



Sector data overview

ECE Funding Review MAG meeting 1

Presented by Reuben Matai'a & Isaac Malpass

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Proactively Released





ECE service numbers

IN-CONFIDENCE - RELEASE EXTERNALLY

ECE service numbers

Number of licensed ECE services					
Service type	2002	2007	2012	2021	2024
Education & Care	1,612	1,927	2,324	2,736	2,666
Kindergarten	606	618	644	664	674
Home-based	194	224	334	392	248
Casual Education & Care	38	35	29	8	3
Hospital-based	-	-	10	20	20
Kōhanga reo	545	470	463	434	416
Playcentre	492	465	456	398	382
Total	3,488	3,740	4,261	4,653	4,409

Expansion of teacher-led ECE services

- Significant expansion in education and care services, increasing by over 1,000 services since 2002.*
- Rapid growth in home-based providers from 2007, peaking in 2021, before returning to levels similar to 2007 by 2025.*
- Kindergarten services grew steadily across the period.*
- Parent-led services declined consistently over the period.*

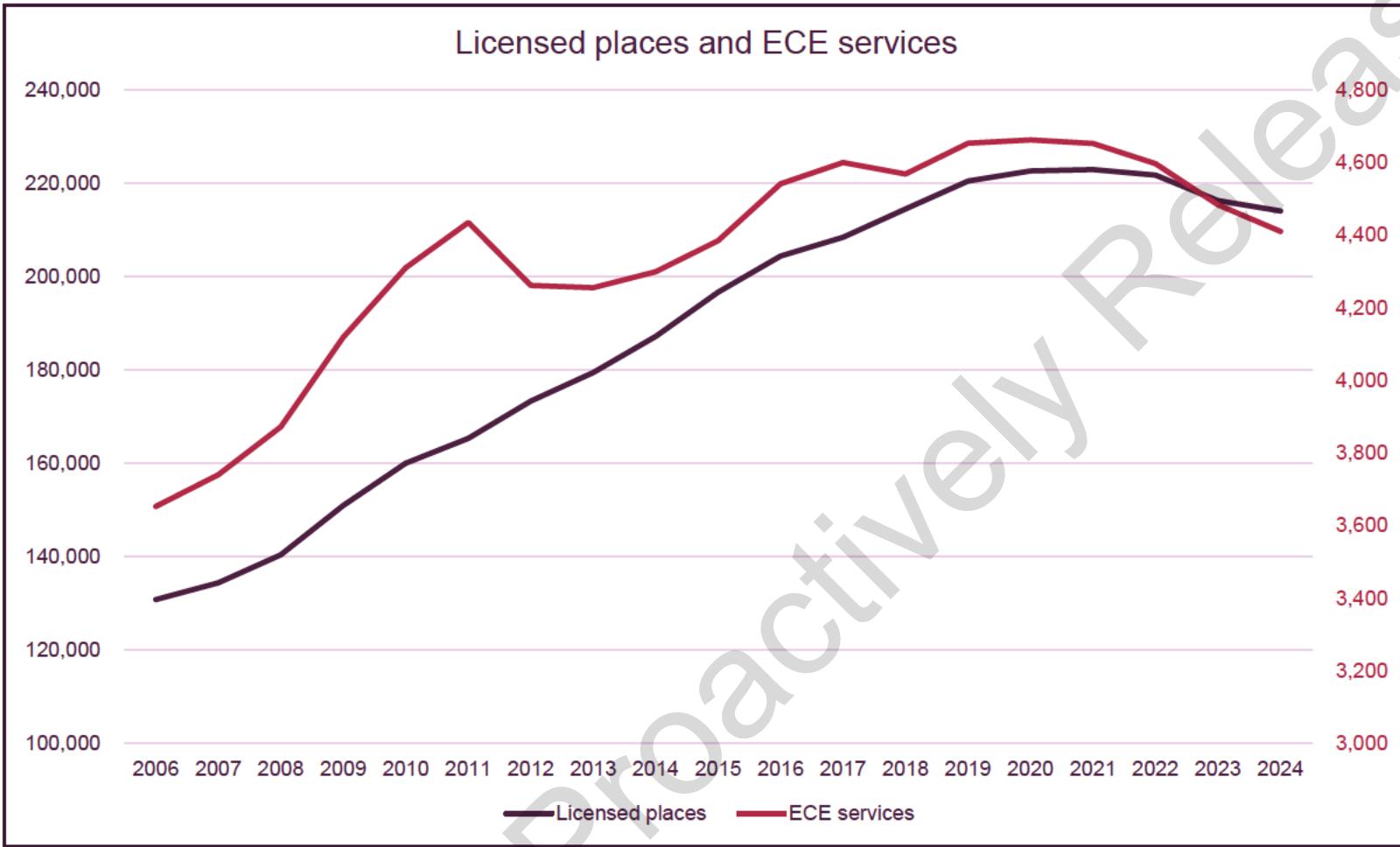
Average service size (as at July 2025)

Service type	Median licensed places	Median places for under 2	% services with under 2s places	Highest capacity provider	Lowest capacity provider
Education & Care	50	14	82%	150	5
Kindergarten	40	0	8%	96	20
Home-based	80	60	100%	100	20
Casual education and care	41	15	67%	50	33
Hospital-based	24	17	100%	50	7
Kōhanga reo	28	8	99%	100	10
Playcentre	30	15	100%	32	17

Most ECE services are licensed to include children under 2 years old, but not all:

- Kindergartens are the main exception – only 8% of them offer places for under-2s.
- All home-based, hospital-based, kōhanga reo, and playcentre services are licensed to cater for under 2s, and the majority of education and care services.
- There is considerable variation in the size of ECE service providers, with the most significant range seen in Education & Care services (from 5 places to 150 places).

