	350
	- Interactive whiteboards (2 x 10,000 lei/unit)	20.000	10%	2.000
	- Educational software, including licenses for digital games (subscriptions/year)	3.000	100%	3.000

- Audio-video systems and digital equipment for communication and collaboration with parents and community members and for presenting educational materials	25.000	10%	2.500
Total average annual expenses with basic technology maintenance for the Primokiz kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)			13.400

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

e) Unit cost estimation

Unit costs are essential to assess the efficiency of allocated resources and to establish the basis for a certain number of children.

Costs per child: Determining the total costs divided by the number of children, providing an estimate of the cost per child for each type of activity.

Table 3.3.4.18 Calculation model of the average cost per child for the Primokiz kindergarten (with average no. of 30 children)

Cost type	Details	Total average cost (lei)	Number of children	Average cost per child (lei)
Costs per child	Capital costs	269.400	30	8.980
	Operational costs	495.540	30	16.518
	Administrative and indirect costs	22.984	30	766
	Long-term costs and sustainability	27.330	30	911
Total average expenditure in the first year per Primokiz kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)		787.924	30	26.264
Total average expenditure in the following years per Primokiz kindergarten (with an average of 30 children)		545.854	30	18.195

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Table 3.3.4.19 Detailed model for calculating the average cost per child for the Primokiz kindergarten (with no. 30 children)

Structure of the cost model for Primokiz kindergartens		Initial/Annual average cost per child (lei)	No. of Children	Initial/Annual average cost (lei)
a	Capital costs	8.980	30	269.400
1	Space design and safety	3.783		113.500
2	Specific furniture and equipment	1.330		39.900
3	Educational materials	300		9.000
4	IT & Multimedia Equipment	3.567		107.000
b	Operational costs	16.518		495.540
5	Salaries and benefits for educational and coordination staff	13.624		408.720
6	Activity supplies	720		21.600
7	Utilities	314		9.420
8	Cleaning and hygiene products	60		1.800

9	Space rental	1.800	54.000
c	Administrative and indirect costs	766	22.984
10	Supervision of the Primokiz kindergarten	113	3.384
11	Continuing professional training	267	8.000
12	Communication and relationship with parents	187	5.600
13	Information and promotion materials	200	6.000
d	Long-term costs and sustainability	911	27.330
14	Space maintenance	112	3.350
15	Renewal of specific furniture and equipment	266	7.980
16	Renewal of educational materials	87	2.600
17	Basic technology maintenance	447	13.400
is	Unit cost estimation		
18	Costs per child in the first year of operation		26.264
19	Costs per child in subsequent years of operation		18.195

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

f) Sources of financing and financial sustainability

The funding sources available to support Primokiz kindergartens are:

- **State budget:** amounts broken down from some revenues of the state budget to balance local budgets.
- **Local budget:** own revenues of local budgets.
- **European funds:** the possibility of accessing European funds through dedicated programs early childhood education and social inclusion.
- **Partnerships with NGOs and the private sector:** donations and sponsorships based on partnerships created to finance and develop infrastructure and resources.

It is important to plan for long-term costs to ensure the sustainability of kindergartens:

- **Renewal of equipment and resources:** Budget for replacing furniture, toys, and other equipment as they wear out.
- **Infrastructure upgrades and improvements:** Funds for periodic renovations and upgrades of spaces and facilities.
- **Evaluations and monitoring:** Costs for periodic evaluation of services, monitoring of beneficiary satisfaction and impact on children's development.

3.4. Development of alternative costing scenarios for the expansion of complementary services at national level, based on the profile of complementary services in Romania or Europe and mapped as potentially suitable for Romania

In order to expand complementary services at national level, based on the profile of complementary services in Romania or Europe and mapped as potentially suitable for Romania, three scenarios were taken into account:

- **Scenario I** in which complementary services are extended at national level using only the three types of complementary early education services provided by the Romanian legislation: **community kindergartens, toy libraries and day centers;**
- **Scenario II** in which complementary services are extended at national level using in addition to the three types of complementary early education services provided by the Romanian legislation: **community kindergartens, toy libraries and day centers** and one of the four types of services

- Identified in Europe and mapped as potentially suitable for Romania, namely **family centers**;
- **Scenario III**, in which complementary services are extended at national level, using, in addition to the three types of complementary early childhood education services provided by the Romanian legislation, all four types of complementary early childhood education services identified in Europe and mapped as potentially suitable for Romania.

To provide detailed estimates, I will calculate the costs for the three scenarios based on typical variables: number of beneficiaries (copies), average costs per unit (e.g. capital costs, operational costs, administrative and indirect costs, long-term costs and sustainability), and comparative models from other countries. If no concrete data are identified, as recent as possible, for Romania, estimates will be made based on general information about ECEC.

3.4.1. Parameters used for estimates:

Number of children targeted:

From the Report on the Evaluation of the Status of Early Childhood Education and Care Services in Romania Cult Research extracted data on the number of children targeted:

Table 3.4.1.1 Distribution by counties of the deficit³ of places for children between 0 and 6 years old in Romania

Counties	Children 0-3 years old			Children 4-6 years old			Children 0-6 years old		
	Total No.	Table of Contents	Shortage of places	Total No.	Table of Contents	Shortage of places	Total No.	Table of Contents	Shortage of places
Alba	11.973	345	11.628	9.533	8.528	1.005	21.506	8.873	12.633
Arad	16.947	283	16.664	13.570	11.813	1.757	30.517	12.096	18.421
Argeş	20.190	1.041	19.149	16.411	15.461	950	36.601	16.502	20.099
Bacău	26.388	663	25.725	20.759	15.368	5.391	47.147	16.031	31.116
Bihor	23.968	1.146	22.822	18.723	17.138	1.585	42.691	18.284	24.407
Bistrita-Nasaud	13.510	475	13.035	10.671	9.058	1.613	24.181	9.533	14.648
Botoşani	16.994	136	16.858	13.474	10.353	3.121	30.468	10.489	19.979
Braşov	25.558	1.081	24.477	20.616	17.479	3.137	46.174	18.560	27.614
Brăila	9.357	247	9.110	7.495	6.837	658	16.852	7.084	9.768
Buzău	14.426	493	13.933	11.157	9.969	1.188	25.583	10.462	15.121
Caras-Severin	8.743	220	8.523	7.164	6.283	881	15.907	6.503	9.404
Calarasi	11.131	60	11.071	8.620	6.720	1.900	19.751	6.780	12.971
Cluj	28.656	2.304	26.352	22.405	21.987	418	51.061	24.291	26.770
Constanta	26.740	686	26.054	21.411	18.128	3.283	48.151	18.814	29.337
Covasna	8.693	579	8.114	6.791	6.140	651	15.484	6.719	8.765
Dâmboviţa	18.308	889	17.419	14.270	11.821	2.449	32.578	12.710	19.868
Dolj	24.568	293	24.275	19.486	15.435	4.051	44.054	15.728	28.326

³Starting from the shortage of available places in nurseries and kindergartens at national level, taken from the report prepared by Cult Research for Step by Step, a linear increase in the number of beneficiaries from the current values to those provided for in the National Action Plan for Childcare was taken into account; for each of the three expansion scenarios, An estimate of the annual costs per type of complementary services has been made.

Galati	21.776	263	21.513	17.113	11.943	5.170	38.889	12.206	26.683
Giurgiu	9.205	0	9.205	7.145	5.609	1.536	16.350	5.609	10.741
Gorj	10.715	421	10.294	8.439	7.710	729	19.154	8.131	11.023
Harghita	12.187	265	11.922	9.523	10.438	-915	21.710	10.703	11.007
Hunedoara	13.001	339	12.662	10.439	8.017	2.422	23.440	8.356	15.084
Ialomita	11.240	221	11.019	8.826	5.819	3.007	20.066	6.040	14.026
Iasi	43.933	1.583	42.350	35.498	21.953	13.545	79.431	23.536	55.895
Ilfov	20.731	0	20.731	17.564	13.925	3.639	38.295	13.925	24.370
Maramureş	18.606	945	17.661	14.870	12.901	1.969	33.476	13.846	19.630
Mehedinti	8.998	313	8.685	7.129	5.480	1.649	16.127	5.793	10.334
Mureş	22.701	830	21.871	17.770	16.035	1.735	40.471	16.865	23.606
German	18.075	316	17.759	14.666	11.430	3.236	32.741	11.746	20.995
Olt	12.867	411	12.456	10.133	9.576	557	23.000	9.987	13.013
Prahova	24.036	669	23.367	19.319	16.666	2.653	43.355	17.335	26.020
Satu Mare	13.785	524	13.261	11.067	9.971	1.096	24.852	10.495	14.357
Sălaj	9.886	225	9.661	7.763	7.342	421	17.649	7.567	10.082
Sibiu	16.913	597	16.316	13.689	13.031	658	30.602	13.628	16.974
Suceava	35.551	172	35.379	27.854	21.440	6.414	63.405	21.612	41.793
Teleorman	10.297	288	10.009	8.150	6.743	1.407	18.447	7.031	11.416
Timiş	29.658	928	28.730	23.781	18.548	5.233	53.439	19.476	33.963
Tulcea	6.612	344	6.268	5.064	4.409	655	11.676	4.753	6.923
Vaslui	21.741	280	21.461	17.390	9.931	7.459	39.131	10.211	28.920
Vâlcea	10.525	508	10.017	8.563	8.716	-153	19.088	9.224	9.864
Vrancea	13.019	130	12.889	10.226	8.217	2.009	23.245	8.347	14.898
Bucharest Municipality	81.749	5.487	76.262	64.536	47.458	17.078	146.285	52.945	93.340
Total	803.957	27.000	776.957	639.073	521.826	117.247	1.443.030	548.826	894.204

Data source: Report on the evaluation of the status of early childhood education and care services in Romania prepared by Cult Research

At the meeting of the Romanian Government on October 31, 2023, the Memorandum on the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the Child Guarantee was approved, whose measures are correlated with those included in the "*National Strategy for Children 2023-2027*".

This program that will be applied in Romania - the Child Guarantee - was established at European level in 2021. Its objective is to prevent and combat social exclusion by guaranteeing access to a set of essential services for children in difficulty, thus helping to support their rights by combating poverty and promoting equal opportunities.

One of the expected results from the implementation of the Action Plan until 2030 is to increase the coverage rate of early childhood education, Romania having the obligation to allocate 5% of the ESF+ at the level of specific objectives for those measures that contribute to decreasing the number of children affected by poverty and social exclusion, respectively approximately 352 million. euro.

Thus, according to the Action Plan, by 2030 Romania has committed to achieving an early childhood education inclusion rate of at least 22% for the 0-3 age segment and at least 95% for the 4-6 year old segment.

According to the data in the previous table, it appears that only 3.36% of children between 0 and 3 years old are included in early education and care services (27,000 out of 803,957 children). Also, 81.65% of children between 3 and 6 years old are included in early education and care services (521,826 out of 639,073 children).

In order to achieve the proposed targets for 2030 (22% of children under 3 years of age and 95% of children between 4 and 6 years of age will be enrolled in early childhood education and care services), it is necessary that the number of children between 0-3 years old increase by 24,978 per year, respectively that the number of children between 4-6 years old increase by 14,216 per year, in each of the 6 years until 2030.

Under these conditions, in 2030 there will be 176,871 children between 0-3 years old enrolled in early education and care services, respectively 22% of the total and 607,119 children between 4-6 years old enrolled in early education and care services, respectively 95% of the total.

Table 3.4.1.2 Forecast model for calculating the annual evolution of early childhood education enrolments in the period 2024 – 2030

Year	Percentage of children 0-3 years old	Cumulative number of children 0-3 years	No. of children 0-3 years old	Percentage of children 4-6 years old	No. cumulative children 4-6 years	No. of children 4-6 years old	Percentage of children 0-6 years old	Cumulative number of children 0-6 years	No. of children 0-6 years old
2024	3,36%	27.000	27.000	81,65%	521.826	521.826	38,03%	548.826	548.826
2025	6,47%	51.978	24.978	83,88%	536.042	14.216	40,75%	588.020	39.194
2026	9,57%	76.957	24.978	86,10%	550.257	14.216	43,47%	627.214	39.194
2027	12,68%	101.935	24.978	88,33%	564.473	14.216	46,18%	666.408	39.194
2028	15,79%	126.914	24.978	90,55%	578.688	14.216	48,90%	705.602	39.194
2029	18,89%	151.892	24.978	92,78%	592.904	14.216	51,61%	744.796	39.194
2030	22,00%	176.871	24.978	95,00%	607.119	14.216	54,33%	783.990	39.194

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Average annual costs per child and by type of complementary early care services.

The data from the previous chapters on average annual costs per child have been centralised in the table below:

Table 3.4.1.3 Calculation model of the average cost per child, broken down by types of costs and types of Complementary early education services

Average Initial Cost / annually per child (lei)	Community Kindergarten	Playroom/ Playgroup	Day center	Family center	Community Playroom	Aistear Kindergarten	Primokiz Kindergarten
Number of children	30	30	40	7	50	30	30
a Capital costs	31.119	30.235	14.688	6.586	8.160	8.338	8.980
b Operational costs	9.072	8.990	24.637	19.783	9.763	13.593	16.518
c Administrative costs and indirect	1.479	1.332	721	1.798	766	1.708	766
d Long-term costs and sustainability	1.488	1.399	914	1.154	414	869	911

Average cost per child in the first year (lei)	41.670	40.558	40.046	28.166	18.689	23.639	26.264
Average cost per child in the following years (lei)	12.039	11.722	26.272	22.735	10.943	16.170	18.195

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Table 3.4.1.4 Model for calculating the average cost by types of complementary education services disaggregated by cost types

Average initial cost /total annual (lei)	Community Kindergarten	Playroom/ Playgroup	Day center	Family center	Community Playroom	Aistear Kindergarten n	Primokiz Kindergarten n
Number of children	30	30	40	7	50	30	30
a Capital costs	933.556	907.056	587.525	46.100	408.000	250.150	269.400
b Operational costs	272.158	269.714	985.476	138.480	488.151	407.784	495.540
c Administrative costs and indirect	44.372	39.972	28.822	12.584	38.322	51.247	22.984
d Long-term costs and sustainability	44.628	41.978	36.578	8.080	20.700	26.055	27.330
Average cost first year (lei)	1.250.086	1.216.742	1.601.823	197.164	934.473	709.181	787.924
Average cost in the coming years (lei)	361.158	351.664	1.050.876	159.144	547.173	485.086	545.854

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

3.4.2. Scenario I - Basic scale-up

In this scenario, the complementary services are scaled up at national level using only the three types of complementary ECEC services provided by the Romanian legislation in force at the time of this study: community kindergartens, playgrounds/play groups and day centers.

This approach is in line with the current regulatory framework and focuses on strengthening existing infrastructure and effectively deploying these services in all regions.

Assumptions:

- The current number of community kindergartens, playrooms and day centers is growing linearly over the period 2025 - 2030.
- Funding is provided on an as-needed basis.
- Marginal cost increases caused by inflation or minor legislative requirements.

Cost structure:

- Cost of capital;
- Recurring cost:
 - Operational costs;
 - Administrative and indirect costs;
 - Long-term costs and sustainability.

