



# TRACKING CANADA'S PROGRESS IN ECE POLICY

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# Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development

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## WHO WE ARE

Established in 2000 and in partnership with the School of Early Childhood at **George Brown College**, the Atkinson Centre is housed at the **University of Toronto**.

The Centre is a bridge between research, policy, and practice and strives to mobilize the best available evidence to strengthen the quality of early childhood practice and inform public policy and discourse.

We are focused on advancing equitable and evidence-informed early childhood systems.

We have a longstanding collaboration with governments across Canada and a frequent contributor to **UNICEF Canada** and the **OECD**.

To support and advance our work, we partner with the **Science of Early Childhood Development** (SECD) housed at Red River College in Manitoba, **Mount Saint University**, as well as **Abilio and the Child-Encyclopedia** housed at the Universities of Montreal and Laval in Quebec to support knowledge translation and mobilization.





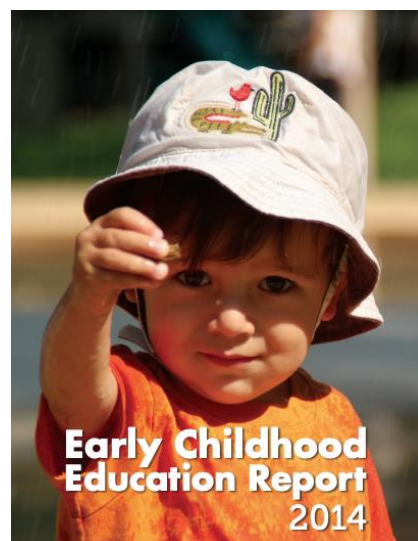
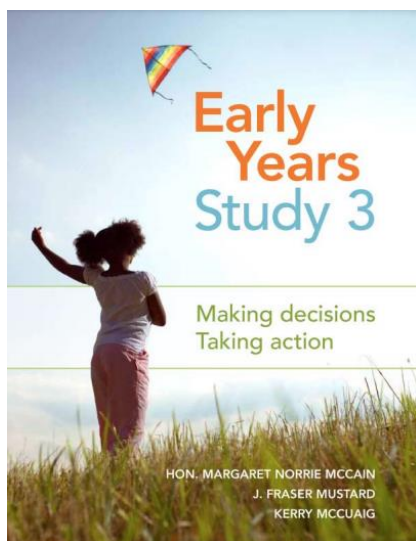
2023

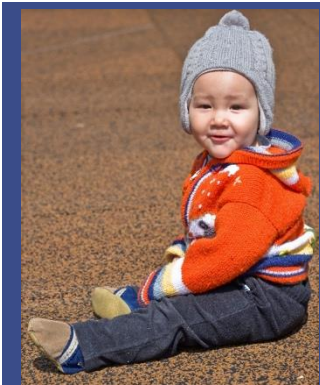
# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION REPORT



Established in 2011, the Early Childhood Education Report is released every three years to evaluate the quality of provincial/territorial early years services against a 15-point-scale.

Results are populated from detailed profiles of each jurisdiction. ECER 2026 will be the 6<sup>th</sup> edition.





# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION REPORT



## OVERVIEW

## RESULTS & TRENDS

## WORKFORCE

## CONTACT

- ▶ The report's development is a collaborative process with PT officials evaluating the progress of ECEC policy.
- ▶ Report 2026 will see the evolution of the benchmarks to reflect the progress made across the country and the impact of CWELCC.
- ▶ The Atkinson convenes a regular meeting of PT officials, a space for discussion on the report's development.
- ▶ The next meeting is scheduled for **April 30<sup>th</sup>**.

