Attendance at licensed ECE services in 2019

Both the total number of attendances and attendance rates decreased between 2018 and 2019, though the majority of 3 and 4 year olds did attend early childhood education during the 2019 ECE Census week. The number of children attending an education & care service has increased.

Attendance rates decreased for all ages between 2018 and 2019

- There was a 0.8% decrease from the 200,588 attendances in 2018 to 198,923 attendances in 2019. The overall attendance rate for New Zealand children aged 0-4 years was 63.9% in 2019, down 0.9 percentage points from 2018.

- The largest decreases in attendances by age was for older children – the percentage of children aged 3 who attended ECE has decreased from 92.2% in 2018 to 90.0% in 2019, and the attendance rate of 4 year olds has fallen below 95%.

17% of Māori children attended Te Kōhanga Reo, while 17% of Pacific children attended a home-based service in 2019

Māori children accounted for 94% of enrolments at Te Kōhanga Reo

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1 The dashed red line indicates that direct numerical comparisons with earlier years cannot be made due to a change in how enrolments/attendances were collected, though trends can be inferred. Enrolment data was captured under RS61 and attendance data was captured under the Early Learning Information (ELI) system.

2 The enrolment rate is the number of enrolments/attendances as a percentage of the population aged 0-4, after adjustment for the changing age distribution over the years (weighted by each age group’s population share in 2019). Population numbers were sourced from Stats NZ’s Estimated Resident Population by Age and Sex tables (Infoshare).
Regardless of ethnic group, most children attended an education & care service.

- The number of children attending education & care services increased to 135,237 children in 2019 (up 0.4% from 2018). All other services saw a decrease in the number of children enrolled.
- The proportion of attendances at kindergartens has decreased from 20% of attendances in 2010 to 14% of attendances in 2019. The proportion of attendances shared by playcentres has also decreased, while the proportions attending Te Kōhanga Reo and home-based services have remained steady.
- Most regions saw a decrease in attendance between 2018 and 2019, though these changes are minor.

The West Coast region saw a decrease in both the number of services and the number of attendances between 2018 and 2019.

- The Tasman and Manawatu-Wanganui regions were the only regions to see an increase in attendance between 2018 and 2019.
- Attendances in the Tasman region increased by 2.0% and in the Manawatu-Wanganui region by 1.2%.
- The biggest decreases in attendance were in the West Coast, Nelson and Gisborne regions.
- Attendances in the West Coast region decreased by 5.2% between 2018 and 2019, in the Nelson region by 4.2% and in the Gisborne region by 4.1%.