Table 3.4.2.1 Detailed cost structure of complementary early childhood education services for Scenario I

Cost Type		Community Kindergarten	Playroom/ Playgroup	Day center
Cost of capital		Arrangement or Construction of spaces	Arrangement or acquisition of spaces	Construction or space renovation
		Furniture & Equipment Educational	Furniture & Equipment Specific	Educational furniture and equipment
		Game materials and teaching resources	Educational resources and toys	Game materials and Teaching resources
		Digital technology and infrastructure	IT & Multimedia Equipment	Digital technology and infrastructure
Recurring cost	Costs Operational	Salaries and benefits for Personal	Salaries and benefits for Personal	Salaries and benefits for staff
		Training and professional development for staff	Vocational training for Personal	Supplies
		Supplies	Consumables & Materials Educational	Utilities
		Utilities	Utilities	Safety and hygiene
	Administrative and indirect costs	Safety and hygiene	Safety and hygiene	Administrative costs and indirect
		Management and kindergarten coordination Community	Coordination and management	Management and Coordination of the Centre
		Awareness and communication activities	Communication and promotion	Training for staff
		Extracurricular and community integration activities	Community activities and Special Events	Community Promotion and Engagement
	Long-term costs and sustainability	Maintenance of premises	Maintenance of premises	Maintenance of premises
		Furniture renewal and Educational Equipment	Furniture renewal and Educational Equipment	Furniture renewal and Equipment Educational
		Renewal of game materials and teaching resources	Renewal of game materials and Teaching resources	Renewal of game materials and teaching resources
		Renewing technology and digital infrastructure	Renewing technology and digital infrastructure	Technology renewal and digital infrastructure

Data source: consultant's estimates

Scenario I (baseline) details estimation

Table 3.4.2.2 Detailed structure of complementary ECEC service types and estimated number of copies per service type in Scenario I

Year s		Total number of childre n 0-3	Total number of childre n 4-6	Community kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)			Playroom/ Playgroup (with an average of 30 children)			Day center (with an average number of 40 children)		
				Childre n 0-3	Childre n 4-6	No. .	Childre n 0-3	Childre n 4-6	No.	Childre n 0-3	Childre n 4-6	No.
2025	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	4.739	158	12.489	4.739	575	12.489	4.739	431
	Cumulative copies	24.978	14.216	-	4.739	158	12.489	4.739	575	12.489	4.739	431

2026	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	4.739	158	12.489	4.739	575	12.489	4.739	431
	Cumulative copies	49.957	28.431	-	9.477	316	24.978	9.477	1.149	24.978	9.477	862
2027	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	4.739	158	12.489	4.739	575	12.489	4.739	431
	Cumulative copies	74.935	42.647	-	14.216	474	37.468	14.216	1.723	37.468	14.216	1.293
2028	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	4.739	158	12.489	4.739	575	12.489	4.739	431
	Cumulative copies	99.914	56.862	-	18.954	632	49.957	18.954	2.298	49.957	18.954	1.723
2029	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	4.739	158	12.489	4.739	575	12.489	4.739	431
	Cumulative copies	124.892	71.078	-	23.693	790	62.446	23.693	2.872	62.446	23.693	2.154
2030	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	4.739	158	12.489	4.739	575	12.489	4.739	431
	Cumulative copies	149.871	85.293	-	28.431	948	74.935	28.431	3.446	74.935	28.431	2.585

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Number of complementary services:

- **Community kindergartens:** 158 new units/year, 948 units in 2030
- **Toys/playgroups:** 575 new units /year, 3,446 units in 2030
- **Day centers:** 431 new units /year, 2,585 units in 2030

Table 3.4.2.3 Detailed staff structure by types of staff and types of services Scenario I

Years	Structure/ No. of staff	Community Kindergarten			Playroom/ Playgroup			Day center			Total staff		
		2 Spec	1 Admin	3 Total	2 Spec	1 Admin	3 Total	10 Spec	4 Admin	14 Total	Spec	Admin	Total
2025	New staff	316	158	474	1.150	575	1.725	4.310	1.724	6.034	5.776	2.457	8.233
	Cumulative staff	316	158	474	1.150	575	1.725	4.310	1.724	6.034	5.776	2.457	8.233
2026	New staff	316	158	474	1.150	575	1.725	4.310	1.724	6.034	5.776	2.457	8.233
	Cumulative staff	632	316	948	2.300	1.150	3.450	8.620	3.448	12.068	11.552	4.914	16.466
2027	New staff	316	158	474	1.150	575	1.725	4.310	1.724	6.034	5.776	2.457	8.233
	Cumulative staff	948	474	1.422	3.450	1.725	5.175	12.930	5.172	18.102	17.328	7.371	24.699
2028	New staff	316	158	474	1.150	575	1.725	4.310	1.724	6.034	5.776	2.457	8.233
	Cumulative staff	1.264	632	1.896	4.600	2.300	6.900	17.240	6.896	24.136	23.104	9.828	32.932
2029	New staff	316	158	474	1.150	575	1.725	4.310	1.724	6.034	5.776	2.457	8.233
	Cumulative staff	1.580	790	2.370	5.750	2.875	8.625	21.550	8.620	30.170	28.880	12.285	41.165
2030	New staff	316	158	474	1.150	575	1.725	4.310	1.724	6.034	5.776	2.457	8.233
	Cumulative staff	1.896	948	2.844	6.900	3.450	10.350	25.860	10.344	36.204	34.656	14.742	49.398

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Number of staff:

- Community kindergartens: 474 new staff (316 specialized and 158 administrative) annually, 2,844 cumulative staff (1,896 specialized and 948 administrative) in 2030 toys/playgroups: 1,725 new staff (1,150 specialized and 575 administrative) annually, 10,350 cumulative staff (6,900 specialized and 3,450 administrative) in 2030.
- Day centers: 6,034 new staff/year (4,310 specialized and 1,724 administrative), 36,204 cumulative

staff (25,860 specialized and 10,344 administrative) in 2030.

- In total: 8,233 new staff (5,776 specialized and 2,457 administrative) annually, 49,398 cumulative staff (34,656 specialized and 14,742 administrative) in 2030.

Table 3.4.2.4 Detailed costs by types of costs and by types of complementary services early childhood education taken into account in Scenario I

Years	Costs	Community Kindergarten (with an average number of 30 children)	Playroom/ Playgroup (with an average number of 30 children)	Day center (with an average number of 40 children)	Total
2025	Cost of capital	147.455.815	520.884.039	253.043.068	921.382.922
	Recurring cost	49.996.119	177.839.571	436.851.330	664.687.020
	Total	197.451.933	698.723.610	689.894.398	1.586.069.942
2026	Cost of capital	147.455.815	520.884.039	253.043.068	921.382.922
	Recurring cost	107.041.279	379.785.404	889.456.344	1.376.283.027
	Total	254.497.093	900.669.443	1.142.499.412	2.297.665.949
2027	Cost of capital	147.455.815	520.884.039	253.043.068	921.382.922
	Recurring cost	164.086.439	581.731.237	1.342.061.358	2.087.879.033
	Total	311.542.253	1.102.615.276	1.595.104.426	3.009.261.955
2028	Cost of capital	147.455.815	520.884.039	253.043.068	921.382.922
	Recurring cost	221.131.598	783.677.070	1.794.666.371	2.799.475.040
	Total	368.587.413	1.304.561.109	2.047.709.439	3.720.857.962
2029	Cost of capital	147.455.815	520.884.039	253.043.068	921.382.922
	Recurring cost	278.176.758	985.622.903	2.247.271.385	3.511.071.046
	Total	425.632.573	1.506.506.942	2.500.314.453	4.432.453.968
2030	Cost of capital	147.455.815	520.884.039	253.043.068	921.382.922
	Recurring cost	335.221.918	1.187.568.736	2.699.876.398	4.222.667.052
	Total	482.677.733	1.708.452.775	2.952.919.466	5.144.049.974
Total	Cost of capital	884.734.889	3.125.304.236	1.518.258.408	5.528.297.532
	Recurring cost	1.155.654.111	4.096.224.921	9.410.183.186	14.662.062.218
	Total	2.040.388.999	7.221.529.156	10.928.441.594	20.190.359.750

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Estimate⁴ annual costs per type of complementary services:

- Kindergartens:
 - Capital cost: 147,455,815 lei/year, 884,734,889 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 1,155,654,111 lei in total
 - Total cost: 2,040,388,999 lei in total
- Toys:
 - Capital cost: 520,884,039 lei/year, 3,125,304,236 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 4,096,224,921 lei in total
 - Total cost: 7,221,529,156 lei in total

⁴ For the first scale-up scenario, an estimate of annual costs per type of complementary services is included. The costs are based on the real needs (the shortage of places available in nurseries and kindergartens) at national level, taken from the report prepared by Cult Research for Step by Step.

- Day centers:
 - Capital cost: 253,043,068 lei/year, 1,518,258,408 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 9,410,183,186 lei in total
 - Total cost: 10,928,441,594 lei in total

Total costs Scenario I: 20,190,359,750 lei

- Cost of capital: 5,528,297,532 lei in total
- Recurring cost: 14,662,062,218 lei in total

3.4.3. Scenario II – partial scale-up

In this scenario, complementary ECEC services are scaled up at national level using family centers (Swedish model), in addition to the three types of complementary ECEC services provided by the Romanian legislation in force at the time of this study: community kindergartens, playhouses/playgroups and day centers.

This variant involves a gradual adaptation of the national early education system by introducing a new type of service, offering more flexibility and adaptability for the needs of children and families.

Assumptions:

- Both the current number of community kindergartens, playrooms and day centers, as well as the number of centers increase linearly over the period 2025 - 2030.
- Funding is provided on an as-needed basis.
- Marginal cost increases caused by inflation or minor legislative requirements.

Cost structure:

- Cost of capital
- Recurring cost
 - Operating costs
 - Administrative and indirect costs
 - Long-term costs and sustainability

Table 3.4.3.1 Detailed cost structure of complementary early childhood education services for Scenario II

Cost Type		Community Kindergarten	Playroom/ Playgroup	Day center	Family Center
Cost of capital		Arrangement or Construction of spaces	Arrangement or Acquisition of premises	Construction or renovation Space	Spatial design Care
		Educational furniture and equipment	Furniture and Specific equipment	Educational furniture and equipment	Equipment and furniture
		Game materials and Teaching resources	Educational resources and toys	Game materials and teaching resources	Toys and educational materials
		Technology and infrastructure digital	IT equipment and multimedia	Technology and infrastructure digital	IT Equipment base
	Costs Operational	Salaries and benefits for staff	Salaries and benefits for staff	Salaries and benefits for staff	Salaries and benefits for caregivers
		Training and development professional for Personal	Training for staff	Supplies	Supplies

Recurring cost		Supplies	Educational supplies and materials	Utilities	Utilities
		Utilities	Utilities	Safety and hygiene	Insurance and safety
	Administrative and indirect costs	Safety and hygiene	Safety and hygiene	Management and the coordination of the centre	Coordination and monitoring
		Kindergarten management and coordination Community	Coordination and management	Training Professional for staff	Training professional and validation
		Awareness and communication activities	Communication and promotion	Community Promotion and Engagement	Promotion of services
		Extracurricular and integration activities Community	Community activities and Special Events		Communication materials
	Long-term costs and sustainability	Maintenance of premises	Maintenance of premises	Maintenance of premises	Maintenance of the premises
		Renewal of educational furniture and equipment	Furniture renewal and Educational	Renewal of educational furniture and equipment	Renewal of equipment and furniture
		Renewal of game materials and teaching resources	Renewal of game materials and teaching resources	Renewal of game materials and resources Teaching	Renewal toys and Materials Educational
		Renewal of technology and digital infrastructure	Renewal of technology and digital infrastructure	Renewal of technology and digital infrastructure	Maintenance of basic IT equipment

Data source: consultant's estimates

Scenario II Details Estimation

Table 3.4.3.2 Detailed structure of complementary ECEC service types and estimated number of copies per service type in Scenario II

Year s		Total Childre n 0-3	Total Childre n 3-6	Community Kindergarten (30 children)			Playroom/ Playgroup (27 children)			Day center (40 children)			Family center (7 children)		
				Childre n 0-3	Childre n 4-6	No.	Childre n 0-3	Childre n 4-6	No.	Childre n 0-3	Childre n 4-6	No.	Childre n 0-3	Childre n 4-6	No.
2025	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	3.554	11 9	8.326	3.554	397	8.326	3.554	298	8.326	3.554	1.698
	Cumulati ve copies	24.978	14.216	-	3.554	11 9	8.326	3.554	397	8.326	3.554	298	8.326	3.554	1.698
2026	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	3.554	11 9	8.326	3.554	397	8.326	3.554	298	8.326	3.554	1.698
	Cumulati ve copies	49.957	28.431	-	7.108	23 7	16.652	7.108	793	16.652	7.108	595	16.652	7.108	3.395
2027	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	3.554	11 9	8.326	3.554	397	8.326	3.554	298	8.326	3.554	1.698
	Cumulati ve copies	74.935	42.647	-	10.662	35 6	24.978	10.662	1.18 9	24.978	10.662	892	24.978	10.662	5.092
2028	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	3.554	11 9	8.326	3.554	397	8.326	3.554	298	8.326	3.554	1.698
	Cumulati ve copies	99.914	56.862	-	14.216	47 4	33.305	14.216	1.58 5	33.305	14.216	1.18 9	33.305	14.216	6.789

2029	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	3.554	11 9	8.326	3.554	397	8.326	3.554	298	8.326	3.554	1.698
	Cumulative copies	124.892	71.078	-	17.769	59 3	41.631	17.769	1.98 1	41.631	17.769	1.48 6	41.631	17.769	8.486
2030	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	3.554	11 9	8.326	3.554	397	8.326	3.554	298	8.326	3.554	1.698
	Cumulative copies	149.871	85.293	-	21.323	71 1	49.957	21.323	2.37 7	49.957	21.323	1.78 3	49.957	21.323	10.18 3

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Number of complementary services:

- Community kindergartens: 119 new units/year, 711 units in 2030
- Toys/playgroups: 397 new units /year, 2,377 units in 2030
- Day centers: 298 new units/year, 1,783 units in 2023
- Family centers: 1,698 new units/year, 10,183 units in 2030

Table 3.4.3.3 Detailed staff structure by types of staff and types of services Scenario II

Years	Structure/ No. of staff	Community Kindergartens			Playgroups/ Playgroups			Day centers			Family Centre			Total staff		
		2 Spec	1 Admin	3 Total	2 Spec	1 Admin	3 Total	10 Spec	4 Admin	14 Total	1 Spec	0 Admin	1 Total	Spec	Admin	Total
2025	New staff	238	119	357	794	397	1.191	2.980	1.192	4.172	1.698	0	1.698	5.710	1.708	7.418
	Personal Cumulative	238	119	357	794	397	1.191	2.980	1.192	4.172	1.698	0	1.698	5.710	1.708	7.418
2026	New staff	238	119	357	794	397	1.191	2.980	1.192	4.172	1.698	0	1.698	5.710	1.708	7.418
	Personal Cumulative	476	238	714	1.588	794	2.382	5.960	2.384	8.344	3.396	0	3.396	11.420	3.416	14.836
2027	New staff	238	119	357	794	397	1.191	2.980	1.192	4.172	1.698	0	1.698	5.710	1.708	7.418
	Personal Cumulative	714	357	1.071	2.382	1.191	3.573	8.940	3.576	12.516	5.094	0	5.094	17.130	5.124	22.254
2028	New staff	238	119	357	794	397	1.191	2.980	1.192	4.172	1.698	0	1.698	5.710	1.708	7.418
	Personal Cumulative	952	476	1.428	3.176	1.588	4.764	11.920	4.768	16.688	6.792	0	6.792	22.840	6.832	29.672
2029	New staff	238	119	357	794	397	1.191	2.980	1.192	4.172	1.698	0	1.698	5.710	1.708	7.418
	Personal Cumulative	1.190	595	1.785	3.970	1.985	5.955	14.900	5.960	20.860	8.490	0	8.490	28.550	8.540	37.090
2030	New staff	238	119	357	794	397	1.191	2.980	1.192	4.172	1.698	0	1.698	5.710	1.708	7.418
	Personal Cumulative	1.428	714	2.142	4.764	2.382	7.146	17.880	7.152	25.032	10.188	0	10.188	34.260	10.248	44.508

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Number of staff:

- Community kindergartens: 357 new staff (238 specialized and 119 administrative) annually, 2,142 cumulative staff (1,428 specialized and 714 administrative) in 2030
- toys/playgroups: 1,191 new staff (794 specialized and 397 administrative) annually, 7,146 cumulative staff (4,764 specialized and 2,382 administrative) in 2030
- Day centers: 4,172 new staff (2,980 specialized and 1,192 administrative) annually, 25,032 cumulative staff (17,880 specialized and 7,152 administrative) in 2030
- Family centers: 1,698 new (specialized) staff annually, 10,138 cumulative (specialized) staff in 2030
- In total: 7,418 new staff (5,710 specialized and 1,708 administrative) annually, 44,508 cumulative staff (34,260 specialized and 10,248 administrative) in 2030

Table 3.4.3.3 Detailed costs by cost types and complementary ECEC service types taken into account in Scenario II

Years	Level	Community Kindergarten (30 children)	Playroom/ Playgroup (27 children)	Day center (40 children)	Family center (7 children)	Total
2025	Cost of capital	110.591.861	359.195.203	174.495.376	78.238.488	722.520.928
	Cost Recurring	37.497.089	122.635.973	301.247.284	256.377.851	717.758.197
	Total	148.088.950	481.831.176	475.742.660	334.616.339	1.440.279.125
2026	Cost of capital	110.591.861	359.195.203	174.495.376	78.238.488	722.520.928
	Cost Recurring	80.280.959	261.895.326	613.358.114	526.468.652	1.482.003.051
	Total	190.872.820	621.090.529	787.853.490	604.707.140	2.204.523.979
2027	Cost of capital	110.591.861	359.195.203	174.495.376	78.238.488	722.520.928
	Cost Recurring	123.064.829	401.154.679	925.468.944	796.559.452	2.246.247.905
	Total	233.656.690	760.349.883	1.099.964.320	874.797.940	2.968.768.833
2028	Cost of capital	110.591.861	359.195.203	174.495.376	78.238.488	722.520.928
	Cost Recurring	165.848.699	540.414.033	1.237.579.774	1.066.650.253	3.010.492.759
	Total	276.440.560	899.609.236	1.412.075.150	1.144.888.741	3.733.013.687
2029	Cost of capital	110.591.861	359.195.203	174.495.376	78.238.488	722.520.928
	Cost Recurring	208.632.569	679.673.386	1.549.690.604	1.336.741.054	3.774.737.613
	Total	319.224.430	1.038.868.589	1.724.185.980	1.414.979.542	4.497.258.540
2030	Cost of capital	110.591.861	359.195.203	174.495.376	78.238.488	722.520.928
	Cost Recurring	251.416.439	818.932.739	1.861.801.434	1.606.831.854	4.538.982.466
	Total	362.008.300	1.178.127.942	2.036.296.810	1.685.070.342	5.261.503.394
Total	Cost of capital	663.551.166	2.155.171.218	1.046.972.255	469.430.927	4.335.125.567
	Cost Recurring	866.740.583	2.824.706.137	6.489.146.155	5.589.629.116	15.770.221.991
	Total	1.530.291.750	4.979.877.355	7.536.118.410	6.059.060.043	20.105.347.558

Data source: calculations based on consultant estimates

Estimate ⁵annual costs per type of complementary services:

- Kindergartens:
 - Capital cost: 110,591,861 lei/year, 663,551,166 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 866,740,583 lei in total
 - Total cost: 1,530,291,750 lei in total
- Toys:
 - Capital cost: 359,195,203 lei/year, 2,155,171,218 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 2,824,706,137 lei in total
 - Total cost: 4,979,877,355 lei in total
- Day centers:
 - Capital cost: 174,495,376 lei/year, 1,046,972,255 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 6,489,146,155 lei in total

⁵ For the second scale-up scenario, an estimate of annual costs per type of complementary services is included. The costs are based on the real needs (the shortage of places available in nurseries and kindergartens) at national level, taken from the report prepared by Cult Research for Step by Step.