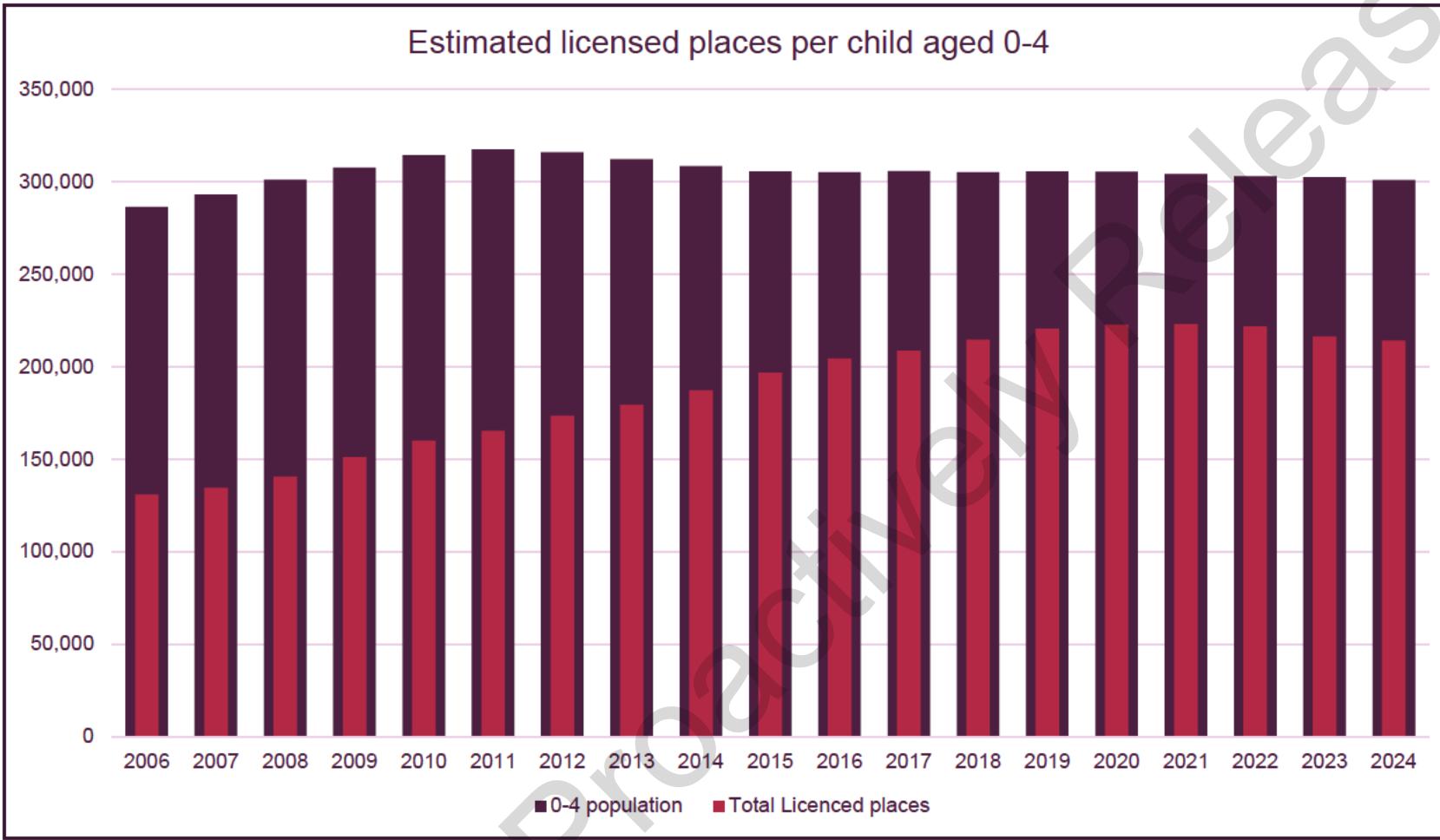
Licensed places



Licensed places generally increase in-line with service growth:

- Licensed places increased steadily, peaking in 2021, before declining by 4% by 2024.
- The dip in services in 2011/12 was driven by mergers following an increase in maximum licensed capacity.
- Between 2017 and 2018, licensed places continued to rise even as the number of licensed services declined.

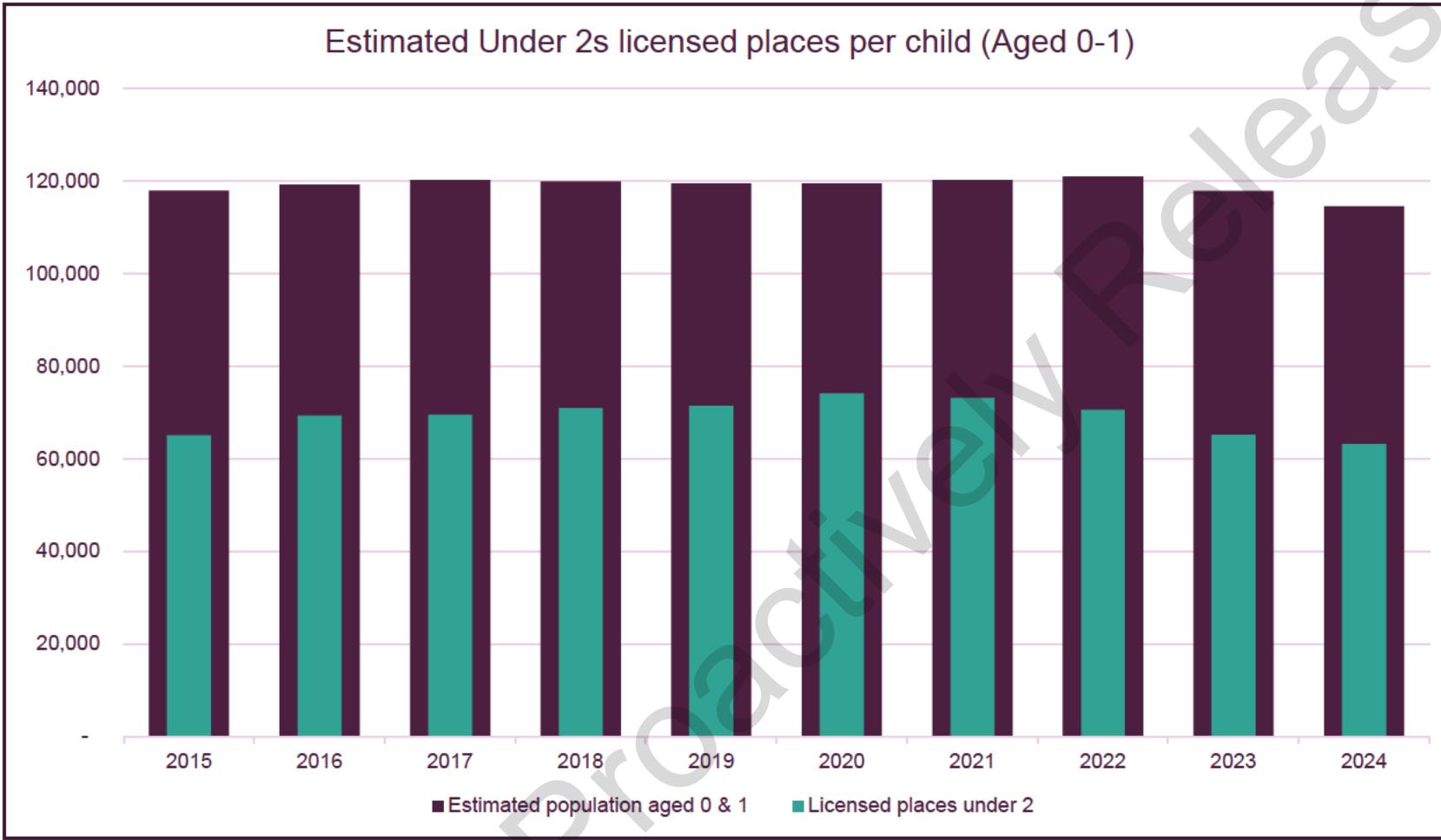
Licensed places per capita (total aged 0-4)



Consistent increases in the number of licensed places per child in New Zealand until 2021.

