



TRACKING CANADA'S PROGRESS IN ECE POLICY

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Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development

About Us

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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.



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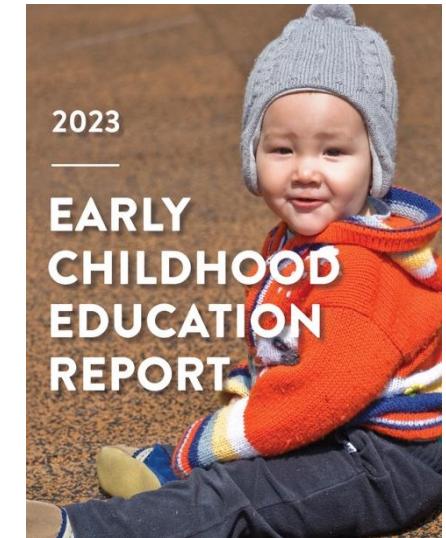
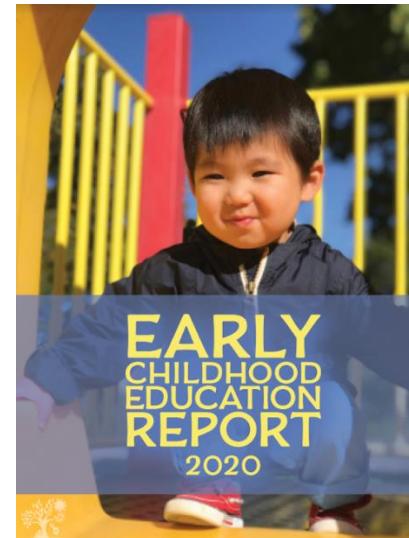
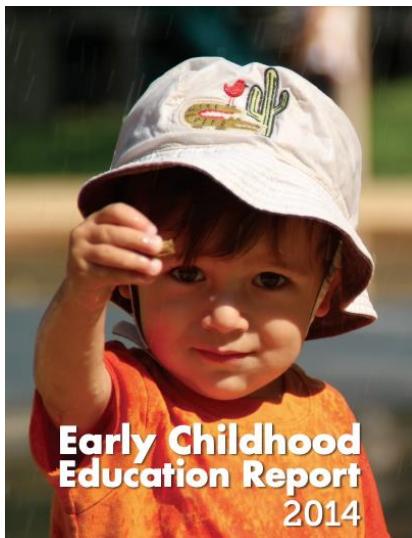
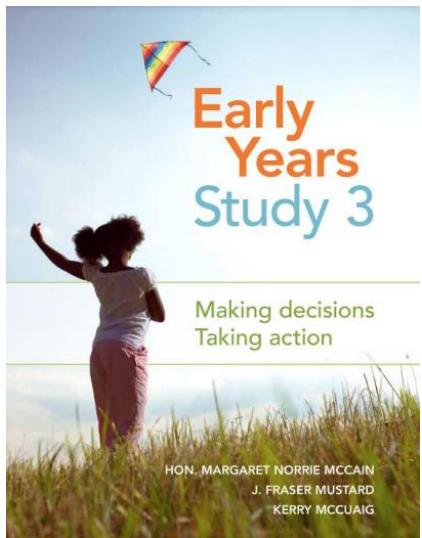
2023

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 6th 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 30th**.