- Total cost: 7,536,118,410 lei in total
- Family center:
 - Cost of capital: 78,238,488 lei/year, 469,430,927 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 5,589,629,116 lei in total
 - Total cost: 6,059,060,043 lei in total

Total costs Scenario II: 20,105,347,558 lei

- **Capital cost: 4,335,125,567 lei in total**
- **Recurring cost: 15,770,221,991 lei in total**

3.4.4. Scenario III – Advanced scale-up

In this scenario, complementary ECEC services are scaled up at national level using all four types of complementary ECEC services identified in Europe and mapped as potentially suitable for Romania (Family Centers, Community Play Libraries, Aistear Kindergartens, Primokiz Kindergartens), in addition to the three types of complementary ECEC services provided by the Romanian legislation in force at the time of this study: community kindergartens, playrooms/playgroups and day centers.

This scenario ensures an extensive educational offer adapted to the diverse needs of children and families, contributing to the creation of a flexible, modern and inclusive educational system, capable of responding to a wide range of educational and social needs.

Assumptions:

- Both the current number of community kindergartens, toy libraries and day centers, as well as the number of new types of complementary services (family centers, community toy libraries, Aistear kindergartens, Primokiz kindergartens) increase linearly over the period 2025 - 2030.
- Funding was provided as needed.
- Marginal cost increases caused by inflation or minor legislative requirements.

Cost structure:

- Cost of capital;
- Recurring cost:
 - Operational costs;
 - Administrative and indirect costs;
 - Long-term costs and sustainability.

Table 3.4.4.1 Detailed cost structure of complementary ECEC services for Scenario III, in addition to Scenario II

Cost Type		Community Playroom	Aistear Kindergarten	Primokiz Kindergarten
Cost of capital		Arrangement and security Space	Arrangement of the educational space	Space design and safety
		Furniture and equipment Play	Furniture & Equipment for children	Furniture & Equipment Specific
		Educational and recreation materials	Educational materials and interactive toys	Educational materials
		Multimedia equipment and EN	Core technology	IT equipment and multimedia
	Operational costs	Salaries and benefits for educational and care staff	Salaries and benefits for educators and auxiliary staff	Salaries and benefits for educational and coordination staff
		Supplies	Consumables for Activities	Consumables for Activities
		Utilities	Utilities	Utilities
		Safety and hygiene	Cleaning and hygiene products	Cleaning and hygiene products

Recurring cost		Space rental	Space rental	Space rental
	Administrative and indirect costs	Management and Coordination of the toy library	Coordination and Kindergarten supervision Aistear	Kindergarten supervision Primokiz
		Training	Continuing professional training	Continuing professional training
		Promotion and engagement Community	Promotion of the program Aistear and informing parents	Communication and relationship with parents
		Communication materials with Parents	Digital support and administrative	Information materials and promotion
	Long-term costs and sustainability	Maintenance of the premises	Maintenance of the educational space	Space maintenance
		Renewal of furniture and playground equipment	Furniture renewal and Children's Equipment	Furniture renewal and Specific equipment
		Renewal of educational and recreation materials	Material renewal Educational Toys and Toys Interactive	Renewal of educational materials
		Maintenance of multimedia and IT equipment	Maintenance technology base	Maintenance technology base

Data source: consultant's estimates

Scenario III Details Estimation

Table 3.4.4.2 Detailed structure of the three types of complementary ECEC services already existing in Romania and the number of copies estimated to be included on these types of services in Scenario III

Years	Children	Total Children 0-3	Total Children 4-6	Community Kindergarten (30 children)			Playroom/ Playgroup (30 children)			Day center (40 children)		
				Children 0-3	Children 4-6	No.	Children 0-3	Children 4-6	No.	Children 0-3	Children 4-6	No.
2025	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	2.031	68	6.245	2.031	276	6.245	2.031	207
	Cumulative copies	24.978	14.216	-	2.031	68	6.245	2.031	276	6.245	2.031	207
2026	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	2.031	68	6.245	2.031	276	6.245	2.031	207
	Cumulative copies	49.957	28.431	-	4.062	136	12.489	4.062	552	12.489	4.062	414
2027	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	2.031	68	6.245	2.031	276	6.245	2.031	207
	Cumulative copies	74.935	42.647	-	6.092	204	18.734	6.092	828	18.734	6.092	621
2028	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	2.031	68	6.245	2.031	276	6.245	2.031	207
	Cumulative copies	99.914	56.862	-	8.123	271	24.978	8.123	1.104	24.978	8.123	828
2029	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	2.031	68	6.245	2.031	276	6.245	2.031	207
	Cumulative copies	124.892	71.078	-	10.154	339	31.223	10.154	1.380	31.223	10.154	1.035
2030	New Kids	24.978	14.216	-	2.031	68	6.245	2.031	276	6.245	2.031	207
	Cumulative copies	149.871	85.293	-	12.185	407	37.468	12.185	1.656	37.468	12.185	1.242

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Table 3.4.4.3 Detailed structure of the four complementary ECEC service types identified in Europe and mapped as potentially suitable for Romania and the number of children estimated to be included in these types of services, in Scenario III

Years	Children	Family center (7 children)			Community playroom (50 children)			Aistear Kindergarten (30 children)			Primokiz Kindergarten (30 children)		
		Children 0-3	Children 3-6	No.	Children 0-3	Children 3-6	No.	Children 0-3	Children 3-6	No.	Children 0-3	Children 3-6	No.
2025	New Kids	6.245	2.031	1.183	6.245	2.031	166	-	2.031	68	-	2.031	68
	Cumulative copies	6.245	2.031	1.183	6.245	2.031	166	-	2.031	68	-	2.031	68
2026	New Kids	6.245	2.031	1.183	6.245	2.031	166	-	2.031	68	-	2.031	68
	Cumulative copies	12.489	4.062	2.365	12.489	4.062	332	-	4.062	136	-	4.062	136
2027	New Kids	6.245	2.031	1.183	6.245	2.031	166	-	2.031	68	-	2.031	68
	Cumulative copies	18.734	6.092	3.547	18.734	6.092	497	-	6.092	204	-	6.092	204
2028	New Kids	6.245	2.031	1.183	6.245	2.031	166	-	2.031	68	-	2.031	68
	Cumulative copies	24.978	8.123	4.729	24.978	8.123	663	-	8.123	271	-	8.123	271
2029	New Kids	6.245	2.031	1.183	6.245	2.031	166	-	2.031	68	-	2.031	68
	Cumulative copies	31.223	10.154	5.911	31.223	10.154	828	-	10.154	339	-	10.154	339
2030	New Kids	6.245	2.031	1.183	6.245	2.031	166	-	2.031	68	-	2.031	68
	Cumulative copies	37.468	12.185	7.094	37.468	12.185	994	-	12.185	407	-	12.185	407

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Number of complementary services:

- Community kindergartens: 68 new units/year, 407 units in 2030
- Playgroups: 276 new units /year, 1,656 units in 2030
- Day centers: 207 new units /year, 1,242 units in 2023
- Family centers: 1,183 new units/year, 7,094 units in 2030
- Community toy libraries: 166 new units /year, 994 units in 2030
- Aissar kindergartens: 68 new units/year, 407 units in 2030
- Primokiz kindergartens: 68 new units/year, 407 units in 2030.

Table 3.4.4.4 Detailed staff structure by types of personnel and the three types of complementary ECEC services already existing in Romania, in Scenario III

Years	Structure/ No. of staff	Community Kindergartens			Playgroups/ Playgroups			Day centers			Family Centre		
		2	1	3	2	1	3	10	4	14	1	0	1
		Spec	Admin	Total	Spec	Admin	Total	Spec	Admin	Total	Spec	Admin	Total
2025	New staff	136	68	204	552	276	828	2.277	621	2.898	1.183	0	1.183
	Cumulative staff	136	68	204	552	276	828	2.277	621	2.898	1.183	0	1.183
2026	New staff	136	68	204	552	276	828	2.277	621	2.898	1.183	0	1.183
	Cumulative staff	272	136	408	1.104	552	1.656	4.554	1.242	5.796	2.366	0	2.366
2027	New staff	136	68	204	552	276	828	2.277	621	2.898	1.183	0	1.183
	Cumulative staff	408	204	612	1.656	828	2.484	6.831	1.863	8.694	3.549	0	3.549
2028	New staff	136	68	204	552	276	828	2.277	621	2.898	1.183	0	1.183
	Cumulative staff	544	272	816	2.208	1.104	3.312	9.108	2.484	11.592	4.732	0	4.732
2029	New staff	136	68	204	552	276	828	2.277	621	2.898	1.183	0	1.183
	Cumulative staff	680	340	1.020	2.760	1.380	4.140	11.385	3.105	14.490	5.915	0	5.915
2030	New staff	136	68	204	552	276	828	2.277	621	2.898	1.183	0	1.183
	Cumulative staff	816	408	1.224	3.312	1.656	4.968	13.662	3.726	17.388	7.098	0	7.098

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Table 3.4.4.5 Detailed staff structure by staff type and on the three of the four complementary ECEC service types identified in Europe and mapped as potentially suitable for Romania, in Scenario III

Years	Structure/ No. of staff	Community toy libraries			Kindergartens Aistear			Primokiz Kindergartens			Total staff		
		4	1	5	2	1	3	3	1	4	Spec	Admin	Total
		Spec	Admin	Total	Spec	Admin	Total	Spec	Admin	Total			
2025	New staff	664	166	830	136	68	204	204	68	272	5.152	1.267	6.419
	Cumulative staff	664	166	830	136	68	204	204	68	272	5.152	1.267	6.419
2026	New staff	664	166	830	136	68	204	204	68	272	5.152	1.267	6.419
	Cumulative staff	1.328	332	1.660	272	136	408	408	136	544	10.304	2.534	12.838
2027	New staff	664	166	830	136	68	204	204	68	272	5.152	1.267	6.419
	Cumulative staff	1.992	498	2.490	408	204	612	612	204	816	15.456	3.801	19.257
2028	New staff	664	166	830	136	68	204	204	68	272	5.152	1.267	6.419
	Cumulative staff	2.656	664	3.320	544	272	816	816	272	1.088	20.608	5.068	25.676
2029	New staff	664	166	830	136	68	204	204	68	272	5.152	1.267	6.419
	Cumulative staff	3.320	830	4.150	680	340	1.020	1.020	340	1.360	25.760	6.335	32.095
2030	New staff	664	166	830	136	68	204	204	68	272	5.152	1.267	6.419
	Cumulative staff	3.984	996	4.980	816	408	1.224	1.224	408	1.632	30.912	7.602	38.514

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Number of staff:

- Community kindergartens: 204 new staff (136 specialized and 68 administrative) annually, 1,224 cumulative staff (816 specialized and 408 administrative) in 2030.
- Toys/playgroups: 828 new staff (552 specialized and 276 administrative) annually, 4,968 cumulative staff (3,312 specialized and 1,656 administrative) in 2030.
- Day centers: 2,898 new staff (2,277 specialized and 621 administrative) annually, 17,388

cumulative staff (13,662 specialized and 3,726 administrative) in 2030.

- Family centers: 1,183 new (specialized) staff annually, 7,098 cumulative (specialized) staff in 2030.
- Community toy libraries: 830 new staff (664 specialized and 166 administrative) annually, 4,980 cumulative staff (3,984 specialized and 996 administrative) in 2030.
- Aistear kindergartens: 204 new staff (136 specialized and 68 administrative) annually, 1,224 cumulative staff (816 specialized and 408 administrative) in 2030.
- Primokiz kindergartens: 272 new staff (204 specialized and 68 administrative) annually, 1,632 cumulative staff (1,224 specialized and 408 administrative) in 2030.
- In total: 6,419 new staff (5,152 specialized and 1,267 administrative) annually, 38,514 cumulative staff (30,912 specialized and 7,602 administrative) in 2030.

Table 3.4.4.6 Detailed costs by cost types and complementary ECEC service types taken into account in Scenario III

Years	Level	Community Kindergarten	Playroom/ Playgroup	Day center	Family center	Community Playroom	Aistear Kindergarten	Primokiz Kindergarten	Total
2025	Capital Cost		250.208.439	121.550.108	54.499.419	67.527.263	16.933.438	18.236.531	592.150.547
	Recurring	21.426.908	85.425.850	209.843.039	178.587.858	87.135.492	31.073.247	35.100.515	648.592.909
	Total	84.622.257	335.634.289	331.393.147	233.087.277	154.662.755	48.006.685	53.337.046	1.240.743.456
2026	Capital Cost		250.208.439	121.550.108	54.499.419	67.527.263	16.933.438	18.236.531	592.150.547
	Recurring	45.874.834	182.431.225	427.253.413	366.727.892	177.697.000	63.910.239	72.051.084	1.335.945.687
	Total	109,070,183	432.639.664	548.803.521	421.227.312	245.224.263	80.843.677	90.287.614	1.928.096.234
2027	Capital Cost		250.208.439	121.550.108	54.499.419	67.527.263	16.933.438	18.236.531	592.150.547
	Recurring	70.322.759	279.436.600	644.663.788	554.867.926	268.258.507	96.747.232	109.001.652	2.023.298.465
	Total	133,518,109	529.645.040	766.213.896	609.367.346	335.785.770	113.680.669	127.238.183	2.615.449.012
2028	Capital Cost		250.208.439	121.550.108	54.499.419	67.527.263	16.933.438	18.236.531	592.150.547
	Recurring		376.441.975	862.074.163	743.007.961	358.820.015	129.584.224	145.952.220	2.710.651.243
	Total	157,966,034	626.650.415	983.624.271	797.507.380	426.347.278	146.517.661	164.188.751	3.302.801.790
2029	Capital Cost		250.208.439	121.550.108	54.499.419	67.527.263	16.933.438	18.236.531	592.150.547
	Recurring		473.447.351	1.079.484.537	931.147.995	449.381.522	162.421.216	182.902.789	3.398.004.020
	Total	182,413,960	723.655.790	1.201.034.645	985.647.414	516.908.785	179.354.653	201.139.320	3.990.154.567
2030	Capital Cost		250.208.439	121.550.108	54.499.419	67.527.263	16.933.438	18.236.531	592.150.547
	Recurring		570.452.726	1.296.894.912	1.119.288.029	539.943.030	195.258.208	219.853.357	4.085.356.798
	Total	206,861,886	820.661.165	1.418.445.020	1.173.787.448	607.470.293	212.191.645	238.089.888	4.677.507.345
Total	Capital Cost		1.501.250.637	729.300.647	326.996.515	405.163.578	101.600.626	109.419.183	3.552.903.282
	Recurring		1.967.635.727	4.520.213.853	3.893.627.661	1.881.235.566	678.994.365	764.861.618	14.201.849.122
	Total	874,452,428	3.468.886.363	5.249.514.500	4.220.624.176	2.286.399.144	780.594.991	874.280.801	17.754.752.404

Data source: calculation based on consultant estimates

Estimate ⁶annual costs per type of complementary services:

⁶For the third expansion scenario, an estimate of annual costs per type of complementary services is included. The costs are based on the real needs (the shortage of places available in nurseries and kindergartens) at national level, taken from the report prepared by Cult Research for Step by Step.

