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Different Problems and Same Theme: Policies addressing holistic nature of ECD

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Early Childhood Education Policies in Asia Pacific

Advances in Theory and Practice

From the Back Cover

This book evaluates recent early childhood education policies on the basis of a '3A2S' framework, which refers to accessibility, affordability, accountability, sustainability, and social justice. It systematically and empirically reviews early childhood education policies in specific countries and areas in the Asia-Pacific Region, such as Australia, Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Singapore, Vietnam, New Zealand, Pacific Islands, and so on. As the first English-language collection of large-scale reviews of early childhood education policies in Asia Pacific, this book will be of great value to early childhood educators, policymakers, researchers, and postgraduate students in the Region and beyond.

"As one of the most comprehensive volumes about early childhood education (ECE) in the Asia-Pacific region, this book examines and discusses ECE policies and implementations in countries that are more familiar to readers (e.g., China, Australia, Korea and Singapore) as well as those that are rarely discussed in existing literature such as Vietnam, Nepal and the Pacific Island Countries. It is also the first collection of studies applying 3A2S framework, which provides a common language to understand and discuss policies and implementation at national level. Overall, this book provides a great reference and insights for ECE policy researchers and makers."

Prof. Christine Wang, Fisher-Price Endowed Early Childhood Research Center, State University of New York at Buffalo

1	Early Childhood Education Policies in Australia.....	1
	Bridie Raban and Anna Kilderry	
2	A Critical Analysis of the Changing Landscape of Early Childhood Education in Mainland China: History, Policies, Progress, and Future Development.....	31
	Xiumin Hong and Jennifer J. Chen	
3	Achieving a Balance Between Affordability, Accessibility, Accountability, Sustainability and Social Justice: The Early Childhood Education Policies in Hong Kong.....	51
	Weipeng Yang, Jingying Wang, and Hui Li	
4	Japanese ECE: Four Abilities (Accessibility, Affordability, Accountability, and Sustainability) that Result in Social Justice	73
	Satomi Izumi-Taylor and Yoko Ito	
5	Early Childhood Education Policies in Korea: Advances in Theory and Practice	87
	Eunhye Park, Minyoung Jang, and Seenyoung Park	
6	A Postcolonial Analysis of the Free Kindergarten Education Policy in Macau.....	109
	Michelle Marie Lau	
7	Early Childhood Development Policies in Nepal: Achievements, Learning, and Implications	135
	Sanjaya K. Khanal, Bimala Rai Paudyal, and Sabita Dangal	
8	A Story of Changing State Priorities: Early Childhood Care and Education Policies in Aotearoa New Zealand.....	163
	Liz Everiss, Diti Hill, and Anne Meade	

xv

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xvi		Contents
9	Understanding the Early Childhood Education Policies in Pacific Islands.....	187
	Wendy Rich-Orloff and Ufemia Camaitoga	
10	The ECE Landscape Being Shaped by Cosmopolitanism: An Examination and Evaluation of Policies in Singapore.....	221
	Mengguo Jing	
11	An Examination and Evaluation of Postmillennial Early Childhood Education Policies in Taiwan.....	245
	Suzannie K.Y. Leung and Eva E. Chen	
12	Early Childhood Education in Vietnam: History and Evaluation of Its Policies.....	263
	Wendy Boyd and Thao Dang Phuong	
13	Different Problems, Same Themes: A Summary of This Book.....	285
	Hui Li, Eunhye Park, and Jennifer J. Chen	
	Erratum	E1

Participated Countries

China(mainland, Hong Kong, Macau),
Japan, Korea, Taiwan

Singapore

Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Island

Nepal
Viet Nam

Backgrounds

- Increasing in investment of early childhood education
- Diversified and complicated in terms of cultural geography, social-cultural beliefs, levels of development, demographic profiles, political systems, and government commitment to early childhood education and care
- Each country is contextually unique in its advances and problems
- Lack of information about the region.
Even when data are available, they are often not categorized by age, sex, type of program, etc
- Limited indicators of evaluating national policies: Accessibility

