

<b>Institution:</b> University of East London (UEL)		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 23 Education		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Childcare marketisation: Addressing the perils and shaping the future		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2014 – 2017		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>  Eva Lloyd	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>  Professor of Early Childhood	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>  2007 – present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014 – 2020 (ongoing)		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No		

### 1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

ICMEC (International Centre for the Study of the Mixed Economy of childcare) interrogates policies and proposes strategies to mitigate childcare marketisation risks to disadvantaged children's access to quality early childhood education and care (ECEC). It explores alternatives to marketised ECEC to benefit children's life chances and economic wellbeing within low-income families. ICMEC's research influences UK and international policy law and services by working with policy makers, informing public debate, and influencing the ECEC sector's operations and strategies. More equitable early childhood education and care systems contribute to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 10, reduced inequalities within and between countries.

### 2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

ICMEC, a multi-disciplinary research centre, was established in 2007 by Professors Penn and Lloyd to survey policy-relevant evidence about the impact of the marketisation of early childhood education and care systems. As the only UK research centre specialising in this area, it serves as an on-line meeting point for scholars researching developments within mixed economies of childcare (**R1**), with research associates across six continents. ICMEC's primary focus is on strategies and policies to improve access to high quality and affordable provision within marketised ECEC systems (**R1**, **R5**).

Inadequate childcare can have a devastating influence on young children's wellbeing, development and life chances (**R4**, **R5**, **R6**). England's ECEC reflects growing marketisation which diminishes its intended policy purpose. Most ECEC provision for children aged nought to five is now delivered by private childcare businesses, including day nurseries and childminders (**R1**, **R2**, **R3**). According to 2020 official statistics, 66% of three-year-olds and 86% of eligible disadvantaged two-year-olds received their subsidised early education in private sector provision, mostly for-profit childcare businesses. Almost a quarter of four-year-olds also did so, but most attended primary Reception classes. These businesses delivered additional childcare hours employed parents required for these age groups and for under threes. The burgeoning private childcare market shows increasing financialisation, where heavily indebted private for-profit childcare groups, owned by international investors, finance their expansion to the detriment of disadvantaged children's equitable access (**R2**, **R3**). The pandemic has increased ECEC sustainability and equity risks linked to this trend (**S6**).

ECEC's systemic weakness contributes to the disadvantage that increasing numbers of young children experience (**R6**). Official UK poverty figures confirm families with

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children are bearing the brunt of rising poverty. Across the UK over four million children now live in poverty, almost one in three, with under-fives making up 53% of this total. Poverty affects over two million young children, jeopardizing their present and future well-being.

ICMEC's research highlights the growing dominance of the private-for-profit sector among ECEC providers in the UK, European Union, OECD member states and elsewhere, and its negative effect on children's equitable access to affordable, high quality services. (R1, R4). ICMEC's research into childcare marketisation's impact and alternatives to marketisation or mitigating policies has reached a wide national and international policymaker, professional and academic audience (R1, R2, R3, R4, R5, R6).

An ICMEC commission from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF), an influential independent social change organisation working to solve UK poverty, illustrates ICMEC's policy influence. In 2014, JRF commissioned 33 evidence reviews of existing policy research across a range of areas to inform an anti-poverty strategy for the UK. Eva Lloyd reviewed evidence for the links between early childhood education and care and poverty (R4). JRF published each review's findings (R4), while the researchers' academic institutions published their long reports. This evidence informed public and parliamentary debates on poverty eradication.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

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**R1.** Lloyd, E. and Penn, H. 2014. Childcare markets in an age of austerity. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 22(3), 386-396.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2014.912901>

**R2.** Lloyd, E. 2017. Early childhood education and care: poverty and access. Perspectives from England, in L. Miller, C. Cameron, C. Dalli and N. Barbour (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Early Childhood Policy*. SAGE. 268-

286. <https://repository.uel.ac.uk/download/b59a3d04a47ccd2d036e33ce361b93b1439438672e2abedfb915251dfef132e5/483444/Eva%20Lloyd%202017%20chapter%20SAGE%20Handbook%20of%20Early%20Childhood%20Policy.pdf>.

**R3.** Lloyd, E. 2015. Early childhood education and care in England under the Coalition Government, *London Review of Education*, 33(2), 144-156.

<http://ingentaconnect.com/content/ioep/clre/2015/00000013/00000002/art00012>

**R4.** Lloyd, E. and Potter, S. 2014. Early childhood education and care and poverty in C. Gould (ed) *Reducing poverty in the UK – a collection of evidence reviews*. Joseph Rowntree Publishing. 84-88. [https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/Reducing-poverty-reviews-FULL\\_0.pdf](https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/Reducing-poverty-reviews-FULL_0.pdf)

**R5.** Lloyd, E. 2016. Early years provision and children's life chances in J. Tucker (ed) *Improving children's life chances*. Child Poverty Action Group. 25-37.