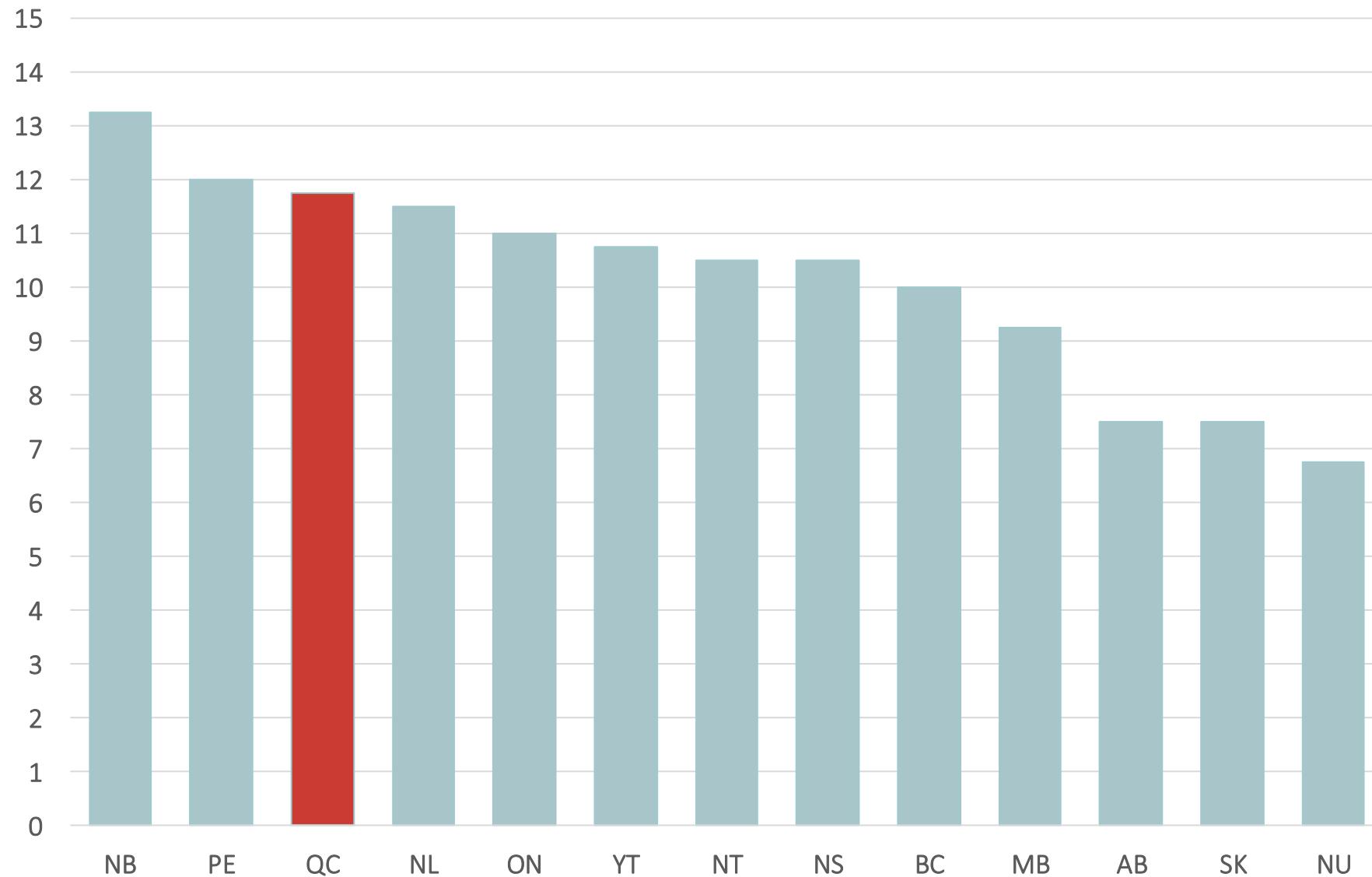
5 CATEGORIES

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|-----|---------|-----|--------|-----|----------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Governance | PTs | Funding | PTs | Access | PTs | Learning Environment | PTs | Accountability | PTs |
|------------|-----|---------|-----|--------|-----|----------------------|-----|----------------|-----|