SDG 4.2

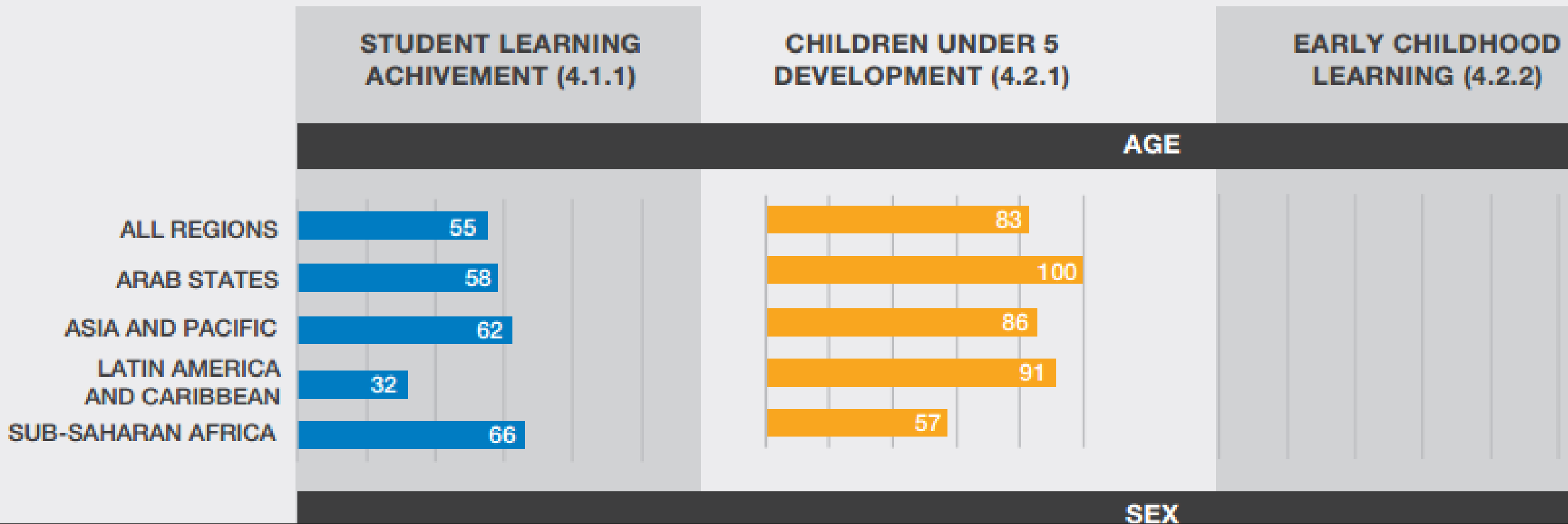
By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

Indicator for SDG 4.2

- 4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex (Tier III: there is no established methodology for the indicator)
- 4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex (Tier I) UNESCO-UIS