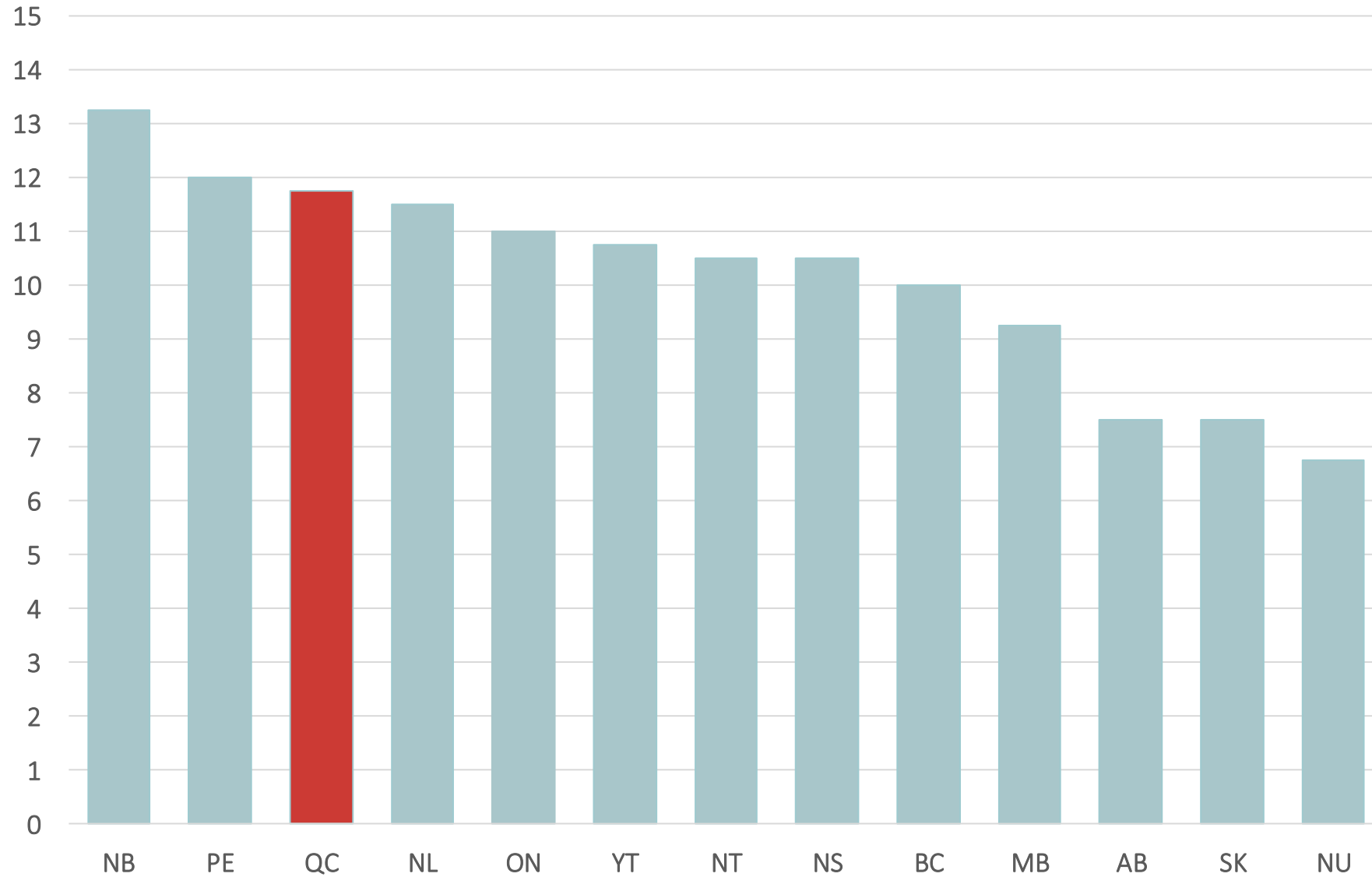
5 CATEGORIES

Governance	PTs	Funding	PTs	Access	PTs	Learning Environment	PTs	Accountability	PTs