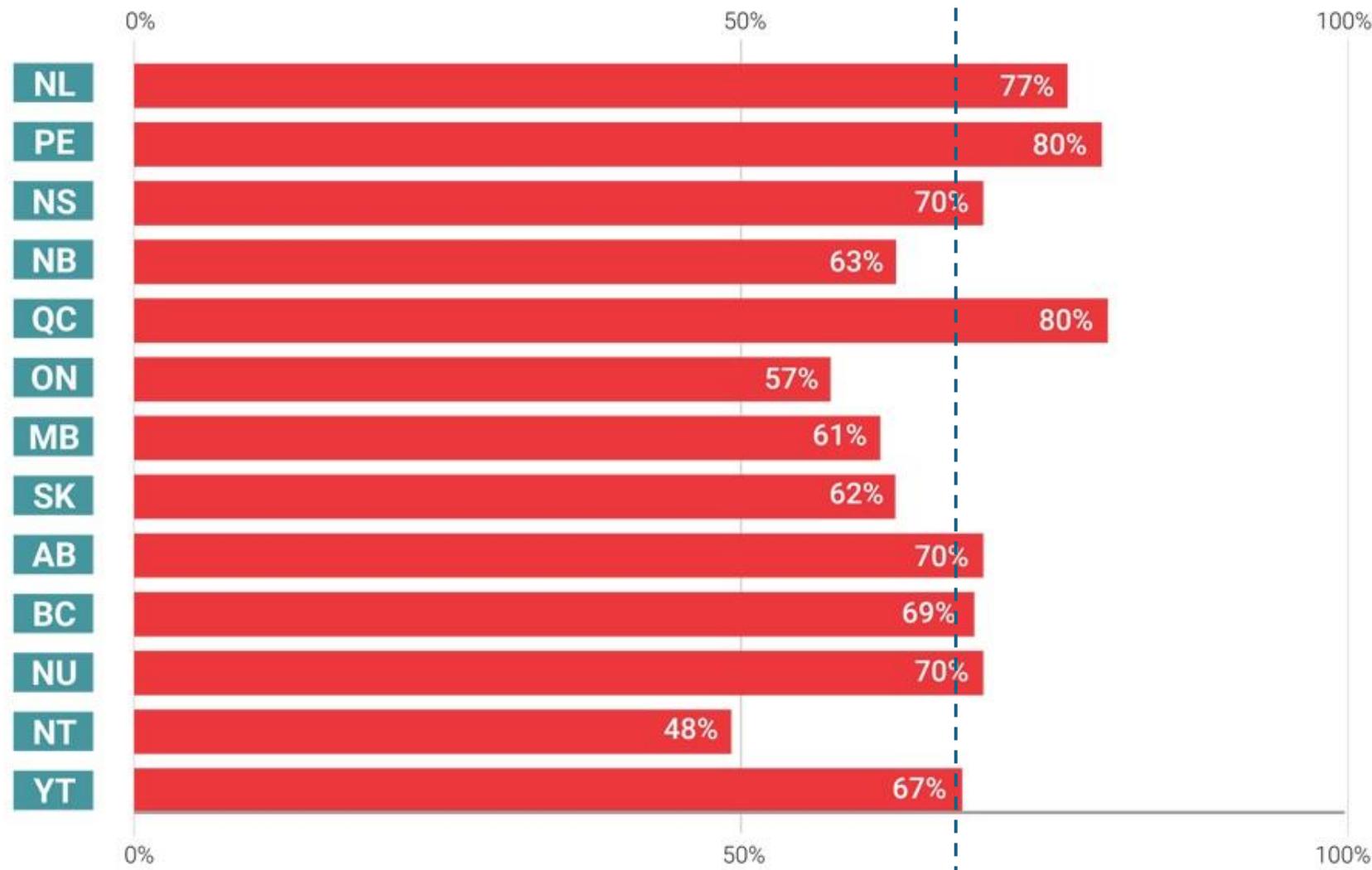
21 BENCHMARKS

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----|--|---|---|---|---|------|--|---|
| Common ministry | 0.5 | Min 2/3 CC funding 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 |