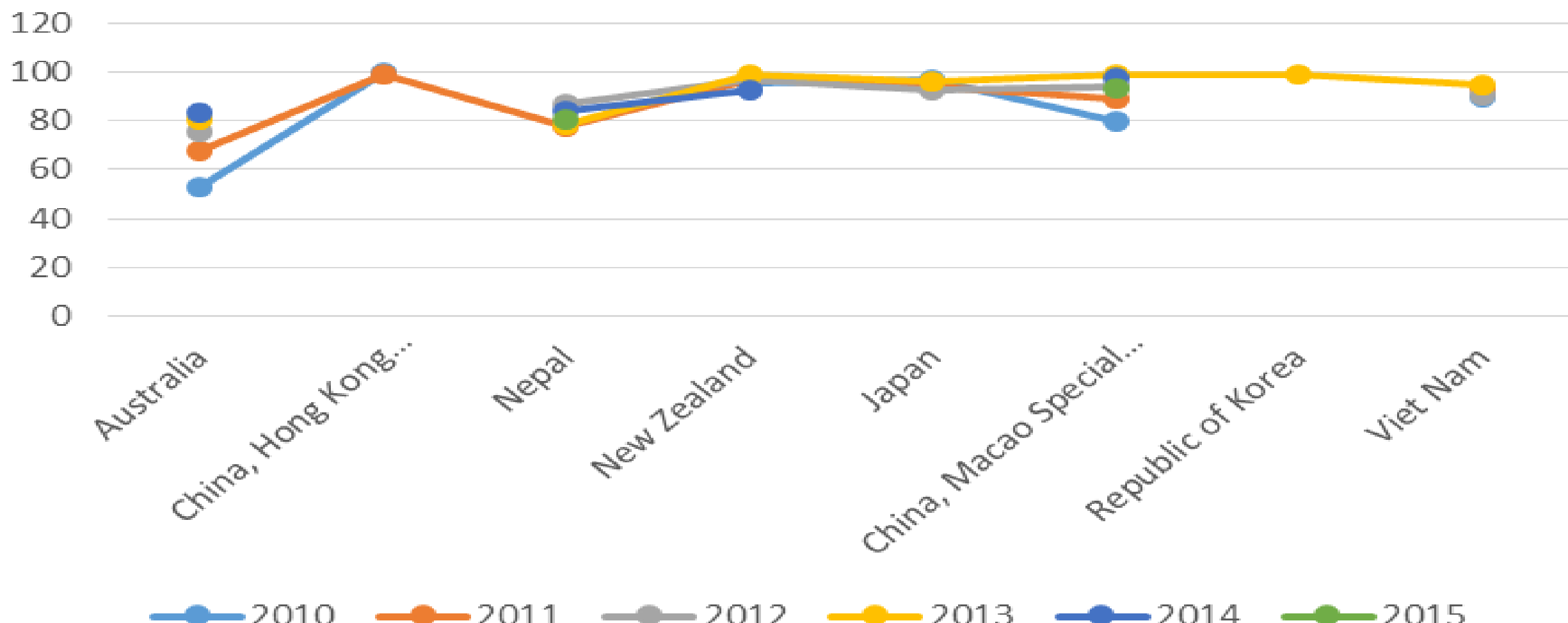
Data from SDG Knowledge Platform

Figure 9. Selected education indicators by region and type of disaggregation



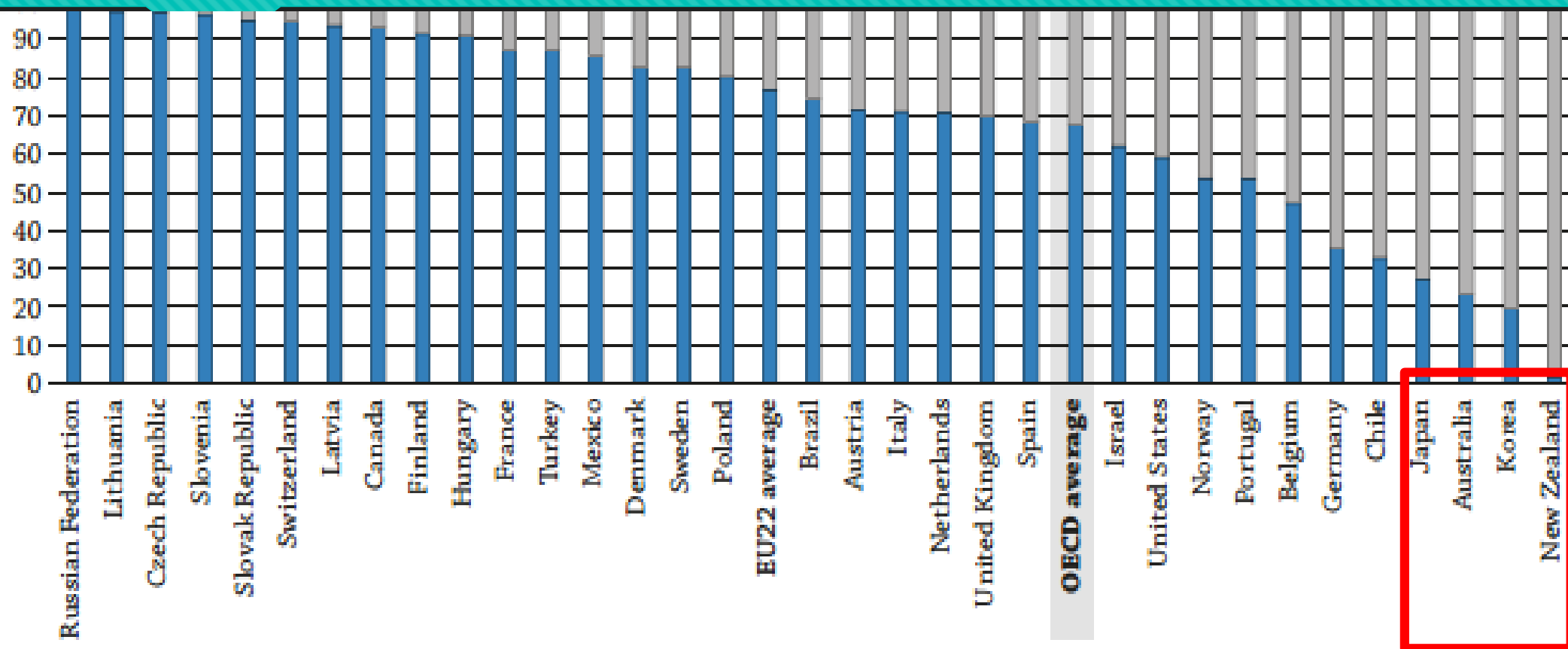
Data from SDG Knowledge Platform

indicator 4.2.2