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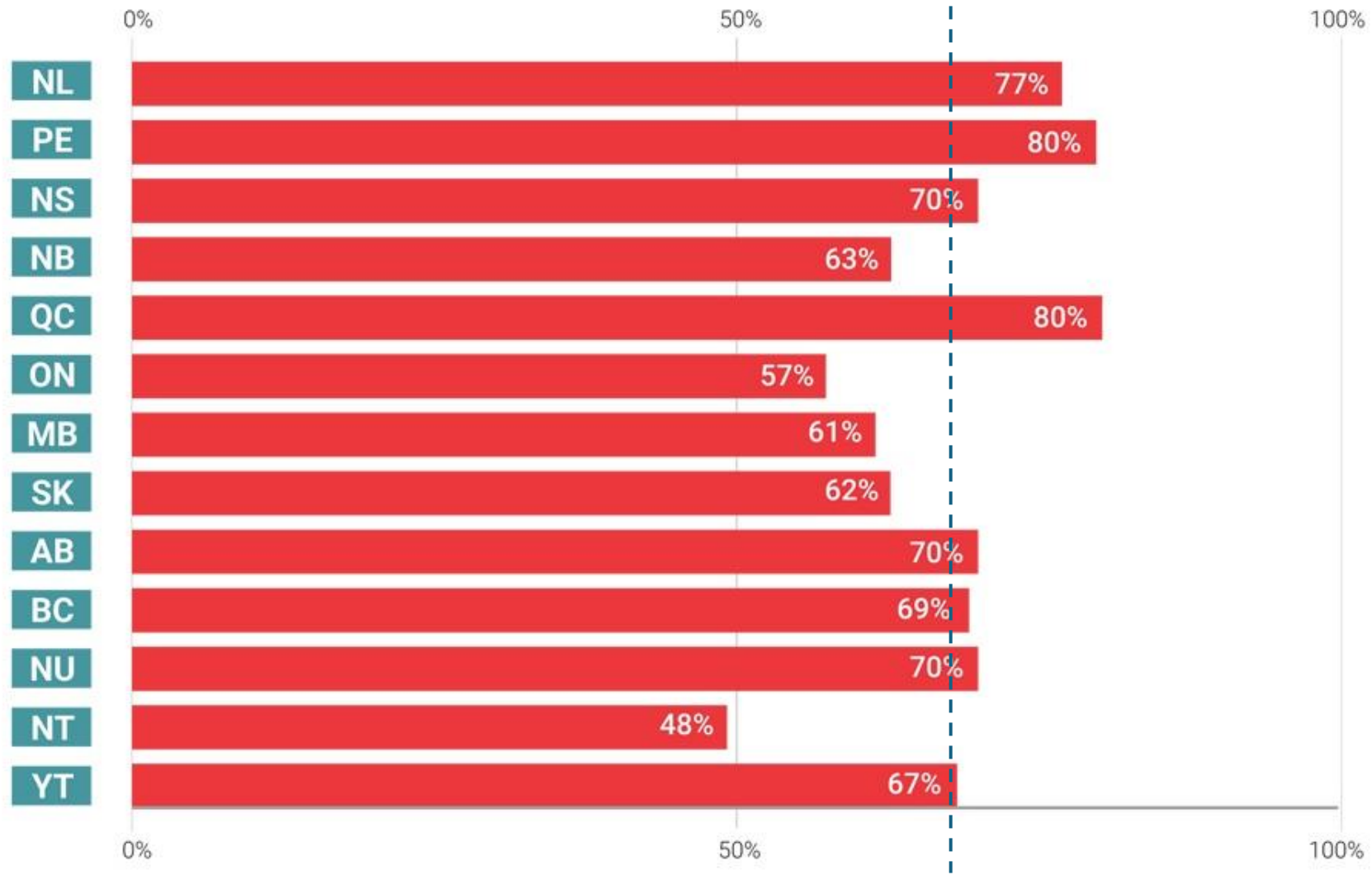
21 BENCHMARKS