ECER 2023 Benchmark Results



Annual ECE Wages as Percent of Teacher Wages

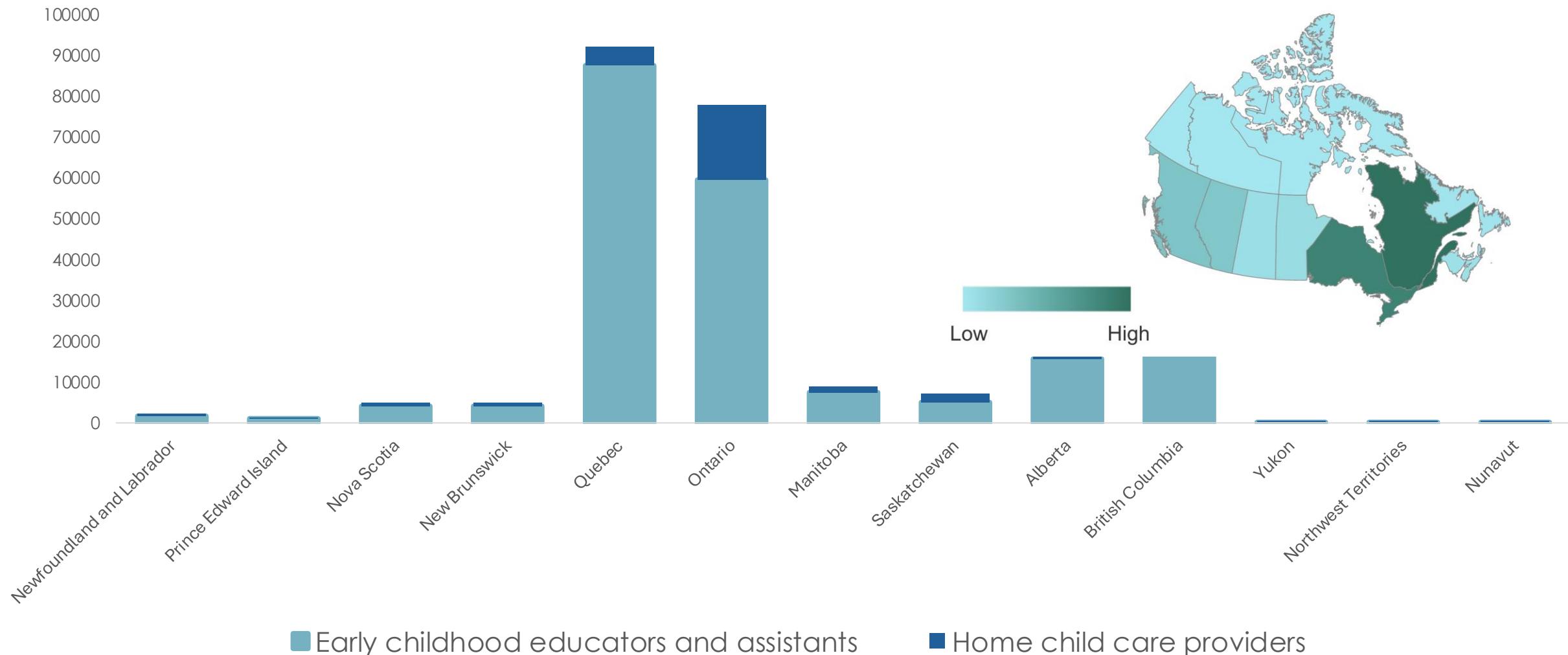


^a ECE wages based on government-supported compensation for an FTE staff with legislated credentials and five years of experience.