Percentage of pupils enrolled in public institutions in pre-primary education

C2



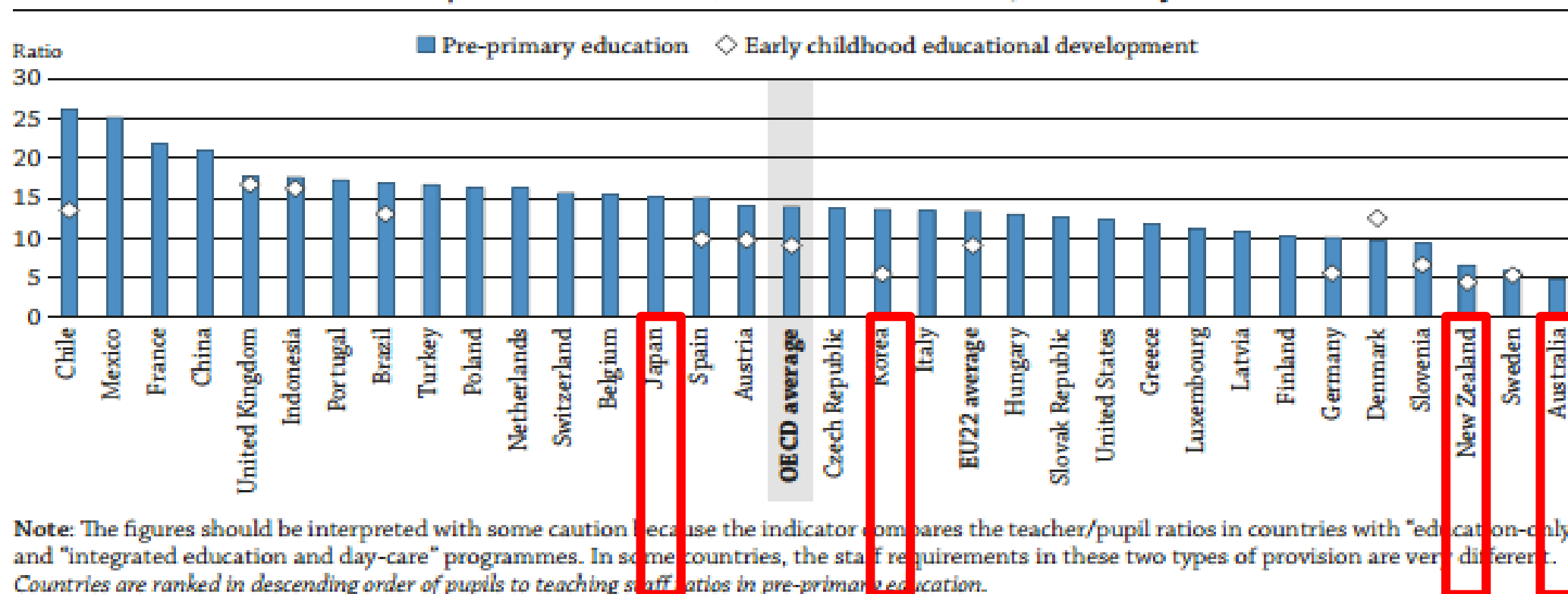
Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of pupils enrolled in public institutions in pre-primary education.