- Community kindergartens:
 - Capital cost: 63,195,349 lei/year, 379,172,095 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 495,280,333 lei in total
 - Total cost: 874,452,428 lei
- Playgroups/Playgroups:
 - Capital cost: 250,208,439 lei/year, 1,501,250,637 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 1,967,635,727 lei in total
 - Total cost: 3,468,886,363 lei
- Day centers:
 - Capital cost: 121,550,108 lei/year, 729,300,647 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 4,520,213,853 lei in total
 - Total cost: 5,249,514,500 lei
- Family center:
 - Capital cost: 54,499,419 lei/year, 326,996,515 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 3,893,627,661 lei in total
 - Total cost: 4,220,624,176 lei
- Community playrooms:
 - Capital cost: RON 67,527,263/year, RON 405,163,578 in total
 - Recurring cost: 1,881,235,566 lei in total
 - Total cost: 2,286,399,144 lei
- Aistear Kindergartens:
 - Capital cost: 16,933,438 lei/year, 101,600,626 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 678,994,365 lei in total
 - Total cost: 780,594,991 lei
- Primokiz Kindergartens:
 - Cost of capital: 18,236,531 lei/year, 109,419,183 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 764,861,618 lei in total
 - Total cost: 874,280,801 lei
- Total costs Scenario III: 17,754,752,404 lei
 - Cost of capital: 3,552,903,282 lei in total
 - Recurring cost: 14,201,849,122 lei in total

3.4.5. Comparative analysis of the three scenarios

Table 3.4.5.1 Total costs detailed by years and by types of costs in the three scenarios

Scenarios	Costs	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total
Scenario I	Cost of capital	921.382.922	921.382.922	921.382.922	921.382.922	921.382.922	921.382.922	5.528.297.532
	Recurring cost	664.687.020	1.376.283.027	2.087.879.033	2.799.475.040	3.511.071.046	4.222.667.052	14.662.062.218
	Total	1.586.069.942	2.297.665.949	3.009.261.955	3.720.857.962	4.432.453.968	5.144.049.974	20.190.359.750
Scenario II	Cost of capital	722.520.928	722.520.928	722.520.928	722.520.928	722.520.928	722.520.928	4.335.125.567
	Cost Recurring	717.758.197	1.482.003.051	2.246.247.905	3.010.492.759	3.774.737.613	4.538.982.466	15.770.221.991
	Total	1.440.279.125	2.204.523.979	2.968.768.833	3.733.013.687	4.497.258.540	5.261.503.394	20.105.347.558
Scenario III	Cost capital	592.150.547	592.150.547	592.150.547	592.150.547	592.150.547	592.150.547	3.552.903.282
	Recurring cost	648.592.909	1.335.945.687	2.023.298.465	2.710.651.243	3.398.004.020	4.085.356.798	14.201.849.122
	Total	1.240.743.456	1.928.096.234	2.615.449.012	3.302.801.790	3.990.154.567	4.677.507.345	17.754.752.404

Data source: calculations based on consultant estimates

Following the analysis of the three scenarios, it can be seen that for Scenario I the highest costs were estimated, while for Scenario II the total costs are slightly lower by 0.4%, for Scenario III the total costs are significantly lower, respectively by 12.1%.

At the same time, it should be noted that the highest capital expenditures, in absolute terms, are in Scenario I, accounting for 27.4% of total costs. This is while in Scenario II, capital expenditures represent 21.6% of total costs, and in Scenario III, capital expenditures represent 20% of total costs.

It is also found that the highest recurring costs, in absolute value, are in Scenario II, representing 78.4% of the total costs. Recurring costs account for more than 72.6% of total costs in Scenario I and 80% of total costs in Scenario II.

From the perspective of extending complementary ECEC services, broken down by types of services, into the three scenarios analysed, the situation is presented in the table below.

Table 3.4.5.2 Number of complementary ECEC services detailed by years and by types of complementary ECEC services, in the three scenarios

Scenario	Complementary services	Number of complementary ECEC services					
		2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
I	Community Kindergartens	158	316	474	632	790	948
	Toy libraries	575	1.149	1.723	2.298	2.872	3.446
	Day centers	431	862	1.293	1.723	2.154	2.585
	Total	1.164	2.327	3.490	4.653	5.816	6.979
II	Community Kindergartens	119	237	356	474	593	711
	Toy libraries	397	793	1.189	1.585	1.981	2.377
	Day centers	298	595	892	1.189	1.486	1.783
	Family Centre	1.698	3.395	5.092	6.789	8.486	10.183
	Total	2.512	5.020	7.529	10.037	12.546	15.054
III	Community Kindergartens	68	136	204	271	339	407
	Toy libraries	276	552	828	1.104	1.380	1.656
	Day centers	207	414	621	828	1.035	1.242
	Family Centre	1.183	2.365	3.547	4.729	5.911	7.094
	Community toy libraries	166	332	497	663	828	994
	Kindergartens Aistear	68	136	204	271	339	407
	Primokiz Kindergartens	68	136	204	271	339	407
	Total	2.036	4.071	6.105	8.137	10.171	12.207

Data source: calculations based on consultant estimates

It is noted that in scenario II, the number of complementary ECEC services would reach the highest value in 2030, i.e. 15,054; the fewest complementary ECEC services in 2030, i.e. 6,979 would be achieved in scenario I; in scenario III, in 2030 the number of complementary ECEC services would reach 12,207.

From the perspective of the evolution over time of the inclusion of children in complementary ECEC services, broken down by years and types of services, in the three scenarios analysed, the situation is presented in the table below.

Table 3.4.5.3 Evolution over time of children's inclusion in complementary ECEC services, detailed by years and types of complementary ECEC services, in the three scenarios

Scenario	Complementary services	Number of children in complementary ECEC services					
		2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
I	Community Kindergartens	4.739	9.477	14.216	18.954	23.693	28.431
	Toy libraries	17.228	34.455	51.683	68.911	86.139	103.366
	Day centers	17.228	34.455	51.683	68.911	86.139	103.366
	Total	39.194	78.388	117.582	156.776	195.970	235.164
II	Community Kindergartens	3.554	7.108	10.662	14.216	17.769	21.323
	Toy libraries	11.880	23.760	35.640	47.520	59.400	71.280
	Day centers	11.880	23.760	35.640	47.520	59.400	71.280
	Family Centre	11.880	23.760	35.640	47.520	59.400	71.280
	Total	39.194	78.388	117.582	156.776	195.970	235.164
III	Community Kindergartens	2.031	4.062	6.092	8.123	10.154	12.185
	Toy libraries	8.275	16.551	24.826	33.102	41.377	49.652
	Day centers	8.275	16.551	24.826	33.102	41.377	49.652
	Family Centre	8.275	16.551	24.826	33.102	41.377	49.652
	Community toy libraries	8.275	16.551	24.826	33.102	41.377	49.652
	Kindergartens Aistear	2.031	4.062	6.092	8.123	10.154	12.185
	Primokiz Kindergartens	2.031	4.062	6.092	8.123	10.154	12.185
	Total	39.194	78.388	117.582	156.776	195.970	235.164

Data source: calculations based on consultant estimates

From the analysis of the data contained in the table above, it can be seen that, in scenario I, the vast majority of children are included in complementary ECEC services such as a playroom or day center and only a small part in community kindergartens. Thus, in 2030 only about 12% of children would be in community kindergartens, 44% would be in toy libraries and 44% in day centers. By comparison, in scenario II, in 2030 only 9% of children will be in community kindergartens, 30% of whom will be equally enrolled in playgrounds, day centers and family centers.

In scenario III, in 2030 only a little over 5% of children would be in community kindergartens, 21% of whom would be equally enrolled in playgrounds, day centers, family centers and community play libraries, respectively 5% in kindergartens such as Aistear and Primokiz. From the perspective of the evolution over time of the number of employees in complementary ECEC services, broken down by years and types of services, in the three scenarios analysed, the situation is presented in the table below.

Table 3.4.5.4 Evolution over time of the number of employees in complementary ECEC services, detailed on complementary ECEC service types, in the three scenarios

Scenario	Complementary services	Number of employees in complementary ECEC services					
		2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
I	Community Kindergartens	474	948	1.422	1.896	2.370	2.844
	Toy libraries	1.725	3.447	5.169	6.894	8.616	10.338
	Day centers	6.034	12.068	18.102	24.122	30.156	36.190
	Total	8.233	16.463	24.693	32.912	41.142	49.372
	Community Kindergartens	357	711	1.068	1.422	1.779	2.133

II	Toy libraries	1.191	2.379	3.567	4.755	5.943	7.131
	Day centers	4.172	8.330	12.488	16.646	20.804	24.962
	Family Centre	1.698	3.395	5.092	6.789	8.486	10.183
	Total	7.418	14.815	22.215	29.612	37.012	44.409
III	Community Kindergartens	204	408	612	813	1.017	1.221
	Toy libraries	828	1.656	2.484	3.312	4.140	4.968
	Day centers	2.898	5.796	8.694	11.592	14.490	17.388
	Family Centre	1.183	2.365	3.547	4.729	5.911	7.094
	Community toy libraries	830	1.660	2.485	3.315	4.140	4.970
	Kindergartens Aistear	204	408	612	813	1.017	1.221
	Primokiz Kindergartens	272	544	816	1.084	1.356	1.628
	Total	6.419	12.837	19.250	25.658	32.071	38.490

Data source: calculations based on consultant estimates

From the analysis of the data contained in the table above, it can be seen that, in scenario I, the number of employees in complementary ECECE services has the sharpest increase, from year to year, reaching 49,372 employees in 2030, of which over 73% in day centers, 21% in toy libraries and only 6% in community kindergartens.

In scenario II, the number of employees in ECECE services increases from year to year, but to a lesser extent than in scenario I, reaching 44,409 employees in 2030, of which over 56% in day centers, 23% in family centers, 16% in toy libraries and less than 5% in community kindergartens.

In scenario III, the number of employees in ECECE services increases the least from year to year, compared to the first two scenarios, reaching 38,490 employees in 2030, of which over 45% in day centers, 18% in family centers, 13% each in toy libraries and community toy libraries, just over 4% in Primokiz kindergartens and just over 3% in community kindergartens and Aistear kindergartens.

The total number of employees in complementary ECECE services in 2030 is 22% lower in 2030 scenario III compared to scenario I and by 10% in scenario II compared to scenario I.

From the perspective of the evolution over time of the average annual cost per child enrolled in complementary ECEC services, broken down by years and types of services, in the three scenarios analysed, the situation is presented in the table below.

Table 3.4.5.5 Evolution over time of the average annual cost per child enrolled in complementary ECEC services, detailed by years and types of complementary ECEC services, in the three scenarios

Scenario	Complementary services	Average annual cost/child					
		2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
I	Community kindergartens	41.670	26.854	21.916	19.446	17.965	16.977
	Toy libraries	40.558	26.140	21.334	18.931	17.489	16.528
	Day centers	40.046	33.159	30.863	29.715	29.027	28.568
	Total						
II	Community kindergartens	41.670	26.854	21.916	19.446	17.965	16.977
	Toy libraries	40.558	26.140	21.334	18.931	17.489	16.528
	Day centers	40.046	33.159	30.863	29.715	29.027	28.568
	Family Centre	28.166	25.451	24.545	24.093	23.821	23.640
	Total						

III	Community kindergartens	41.670	26.854	21.916	19.446	17.965	16.977
	Toy libraries	40.558	26.140	21.334	18.931	17.489	16.528
	Day centers	40.046	33.159	30.863	29.715	29.027	28.568
	Family Centre	28.166	25.451	24.545	24.093	23.821	23.640
	Community toy libraries	18.689	14.816	13.525	12.880	12.493	12.234
	Kindergartens Aistear	23.639	19.904	18.659	18.037	17.664	17.415
	Primokiz Kindergarten	26.264	22.230	20.885	20.212	19.809	19.540
	Total						

Data source: calculations based on consultant estimates

From the analysis of the data contained in the table above, it can be seen that the highest average annual cost per child is estimated for 2025 at 41,670 lei, for children enrolled in complementary ECEC services such as community kindergartens; This cost is estimated to decrease by almost 60% over the analyzed period, reaching 16,977 lei in 2030.

The next highest average annual cost per child is estimated for 2025 at 40,558 lei, for children enrolled in complementary ECEC toy services; This cost is also estimated to decrease by almost 60% over the analyzed period, reaching 16,528 lei in 2030.

The lowest average annual cost per child is estimated for 2025 at 18,689 lei, for children enrolled in complementary ECEC services such as community toy libraries; This cost is estimated to decrease by almost 35% over the analyzed period, reaching 12,234 lei in 2030.

4. Financing complementary ECEC services, including similar services offered through day centers

4.1. Personal/child ratio

The financing of complementary ECEC services in Romania, including those offered through day care centers, requires a detailed approach to the employee/pupil staff ratio, which is essential for determining budgets and allocated resources. The employee/student (or staff/child) ratio is a key indicator in the management of the quality of ECEC services, influencing both personnel costs and the efficiency and quality of the services offered.

Community kindergartens:

- According to GD 1563/2024, the activity with children is organized in groups, the number of children in the group being on average 15 children, but no less than 10 and no more than 20.
- Children between 4 and 6 years old can also enroll in a community kindergarten.
- The staff structure of the community kindergarten, with two groups, consists of:
 - o Teaching staff: two teachers, respectively two teachers for preschool education.
 - o Non-teaching staff: a caregiver.
- Consequently, the personal/child ratio is a minimum of 1 teacher per 10 children and a maximum of 1 teacher per 20 children, the average expected being 15 children/teacher (Art.8, paragraph 2, of GD 1563/2024).

Toys/playgroups:

- According to GD 1563/2024, the activity with children is organized in groups, the number of children in the group being on average 15 children, but not less than 10 and no more than 20.
- In a playroom/playgroup, they can also enroll between 3 months and 4 years old.
- Depending on the age of the children enrolled in the playroom/playgroup with two groups, they can be found

Three different personnel structures:

- Type 1: 2 groups of preschoolers
 - Teaching staff: a childcare educator for preschool education and a school pedagogue/instructor-animator/extracurricular education instructor.
 - Non-teaching staff: a caregiver.
- Type 2: 1 group of preschoolers and one group of preschoolers
 - Personal Teaching: a educatoranda
 - Educator-Child Educator for ante-preschool education.
 - Non-teaching staff: a caregiver.
- Type 3: 2 groups of preschoolers
 - Personal Teaching: a educatoranda pedagogue school/instructor animator/instructor of extracurricular education. -
 - Non-teaching staff: a caregiver.
- The average personal/child ratio is a minimum of 1 teacher per 10 children and a maximum of 1 teacher per 20 children, the average expected being 15 children/teacher.

Day centers:

- The legislation in the field does not provide for a specific number of children who can benefit from early education services in day care centers. In particular cases, in the organization and functioning regulations of each day center, it is mentioned that the center's staff is sized according to the number and needs of the beneficiaries, without specifying a fixed numerical ratio between staff and children.
- It is important to note that, according to Law no. 100/2024, the public authorities that issue administrative authorizations prior to the operation of social services must consider the observance of the general values and principles of the national social assistance system.

4.1.1. The importance of the employee/student ratio in ECEC

The employee/student ratio is critical in the context of ECEC, as an adequate number of staff per child:

- **It provides the necessary attention and care for each child**, favoring its development in conditions of safety and proper care.
- **It influences the quality of education and care**; A low staff-to-student ratio allows for more effective education and supervision, adaptation of activities, and better individualized assistance.
- **Reduces the risk of staff burnout**; In the case of a higher ratio, employees have less pressure and a more manageable work environment.

4.1.2. Legal requirements regarding the personal/student relationship in Romania

In Romania, the Education Law and the related regulations provide general rules for the Staff/child in ECEC:

- **Age groups and specified ratio:** In general, for children aged 3 months-3 years and 4-6 years, regulations require a different personal/child ratio, given the different needs for supervision and assistance.
- **Type of staff:** It is necessary to ensure the diversity of staff (educators, assistants, administrative staff, psychologists, etc.) depending on the specifics of the center and the needs of the children, which adds diversity in budgeting and the allocation of funds.

4.1.3. Structure of funding according to the personal/student ratio

a) Funding at national level

State funds: Funding for salaries and training comes largely from local and national budgets, and the staff/student ratio is essential in calculating these budgets.

European funds and grants: Projects supported by European funds, such as PNRR or PEO, offer funding opportunities for staff training and improving the staff/child ratio, especially in disadvantaged areas.

b) Funding at local level

- **Local authority budgets:** Town halls and local councils allocate funds to support ECEC services in their community, including funding for day centers. These budgets are directly influenced by the personal/child ratio, as it determines the number of employees needed and, implicitly, the salary costs.
- **Local sponsorships and partnerships:** Partnerships with non-governmental organizations and local sponsors can bring additional funds for staff supplementation or training.

c) Distribution of personnel costs according to the staff/student ratio

- **Direct personnel costs:** The salaries of educators, assistants, auxiliary staff (including medical staff, psychologists) are the bulk of recurring costs. A small ratio (e.g. 1 employee per 5-6 children) requires several funded positions.
- **Continuing education and training:** A significant proportion of the budget is allocated to the continuous training of staff to ensure the standards of care and education set by the ECEC model applied.
- **Administrative costs:** The maintenance of the centers, the purchase of materials and other operating costs are also influenced by the staff/student ratio, since a higher number of staff also implies an increase in administrative and logistical requirements.

4.1.4. Challenges and solutions for securing funding according to the report staff/student

Challenges:

- **Shortage of qualified personnel:** In many regions of Romania, there is a shortage of personnel qualified in ECEC, which makes it difficult to maintain an optimal personal/student ratio.
- **Insufficient budgets of local authorities:** In some cases, local budgets are limited, which affects the ability of the centers to hire and maintain sufficient staff.

Solutions:

- **Accessing European funds:** Accessing European programmes for early childhood education can bring additional funds for staff supplementation or for training and professional development of employees.
- **Inter-institutional collaboration:** Partnerships between local authorities, educational institutions and non-profit organisations can bring additional resources and support for staff funding.
- **Local training and active recruitment:** Organising local training programmes can help reduce staff shortages and ensures that an optimal staff/student ratio is maintained.

4.1.5. Recommendations for improving the staff/student ratio and funding

- **Standardization of the staff/student ratio** at national and local level, depending on regional and demographic needs.
- **Creating a flexible legislative framework** that allows for adjustments in the ECEC allocated budget, depending on the the personal/child ratio needed in each community.
- **Stimulating public-private partnerships** to attract additional funds for staff, including for the supplementation of salaries and social benefits.
- **Implementation of Programs of support** for disadvantaged areas, where the staff/child ratio is difficult to maintain due to financial and logistical constraints.

Thus, an optimal funding model, based on the employee/student ratio, would facilitate a more efficient allocation of resources, a higher standard of care and an increase in the accessibility of ECEC services in Romania.