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

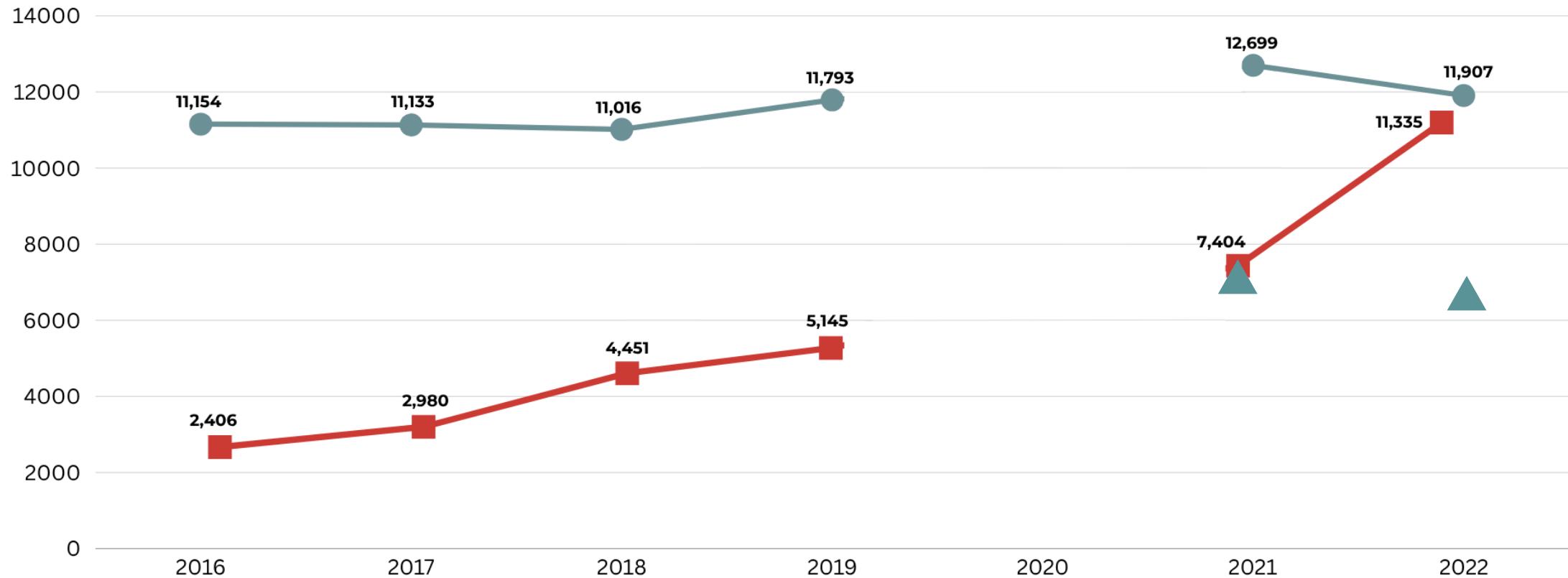
Source: Akbari, E., McCuaig, K., & Mehta, S. (2024). *The Early Childhood Education Report 2023*. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto.

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: JVWS, 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