Source: OECD. Table C2.2. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm).

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/8889333398366>

Ration of pupils to teaching staff in ece

Figure C2.4. Ratio of pupils to teaching staff in early childhood education (2014)
Public and private institutions, calculation based on full-time equivalents



Note: The figures should be interpreted with some caution because the indicator compares the teacher/pupil ratios in countries with "education-only" and "integrated education and day-care" programmes. In some countries, the staff requirements in these two types of provision are very different. Countries are ranked in descending order of pupils to teaching staff ratios in pre-primary education.

Source: OECD. Table C2.2. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm).

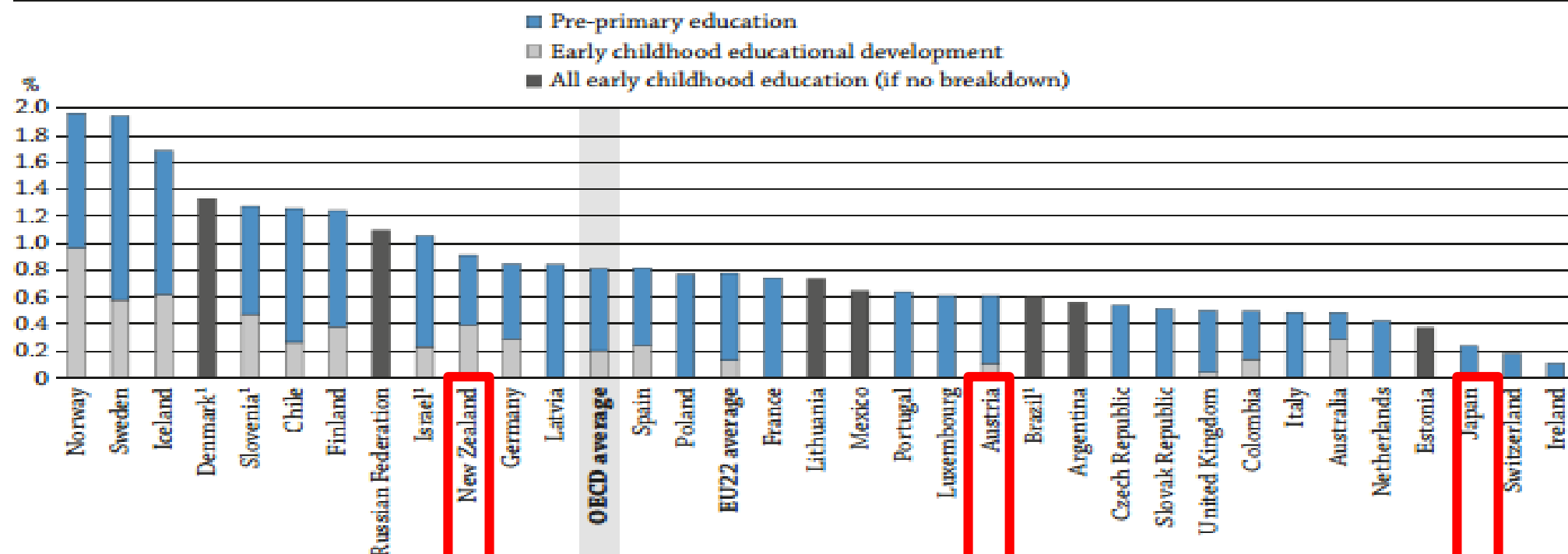
StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933398370>

Expenditure on ece: as a percentage of GDP by category

C2

Figure C2.5. Expenditure on early childhood educational institutions (2013)

As a percentage of GDP, by category



1. Includes some expenditure on childcare.

Countries are ranked in descending order of public and private expenditure on educational institutions.

Source: OECD, Table C2.3. See Annex 3 for notes (www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm).