Common ministry	0.5	Min 2/3 CC finding to program operations	1	Full-day Kindergarten	1	ECEC curriculum framework	0.25	Current and posted annual progress report	1
Common ECEC supervisory unit	0.5	Managed salary/fee scale in licensed CC	1	Licensed capacity min 50% for 2-4 yr olds	1	ECEC curriculum framework mandatory	0.25	Facility standards that include Kindergarten	1
Common ECEC policy framework	1	Min 3% of overall budget to ECEC	1	Funding conditional on inclusion	1	Program alignment with Kindergarten	0.5	Population measures collected for preschool	1
Common local authority	1					Min 2/3 staff qualified for 2-4 yr olds	0.5		
						Kindergarten Educators require ECE qualifications	0.5		
						Wages of ECEs at least 2/3 of teachers	0.5		
						ECE professional recognition required	0.25		
						ECE professional development required	0.25		
15 POINTS	3		3		3		3		3

# ECER 2023 Benchmark Results



# Annual ECE Wages as Percent of Teacher Wages

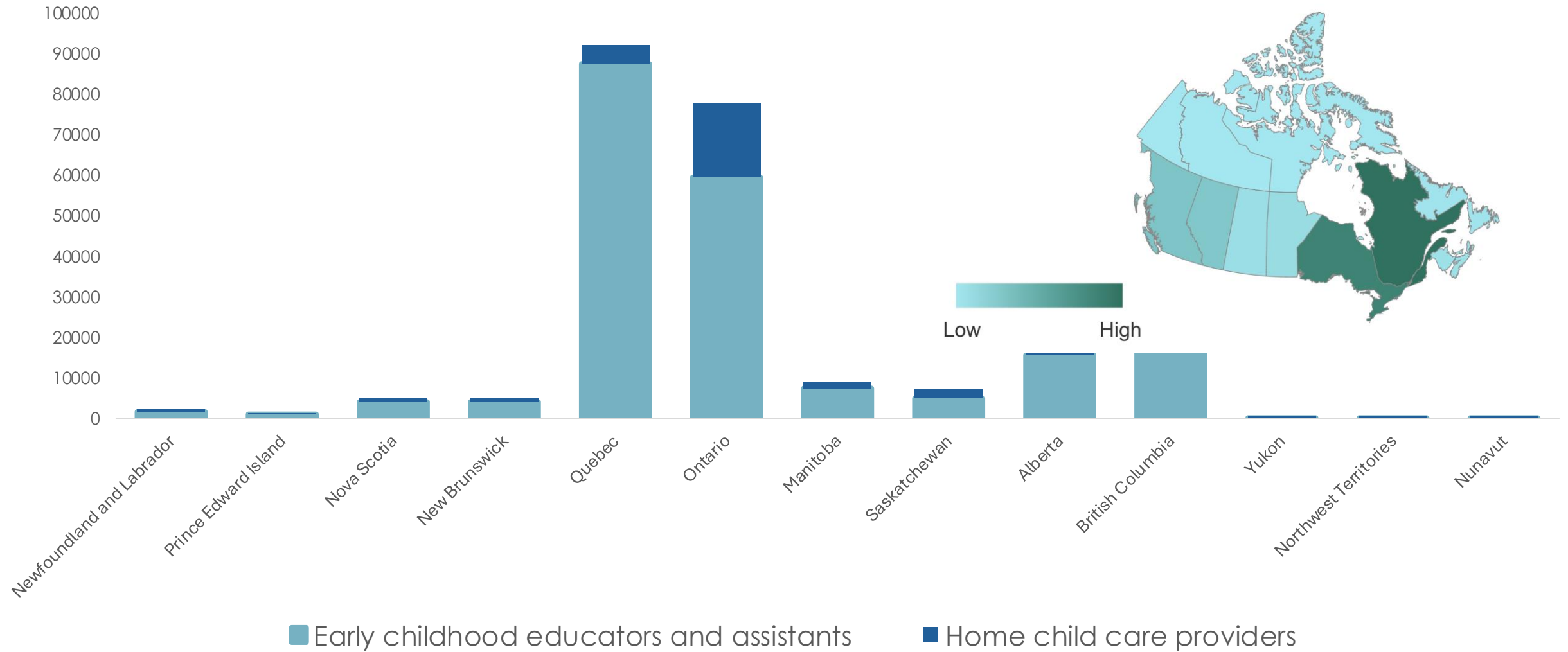


<sup>a</sup> ECE wages based on government-supported compensation for an FTE staff with legislated credentials and five years of experience.

<sup>b</sup> Teacher wages are based on the latest collective agreement for staff at Level 5, with 5 years of experience.

Source: Akbari, E., McCuaig, K., & Mehta, S. (2024). *The Early Childhood Education Report 2023*. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto.

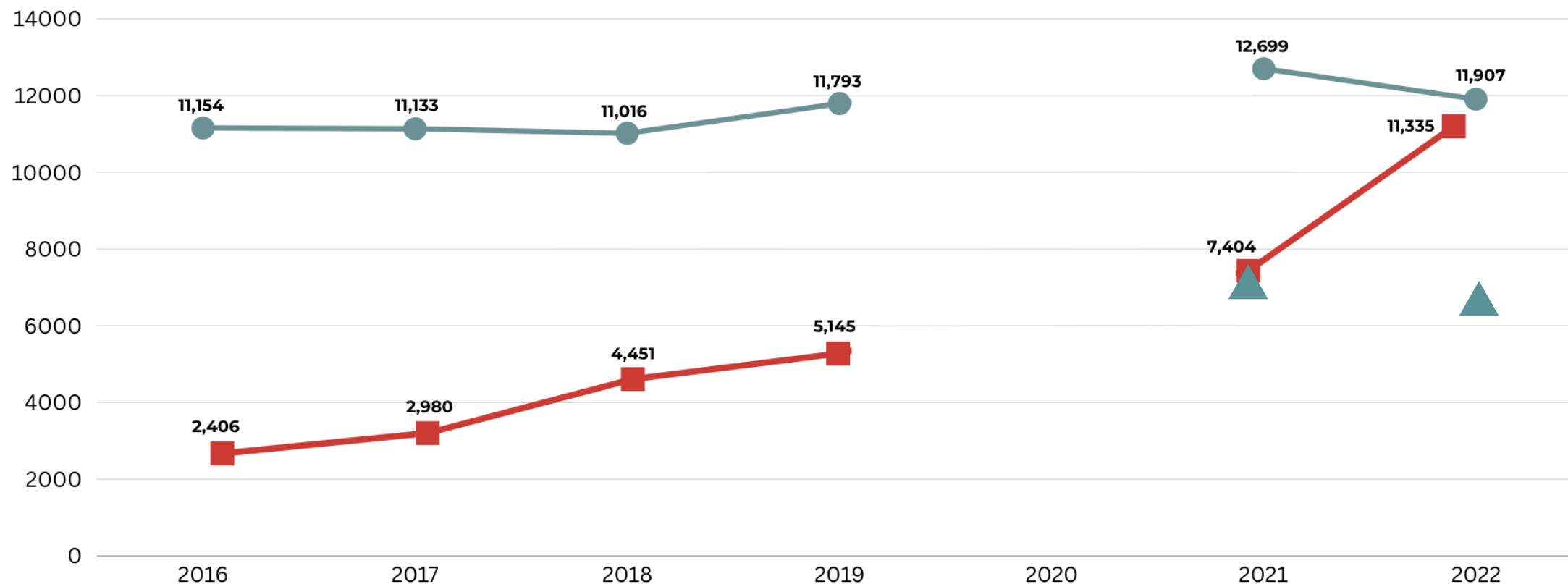
# Number of People Employed in the Child Care Sector in Canada





## Mind the Gap: ELCC Graduates vs. Job Vacancies

● Number of graduations and certifications from ELCC programs, Canada, 2016-2022 ■ Average number of job vacancies for ECEAs, Canada, 2016-2023