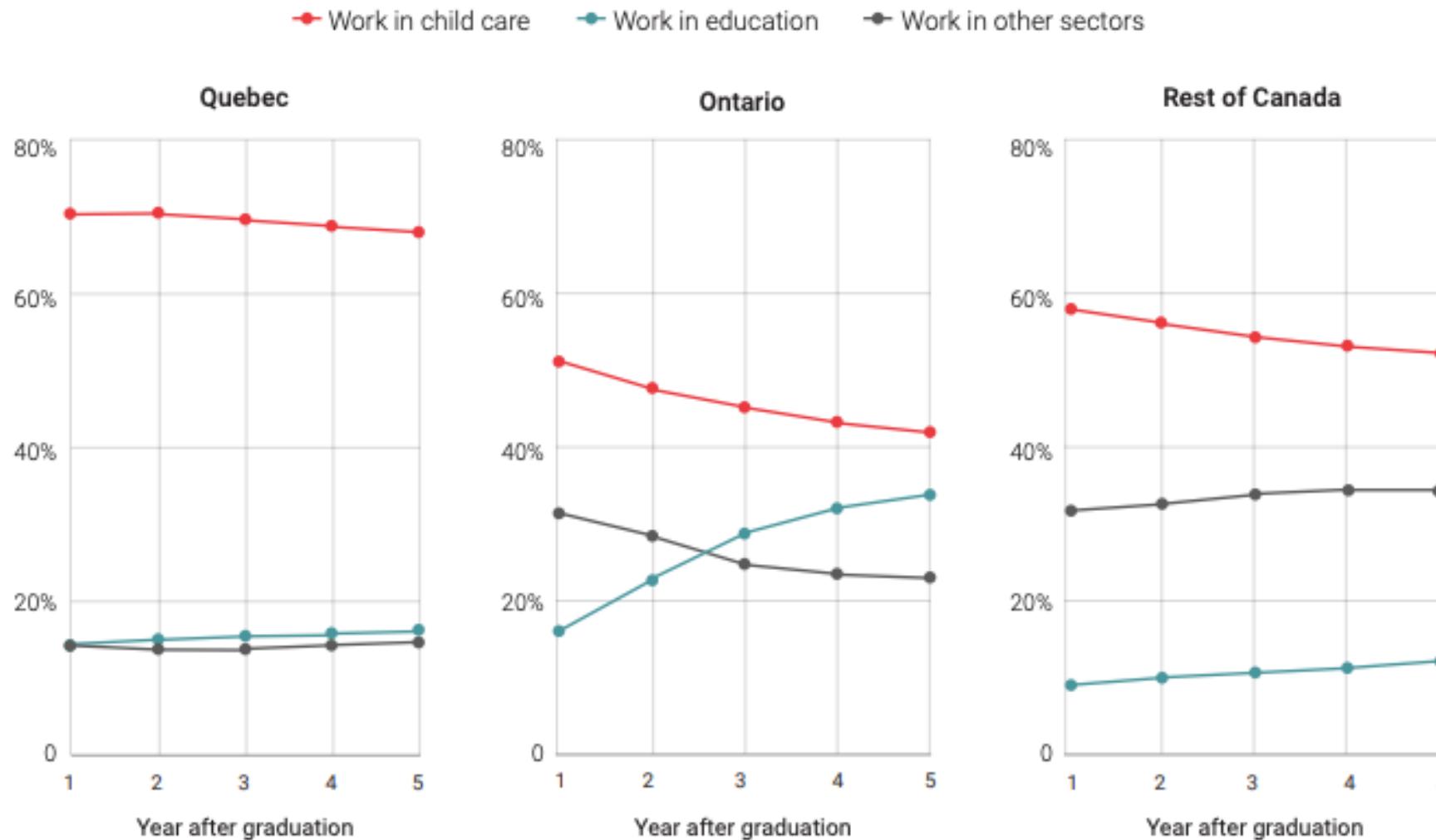
Adapted from Statistics Canada



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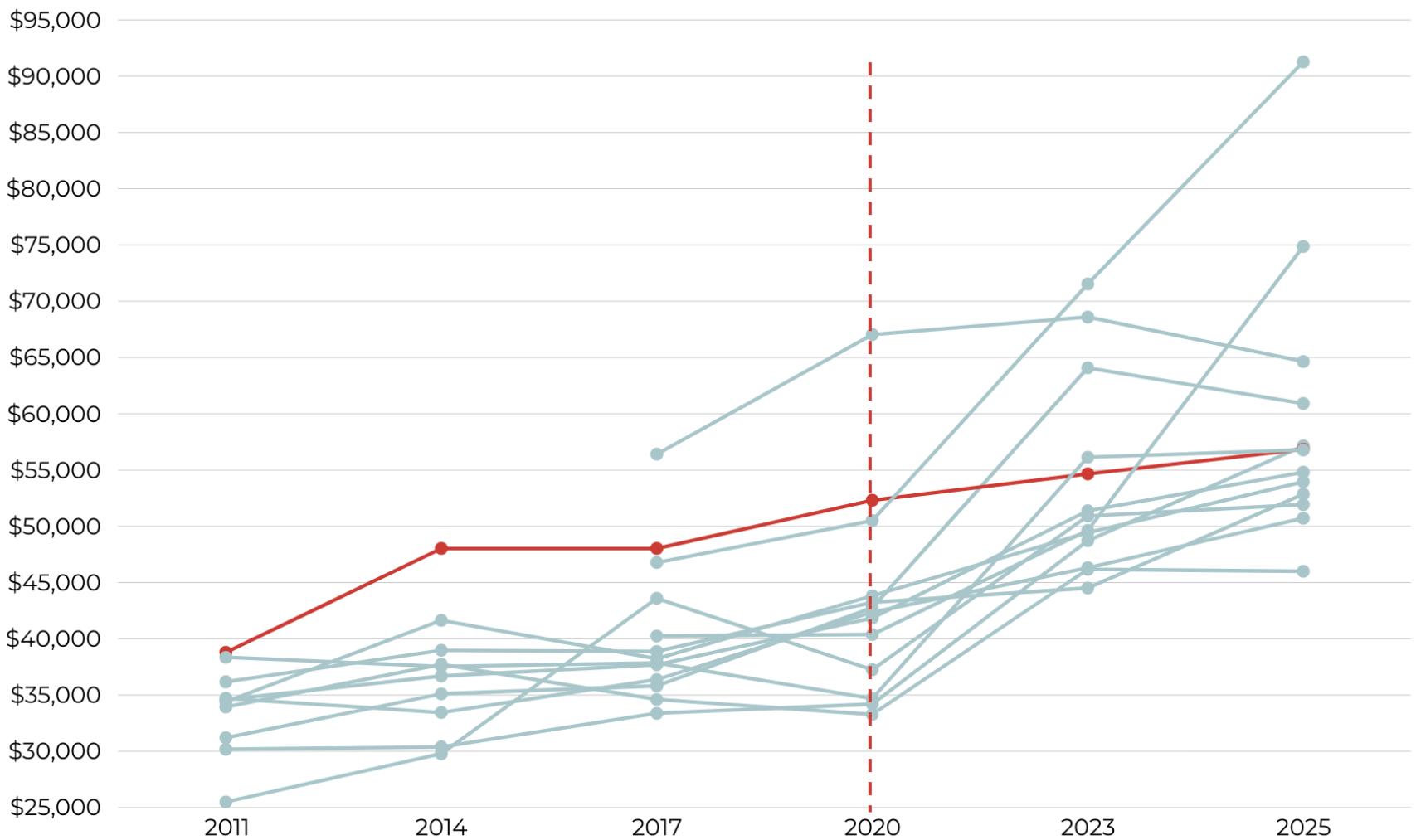
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Career Trajectories of College ECE Graduates by Years Following Graduation