- Places per child ranged from 0.46 to 0.73 places per child over the period, (0.71 in 2024).
- The estimated 0-4 population ranged from 286,000 to 317,000 over this period (301,000 in 2024).
- Licensed places ranged from 131,000 to 223,000 over the period (214,000 in 2024).

Licensed places per capita (aged 0 & 1/under 2s)



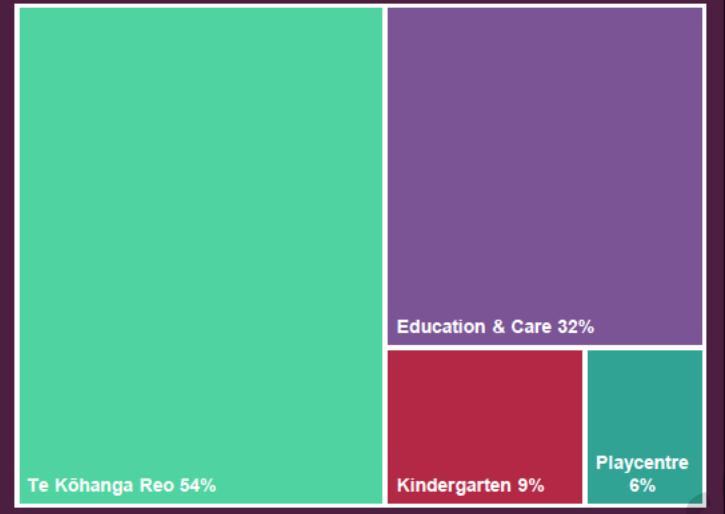
Under 2s places per capita largely unchanged since 2015

- Places per child ranged from 0.55 to 0.62 places per child over the period, (0.55 in 2024).
- 0-1 population ranged from 118,000 to 121,000 over this period (114,000 in 2024).
- Licensed places ranged from 65,000 to 74,000 (63,500 in 2024)

Service diversity in local settings

Ōpotiki District

- 2023 census usual resident 0-4 population count: 717
- Total licenced places: 544
- Places per child: 0.76
- Licenced ECE services: 15
- Proportion of Teacher-led services: 41%
- Proportion of whānau/parent-led: 59%



Western Bay of Plenty District

- 2023 census usual resident 0-4 population count: 3,108
- Total licenced places: 1,761
- Places per child: 0.56
- Licenced ECE services: 48
- Proportion of Teacher-led: 75%
- Proportion of Whānau/Parent-led: 25%



MacKenzie District

- 2023 census usual resident 0-4 population count: 279
- Total licenced places: 174
- Places per child: 0.62
- Licenced ECE services: 9
- Proportion of Teacher-led: 100%
- Proportion of Whānau/Parent-led: 0%

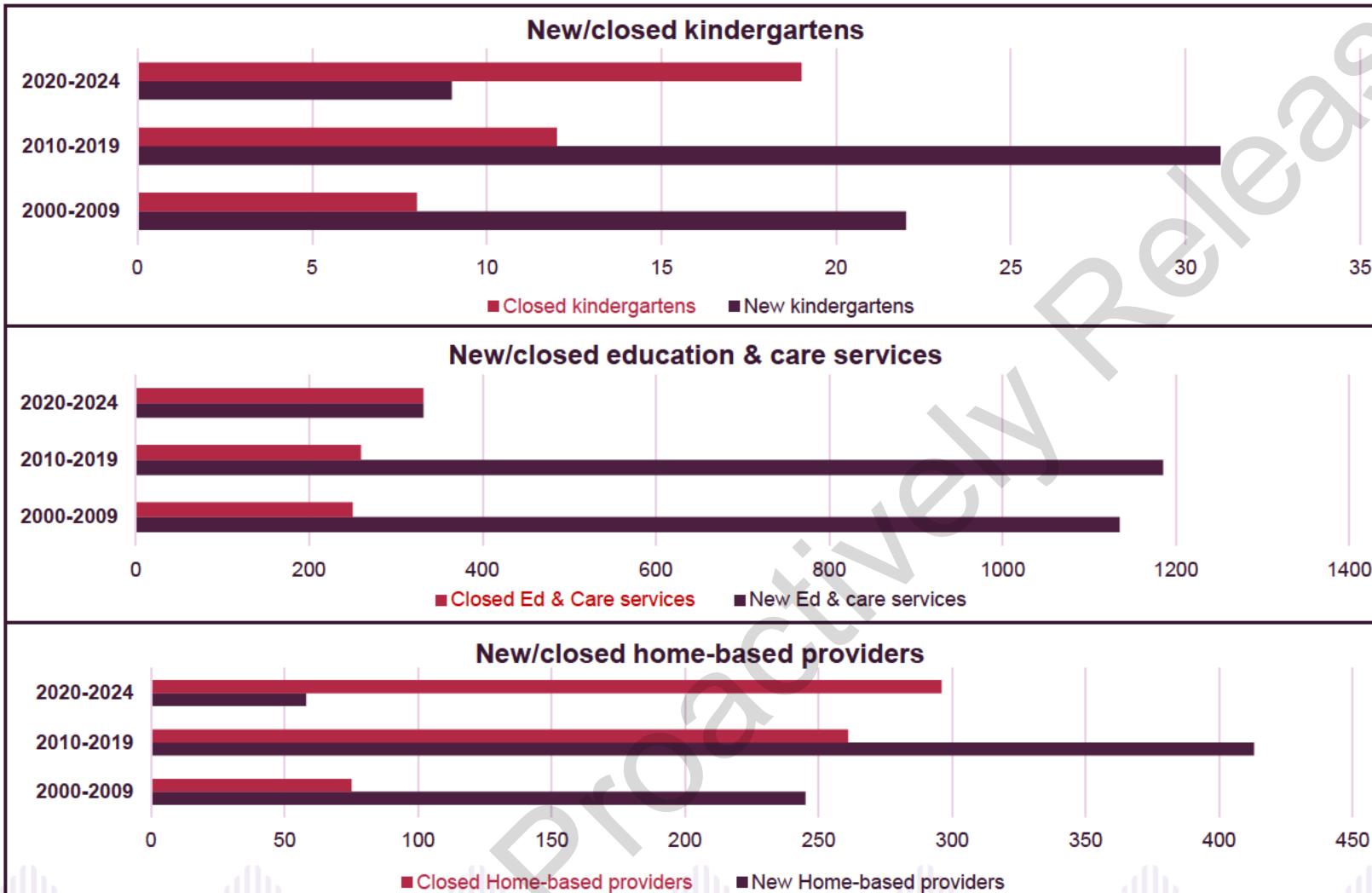


Questions or comments?