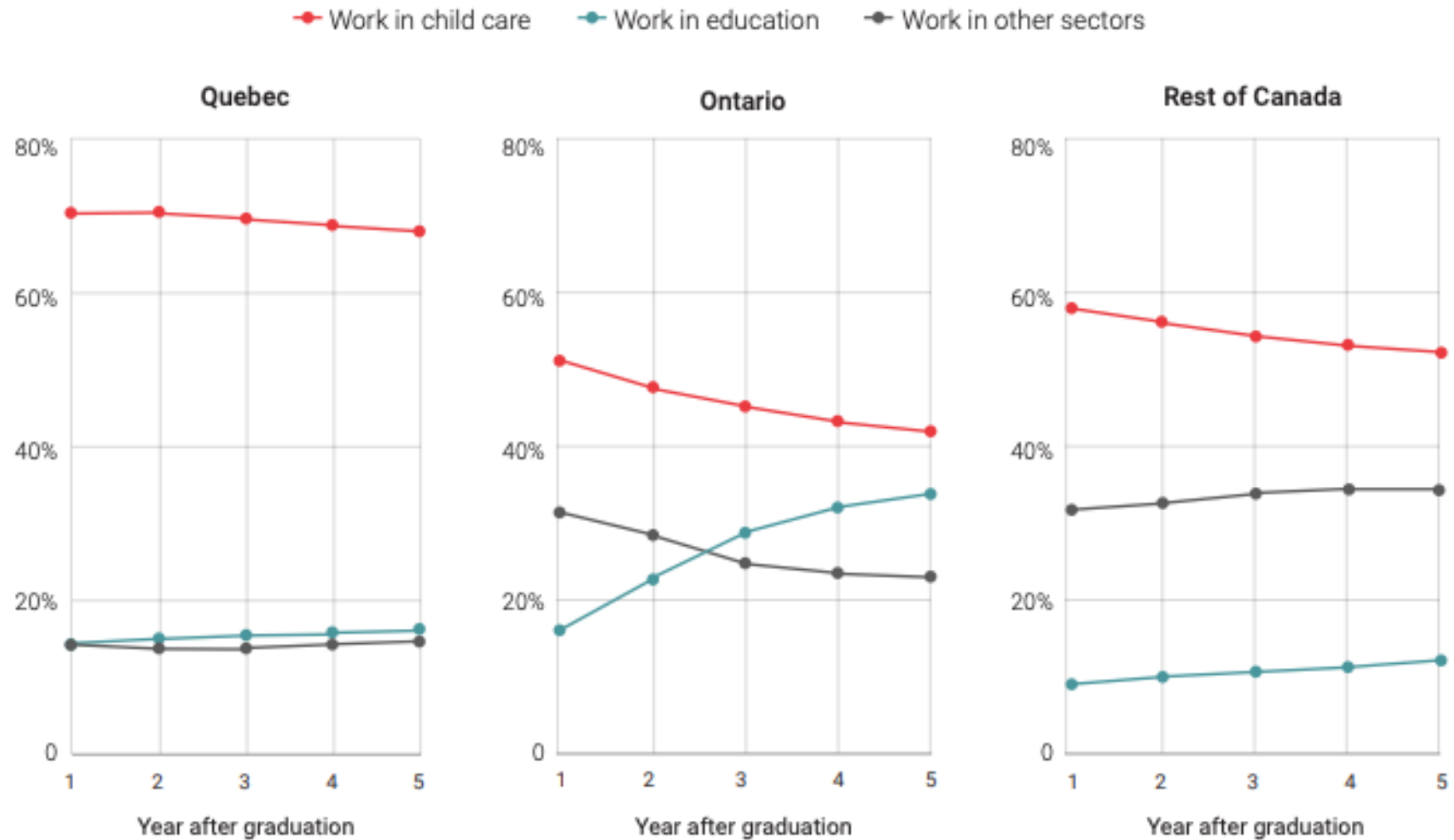
**Sources:** JAWS, 2016-2023; PSIS and RAIS, 2016-2022