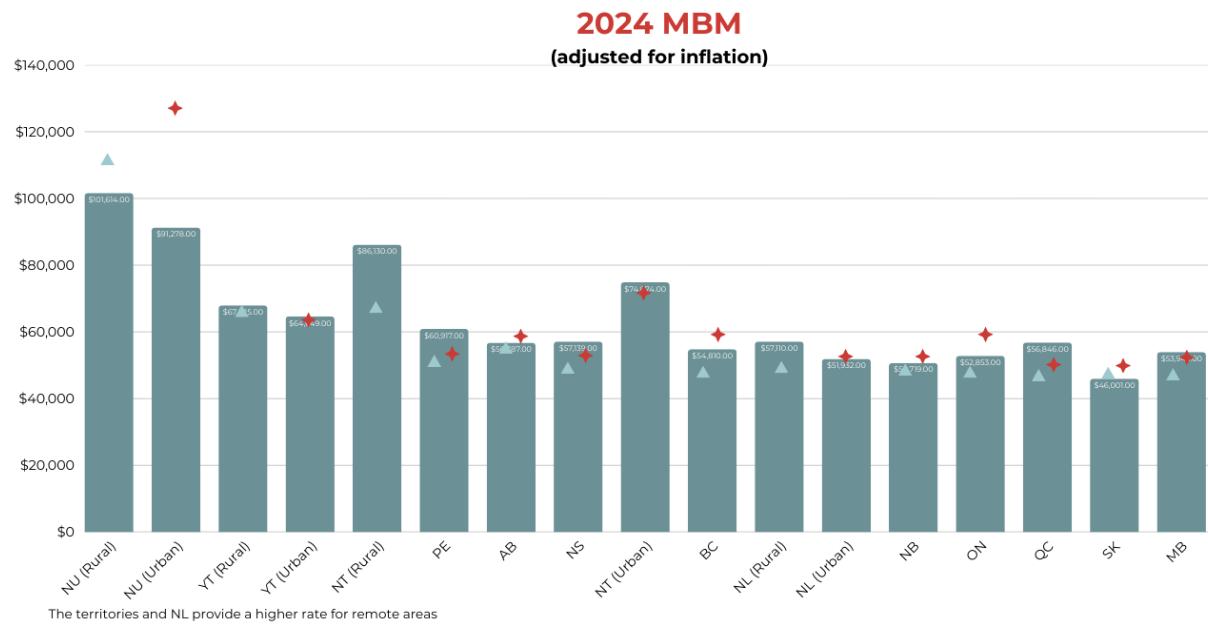
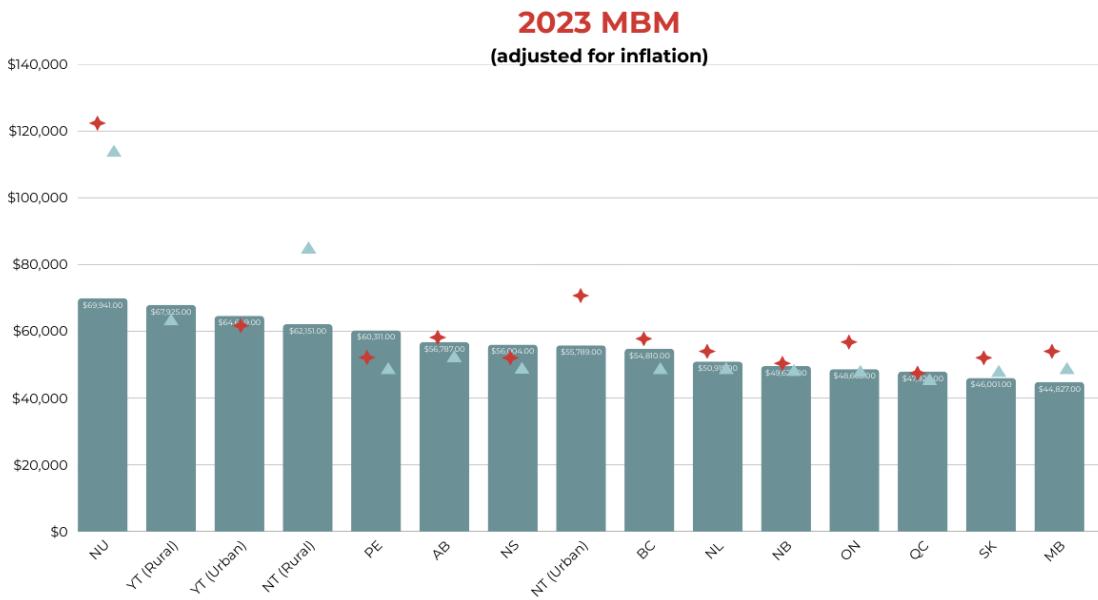
ECE Wages Over Time