New and closed services

New/Closed services and changes in ownership



110 services underwent a change in ownership in 2024, mostly through company-to-company transfers (77.8%). Other transfers included:

- Charitable Trust → Incorporated society (6%)
- Charitable Trust → Charitable Trust (3%)
- Other transitions (13.6%)

Despite more kindergarten closed than new services over the 2020-2024 period, total services grew due to ownership changes (primarily, from education and care services to kindergartens).

Primary reasons for closure

Primary reasons for closure in teacher-led ECE services (2015 – 2019)



Primary reasons for closure in teacher-led ECE services (2020 – May 2025)



Key (recorded) drivers of ECE service closures:

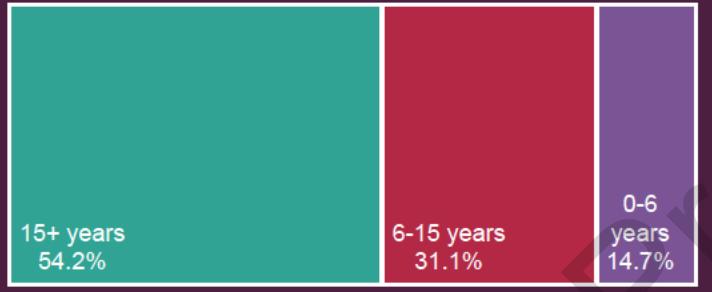
- *Voluntary permanent closure and declining enrolments were recorded as being the most common reasons for service closures across both periods.*
- *The proportion of services closing due to non-compliance remained similar throughout both periods.*
- *Financial-related closures typically involve liquidation or receivership.*
- *2015-2019 covers 310 closures, compared to 585 in 2020-2025.*

Service lifespan prior to closure (2015 – May 2025)

Education & Care

- 546 closures, with 447 reporting a reason.
- Non-compliance was more common in short-lived services (29%) compared to long-running services (7%).
- Top reasons across all 'lifespans' included voluntary permanent closure and declining enrolments.

Lifespan prior to closure



Kindergarten

- 32 closures, with 28 reporting a reason.
- Only 3 reasons were recorded across all service 'lifespans', these include:
 - Permanent voluntary closure (75%)
 - Declining enrolments (21%)
 - Financial reasons (4%)

Lifespan prior to closure



Home-based

- 443 closures, with 418 reporting a reason.
- Non-compliance was more common in short-lived services (36%) compared to long-running services (22%).
- The most common reasons for closure included voluntary permanent closure (34%) and a declining roll (33%).

Lifespan prior to closure

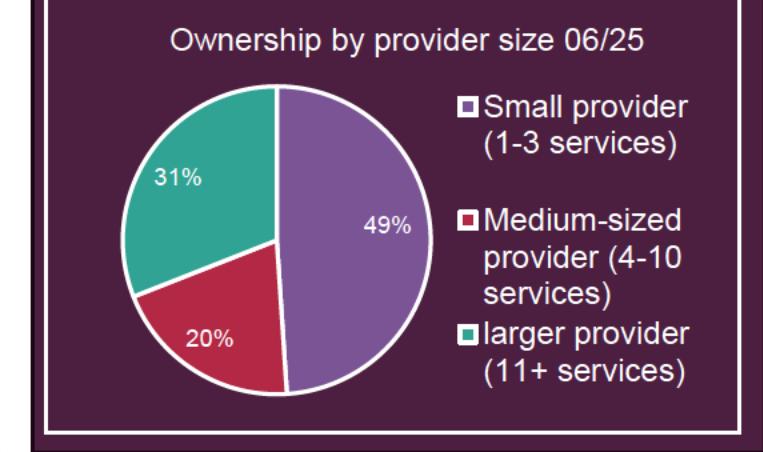
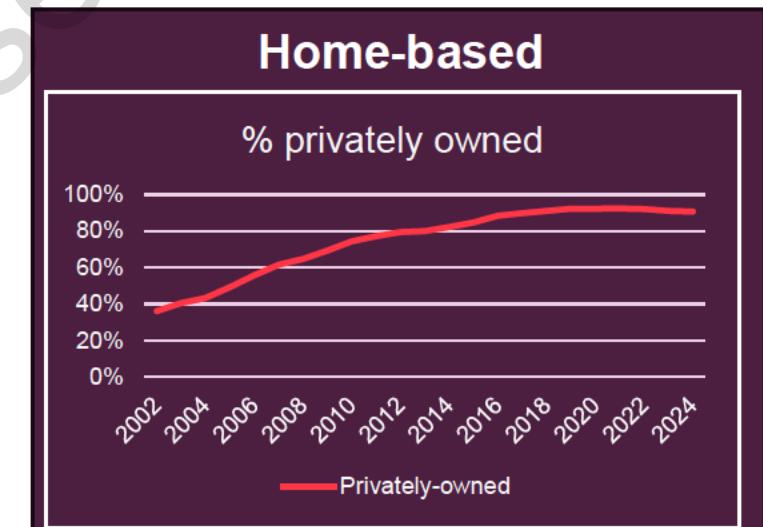
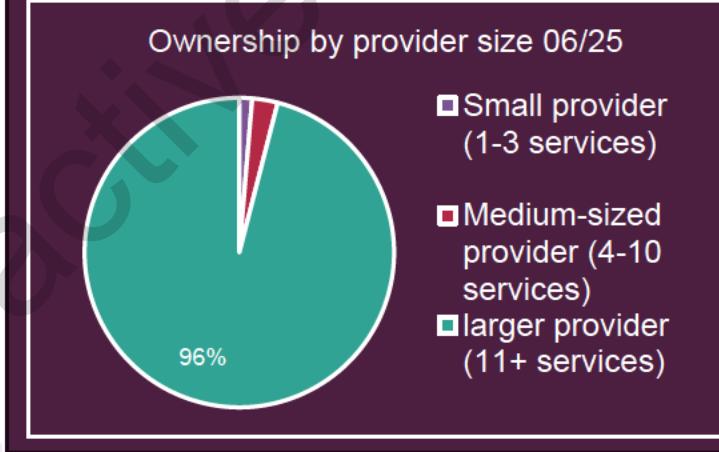
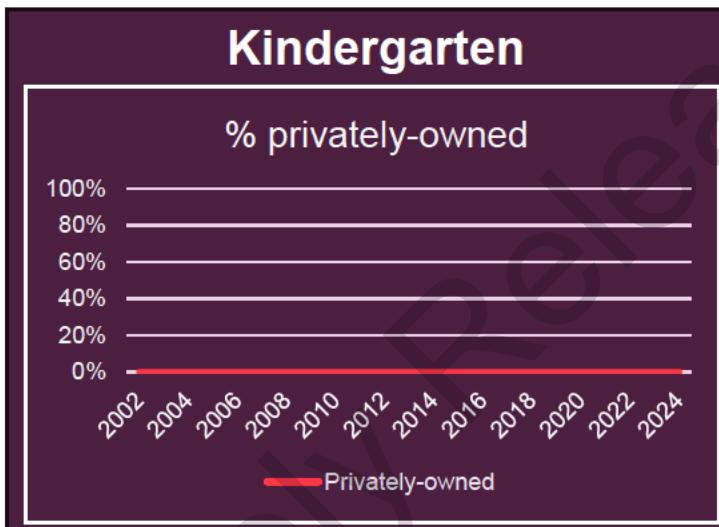
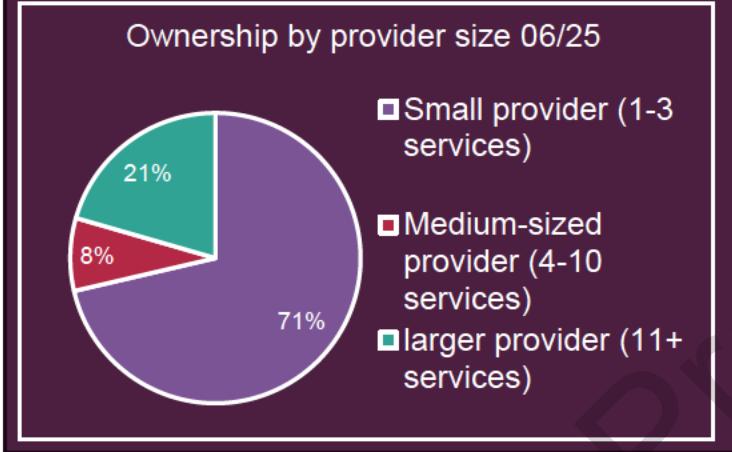
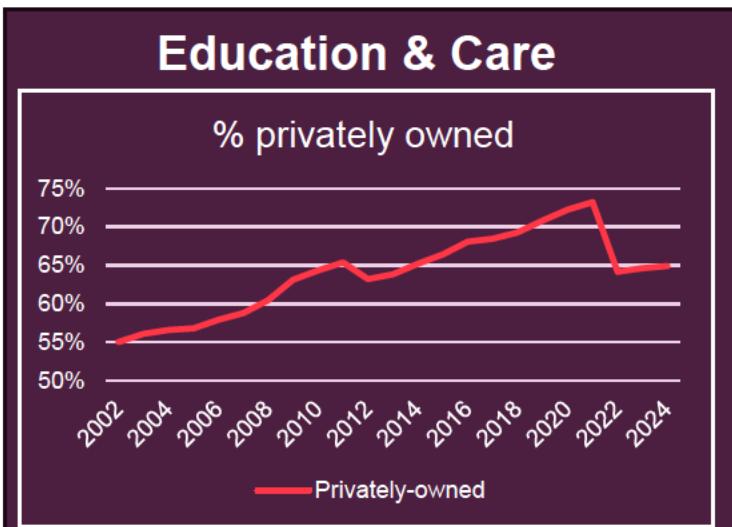