**Note:** Data for 2020 unavailable due to the COVID-19 pandemic

▲ Estimate based on Dhuey et al., 2023

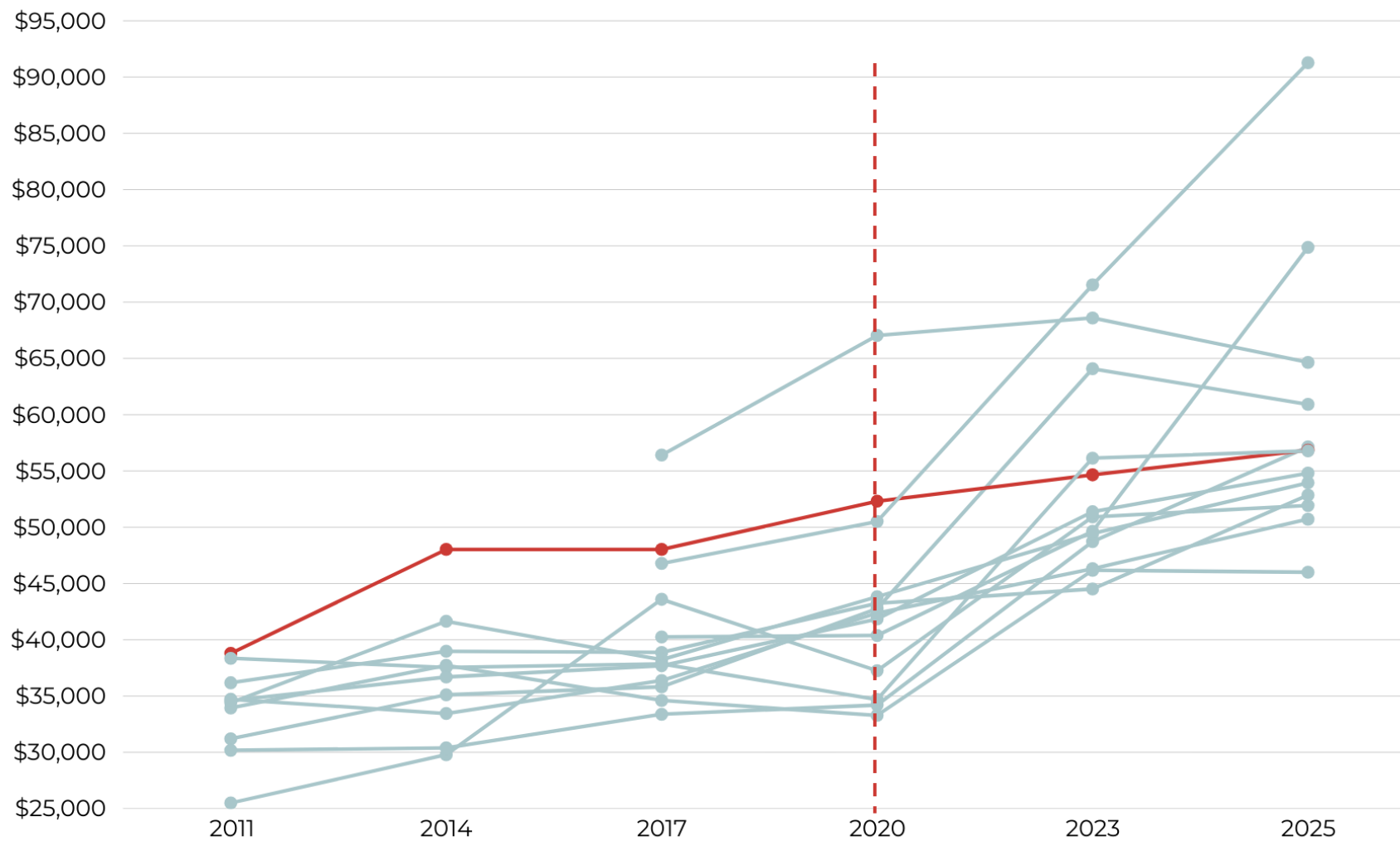
Adapted from Statistics Canada

## Career Trajectories of College ECE Graduates by Years Following Graduation



## ECE Wages Over Time

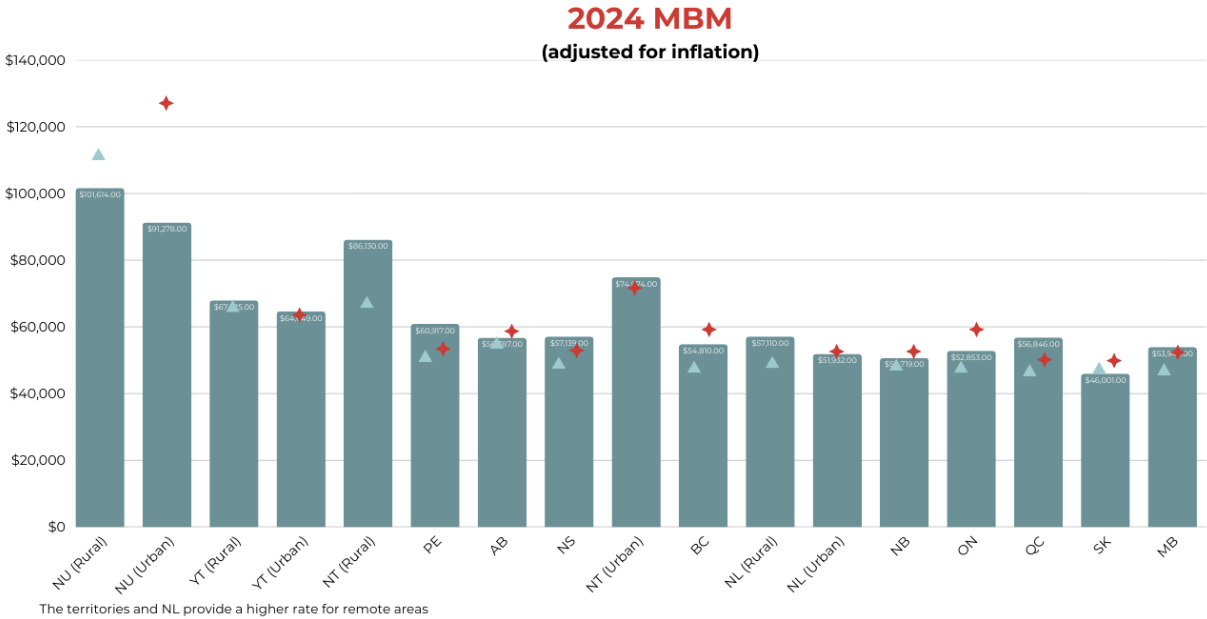
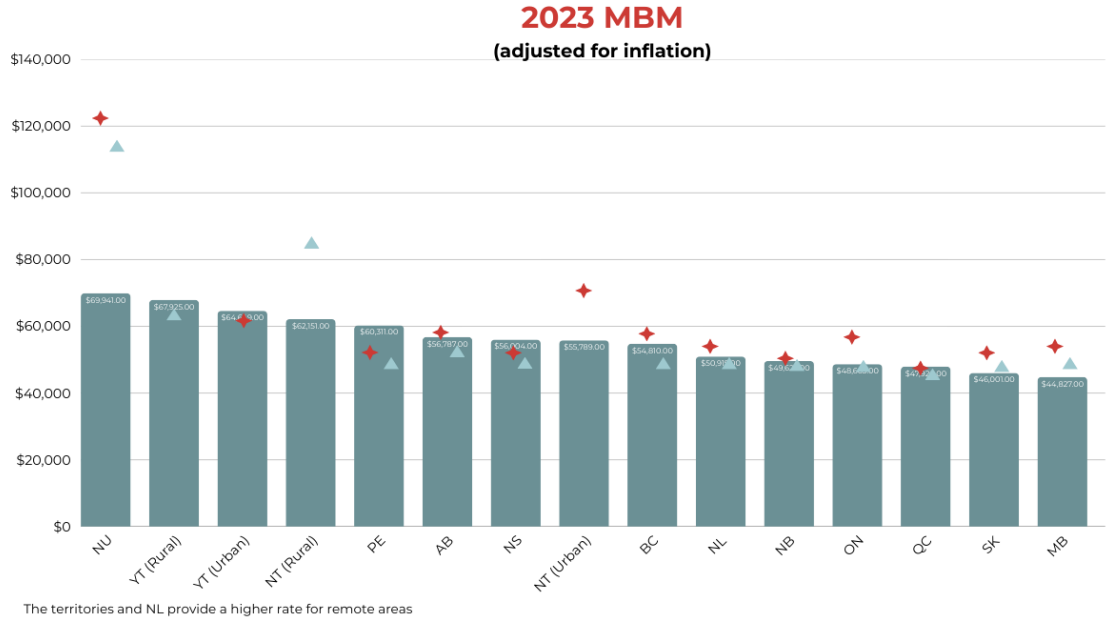
2011 - 2025



Source: Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development, 2025



Earnings (■) of ECEs across Canada compared to poverty thresholds in urban (✦) and rural (▲) regions



The Market Basket Measure (MBM) is used to establish poverty thresholds. The MBM is calculated based on the cost of a basket of food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and other items for a family of four that reflects a modest, basic standard of living.

For more detailed information:







# ECE Workforce Knowledge **HUB**

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## Introducing the ECE Workforce Knowledge HUB

### **Purpose**

A national platform to connect research, policy, and practice on the ECE workforce

### **Key Goals**

- To curate and share research
- Support governments with best available evidence and analysis for policy development
- Foster collaboration across jurisdictions and partners



# ECE Workforce Knowledge **HUB**

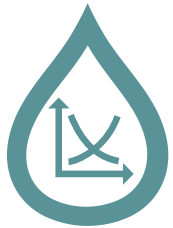
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## AREAS OF EXPERTISE