**R6.** LaValle, I., Payne, L., Lloyd, E. with Potter, S. 2014. *Review of policies and interventions for low income families with young children*. London: Office of the Children's Commissioner for England. [http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/21633/1/Low\\_income\\_families\\_full\\_review\\_final.pdf](http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/21633/1/Low_income_families_full_review_final.pdf)

**G1.** Eva Lloyd, *Anti-poverty Strategies for the UK*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1 November 2013 - 31 January 2014, GBP12,024.32.

**G2.** Eva Lloyd, *Literature Review on the policy framework and quality of provision for 0-5-year-olds in low-income families*, Office of the Children's Commissioner for England, 10 February 2014 – 30 May 2014, GBP19,956.00.

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

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#### ICMEC's contribution to national policy, debate and awareness

The 2014 House of Lords Select Committee on Affordable Childcare used ICMEC's evidence. Its report cited ICMEC research to scrutinize proposed and existing early years legislation and make recommendations to Government (S1). For instance, recommendations 42 and 45 clearly reflected findings from ICMEC research cited in paragraph 39 and in Annex A's section on OECD comparisons of childcare costs and public spending on childcare.

ICMEC made a significant contribution to the implementation of the 2015 Conservative Government's flagship 30 hours free childcare policy. Lloyd was advisor for three evaluations in this policy's evolution (**S2**). Changes to the evolving policy led to a better ECEC experience for young children.

ICMEC's research and international seminar series have frequently prompted requests to its director for further face-to-face meetings, including with HM Treasury, the Department for Education, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Cabinet Office Open Innovation team, the National Audit Office, the Social Mobility Commission, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty, the Children and Families Directorate of the Scottish Government, several Labour Party Shadow Early Years ministers, Glasgow City Council and LB Islington. These consultations heightened policymaker awareness of the risk to equitable ECEC access from the private-for-profit sector's rapid expansion and led to research commissions (**R4, R6, S6**).

ICMEC also informs research and campaigning to promote equitable ECEC access through contributions to publications produced by national NGOs and charities, including the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (**R4**) and the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) (**R5**). Reports by the Resolution Foundation and the New Economics Foundation both reference ICMEC research (**S3**). In a 2016 CPAG publication (**R5**), published in the run-up to the Conservative government's life chances strategy launch, Lloyd and others argued that improving children's life chances was impossible without addressing child poverty, further contributing to policy debate.

To foster public debate ICMEC shares research findings with UK practitioner and general audiences via articles in practitioner magazines, presentations to policymaker and practitioner audiences and media contributions through blogs (**S6**), articles (**S7**) and interviews. In 2020 alone, through articles on the BBC News website, in *The Week* and in *the New Stateman*, ICMEC's research reached a combined daily audience of more than 26 million.

### **ICMEC's contribution to international communities**

ICMEC engages with international communities, NGOs and policy makers through various communication avenues, including childcare quality improvement organisation Bureau Kwaliteit Kinderopvang (the Netherlands); childcare umbrella organisation Start Strong (Ireland), the Bertelsmann Foundation, the Bavarian State Institute for Early Childhood Research and the German Youth Institute (Germany). Three country examples evidence this impact.

#### Ireland/Eire

Penn and Lloyd contributed a review of international policies and strategies to reduce childcare markets' equity risks to a 2014 report (**S4**) by Irish early years umbrella organisation *Start Strong*. The report informed Irish early childhood policy development. This work generated an invitation to Lloyd to speak at a 2015 Dublin ECEC policy seminar organised by the Irish Department of Children and Youth Affairs. This meeting resulted in the 2018 launch of Ireland's first major ECEC policy document: *First 5*.

In 2019, the Irish Minister of Children and Youth Affairs invited Lloyd to join an independent Expert Group tasked with developing a new funding model for early learning and childcare and out-of-school care. Facilitated by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (now the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth), this group is directly responsible for shaping Irish early childhood policy (**S4**).

#### The Netherlands

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Lloyd collaborated with the Dutch Social and Economic Council (SER) on a review of Dutch ECEC and to help formulate its recommendations. In 2015, she addressed the SER international expert meeting launching this review. SER's 2016 report contains a case study of the UK (section 4.3) reflecting and citing Lloyd's input, acknowledging her contribution to the expert meeting (SER, 2016, p. 177) and references ICMEC research (S5).