4.2. Remuneration and retention of staff

Funding complementary early education and care (ECEC) services in Romania, including those offered through day centers, is crucial for attracting, remunerating and retaining qualified staff. In a sensitive area like ECEC, the quality of services provided to children depends heavily on the skills and motivation of the staff. However, financial and legislative challenges often limit the ability of local authorities and institutions to ensure competitive wages and adequate working conditions.

4.2.1. Current state of staff remuneration in ECEC in Romania

In Romania, staff remuneration in the ECEC sector is often lower compared to other domains, and this affects:

- **Ability to attract qualified personnel:** Low salary levels reduce the interest of potential employees, leading to a shortage of qualified personnel, especially in rural areas and vulnerable communities.
- **Quality of care and education provided:** Low wages can reduce employee motivation and resources for continuous professional development, having a direct impact on the quality of interaction with children.

4.2.1.1. Remuneration of staff in complementary early education services established as structures of pre-university education units

Complementary early education services are established as structures of pre-university education units based on the provisions of GD 1563/2024.

The remuneration of the staff within the complementary early education services is regulated by GEO no. 128/2023 for some measures relating to the remuneration of education staff and other sectors of budgetary activity.

GEO no. 128/2023 establishes, by derogation from the provisions of Framework Law no. 153/2017 on the remuneration of personnel paid from public funds, with subsequent amendments and completions, the remuneration of education personnel, starting with January 1, 2024 as well as the salary increases granted, starting with the salaries related to June 2024, compared to the level of basic salaries paid in December 2023.

According to GD 1563/2024, the structure of the staff within the complementary early education services, with two groups, established according to the provisions of art. 4, consists of:

a) Two teachers, respectively:

- i. two teachers for pre-school education or

- ii. an educator and a childcare educator for ante-preschool education or
 - iii. an educator and a school pedagogue/instructor-animator/extracurricular education instructor;
- b) non-teaching staff: a caregiver.**

Based on the provisions of GEO no. 128/2023, the average monthly basic salaries for the 5 categories of teaching and non-teaching staff were calculated:

Educator category

Table 4.2.1.1.1 Calculation model of the monthly basic salary for educators

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)	6.973					
	Graduation 0 Jun 2024	Graduation 1 Jun 2024	Graduation 2 Jun 2024	Graduation 3 Jun 2024	Graduation 4 Jun 2024	Graduation 5 Jun 2024
Basic salary lei June 2024						
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Educator M, GDI, seniority >25	6.388	6.867	7.210	7.571	7.760	7.954
Educator M, GDI, seniority 20-25	6.284	6.755	7.093	7.448	7.634	7.825
Educator M, GDI, seniority 15-20	6.182	6.646	6.978	7.327	7.510	7.698
Educator M, GDI, seniority 10-15	6.132	6.592	6.922	7.268	7.450	7.636
Educator M, GDI, seniority 5-10	6.080	6.536	6.863	7.206	7.386	7.571
Educator M, GDII, seniority >25	6.284	6.755	7.093	7.448	7.634	7.825
Educator M, GDII, seniority 20-25	6.234	6.702	7.037	7.389	7.574	7.763
Educator M, GDII, seniority 15-20	6.182	6.646	6.978	7.327	7.510	7.698
Educator M, GDII, seniority 10-15	6.132	6.592	6.922	7.268	7.450	7.636
Educator M, GDII, seniority 5-10	6.080	6.536	6.863	7.206	7.386	7.571
Educator M, GDII, seniority 1-5	6.028	6.480	6.804	7.144	7.323	7.506
Educator M, GDD, seniority >25	6.234	6.702	7.037	7.389	7.574	7.763
Educator M, GDD, seniority 20-25	6.182	6.646	6.978	7.327	7.510	7.698
Educator M, GDD, seniority 15-20	6.132	6.592	6.922	7.268	7.450	7.636
Educator M, GDD, seniority 10-15	6.080	6.536	6.863	7.206	7.386	7.571
Educator M, GDD, seniority 5-10	6.028	6.480	6.804	7.144	7.323	7.506
Educator M, GDD, seniority 1-5	5.977	6.425	6.746	7.083	7.260	7.442
Educator M, Beginner, seniority <1	5.874	6.315	6.631	6.963	7.137	7.315
Educator M, without specialized training, Seniority >25	6.182	6.646	6.978	7.327	7.510	7.698
Educator M, without specialized training, Seniority 20-25	6.132	6.592	6.922	7.268	7.450	7.636
Educator M, without specialized training, Age 15-20	6.080	6.536	6.863	7.206	7.386	7.571
Educator M, without specialized training, seniority 10-15	6.028	6.480	6.804	7.144	7.323	7.506
Educator M, without specialized training, Seniority 5-10	5.977	6.425	6.746	7.083	7.260	7.442
Educator M, without specialized training, Seniority 1-5	5.925	6.369	6.687	7.021	7.197	7.377
Educator M, without specialized training, Seniority <1	5.874	6.315	6.631	6.963	7.137	7.315

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 128 /2023

Preschool teacher category

Table 4.2.1.1.2 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for the teacher for pre-school education

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)						7.680
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Preschool Teacher S, GDI, Seniority >25	8.215	8.831	9.273	9.737	9.980	10.230
Preschool Teacher S, GDI, Seniority 20-25	7.682	8.258	8.671	9.105	9.333	9.566
Preschool Teacher S, GDI, Age 15-20	7.317	7.866	8.259	8.672	8.889	9.111
Preschool Teacher S, GDI, seniority 10-15	7.045	7.573	7.952	8.350	8.559	8.773
Preschool Teacher S, GDI, Seniority 5-10	6.935	7.455	7.828	8.219	8.424	8.635
Preschool Teacher S, GDI, Seniority 1-5	6.773	7.281	7.645	8.027	8.228	8.434
Preschool Teacher S, GDII, Seniority >25	7.385	7.939	8.336	8.753	8.972	9.196
Preschool Teacher S, GDII, Seniority 20-25	7.025	7.552	7.930	8.327	8.535	8.748
Preschool Teacher S, GDII, Age 15-20	6.827	7.339	7.706	8.091	8.293	8.500
Preschool Teacher S, GDII, seniority 10-15	6.773	7.281	7.645	8.027	8.228	8.434
Preschool Teacher S, GDII, Seniority 5-10	6.718	7.222	7.583	7.962	8.161	8.365
Preschool Teacher S, GDII, Seniority 1-5	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Teacher for preschool education S, GDD, Seniority >25	7.055	7.584	7.963	8.361	8.570	8.784
Teacher for preschool education S, GDD, Seniority 20-25	6.861	7.376	7.745	8.132	8.335	8.543
Teacher for preschool education S, GDD, Age 15-20	6.718	7.222	7.583	7.962	8.161	8.365
Teacher for preschool education S, GDD, seniority 10-15	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Teacher for preschool education S, GDD, Seniority 5-10	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Teacher for preschool education S, GDD, Seniority 1-5	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Preschool Teacher S, Beginner, seniority <1	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDI, Seniority >25	7.051	7.580	7.959	8.357	8.566	8.780
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDI, Seniority 20-25	6.882	7.398	7.768	8.156	8.360	8.569
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDI, Age 15-20	6.773	7.281	7.645	8.027	8.228	8.434
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDI, seniority 10-15	6.718	7.222	7.583	7.962	8.161	8.365
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDI, Seniority 5-10	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDII, Seniority >25	6.882	7.398	7.768	8.156	8.360	8.569
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDII, Seniority 20-25	6.663	7.163	7.521	7.897	8.094	8.296
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDII, Age 15-20	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230

Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDII, seniority 10-15	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDII, Seniority 5-10	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDII, Seniority 1-5	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDD, Seniority >25	6.718	7.222	7.583	7.962	8.161	8.365
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDD, Seniority 20-25	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDD, Age 15-20	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDD, seniority 10-15	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDD, Seniority 5-10	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Teacher for preschool education SSD, GDD, Seniority 1-5	6.391	6.870	7.214	7.575	7.764	7.958
Teacher for preschool education SSD, Beginner, seniority <1	6.337	6.812	7.153	7.511	7.699	7.891
Teacher for preschool education M, without specialized training, seniority >25	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Teacher for preschool education M, without specialized training, seniority 20-25	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Teacher for preschool education M, without specialized training, seniority 15-20	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Teacher for preschool education M, without specialized training, seniority 10-15	6.391	6.870	7.214	7.575	7.764	7.958
Preschool teacher M, without Specialized training, seniority 5-10	6.337	6.812	7.153	7.511	7.699	7.891
Teacher for preschool education M, without specialized training, seniority 1-5	6.282	6.753	7.091	7.446	7.632	7.823
Teacher for preschool education M, without specialized training, seniority <1	6.228	6.695	7.030	7.382	7.567	7.756

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 128 /2023

Category of educators-childcare workers for preschool education

Table 4.2.1.1.3 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for educators for Preschool education

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)	7.607					
	Graduation 0 Jun 2024	Graduation 1 Jun 2024	Graduation 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Graduation 4 Jun 2024	Graduation 5 Jun 2024
Basic salary lei June 2024						
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Primary childcare educator S, GDI, seniority >25	8.215	8.831	9.273	9.737	9.980	10.230
Senior childcare educator S, GDI, seniority 20-25	7.682	8.258	8.671	9.105	9.333	9.566
Primary childcare educator S, GDI, seniority 15-20	7.317	7.866	8.259	8.672	8.889	9.111
Senior childcare educator S, GDI, seniority 10-15	7.045	7.573	7.952	8.350	8.559	8.773
Primary Childcare Educator S, GDI, seniority 5-10	6.935	7.455	7.828	8.219	8.424	8.635
Primary Childcare Educator S, GDI, seniority 1-5	6.773	7.281	7.645	8.027	8.228	8.434
Primary Childcare Educator S, GDII, seniority >25	7.385	7.939	8.336	8.753	8.972	9.196
Primary childcare educator S, GDII, seniority 20-25	7.025	7.552	7.930	8.327	8.535	8.748

Primary childcare educator S, GDII, seniority 15-20	6.827	7.339	7.706	8.091	8.293	8.500
Primary childcare educator S, GDII, seniority 10-15	6.773	7.281	7.645	8.027	8.228	8.434
Primary Childcare Educator S, GDII, seniority 5-10	6.718	7.222	7.583	7.962	8.161	8.365
Primary Childcare Educator S, GDII, seniority 1-5	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Primary childcare educator S, GDD, seniority >25	7.055	7.584	7.963	8.361	8.570	8.784
Primary childcare educator S, GDD, seniority 20-25	6.861	7.376	7.745	8.132	8.335	8.543
Primary childcare educator S, GDD, seniority 15-20	6.718	7.222	7.583	7.962	8.161	8.365
Primary childcare educator S, GDD, seniority 10-15	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Primary childcare educator S, GDD, seniority 5-10	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Primary Childcare Educator S, GDD, seniority 1-5	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Primary childcare educator S, Beginner, seniority <1	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDI, seniority >25	7.051	7.580	7.959	8.357	8.566	8.780
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDI, seniority 20-25	6.882	7.398	7.768	8.156	8.360	8.569
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDI, seniority 15-20	6.773	7.281	7.645	8.027	8.228	8.434
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDI, seniority 10-15	6.718	7.222	7.583	7.962	8.161	8.365
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDI, seniority 5-10	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Senior Childcare Educator SSD, GDII, seniority >25	6.882	7.398	7.768	8.156	8.360	8.569
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDII, seniority 20-25	6.663	7.163	7.521	7.897	8.094	8.296
Senior Childcare Educator SSD, GDII, seniority 15-20	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Senior Childcare Educator SSD, GDII, seniority 10-15	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDII, seniority 5-10	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Senior Childcare Educator SSD, GDII, seniority 1-5	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDD, seniority >25	6.718	7.222	7.583	7.962	8.161	8.365
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDD, seniority 20-25	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDD, seniority 15-20	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDD, seniority 10-15	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDD, seniority 5-10	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, GDD, seniority 1-5	6.391	6.870	7.214	7.575	7.764	7.958
Primary Childcare Educator SSD, Beginner, Seniority <1	6.337	6.812	7.153	7.511	7.699	7.891
Primary Childcare Educator M, GDI, seniority >25	6.773	7.281	7.645	8.027	8.228	8.434
Senior childcare educator M, GDI, seniority 20-25	6.663	7.163	7.521	7.897	8.094	8.296
Senior childcare educator M, GDI, seniority 15-20	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Senior childcare educator M, GDI, seniority 10-15	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Primary childcare educator M, GDI, seniority 5-10	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Primary Childcare Educator M, GDII, seniority >25	6.663	7.163	7.521	7.897	8.094	8.296
Senior Childcare Educator M, GDII, seniority 20-25	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Senior childcare educator M, GDII, seniority 15-20	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Senior childcare educator M, GDII, seniority 10-15	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Primary childcare educator M, GDII, seniority 5-10	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Primary Childcare Educator M, GDII, seniority 1-5	6.391	6.870	7.214	7.575	7.764	7.958
Senior childcare educator M, GDD, seniority >25	6.609	7.105	7.460	7.833	8.029	8.230
Primary childcare educator M, GDD, seniority 20-25	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Senior childcare educator M, GDD, seniority 15-20	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Senior childcare educator M, GDD, seniority 10-15	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Primary childcare educator M, GDD, seniority 5-10	6.391	6.870	7.214	7.575	7.764	7.958

Primary childcare educator M, GDD, seniority 1-5	6.337	6.812	7.153	7.511	7.699	7.891
Primary Childcare Educator M, Beginner, seniority <1	6.228	6.695	7.030	7.382	7.567	7.756
Primary childcare educator M, without training specialty, seniority >25	6.554	7.046	7.398	7.768	7.962	8.161
Primary childcare educator M, without training specialty, seniority 20-25	6.501	6.989	7.338	7.705	7.898	8.095
Primary childcare educator M, without training specialty, seniority 15-20	6.446	6.929	7.275	7.639	7.830	8.026
Primary childcare educator M, without training specialty, seniority 10-15	6.391	6.870	7.214	7.575	7.764	7.958
Primary childcare educator M, without training specialty, seniority 5-10	6.337	6.812	7.153	7.511	7.699	7.891
Primary childcare educator M, without training specialty, seniority 1-5	6.282	6.753	7.091	7.446	7.632	7.823
Primary childcare educator M, without training specialty, seniority <1	6.228	6.695	7.030	7.382	7.567	7.756

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 128 /2023

Category School Pedagogues/Instructors-Animators/Extracurricular Education Instructors

Table 4.2.1.1.4 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for educators for Preschool education

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)						6.182
Basic salary lei June 2024	Graduation 0 Jun 2024	Graduation 1 Jun 2024	Graduation 2 Jun 2024	Graduation 3 Jun 2024	Graduation 4 Jun 2024	Graduation 5 Jun 2024
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
School Pedagogue S, Grade IA	5.932	6.377	6.696	7.031	7.207	7.387
School Pedagogue S, Grade I	5.770	6.203	6.513	6.839	7.010	7.185
School pedagogue S, grade II	5.657	6.081	6.385	6.704	6.872	7.044
School Pedagogue S, Beginner	5.513	5.926	6.222	6.533	6.696	6.863
Instructor- animator S, grade IA	6.058	6.512	6.838	7.180	7.360	7.544
Instructor- animator S, grade I	5.859	6.298	6.613	6.944	7.118	7.296
Instructor- animator S, grade II	5.657	6.081	6.385	6.704	6.872	7.044
Instructor-Animator S, Beginner	5.513	5.926	6.222	6.533	6.696	6.863
Extracurricular Education Instructor S, Grade IA	6.033	6.485	6.809	7.149	7.328	7.511
Extracurricular Education Instructor S, Grade I	5.834	6.272	6.586	6.915	7.088	7.265
Extracurricular Education Instructor S, Grade II	5.576	5.994	6.294	6.609	6.774	6.943
Extracurricular Education Instructor S, Beginner	5.513	5.926	6.222	6.533	6.696	6.863
SSD School Pedagogue, Grade I	5.855	6.294	6.609	6.939	7.112	7.290
SSD School Pedagogue, Grade II	5.597	6.017	6.318	6.634	6.800	6.970
SSD School Pedagogue, Grade III	5.460	5.870	6.164	6.472	6.634	6.800
SSD School Pedagogue, Beginner	5.408	5.814	6.105	6.410	6.570	6.734
Instructor-Animator, Extracurricular Education Instructor SSD, Grade I	5.691	6.118	6.424	6.745	6.914	7.087
Instructor-Animator, Extracurricular Education Instructor SSD, Grade II	5.513	5.926	6.222	6.533	6.696	6.863
Instructor-Animator, Extracurricular Education Instructor SSD, Grade III	5.460	5.870	6.164	6.472	6.634	6.800
Instructor-Animator, SSD Extracurricular Education Instructor, Beginner	5.408	5.814	6.105	6.410	6.570	6.734
School Pedagogue M, Grade IA	5.599	6.019	6.320	6.636	6.802	6.972
School pedagogue M, grade I	5.408	5.814	6.105	6.410	6.570	6.734
School pedagogue M, grade II	5.303	5.701	5.986	6.285	6.442	6.603

School Pedagogue M, Beginner	5.156	5.543	5.820	6.111	6.264	6.421
Instructor-Animator, SSD Extracurricular Education Instructor, Grade IA	5.515	5.929	6.225	6.536	6.699	6.866
Instructor-Animator, Extracurricular Education Instructor SSD, Grade I	5.408	5.814	6.105	6.410	6.570	6.734
Instructor-Animator, Extracurricular Education Instructor SSD, Grade II	5.303	5.701	5.986	6.285	6.442	6.603
Instructor-Animator, SSD Extracurricular Education Instructor, Beginner	5.156	5.543	5.820	6.111	6.264	6.421

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 128 /2023

Caregiver category

Table 4.2.1.1.5 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for caregivers

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)						6.175
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Early education caregiver M, step IA	5.694	6.121	6.427	6.748	6.917	7.090
Early education caregiver M, step I	5.486	5.897	6.192	6.502	6.665	6.832
Early education caregiver M, step II	5.303	5.701	5.986	6.285	6.442	6.603
Early Education Caregiver M, Beginner	5.156	5.543	5.820	6.111	6.264	6.421

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 128 /2023

4.2.1.2. Remuneration of staff in complementary ECEC services in day centers

The staff who provide complementary early education services, within the day centers, are remunerated based on the provisions of the Framework Law no. 153 of 28 June 2017 on the remuneration of personnel paid from public funds, as well as GEO no. 19 of March 7, 2024 on some measures related to the remuneration of personnel in health, social assistance and other sectors of budgetary activity.