1

Labour  
Economics &  
Compensation



2

Immigration  
& Workforce  
Mobility



3

Equity,  
Diversity,  
Inclusion



4

Inclusion of  
Children  
with  
Disabilities



5

Knowledge  
Translation &  
Mobilization



6

Policy  
Evaluation &  
Implementation



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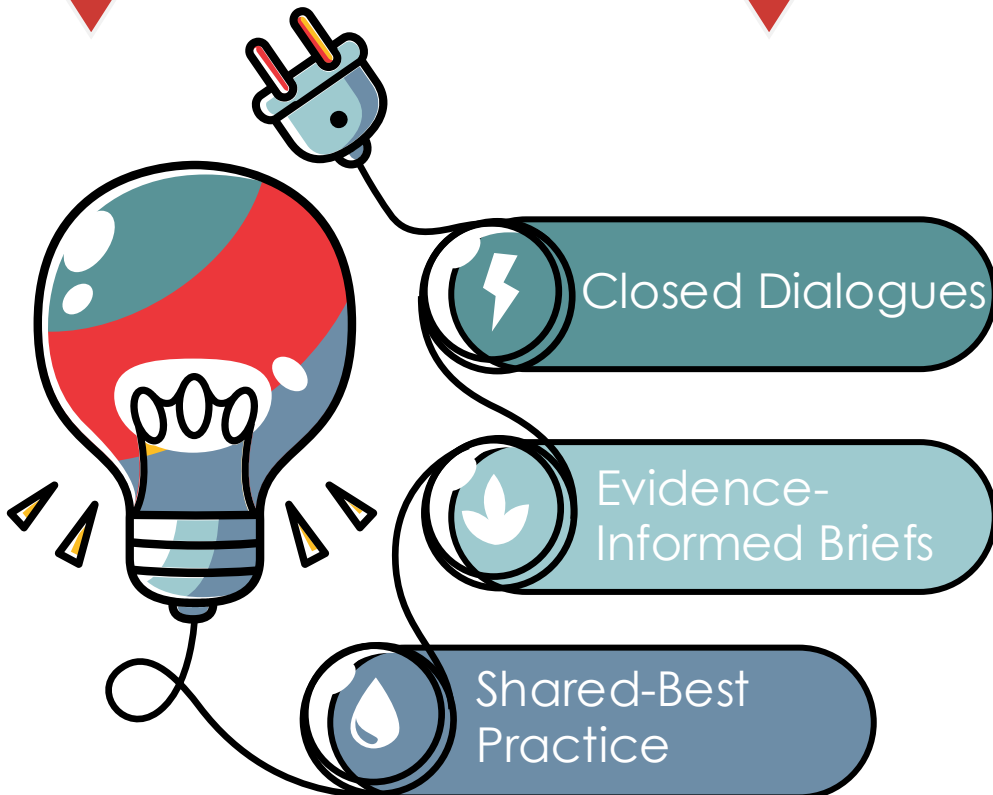
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## EXAMPLES OF HUB ENGAGEENT



Closed Dialogues

The College of ECEs of Ontario, Waterloo Region's School Board Operated Seamless Day Before and After School Program, SNR models of practice and implementation, measuring quality at the policy level (upcoming; Dr. Michal Perlman, UT)

Evidence-Informed Briefs

Guidelines for shared spaces between schools and child care programs, Lowering the Bar – the dangers of de-qualification of the ECE workforce, review of quality frameworks, SNR models, effective professional learning, optimal mentorship models

Shared-Best Practice

NS Pension and Benefits, PEI Pension, New Brunswick's Benefit Program, models of SNR delivery, professional learning models, government/college collaboration in MB



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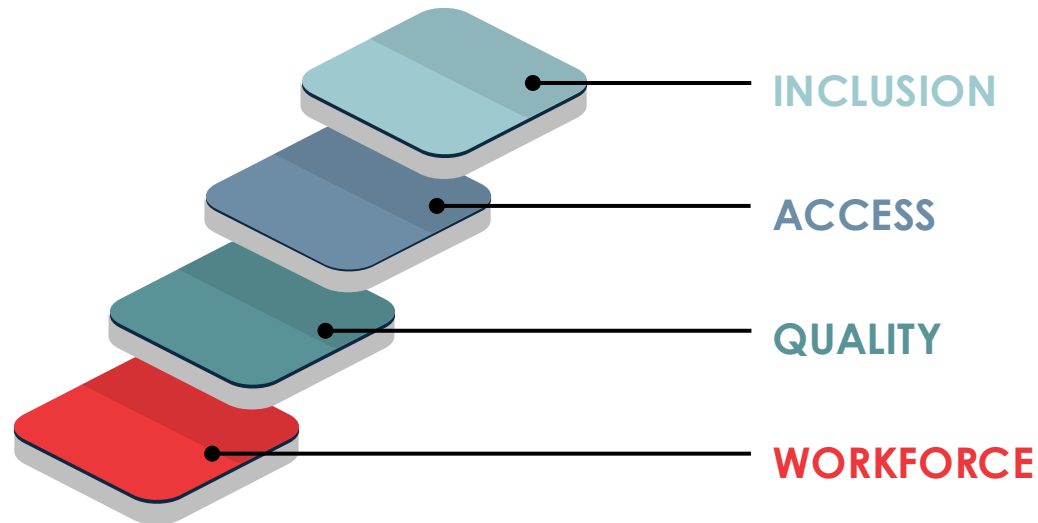


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## WHY IT MATTERS

*"Access, quality, and inclusion  
depend on a strong,  
supported workforce"*







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## Engaging with the **HUB**

You can engage with the HUB through Atkinson's Centre directly or individually with any **HUB** expert.

You may request closed webinars such as the one upcoming in January on monitoring quality in ECE.

### **ECE Workforce Roundtable**

The **HUB** convenes the Roundtable — bringing together governments, post-secondary institutions, academics, and the SECD to foster bi-directional dialogue on workforce challenges, shared strategies, and opportunities to strengthen ECE capacity. Recently expanded to Atlantic Canada, with the goal of building a national network in 2026. We would love to have QC's voice at the table.

THANK

YOU

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Atkinson  
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