Questions or comments?



ECE service characteristics

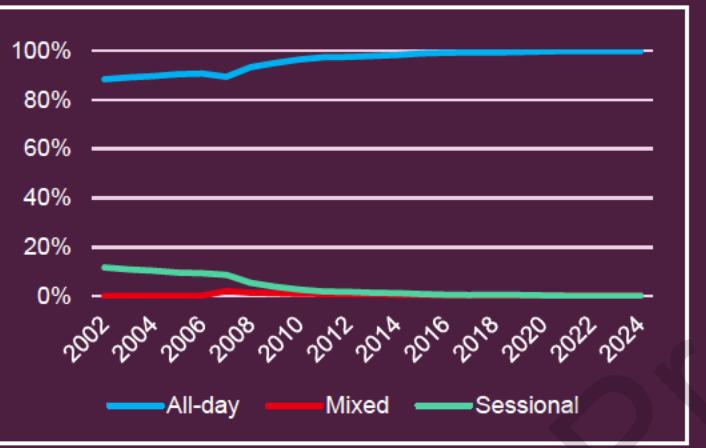
Ownership structure



Operating structure

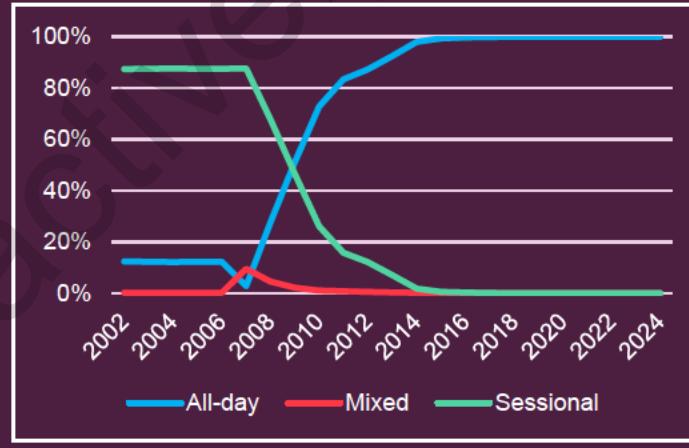
Education & Care

- The majority of all education and care services offer all-day services.
- While there were some services that previously offered sessional only services, practically all services now offer all-day.



Kindergarten

- Significant shift towards all-day provision following the introduction of 20 hours ECE.
- This subsequently led to an increase in the average hours of participation in Kindergarten services.