Based on the provisions of GEO no. 19/2024, the average monthly basic salaries for the 9 categories of specialized and administrative staff working in day centers were calculated:

Day center manager category

Table 4.2.1.2.1 Calculation model of the monthly basic salary for day center manager

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)						8.608
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Director, S, Gr. I	6.949	7.470	7.844	8.236	8.442	8.653
Director, S, Gr. II	8.738	9.393	9.863	10.356	10.615	10.880
Head of Centre, S, Gr. I	6.378	6.856	7.199	7.559	7.748	7.942
Head of Centre, S, Gr. II	8.100	8.708	9.143	9.600	9.840	10.086

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Category of Chief Accountant/Specialized Personal Coordinator

Table 4.2.1.2.2 Calculation model of the monthly basic salary for chief accountant/specialized personal coordinator

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)						7.701
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Chief Accountant, S, Gr. I	6.500	6.988	7.337	7.704	7.897	8.094
Chief Accountant, S, Gr. II	8.100	8.708	9.143	9.600	9.840	10.086
Specialized personal coordinator; S, SSD, PL; Gr. I	5.886	6.327	6.643	6.975	7.149	7.328
Specialized personal coordinator; S, SSD, PL; Gr. II	6.500	6.988	7.337	7.704	7.897	8.094

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Social worker category

Table 4.2.1.2.3 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for social workers

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)						5.802
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Senior Social Worker, S	5.473	5.883	6.177	6.486	6.648	6.814
Social Worker Specialist, S	5.111	5.494	5.769	6.057	6.208	6.363
Practicing Social Worker, S	5.008	5.384	5.653	5.936	6.084	6.236
Junior Social Worker, S	4.740	5.096	5.351	5.619	5.759	5.903

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Psychologist category

Table 4.2.1.2.4 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for the psychologist

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)						5.802
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Senior Psychologist	5.473	5.883	6.177	6.486	6.648	6.814
Specialist psychologist	5.111	5.494	5.769	6.057	6.208	6.363
Practicing Psychologist	5.008	5.384	5.653	5.936	6.084	6.236
Trainee Psychologist	4.740	5.096	5.351	5.619	5.759	5.903

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Speech therapist category

Table 4.2.1.2.5 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for speech therapist

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)							5.370
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024	
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%	
Speech therapist, CFM teacher, interpreter in sign language and specific language for people with deafblindness, physiotherapist, psychopedagogue, therapist Main occupation	4.954	5.326	5.592	5.872	6.019	6.169	
Speech therapist, CFM teacher, interpreter in sign language and specific language for people with deafblindness, physiotherapist, psychopedagogue, therapist Occupational	4.824	5.186	5.445	5.717	5.860	6.007	
Speech therapist, CFM teacher, interpreter in sign language and specific language for people with deafblindness, physiotherapist, psychopedagogue, therapist Beginner Occupation	4.740	5.096	5.351	5.619	5.759	5.903	

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Category physiokinetotherapist

Table 4.2.1.2.6 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for physiokinetotherapist

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)							5.758
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024	
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%	
Senior Physiokinetotherapist, S	5.494	5.906	6.201	6.511	6.674	6.841	
physiokinetotherapist specialist, S	5.040	5.418	5.689	5.973	6.122	6.275	
Physiokinetotherapist, S	4.904	5.272	5.536	5.813	5.958	6.107	
Junior Physiokinetotherapist, S	4.740	5.096	5.351	5.619	5.759	5.903	

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Educator Category

Table 4.2.1.2.7 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for educators

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)							5.524
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024	
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%	
Lead Educator, S	4.954	5.326	5.592	5.872	6.019	6.169	
Educator, S	4.824	5.186	5.445	5.717	5.860	6.007	
Junior Educator, S	4.740	5.096	5.351	5.619	5.759	5.903	

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Nurse Category

Table 4.2.1.2.8 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for nurses

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)						5.524
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Medical assistant, audiology technician and hearing aids; Main, S	4.954	5.326	5.592	5.872	6.019	6.169
Medical assistant, audiology technician and hearing aid, S	4.824	5.186	5.445	5.717	5.860	6.007
Medical assistant, audiology technician and hearing aids; beginner, S	4.740	5.096	5.351	5.619	5.759	5.903

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Category: Child Educator

Table 4.2.1.2.9 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for childcare educator

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)						5.238
Basic salary lei June 2024	Graduation 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Graduation 2 Jun 2024	Graduation 3 Jun 2024	Graduation 4 Jun 2024	Graduation 5 Jun 2024
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Educator, CFM teacher, childcare educator, nurse; main, SSD, *1)	4.740	5.096	5.351	5.619	5.759	5.903
Educator, CFM teacher, childcare educator, nurse. SSD, *1)	4.680	5.031	5.283	5.547	5.686	5.828
Educator, CFM teacher, childcare educator, Nurse; beginner, SSD, *1)	4.620	4.967	5.215	5.476	5.613	5.753
Educator, childcare educator, nurse; Main, PL, 1*)	4.680	5.031	5.283	5.547	5.686	5.828
Educator, childcare educator, nurse, PL, 1*)	4.620	4.967	5.215	5.476	5.613	5.753
Educator, childcare educator, nurse; Beginner, PL, 1*)	4.500	4.838	5.080	5.334	5.467	5.604
Educator, childcare educator, hygiene assistant, BFT assistant, orthopedic and hearing prosthetics optician, nurse; main, M, 1*)	4.620	4.967	5.215	5.476	5.613	5.753
Educator, childcare educator, hygiene assistant, BFT assistant, orthopedic and hearing prosthetics optician, nurse, M, 1*)	4.500	4.838	5.080	5.334	5.467	5.604
Educator, childcare educator, hygiene assistant, BFT assistant, orthopedic and hearing prosthetics optician, nurse; beginner, M, 1*)	4.332	4.657	4.890	5.135	5.263	5.395

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Education Instructor Category

Table 4.2.1.2.10 Calculation model of the monthly basic salary for the education instructor

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)						5.119
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%
Education Instructor, CFM Instructor; main M	4.620	4.967	5.215	5.476	5.613	5.753
Education Instructor, CFM Instructor, M	4.500	4.838	5.080	5.334	5.467	5.604
Education Instructor, CFM Instructor; beginner M	4.332	4.657	4.890	5.135	5.263	5.395

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Occupational Therapy Instructor Category

Table 4.2.1.2.11 Calculation model of the monthly basic salary for occupational therapy instructor

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)							5.185
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024	
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%	
Occupational therapy instructor, art therapist, socio-educational animator, recovery pedagogue; Main, PL	4.680	5.031	5.283	5.547	5.686	5.828	
Occupational therapy instructor, art therapist, socio-educational animator, recovery pedagogue, PL	4.620	4.967	5.215	5.476	5.613	5.753	
Occupational therapy instructor, art therapist, socio-educational animator, recovery pedagogue; beginner, PL	4.500	4.838	5.080	5.334	5.467	5.604	
Occupational therapy instructor, art therapist, socio-educational animator, recovery pedagogue; Main, M	4.620	4.967	5.215	5.476	5.613	5.753	
Occupational therapy instructor, art therapist, socio-educational animator, recovery pedagogue, M	4.500	4.838	5.080	5.334	5.467	5.604	
Occupational therapy instructor, art therapist, socio-educational animator, recovery pedagogue; Beginner, M	4.332	4.657	4.890	5.135	5.263	5.395	

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

Caregiver, laundry category

Table 4.2.1.2.12 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for caregivers, laundresses

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)							4.052
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024	
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%	
caretaker, laundry	3.550	3.816	4.007	4.207	4.312	4.420	

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19/2024, Law 153/2017

Chef Category

Table 4.2.1.2.13 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for the cook

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)							4.052
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024	
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%	
Cook	3.550	3.816	4.007	4.207	4.312	4.420	

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19/2024, Law 153/2017

4.2.1.3. Remuneration of staff responsible for coordination and supervision

The directors of the educational units are the persons responsible for the coordination of the newly established complementary early education services within the educational units with legal personality that they manage, being remunerated based on the provisions of the Framework Law no. 153 of 28 June 2017 on the remuneration of personnel paid from public funds, as well as GEO no. 19 of March 7, 2024 on some measures related to the remuneration of personnel in health, social assistance and other sectors of budgetary activity.

The school inspectors within the ISJ/ISMB are responsible for the supervision of the newly established complementary early education services within the educational units with legal personality that they also supervise, they are remunerated based on the provisions of the Framework Law no. 153 of 28 June 2017 on the remuneration of personnel paid from public funds, as well as GEO no. 19 of March 7, 2024 on some measures related to the remuneration of personnel in health, social assistance and other sectors of budgetary activity.

Based on the provisions of GEO no. 19/2024, the average monthly basic salaries for the two categories of personnel responsible for coordinating and supervising complementary early education services were calculated:

- **Category of school director**

Table 4.2.1.3.1 Calculation model of the monthly basic salary for the director of the educational unit

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)							13.189
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024	
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%	
Director of the school, S, Grade I	11.484	12.345	12.962	13.610	13.950	14.299	
Director of the educational unit, S, Grade II	11.812	12.698	13.333	14.000	14.350	14.709	
Deputy Director of Educational Unit, S, Grade I	11.437	12.295	12.910	13.556	13.895	14.242	
Deputy Director of the Educational Unit, S, Grade II	11.484	12.345	12.962	13.610	13.950	14.299	

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

- **School inspector category**

Table 4.2.1.3.2 Calculation model of the basic monthly salary for school inspector

Monthly basic salary (Lei/month)							13.777
Basic salary lei June 2024	Grade 0 Jun 2024	Grade 1 Jun 2024	Grade 2 Jun 2024	Grade 3 Jun 2024	Grade 4 Jun 2024	Grade 5 Jun 2024	
Bonus/Gradation		7,5%	5,0%	5,0%	2,5%	2,5%	
Specialized School Inspector, School Inspector, S, Grade I	11.759	12.641	13.273	13.937	14.285	14.642	
Specialized School Inspector, School Inspector, S, Grade II	12.379	13.307	13.972	14.671	15.038	15.414	

Data source: calculation based on the legal regulations in force - GEO no. 19 /2024

4.2.2. Challenges in funding for staff retention in ECEC

a) Budgetary constraints at local and national level

- **Insufficient budgets:** Budget allocations for day centers and other ECEC services are often insufficient to cover competitive salaries and provide additional benefits.
- **Unequal distribution of funds:** National and local funds are unevenly distributed, which makes certain regions, especially rural or disadvantaged ones, have major difficulties in maintaining qualified personnel.

b) Competition with the private sector

- **Higher salary offer:** Compared to private care centers or other industries, salaries in public ECEC are lower, leading to the migration of skilled personnel to the private sector.
- **Working conditions and benefits:** In addition to salaries, the private sector often offers benefits (meal vouchers, flexible hours, more modern working conditions), making it more difficult to retain staff.

c) Lack of an incentive system

- **Minimal additional benefits:** The public system offers few financial incentives, such as performance bonuses, bonuses, or additional health insurance, which limits staff's motivation to stay long-term.
- d) **Lack of opportunities for advancement:** In ECEC, career advancement is limited, and this affects the motivation of the staff to stay in the field.

4.2.3. Funding prospects for improved remuneration and retention staff:

a) Funds from the state budget and European funds

- **Supplementing the state budget:** Increasing national budget allocations to ECEC to cover competitive salaries is a priority. One approach could be to implement a differentiated system, which takes into account the regions where it is most difficult to attract personnel.
- **Use of European funds for training and benefits:** Operational programmes (Education and Employment Programme - PEO, Social Inclusion and Dignity Programme - PIDS) funded by the European Union can support the development of staff skills and increase the attractiveness of jobs in day centers and other ECEC institutions.

b) Funding based on public-private partnerships

- **Partnerships with NGOs and local companies:** Collaborations with NGOs and companies in the community can help to supplement salaries, provide benefits and implement special projects for ECEC employees.
- **Private grants:** Accessing grants to improve working conditions, including for the modernization of spaces and the granting of bonuses, can contribute to staff retention.

c) Creating a system of incentives and additional benefits

- **Benefits for ECEC employees:** By creating a system of benefits, such as subscriptions to health services or subsidies for transport, public ECEC institutions can become more competitive.
- **Flexibility and development opportunities:** Offering continuous training programs, supported by the state or European funds, can benefit employees and increase their motivation.

4.2.4. Recommendations for increasing funding and retaining staff in ECEC

- **Reforming the remuneration system** for ECEC staff at national level, with salaries and aligned with European Union standards for this sector.
- **Allocation of incentives and bonuses** for staff in day centers in the in order to ensure the fair distribution of human resources in the country.
- **Strategic public-private partnerships** to support the provision of additional benefits and upgraded infrastructure to attract and retain staff.
- **Develop a national continuing education programme** for ECEC staff, to be financially supported by state and European funds, to improve both skills and job satisfaction.

Ensuring competitive salaries and attractive working conditions for ECEC staff is essential for the success and sustainability of these services in Romania. Adapting funding mechanisms and using European funds to support professional development and provide incentives could significantly contribute to maintaining qualified staff, thus ensuring continuity and quality of ECEC services.

4.3. Supervision and professional development of staff

In order to ensure the quality and sustainability of early childhood education and care (ECEC) services in Romania, supervision and professional development of staff in day centers and other ECEC units are fundamental. In this respect, the financing of these processes plays a key role, having an impact both on

improving the skills of staff and on the quality of care and education provided to children.

4.3.1. The importance of supervision and professional development in the ECEC sector

To meet the complex needs of children in this age group, ECEC services require well-trained staff who are continuously supported by:

- **Proper supervision of staff:** Ensures compliance with quality standards, monitoring of activities, regular feedback and professional evaluations necessary to maintain an optimal level of performance.
- **Continuous professional development:** Helps to update the educational and care skills of staff, through training programs adapted to new research and requirements in the field.

4.3.2. Funding framework for supervision and professional development in Romania

In accordance with the provisions of HG1563/2024, the control of compliance with the regulations of the national standards for assessing the progress of ante-preschool and pre-school children in pre-school and/or ante-preschool education units that set up complementary early education services is carried out by school inspection carried out by the Ministry of Education and by the county school inspectorates/School Inspectorate of the Municipality of Bucharest in accordance with the legal provisions in force.

The county/Bucharest school inspectorates perform the following specific duties regarding the activity of complementary early education services:

- Carries out the methodological guidance and monitoring of the activity of the teaching staff within the Complementary Early Education Service;
- Provides, through the County Center for Educational Resources and Assistance/Bucharest Municipality Center for Educational Resources and Assistance, specialized services for children with special educational needs;
- Monitors, through school inspection, the application of the specific national curriculum and the
- Fundamental milestones in the learning and development of the child from birth to 7 years.

Professional development is achieved from a combination of sources, each with its own unique and unique characteristics.

Limitations:

a) National and local budgets

- **State funds:** Part of the funding for the professional development of ECEC staff comes from the budget of the Ministry of Education and local budgets, through specific allocations for training and monitoring programmes.
- **Local and county council budgets:** Local authorities can allocate additional funds for the professional development of ECEC staff, but resources are often limited and unevenly distributed across the country.

b) European Programs and Funds

- **The National Recovery and Resilience Programme** and other structural funds provide funding for ECEC staff professional development projects, supporting courses, workshops, exchanges of best practices and skills assessment.
- **International partnerships:** Access to European funds allows ECEC staff to participate in mobility and training programmes in other EU countries, helping to improve knowledge through exposure to innovative models.

c) Non-governmental organisations and private partnerships

- **Education NGOs and international organisations** often contribute through projects dedicated to improving the training and supervision of ECEC staff, covering training costs and facilitating mentoring programmes.
- **Private sponsorships and grants:** Programmes sponsored by private organisations and grants directed towards training in ECEC can complement public funding, especially in disadvantaged communities.

4.3.3. Challenges of financing professional development in ECEC

a) Insufficient financial resources

- **Limited budgets:** Financial allocations for training and supervision are often insufficient, especially at local level, where funds are concentrated on basic operational costs (e.g. salaries, maintenance of premises).
- **Regional inequalities:** Rural and disadvantaged areas have less funding, making it difficult to ensure access to training for staff in these areas.

b) Lack of a unitary framework for professional development

- **Limited standardisation:** Although regulations exist, national standards for supervision and continuous training are often insufficiently implemented and are not applied uniformly.

c) Shortage of specialised staff for training

- **Shortage of qualified trainers:** Lack of trainers and mentors specialised in ECEC limits the quality and variety of training programs available.