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





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



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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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**EXAMPLES OF HUB
ENGAGEMENT**



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)

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

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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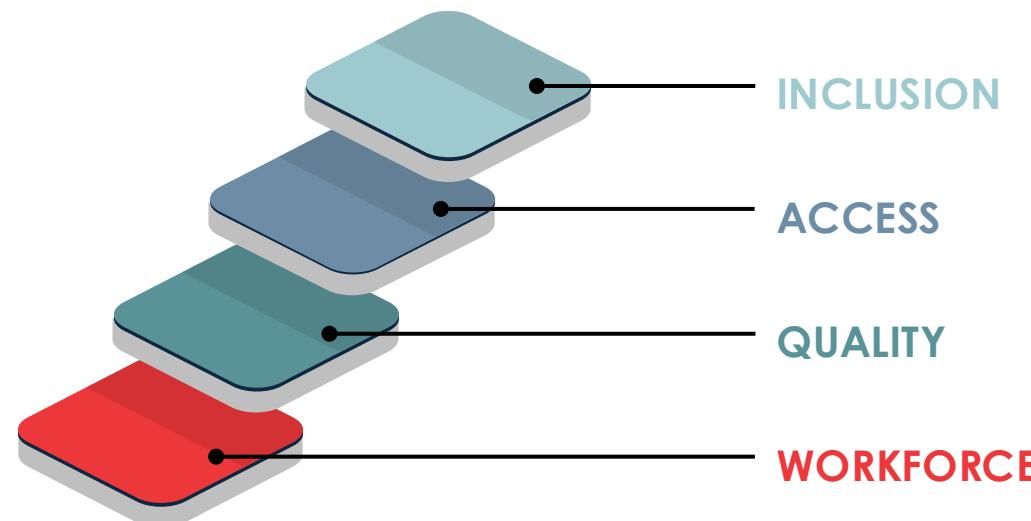
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WHY IT MATTERS

“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.

T H A N K Y O U

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