Next, SER commissioned a comparative study of European ECEC systems, with Lloyd authoring the comparison with England's early childhood policies and systems (SEO, 2020, p. 54). This report for SER directly informed Dutch early childhood policymaking (S5).

### Singapore

A panel discussion with the deputy director of policy in Singapore's Early Childhood Development Agency ECDA, which develops and implements ECEC policy on behalf of the Singaporean government, and a prominent not-for-profit ECEC business leader took place after Professor Lloyd's 2019 presentation on childcare marketisation at Singapore University of Social Sciences. Lloyd separately discussed Singapore's childcare market with each panellist. Policymaker feedback suggested her input influenced ECDA's decision to fund more not-for-profit providers.

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

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**S1.** House of Lords Select Committee on Affordable Childcare; First Report 2014. <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201415/ldselect/ldaffchild/117/11702.htm>

**S2.** The three evaluations of the 30 hours free childcare policy **that build on** ICMEC's research and the second authors of these reports, Ivana La Valle is attached to ICMEC as Visiting Scholar.

**S2a.** Paull, G., La Valle, I. *et al.* 2017a. *Evaluation of early implementation of 30 hours free childcare. Research Report.* Department for Education. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/629460/Evaluation\\_of\\_early\\_implementation\\_of\\_30\\_hours\\_free\\_childcare\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/629460/Evaluation_of_early_implementation_of_30_hours_free_childcare_.pdf)

**S2b.** Paull, G. La Valle, I. *et al.* 2017b. *Evaluation of early roll-out of 30 hours free childcare. Research Report.* Department for Education. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/642007/Evaluation\\_of\\_early\\_rollout\\_of\\_30-hours\\_free\\_childcare.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642007/Evaluation_of_early_rollout_of_30-hours_free_childcare.pdf)

**S2c.** Paull, G., La Valle, I. *et al.* 2018. *Evaluation of the first year of the national roll-out of 30 hours free childcare. Research report.* Department for Education. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/740168/Evaluation\\_of\\_national\\_rollout\\_of\\_30\\_hours\\_free-childcare.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/740168/Evaluation_of_national_rollout_of_30_hours_free-childcare.pdf)

**S3a.** Stewart, K and Gambaro, L. 2014. *World Class: What does international evidence tell us about improving the English childcare market?* Resolution Foundation. <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads/2014/08/World-Class-What-does-international-evidence-tell-us-about-improving-quality-access-and-affordability-in-the-English-childcare-market1.pdf>

**S3b.** Hall, M. Stephens, L. 2020. *Quality childcare for all: making England's childcare a universal basic service.* New Economics Foundation. [https://neweconomics.org/uploads/files/Quality-childcare\\_NEF.pdf](https://neweconomics.org/uploads/files/Quality-childcare_NEF.pdf)

**S4a.** Penn, H. and Lloyd, E. 2014. How can government ensure that early childhood care and education is of high quality? A review of the international evidence, in T. Wolfe (ed.) *Childcare – business or profession?* Start Strong.

**S4b.** For the press announcement of the formation of the Expert Group to develop a new funding model for Irish early childhood and childcare system of which Eva Lloyd is a

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member. <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/d5dfdb-minister-zappone-announces-expert-group-to-develop-a-new-funding-mod/>

**S5a.** SER. 2016. *Gelijk Goed van Start*. The Hague, Sociaal Economische Raad.

<https://www.ser.nl/-/media/ser/downloads/adviezen/2016/gelijk-goed-van-start.pdf>

**S5b.** SEO. 2020. *Naar een stabiel stelsel van kinderopvang*. Sociaal Economisch Onderzoek. <https://25cjk227xfsu3mkkyfg1m9xb7-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-13-Naar-een-stabiel-stelsel-van-kinderopvang.pdf>

**S6.** Lloyd, E. 2020. Ensuring fairer access to early years learning and childcare after the Covid-19 lockdown. Nuffield Foundation. <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/news/opinion/ensuring-fairer-access-early-years-provision-after-covid-19-lockdown>

**S7.** Lloyd's 2018 piece for *The Conversation* on the UK childcare workforce (<https://theconversation.com/profiles/eva-lloyd-140224>) was reprinted in 128 UK media outlets, creating national impact.

**S8.** Testimonial from Mr Michael Scanlan, independent chair of the Expert Group on a New Funding Model, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (previously the Department of Children and Youth Affairs), Dublin.

**S9.** At New Year 2014 Eva Lloyd was awarded an Honorary OBE for Services to Education, received from the Secretary of State for Education during a small ceremony at the Department for Education. This honour reflected official appreciation of her advisory work on early childhood education and care for the Coalition Government, in particular her role in co-producing the 2010-2015 Coalition Government's first early childhood policy.