4.3.4. Proposals to improve the financing of professional development

a) Allocation of additional funds through national and local programmes

- **Creation of a dedicated professional development fund:** Allocating a separate budget for the development of the skills of ECEC staff, from national and local funds, would allow for a more efficient coverage of costs.
- **Specific subsidies for rural and disadvantaged areas:** Additional funds for vulnerable regions can facilitate access to training for staff in these areas.

b) Accessing European funds for training and mobility

- **Extended partnerships for PNRR, PEO, PIDS and Erasmus+ funds:** The expansion of EU-funded projects can support specialisation courses, participation in international conferences and exchanges of experience, bringing added value to ECEC staff.
- **Creation of regional pilot programmes:** Regional pilot projects for lifelong learning, supported by EU funds, would allow for the testing and adaptation of innovative methods of professional development.

c) Development of a national surveillance and evaluation system

- **Implementing standardised periodic evaluations:** Establishing a unified framework for the periodic evaluation of ECEC staff can help identify training needs and monitor performance.
- **Forming teams of specialist mentors and inspectors:** Hiring experienced mentors and inspectors could support continuous professional development and help increase the quality of education and care.

4.3.5. Recommendations for maintaining a sustainable financing system for Professional development

- **Standardization and extension of continuing education programs:** Implementation of national continuing education programs, with funding from public and European funds, for the constant updating of staff skills.
- **Create a flexible funding structure** that allows access to funds for the professional development of ECEC staff according to the specific needs of each region.
- **Establishing a national mentoring programme:** Developing a mentoring framework with mentors trained in the field can improve the quality of supervision and professional support for new employees and those in vulnerable regions.
- **Encouraging international cooperation:** Staff access to international training networks and exchanges of experience can help improve standards of care and education in Romania.

Investing in the supervision and professional development of ECEC staff in Romania is essential to ensure quality services for young children. A well-structured funding strategy, which includes resources from the state budget, European funds and private partnerships, is essential for maintaining and developing staff skills.

4.4. Initial staff training

Funding the initial training of staff in complementary early childhood education and care (ECEC) services in Romania, including for staff in day centers, is essential to guarantee their adequate training and ensure the quality of services provided to young children. As these services play a key role in the development of children from an early age, funding initial training is an investment in the long-term quality of these programmes.

4.4.1. Background and importance of initial training of ECEC staff

Initial training is the basis for the professional development of ECEC staff and includes the essential theoretical and practical training to work with children from birth to 6 years of age. In Romania, the funding challenges for this training affect:

- **Quality of education and care:** Undertrained staff have a limited capacity to respond to the individual needs and harmonious development of children.
- **Access to training for staff in rural areas:** Especially in less developed regions, limited financial resources make it difficult to adequately train staff.

4.4.2. Current systems and sources of funding for initial staff training of ECEC staff in Romania

a) State budget and local allocations

- **Allocations from the state budget:** The Ministry of Education, through various national programmes and the budgets of training institutions (e.g. universities and post-secondary schools), finances initial training for educators, nurses and other professionals in the ECEC sector. But allocations are often limited and focused more on covering basic needs.
- **Local budgets:** Some local authorities supplement training funds, but they are generally restricted, meaning that many regions do not have enough resources for full initial training.

b) European funds

- **EU-funded operational programmes:** The National Recovery and Resilience Programme (NRRP) and other European sources (PEO, PIDS) support training and professional development projects, which also include initial training of ECEC staff. For example, these programmes funded training courses for junior teachers and the specialisation of staff in ECEC units.

- **International partnerships:** Funding through European programmes (e.g. Erasmus+) facilitates exchanges of experience and specialisation courses for future educators and caregivers.

c) NGO programmes and private initiatives

- **NGO funding:** Non-governmental organizations and international institutions (such as UNICEF and related organizations) contribute to the initial training of staff, especially in disadvantaged areas, through free training programs and training grants.
- **Private partnerships:** Private sponsorships and grants help to supplement funding for initial training, but these resources are limited in volume and impact at national level.

4.4.3. Challenges in financing initial training of ECEC staff

a) Lack of a unitary financing framework

- **Inconsistency of funding at national level:** While training initiatives exist, they are not standardised and do not cover the full training needs for all ECEC staff. This leads to discrepancies in employee training between Romania's regions.
- **Unequal distribution of funds:** Urban areas benefit from more resources over time rural and disadvantaged regions have less access to quality initial training.

b) Lack of accessibility of training programs in remote areas

- **Lack of training centers:** In many rural areas, access to initial training is limited due to a lack of training centers or high costs for transport and accommodation.
- **Indirect costs of training:** Staff in rural areas often face indirect costs, such as transport and accommodation, which make it difficult to participate in existing training programmes.

c) Insufficient financial resources for specific specializations

- **Lack of specialisation:** Most initial training programmes only cover general competences, without including specialisations relevant to specific groups of children, such as those with special needs or those from vulnerable socio-economic backgrounds.
- **Limited access to modern teaching materials:** Funding is insufficient to provide adapted educational materials and learning resources, which affects the quality of initial training.

4.4.4. Solutions and proposals to improve the financing of initial training ECEC staff

a) Allocating a dedicated budget for initial training in ECEC

- **National budget for initial training:** The creation of a dedicated training fund for ECEC staff, ensuring access to initial training for all employees, could help standardise the quality of training.
- **Grants for initial training in disadvantaged areas:** Allocating special grants for future employees in rural regions and vulnerable communities could facilitate access to initial training.

b) Expanding access to European and international funds for training

- **International partnerships and programmes:** Collaboration with European institutions and access to PNRR, PEO, PIDS and Erasmus+ funds can ensure funding for initial training, including through exchanges of experience and partnerships with training institutions in other EU Member States.
- **Mobility programmes:** Through European funding, mobilities can be supported for ECEC employees in training, providing them with opportunities to learn from international practices and bring new knowledge to Romania.

c) Collaboration with the private sector and non-governmental organizations

- **Sponsorships and grants for initial training:** The involvement of the private sector and NGOs can help to supplement funding, especially for areas where local resources are insufficient.
- **Mentoring and assisted training programmes:** Collaborations with NGOs may include mentoring and practical training in disadvantaged communities, partially covering the costs associated with these processes.

d) Creation of regional training centers in educational institutions

- **Regional centers for initial training ECEC:** The creation of training centers in partnership with universities and pedagogical colleges could ensure access to quality initial training, including in more remote regions.
- **Hybrid training programs:** To reduce transportation and accommodation costs, it could be developed online training courses, complemented by practical sessions at regional centers.

4.4.5. Recommendations for a sustainable system of financing initial training in ECEC

- **Establish a unitary national initial training framework,** including clear standards and a stable budget for the initial training of ECEC staff.
- **Integration of European funds and collaboration with NGOs** to complement resources and ensure equitable access to quality initial training.
- **Dedicated grants for access to training in rural and disadvantaged areas:** Subsidising indirect costs (transport, accommodation) for staff in these regions would facilitate equitable access to training.
- **Promoting public-private partnerships to ensure continued funding:** Engaging the private sector and NGOs through grants and sponsorships can contribute to the financial sustainability of initial training programmes.

Financing the initial training of ECEC staff in Romania is a strategic investment in the future of children and in the quality of the education system. Ensuring the necessary resources and equitable access to quality initial training is an essential step in raising standards and adapting to the current needs of children in Romania.

4.5. Cost-sharing agreements between households, service providers, national and subnational authorities

The financing of complementary early education and care (ECEC) services in Romania, including services offered through day care centers, involves cost-sharing agreements between families, service providers and public authorities (national and local). This cost-sharing model is essential to ensure the accessibility and quality of ECEC services, being used to support diversity and equity in access to these services.

4.5.1. Cost-sharing mechanisms under ECEC in Romania

a) Contribution of families

- **Direct contributions:** Families generally contribute to the operating costs of day centers and other ECEC services, especially in large cities where these costs are often higher. The families' contribution can cover expenses such as food, extracurricular activities, educational materials, as well as some operational costs of the centers.
- **Exceptions and exemptions from payment:** In the case of low-income families, local authorities may cover all or part of the costs to facilitate access to services. In practice, exemptions are limited, but they are crucial for fairness and to support access to ECEC services for children from vulnerable groups.
- **Vouchers for disadvantaged families:** In some cases, the authorities offer vouchers or subsidies dedicated to vulnerable families, thus supporting access costs and reducing the financial barrier for

families with limited resources.

b) Service providers

- **Private providers' own investments:** Private centers or those managed by non-governmental organizations cover a significant part of the operational costs, and the financing comes from taxes, sponsorships and European funds. These investments include equipping the centers, training staff and developing innovative educational programmes.
- **Public-private collaboration:** In some cases, private providers work with local authorities and costs are shared to ensure continuity and quality of services, which reduces pressure on public budgets and facilitates the expansion of the ECEC service network.

c) Local and county (subnational) authorities

- **Funding from local budgets:** Local authorities are responsible for part of the funding of day centers and other ECEC services, allocating funds for staff salaries, operational expenditure and, in some cases, infrastructure upgrades. However, the level of funding depends on the budget of each administrative unit, which leads to large variations between regions.
- **Support for vulnerable families:** Town halls and local councils provide financial support to disadvantaged families, which allows children from vulnerable groups to be integrated into early education services.
- **Partnerships with NGOs:** Some authorities collaborate with non-governmental organizations to implement additional programs and to access international or national funding for children from disadvantaged categories.

d) National authorities

- **State budget:** The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour allocate funds to partially support the costs of ECEC services, including staff salaries, vocational training and partial coverage of operational expenses in public day centers. These allocations are essential for maintaining a national quality standard.
- **Funding programmes for vulnerable groups:** The State, through various social and educational programmes, provides targeted financial support for children from vulnerable or disadvantaged backgrounds to ensure equitable access to early education and care.
- **EU-funded programmes:** National authorities coordinate access to European funds for the development of ECEC services, such as the Human Capital Operational Programme, which supports both infrastructure development and training initiatives for staff in the ECEC sector.

4.5.2. Benefits and challenges of cost-sharing between actors

a) Benefits of Cost Sharing

- **Reducing pressure on the public budget:** Involving more actors in funding reduces the burden on national and local budgets, allowing for efficient use of resources and supporting more children.
- **Flexibility and adaptability:** Cost-sharing between households, providers and authorities allows services to be adapted to local requirements faster and innovative financing solutions developed.
- **Increased access for vulnerable groups:** Sharing agreements allow low-income families to be more effectively supported by improving their access to education and care services.

b) Challenges and limitations

- **Inequalities between regions:** Funding capacity varies significantly between localities, leading to inequalities in access to and quality of ECEC services.
- **Financial barriers for low- and middle-income families:** Families who do not receive support may find it difficult to bear the costs, especially in urban areas, where they are higher.
- **Difficulty in attracting qualified staff:** A lack of consistent funding affects providers' ability to offer competitive salaries and retain qualified staff, which can decrease the quality of services.

4.5.3. Recommendations for improving cost sharing in ECEC services

- **Establish a national cost-sharing framework:** Create a legislative framework that standardises the contributions of each actor so that there is a balance between the contributions of families, providers and authorities.
- **Increasing funding from the state budget to support local authorities with limited resources:** This would make it possible to standardise access to services and reduce regional disparities.
- **Expanding public-private partnerships and involving the non-profit sector:** Collaborations between authorities, private providers and non-governmental organizations can help to supplement resources and expand the network of services.
- **Introduction of gradual subsidy schemes for families:** Depending on the family's income, the state could cover a variable percentage of the costs of services, to ensure accessibility and reduce financial pressure on families.
- **Development of a training support fund:** Cost-sharing can also be effective in staff training by creating a national fund dedicated to the professional development of ECEC staff, financed by contributions from all actors involved.

4.6. Structural Funds

The financing of complementary early childhood education and care (ECEC) services in Romania through Structural Funds, such as PNRR, PEO and Regional Programmes, plays a central role in the development and expansion of these services, contributing to increasing accessibility and improving the quality of early childhood education. These funds support both infrastructure and staff training, fair access and innovation in ECEC services.

4.6.1. Main funding programs for ECEC services in Romania

a) National Recovery and Resilience Plan (PNRR)

- **Purpose and allocation:** The PNRR supports post-pandemic economic reconstruction through investments in education and structural reforms, allocating significant amounts for the development of early education and care infrastructure.
- **Education component - C.15:** Through the education component, the PNRR allocates funds for construction and modernisation of day centers and community early childhood education services the type of community kindergartens and playrooms/playgroups, especially in rural and disadvantaged areas, where lack of infrastructure limits children's access to ECEC services.
 - o Reform 2 Developing a unitary, inclusive and inclusive early childhood education service system
 - o quality.
 - Investment 1. Construction, equipping and operationalization of 110 nurseries
 - Investment 2. Establishment, equipping and operationalization of 412 services
 - for disadvantaged groups
 - Investment 3. Development of the framework programme for the continuous training of professionals working in early education services.
- **Innovation and digitalization:** PNRR supports projects to digitize the ECEC system, including equipping centers with modern equipment, teaching materials and access to digital resources for children's development.

b) Education and Employment Program (PEO)

- **Objectives:** The PEO supports investment in human resources, aiming to reduce poverty and increase social inclusion through equitable access to education and employment. The PEO provides

support for the accessibility and quality of ECEC services, especially for vulnerable groups.

- **Funding for Human Resource Development:** The PEO provides funding for initial and ongoing training of staff in ECEC centers, thereby improving the quality of education and early intervention for young children.
- **Supporting access for vulnerable groups:** The PEO includes support measures for children from disadvantaged families, covering costs related to access to day centers, pre-school education and extracurricular activities.

c) Regional Programs

- **Infrastructure investments:** Regional Programs together with the PNRR are the main sources of financing for ECEC infrastructure in Romania, allowing the construction, rehabilitation and equipping of kindergartens and day centers, especially in regions with significant infrastructure deficits.
- **Creation of ECEC centers in disadvantaged areas:** Regional Programmes prioritise investment in rural and disadvantaged areas, helping to balance access to educational and early care services.
- **Examples of projects:** Through the ROP, projects have been financed for the modernization of the ECEC infrastructure, the endowment of day centers and the expansion of educational spaces in accordance with quality and safety requirements.

4.6.2. Types of funding and areas of support for ECEC services through structural funds

a) Financing for infrastructure and modernisation

- **Construction and rehabilitation of day centers and kindergartens:** The Regional Programs and PNRR support the construction of new ECEC centers and the rehabilitation of existing ones, ensuring quality learning and care conditions.
- **Equipping the centers with modern equipment:** These funds also provide educational equipment, teaching materials and modern technologies for the digitization of the educational process.

b) Funding for human resources and training

- **Initial and in-service training:** Through PEO and other complementary funds, initial and in-service training of ECEC staff is supported so that teachers are well prepared for the challenges of early childhood education.
- **Professional development and intervention for vulnerable children:** PEO supports specialisation courses in inclusive education and the development of intervention skills for children with special needs, thereby promoting social inclusion in ECEC.

c) Funding for accessibility and social inclusion

- **Subsidies and support for disadvantaged families:** Through the PEO and PNRR, support is provided to partially cover the costs of access to day centers for disadvantaged families, so that children from these backgrounds have equal access to early education.
- **Intervention programmes for children from vulnerable groups:** The Structural Funds support intervention programmes tailored to the needs of children from low-income families or those at social risk, thus reducing inequalities in early childhood education.

4.6.3. Challenges and limitations in the use of the Structural Funds for ECEC

- **Limited administrative capacity at local level:** The efficient absorption of funds is sometimes hampered by the limited administrative capacity of local authorities, especially in small communities.
- **Long-term sustainability:** After the completion of projects, some day centers and kindergartens find it difficult to maintain the level of services and cover operational costs without continuous

external support.

- **Variety and different funding requirements:** The complexity of documentation and strict eligibility conditions can be a barrier to accessing funds, and the need for alignment between different programmes can cause delays.

4.6.4. Recommendations for the efficient use of the Structural Funds in ECEC

- **Creating a regional support mechanism for the absorption of funds:** The creation of support teams for the absorption of funds, especially in rural and disadvantaged areas, could support local authorities and service providers to access the available funds.
- **Development of a sustainability framework for PNRR and PEO projects:** In addition to the initial investment, a source of national or local funding should be provided to ensure the continuity and sustainable functioning of ECEC services after the end of projects financed by structural funds.
- **Simplification of access and reporting procedures:** Simplification of procedures would facilitate access to funds, in particular for rural ECEC units and smaller organisations that have difficulties in complying with reporting requirements.
- **Creation of an emergency fund for maintenance and operation:** The establishment of a national maintenance fund for ECEC infrastructure could ensure the continued maintenance and operation of the centers after the initial implementation of the projects.

The financing of ECEC services in Romania through Structural Funds, including the PNRR, plays a crucial role in developing educational infrastructure and creating a fair and inclusive environment for pre-school children. Improving administrative capacity and simplifying access to these funds would help to expand and sustainably maintain early childhood education services, facilitating equitable access for children to quality education and care.