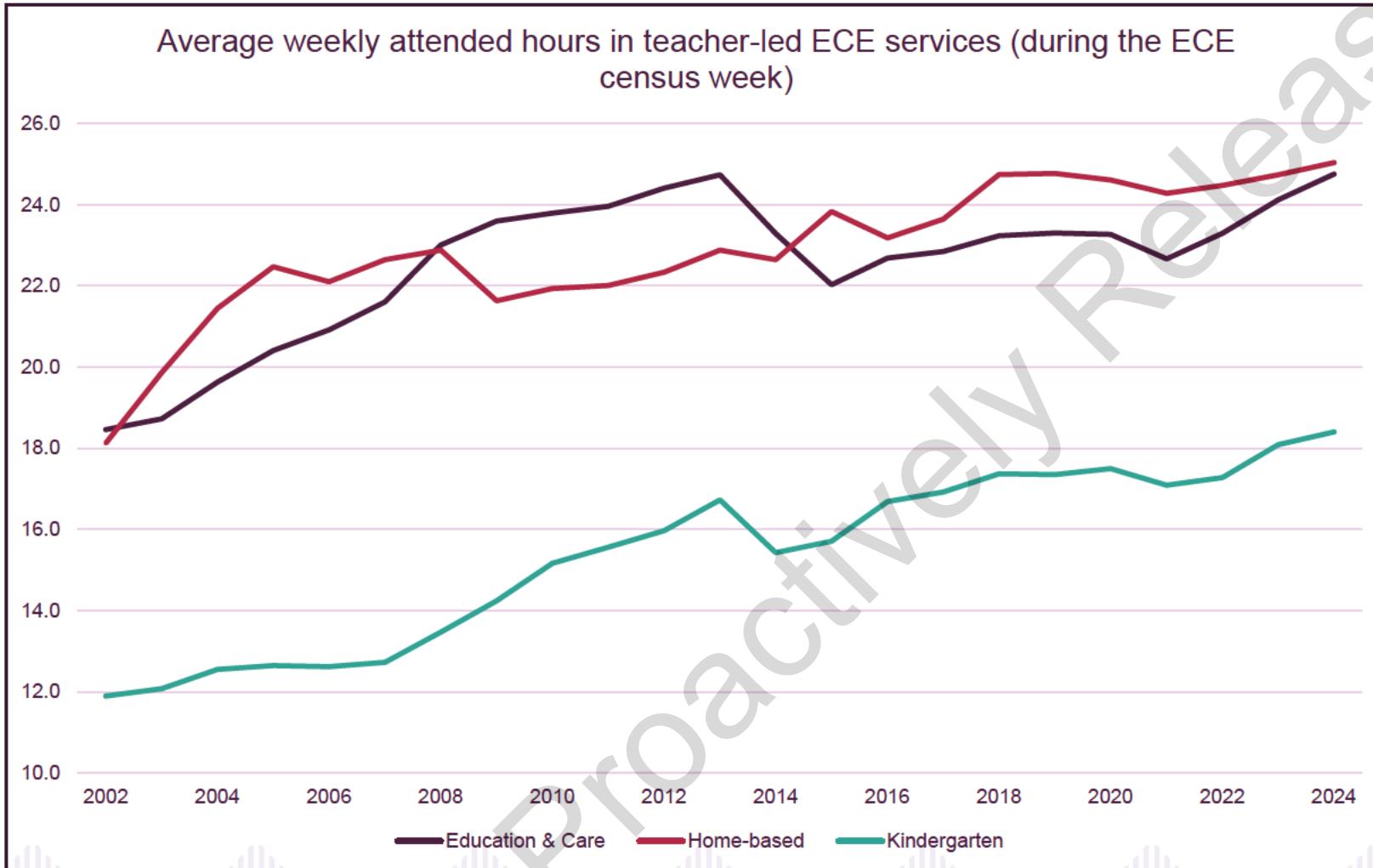


Home-based

- All home-based services are licensed to offer full-day services.



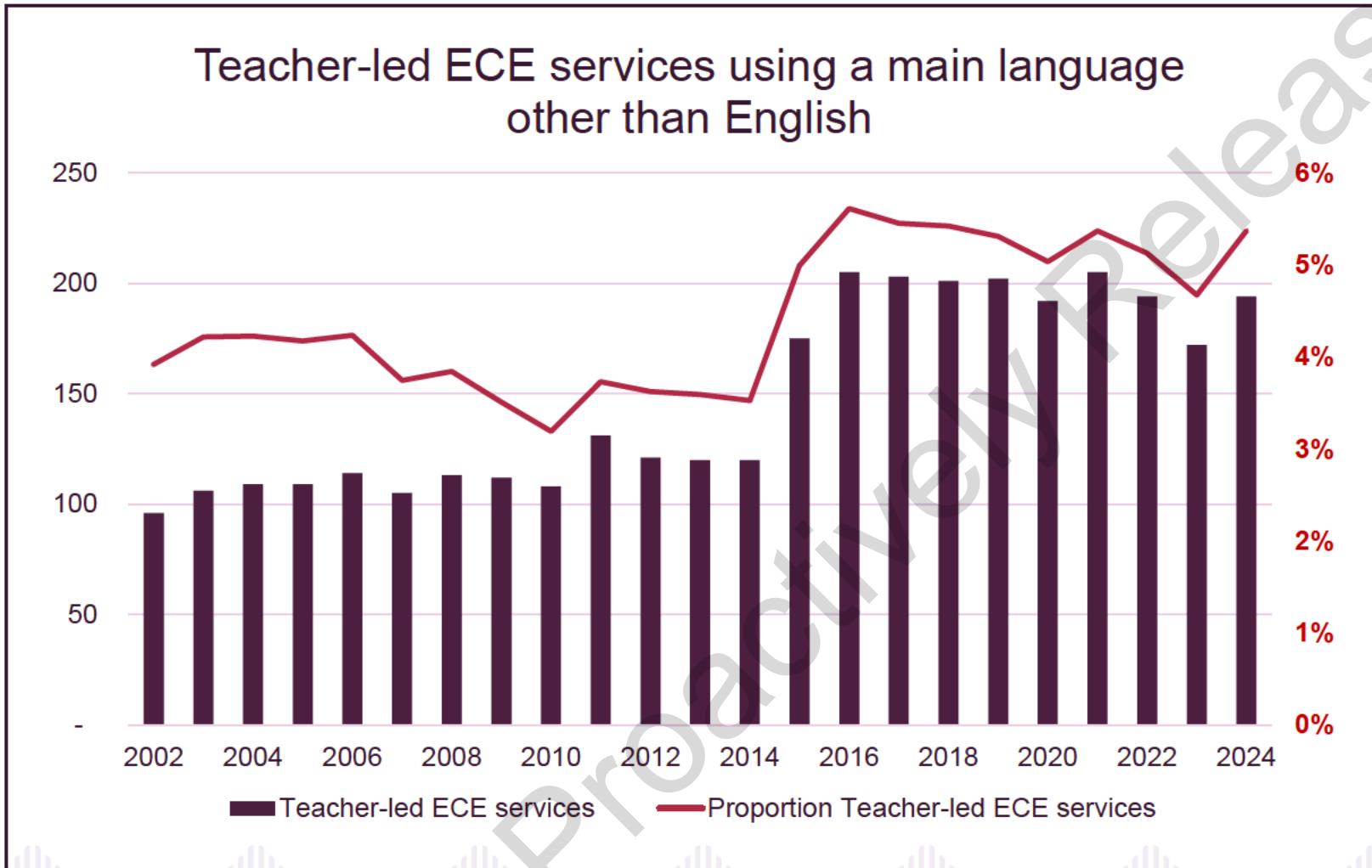
Weekly attended hours in ECE by service type