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933398383>

Framework: 3A2S

- Accessibility
- Affordability
- Accountability
- Sustainability
- Social Justice.

guiding questions

Overall Context

- Historical and educational contexts for both education and care sector
- Overall picture of ECEC sector (name, types, age covered, law, teacher qualifications)

guiding questions

Accessibility

- Brief policy history
- Total number of children (0~6)
- Number of kindergarten and/or daycare(public/private)
- Number of children enrolled (by age/ sector)
- Number of teachers
- Any other indicators?

guiding questions

Affordability

- Brief policy history
- Amount of tuition for a child to be enrolled in centers (kindergarten/daycare/ sector)
- Amount of money subsidized by the government (age, SES, sector)
- Gini coefficient (to compare income inequality)

guiding indicators

Accountability

- Brief policy history
- Quality assurance system
- Teacher : Child ratio (age/ sector)
- Any other indicators (for example, school information site that opens to the public)

guiding questions

Sustainability

- Included in compulsory education system
- Any short, long term national plan?
- National Curriculum
- Any other indicators

guiding questions

Social Justice

- Government expenditure on ECE (compare to other school level)
- Tuition subsidized to low income families
- Any policies regarding gender (language, race, religion, disability, geographical location, social class etc.)
- Any other indicators

Summary: Accessibility

- The gross enrolment in early childhood education and care has dramatically increased for the last decade.
- However, millions of children in the Asia-Pacific still do not have access to services. Factors such as language, ethnicity, rural residence and disability can exacerbate disadvantages presented by poverty and very low levels of parental education
- Poor match with requirement of working families

Summary: Affordability

- Costs vary widely across services
- Free education for young children has become the most intriguing agenda for politicians
- The rapid expansion of center-based programs for-profit sector in some parts of Asia has been observed. This has led to concern in relations with quality, equity, and affordability. Some cases, these programs are less holistic

Summary: Accountability

- Countries begin to introduce quality control mechanism such as kindergarten evaluation, daycare accreditation etc.
- Discourse of universal assessment of young children is beginning to arise
- (OECD, UNICEF, Save the Children,)
- Information on early childhood settings is beginning to be publically available on government websites.

Summary: Sustainability

- Develop a national strategic plan
- Continue to develop the means of articulating and measuring economic and social benefits. This is usually practiced with introducing general assessment of young children

Summary: Social Justice

- Inequality remains for marginalized groups: Indigenous communities, rural families, children with additional needs
- Continued attention is given to mitigate policies that widen the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged children.

Different problems and same theme

Fragmentation

Kindergarten-childcare dichotomy is still observed in many countries

Having multiple ministries involved in holistic ECE has often caused the fragmentation, overlap and duplication of services, and a diffusion of responsibility

Policies and programs were solely created in response to the crises and changing goals in the past decade with limited national plans.

Different problems and same theme

underfinanced

The Public – Private Divide :

Private kindergarten are either being left behind or are only partially subsidized by the government

This public private divide lead the same problems: perpetuating educational inequalities and social justice problems

Different problems and same theme

underfinanced

Free ECE for all

In some countries, the most stimulating 'sound bite' has turned out to be 'free ECE for all.'

In reality, the so-called free ECE is neither 'all kids free' nor 'all fees free'

Controversial Issues : Should the government provide full subsidy to private kindergartens?

Different problems and same theme

**Bureaucratically
neglected**

Developing ECE: a ‘sound bite’ or a ‘political spectacle’

‘political spectacle’ refers to the political constructions of reality (visible part) produced intentionally to shape public policy.

Real happening on the backstage is invisible

Usually the politicians present their agenda by using emotional language, image, and media

Unfortunately, these ‘political spectacles’ do not solve real challenges and problems in reality

What we have learned

- Some countries have achieved sound solutions to solving their problems with a balance within the 3A2S framework
- Some countries are toying with their sound bites and suffering from the lacking of quality monitoring and assurance mechanisms(accountability) and the lacking of healthy finance to sustain their free ECE policy(sustainability)

What we have to do



The diagram consists of two teal chevron shapes pointing to the right, connected by a black arrow. The first chevron contains the word 'Fragmentation' and the second chevron contains the phrase 'Holistic Integrated one stop service for a child'.

Fragmentation

**Holistic Integrated
one stop service
for a child**

What we have to do

```
graph LR; A[Underfinanced] --> B[At least 1% GDP]
```

Underfinanced

**At least 1%
GDP**

What we have to do



**Bureaucratically
Neglected**

**Real problem
solving**

Hope this 3A2S framework serves as a common language to compare ECE policies across countries

THANK YOU