4.7. Other resources

The financing of complementary early education and care (ECEC) services in Romania, including the services offered through day care centers, can also be supported by alternative resources from the Structural Funds, the national budget and local budgets. These complementary resources include donations, sponsorships, public-private partnerships, private sector funds, international grants, community contributions and special taxes. Accessing such funds can help cover current expenses, modernize infrastructure, develop innovative educational programs, and expand services in disadvantaged communities.

4.7.1. Donations and sponsorships

- **Donations from individuals and legal entities:** Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and day centers that provide ECEC services rely on donations, either directly or through fundraising campaigns.
- **Sponsorships from private companies:** According to the Romanian tax legislation, companies can make tax-deductible sponsorships for education and social projects, including for ECEC centers, thus supporting children's programs and the necessary facilities.

4.7.2. Public-private partnerships (PPPs)

- **Co-financing mechanisms:** Public-private partnerships can facilitate the development of infrastructure for day centers and other ECEC services, through contributions from the private sector in exchange for tax or advertising benefits.
- **Long-term partnerships for educational programs:** Involving companies in educational activities can bring additional resources, both financial and expertise, such as mentoring, staff training, or donations of educational materials.

4.7.3. International grants and contributions from non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

- **Funding from international foundations:** International organizations, such as UNICEF, provide grants for early education, social inclusion, and care projects for children from vulnerable groups.
- **Local and international NGO programmes:** Romanian and international NGOs can collaborate on the implementation of innovative ECEC programmes and co-finance day centers in disadvantaged or rural areas, where access is more difficult.
- **Grants offered through the Erasmus+ programme:** The Erasmus+ programme provides opportunities for ECEC staff to participate in best practice exchange and continuous training programmes, thus helping to increase the quality of services.

4.7.4. Community contributions and parent involvement

- **Fees or contributions from parents:** In the case of certain day centers and private services or with additional contributions, parents contribute financially for extra educational or recreational activities, as well as for the improvement of facilities.
- **Parents' associations:** Many day centers and kindergartens form parents' associations that organize fundraising activities, thus helping to finance teaching materials, excursion programs or special activities for children.

4.7.5. Contributions from the private sector and the business environment

- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) campaigns:** Large companies in Romania have CSR programs through which they can support ECEC centers, contributing to the development of infrastructure, equipping them or supporting special activities for children in day care centers.
- **Microgrants provided by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs):** SMEs can provide microgrants for day care centers in the communities in which they operate, thus helping to increase the capacity of these centers and support local families.

4.7.6. Special taxes and funds collected locally

- **Contributions from special funds for children:** Some municipalities may institute special fees for education and social services, such as community development fees, which can be directed to ECEC services.
- **Funds from other local taxes and levies:** Taxes collected by local authorities in sectors such as tourism, culture or local businesses can be allocated to improve ECEC infrastructure and services, especially in localities with a high level of taxation.

4.7.7. Crowdfunding and volunteering programs

- **Crowdfunding platforms:** Online crowdfunding campaigns, carried out on platforms such as Patreon, GoFundMe or Romanian platforms such as Sprijina.ro, allow the collection of funds for specific projects of day centers, supported by individuals and organizations.
- **Volunteering:** The involvement of volunteers can make an important contribution to day centers through recreational, educational or administrative support, thus reducing costs and expanding the range of services offered to children.

Accessing alternative funding resources for ECEC services in Romania, such as donations, sponsorships, public-private partnerships and international grants, can facilitate the development and expansion of these services. The integration of these sources into the overall funding of day centers contributes to increasing the capacity to provide quality educational and care services with wider coverage, especially for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

5. Governance and regulation of complementary ECEC services

5.1. Regulation of the provision of services

The regulation of the provision of complementary ECEC services in Romania, including similar ones that could be offered through day care centers, is established by a specific legislative and regulatory framework, designed to ensure the quality, accessibility and safety of these services. This framework is structured by laws, government decisions, orders and standards issued by various national authorities, in particular the Ministry of Education at the proposal of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance and Inspection in Pre-University Education (ARACIIP), the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection and the National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption (ANPDCA).

5.1.1. Legislative framework and main regulations

a) The Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, with amendments and completions subsequent

- This law establishes the legal basis for pre-university education, including early education, and includes regulations on the organization and operation of kindergartens and day centers that provide complementary education and care services.
- Defining early childhood education as a right of every child, ensuring equal and unconditional access to early childhood education and care services.

b) Government Decision no. 1563/2024 for the approval of the methodology for the organization and operation of complementary early education services

- This government decision establishes the organization and functioning of education services Complementary Early Years
- Establishes the educational content of the activity within the complementary early education services Early education for children from 3 months to 6 years old is carried out on the basis of the Curriculum for Early Childhood Education, approved by order of the Minister of Education.
- It regulates the human resource employed in complementary early education services.
- It regulates the relationship with parents and the community.
- It regulates the monitoring of the activity in complementary early education services.

c) Government Decision no. 566/2022 on the approval of the methodological norms for organisation and functioning of ECEC services

- This government decision establishes methodological norms for the organization of ECEC services, including in day centers, and provides for the minimum requirements of infrastructure, endowment, human resources and quality standards.
- It provides criteria for the authorisation and periodic evaluation of these services to ensure compliance with quality and safety standards.
- Defining the types of centers and services that can be offered, including day centers, playrooms and community kindergartens.

d) Order no. 4018/2024 on minimum quality standards for ECEC services

- This order introduces quality standards for complementary early education and care services, including in the areas of organizing educational activities, staff training, facilities and hygiene and safety conditions.
- It regulates aspects such as the staff-child relationship, the professional training of the staff, arrangement and equipping of spaces, and intervention protocols in case of emergency.
- It provides the framework for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the services offered in these

centers.

e) Child protection legislation

- Law no. 272/2004 on the protection and promotion of children's rights regulates the functioning of day centers as services aimed at preventing the separation of the child from the family and supporting his integration into the community. These centers offer care, education, counseling, support for personal development and assistance for parents, with the role of ensuring the well-being of the child in the family environment. The local public administration authorities, in collaboration with accredited social service providers, have the obligation to establish, finance and monitor these centers in order to guarantee the respect of the rights of the child and the application of the quality standards imposed by the legislation.
- The National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption (ANPDCA) has an active role in monitoring and regulating day centers and complementary education services, having mechanisms for intervention in case of irregularities or abuses.
- Law no. 292/2011 on social assistance regulates the functioning of day centers as social services designed to prevent exclusion and support vulnerable people, including children, the elderly and people with disabilities. These centers offer recovery, rehabilitation, counseling, education and socialization activities, with the role of maintaining and improving the autonomy of the beneficiaries. Their operation is subject to the quality standards established by the specific legislation and can be financed from public, private or European funds. The local public administration authorities are responsible for establishing, accrediting and monitoring these centers to ensure compliance with the rights of the beneficiaries and the efficiency of the services offered.

5.1.2. Rules on the authorisation and operation of day centers

- Day care centers must obtain the operating permit issued by the local authorities and the sanitary approval from the Public Health Directorate (DSP).
- The authorization requires the fulfillment of strict requirements for infrastructure, equipment and safety, and the centers are periodically evaluated to maintain quality standards.
- The rules impose limitations on the number of children admitted, the staff-to-child ratio and staff training, and any non-compliance may lead to sanctions or suspension of authorisation.

5.1.3. Staff training and certification in ECEC

- The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour have clear regulations on the training of staff in the ECEC sector. Staff must be qualified in the field of education, psychology or social work, depending on the responsibilities of each role.
- The requirements of continuous training include periodic refresher courses in early childhood education, child protection and crisis intervention. These courses are essential for improving skills and ensuring a safe environment for children.
- Regulations stipulate that day care centers must provide supervision and evaluation staff to maintain a high level of professionalism.

5.1.4. Quality standards and protection of children's rights

Day centers and complementary ECEC services must comply with the minimum quality standards set by specific legislation, such as:

- Optimal staff-to-child ratio to ensure effective supervision and harmonious development of each child.
- Hygiene and safety conditions in the spaces intended for activities, including playgrounds and sleeping places.
- Implementation of educational and development activities adapted to the needs and stages of

children's development, encouraging inclusion and the development of social and cognitive skills.

5.1.5. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

- **Periodic evaluation:** Day centers are subject to periodic evaluations by regulatory authorities to verify compliance with quality and safety standards. This includes planned inspections and unannounced visits.
- **Monitoring at local level:** Local councils are responsible for monitoring the activity of day centers, supporting assessments and ensuring that they operate in accordance with the legislation.
- **Transparency and reporting:** Schools must report their work and provide parents with access to information about the educational services and activities offered. This increases transparency and allows parents to make informed choices.

5.1.6. Collaboration with the community and parents

- The legislation encourages complementary ECEC services to work with parents and the community to ensure continuity of education and support children's development. Complementary ECEC services are urged to involve parents in educational activities and develop partnerships with other institutions in the community, such as local associations, hospitals and non-profit organisations.
- Complementary ECEC services must respect the right of parents to be informed and consulted about the educational programme, working methods and development of children.

5.1.7. Financial regulation and budget transparency

- Day care centers must comply with specific financial regulations to ensure that
- Public and private funds are used fairly and transparently.
- Budget transparency is required for public and non-profit centers, including reporting and justification of expenditure related to educational activities, staff training and infrastructure maintenance.
- In addition, day care centers can access local and national funds, but they must also comply with their reporting requirements.

The regulation of complementary ECEC services in Romania is essential to ensure a quality and safety framework for children, ensuring an educational environment that promotes balanced development and social inclusion. Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, as subsequently amended and supplemented, Government Decision no. 1563/2024, Government Decision no. 566/2022 and Order no. 4018/2024 are the fundamental benchmarks for these services, and their compliance is supervised through monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. With clear regulation and collaboration between authorities, day care centers and the community, ECEC services can significantly contribute to the development of a generation of healthy, integrated and future-ready children.

5.2. Quality assurance tools and mechanisms to oversee structural and process quality

Ensuring the quality of complementary ECEC services in Romania is an essential aspect for guaranteeing an adequate and safe educational environment for children. In this regard, there are several tools and mechanisms that are implemented at national and local level to supervise the structural and process quality in the provision of these services.

5.2.1. Legislative and regulatory framework

- a) **The Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, with amendments and completions Subsequent**
 - The law provides a general framework for the organization and functioning of early education

services, including minimum quality requirements.

b) Government Decision no. 566/2022

- It establishes methodological norms for the authorisation and operation of early education centers, including their quality and assessment requirements.

c) Order no. 4018/2024

- This order details the mechanism for enrolling children in standard services (nurseries and kindergartens) and in complementary early education services (playroom/playgroup, community kindergarten).

d) Government Decision no. 1563/2024

- It establishes methodological norms for the establishment, authorisation and operation of complementary early childhood education services, including requirements for specific spaces and curriculum.

5.2.2. Quality standards

a) Quality standards for ECEC services

- They are designed to assess both structural aspects (infrastructure, resources, facilities) and educational processes (teaching methods, learning activities, educational interventions).
- The evaluation of compliance with the standards is done through periodic inspections and external evaluations.

5.2.3. Evaluation and monitoring mechanisms

a) External inspections and evaluations

- The competent authorities shall carry out regular inspections of ECEC centers to verify compliance with established quality standards.
- Assessments include direct observations of educational processes, discussions with staff and parents, and review of documentation.

b) Internal assessments

- ECEC centers can implement their own internal evaluation systems to continuously monitor and improve the quality of services.
- These assessments may include feedback from staff, parents and children, as well as self-assessments periodic.

5.2.4. Training and professional development of staff

a) Continuing education programs

- Staff in ECEC centers are obliged to participate in continuing education courses, which include topics related to quality assurance, early education, child developmental psychology and crisis intervention.
- These courses are essential for improving professional skills and knowledge about best practices in early childhood education.

b) Personnel certification

- There are regulations stipulating the requirements for the qualification and certification of personnel, thus ensuring a minimum standard of competence in the provision of ECEC services.

5.2.5. Parent and community involvement

a) Feedback from parents

- ECEC centers are encouraged to seek regular feedback from parents, which may include questionnaires and assessment meetings. This feedback is essential for identifying strengths and areas that need improvement.

b) Advisory committees

- The formation of advisory committees within ECEC centers, which include parents and community members, can facilitate open dialogue and collaboration to improve the quality of services.

5.2.6. Partnerships and collaborations

a) Collaborations with higher education institutions

- ECEC centers can work with universities and higher education institutions to benefit from expertise in early childhood education and develop research-based vocational training programmes.

b) Partnerships with non-governmental organizations

- These partnerships can help develop community-based initiatives that support staff training and service quality assurance, as well as access to funding for quality improvement programmes.

5.2.7. Reporting and transparency

a) Transparency of information

- ECEC centers are obliged to publish relevant information about their work, including assessment reports and feedback from parents, to ensure transparency and accountability to the community.

b) Annual reporting

- It is essential that the centers produce annual reports that include data on their performance against quality standards and present the measures taken to improve services.

The quality assurance of complementary early childhood education and care services in Romania is based on a well-defined legislative framework, clear standards and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Collaboration between authorities, ECEC centers, parents and the community is essential to maintain and improve quality standards, thus ensuring the healthy and educational development of children. This contributes not only to quality early childhood education, but also to building solid foundations for the future of children in Romania.

5.3. Accountability measures established and followed by different levels of the system

Accountability in the provision of complementary early education and care (ECEC) services in Romania is essential to ensure the quality, efficiency and accessibility of these services for children and families.

5.3.1. Legislative framework

a) The Law on Pre-University Education no. 198/2023, with amendments and completions subsequent

- The law sets out the responsibilities of local and national authorities in relation to the organisation and operation of ECEC services, including quality and monitoring requirements.
- It lays down clear obligations for ECEC centers to comply with quality standards and report on the results of their activities.

b) Government Decision no. 1563/2024

- It regulates the establishment and accreditation of complementary early education services, giving priority to localities where there are not enough nurseries and/or kindergartens or in the situation where the number of places in nurseries and kindergartens available is lower than the number of children of ante-preschool or preschool age in the school district or in the respective administrative-territorial unit, with a focus on isolated/disadvantaged localities. It regulates the organization and functioning of the complementary early education services established at the initiative of the administrative-territorial units or of the county/Bucharest school inspectorates, they function as structures of the educational units in that administrative-territorial unit or in other administrative-territorial units.
- It provides a normative framework regarding the educational content of the activity within complementary early education services.
- It regulates the structure of the staff within the complementary early education services in terms of the human resource that can be employed in the complementary early education services.
- It regulates the relationship with parents and the community.
- It provides a regulatory framework for monitoring the activity in early education services Complementary.

c) Government Decision no. 566/2022

- It details the responsibilities of service providers in terms of authorisation, operation and evaluation of ECEC services.
- It includes specific regulations for the accountability of staff in relation to quality standards and performance evaluation.

5.3.2. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms**a) External inspections and evaluations**

- The competent authorities shall carry out regular inspections to verify the compliance of ECEC centers with the established quality standards.
- These assessments include direct observations of activities, interviews with staff and parents, and review of relevant documentation.
- The evaluation reports are publicly available and contribute to the accountability of the centers through transparency.

b) Internal assessments

- ECEC centers are encouraged to implement internal evaluation processes that allow them to regularly review their activities and identify areas for improvement.
- These assessments contribute to the development of an organizational culture of accountability.

5.3.3. Training and professional development of staff**a) Qualification and continuing education requirements**

- Staff in ECEC centers must meet minimum qualification requirements and participate in continuing education in order to maintain their competences.
- This professional accountability ensures that staff are well-trained to provide
- quality services and to comply with the established standards.

b) Staff performance evaluation

- There are mechanisms for evaluating employee performance, which include feedback from colleagues, parents, and supervisors.
- The results of these assessments can influence opportunities for promotion and further training.

5.3.4. Parent and community involvement

a) Feedback and participation

- Parents are encouraged to participate in the activities of ECEC centers and to provide feedback on the quality of services. This may include questionnaires, evaluation meetings or participation in advisory committees.
- The active involvement of parents contributes to the accountability of the centers, ensuring that the needs and concerns of families are taken into account.

b) Transparency of information

- ECEC centers are obliged to publish relevant information about their activities, including evaluation reports and measures taken to improve quality.
- This transparency facilitates accountability and encourages community involvement.

5.3.5. Collaborations and partnerships

a) Partnerships with local authorities

- ECEC centers work with local authorities to ensure the accessibility of services and to meet the needs of the community.
- These partnerships help to empower service providers by establishing clear expectations and performance evaluation.

b) Collaborations with non-governmental organizations

- These organisations can support ECEC centers in the development and implementation of quality improvement and can provide training for staff.
- The involvement of non-governmental organizations can add an additional layer of accountability and expertise in service delivery.

6. Sanction and reward measures

a) Sanctions for non-compliance with standards

- ECEC centers that do not comply with quality standards may be subject to punitive measures, such as withdrawal of the operating permit or fines.
- These sanctioning measures are intended to ensure the accountability of service providers.

b) Rewards for excellent performance

- Centres that demonstrate excellence in service delivery may benefit from public recognition, additional grants or other forms of support from the authorities.
- This type of reward can encourage centers to constantly improve quality services offered.

Accountability in the provision of complementary early education and care services in Romania is based on a solid legislative framework, effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, as well as the active involvement of parents and the community. By implementing these measures, the aim is to ensure quality early education that meets the needs of children and families, thus contributing to the development of a society better prepared for the future.

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