Increasing attended hours by service type over-time

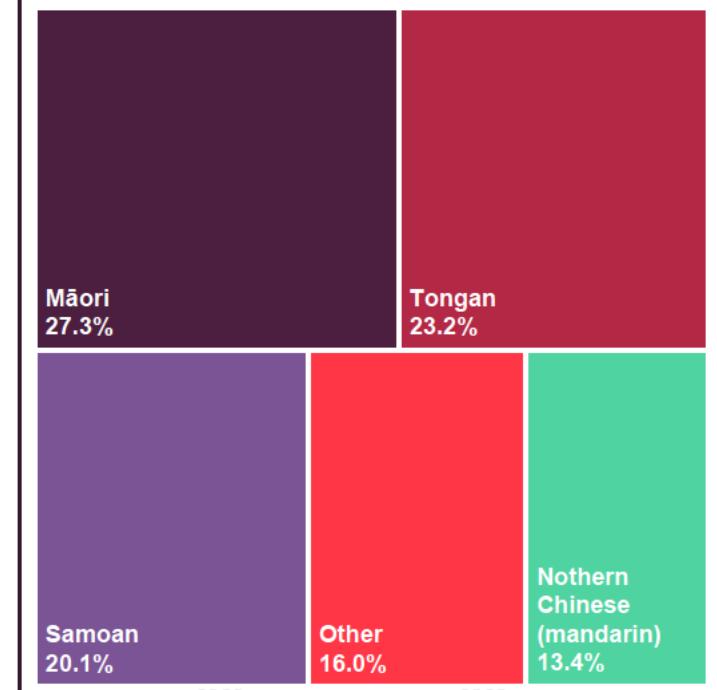
- The largest increase is observed in kindergartens, where the average hours of participation increased significantly following the transition of kindergarten services to all-day services.
- Since 2014, home-based services has consistently held the highest average hours of participation for attending children.

Language provision in teacher-led ECE services



In 2024 ECE was delivered in 34 different languages across 194 teacher-led services, consisting of

- 129 education and care services
- 63 home-based services
- 2 kindergartens

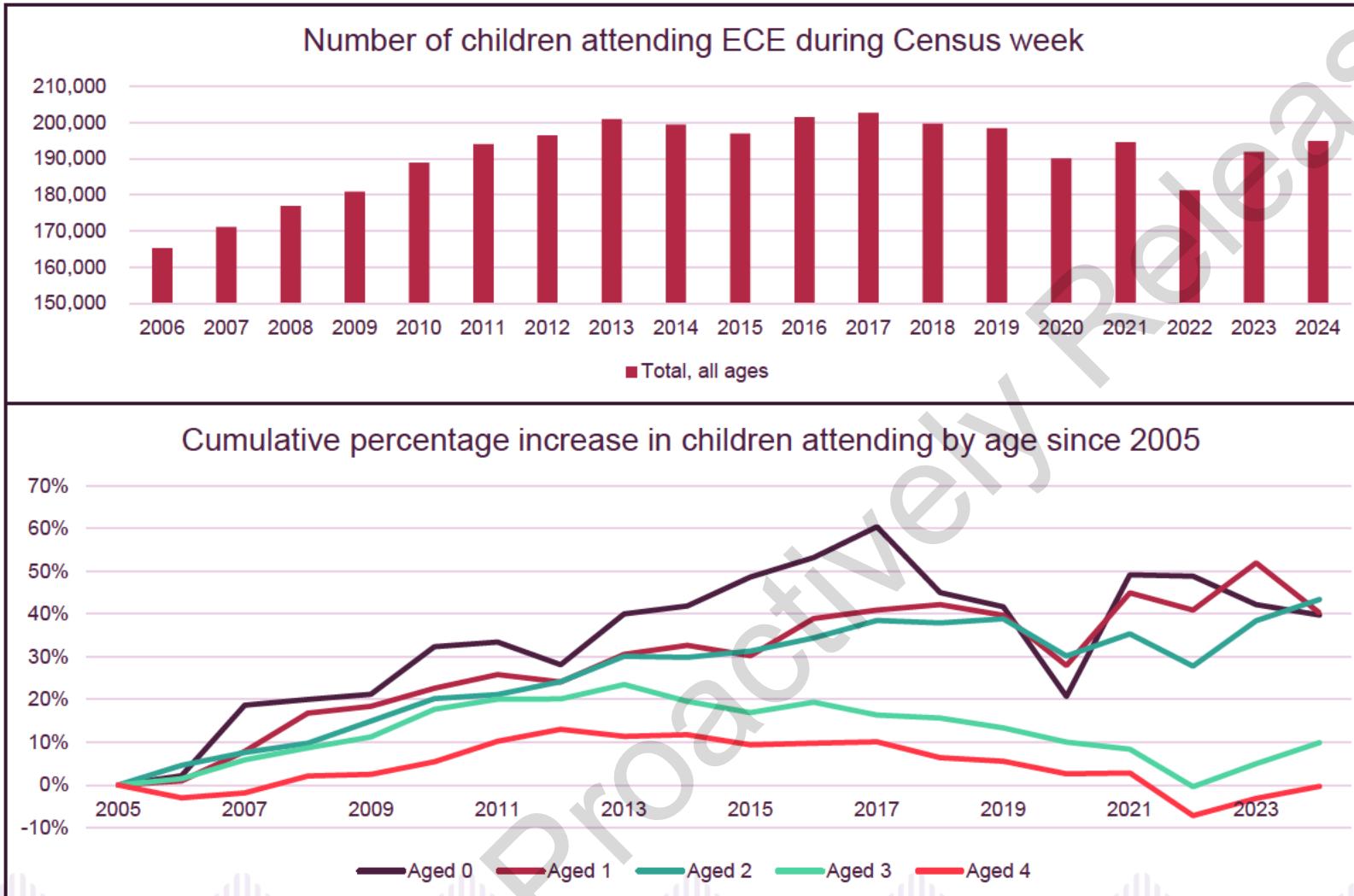


Questions or comments?



Participation in ECE

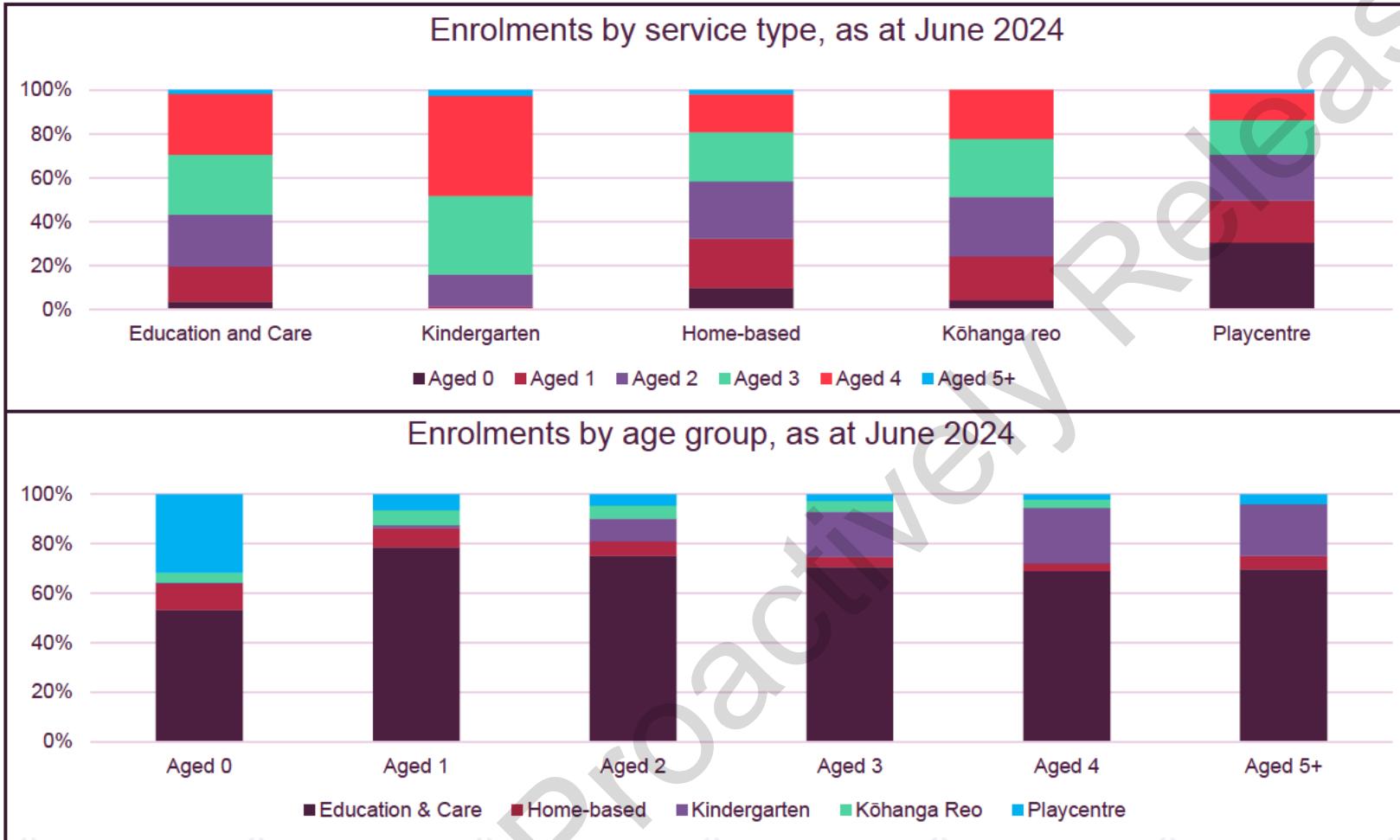
Number of children participating in ECE



ECE Attendance has stabilised, following earlier growth among younger age groups:

- Overall attendance peaked around 2013 and has remained relatively stable since, apart from the COVID period.
- Attendance among 0-2-year-olds grew by approximately 40% per age group.
- There was also an increase in 5-year-old attendance, increasing from 1,915 in 2005 to 3,560 in 2024 (86% increase), although this fluctuates year on year.
- 3-year-old attendance rose by approximately 10%, while the number of 4-year-olds attending remained steady over the period.

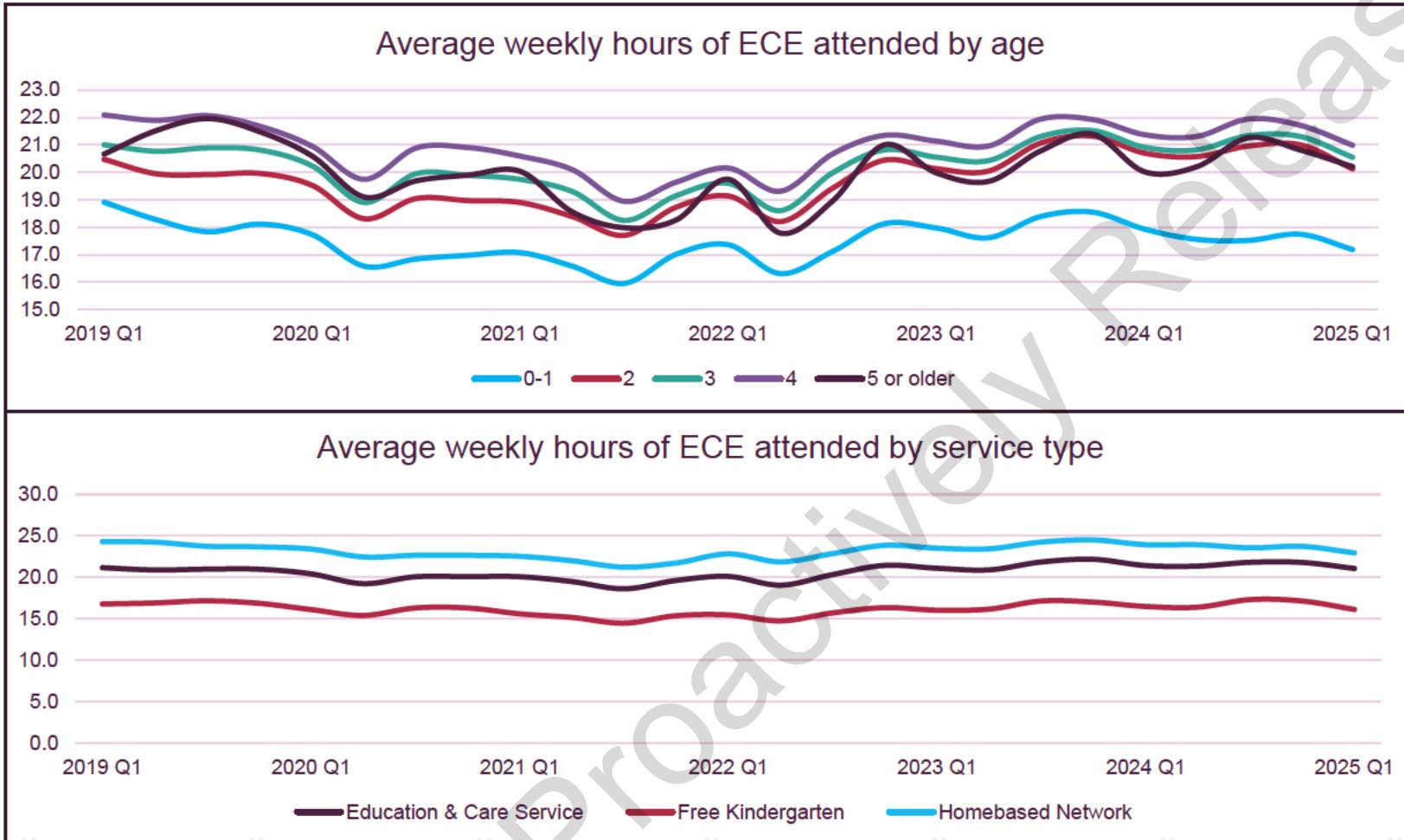
Share of children enrolled by service type and age group



Different ECE services can primarily serve different age groups:

- *Education and care services are the most commonly attended across all age groups.*
- *Kindergarten enrolments are concentrated among older children (aged 3-5), while playcentre is more popular with younger children, particularly infants.*
- *Home-based and Kōhanga reo maintain a balanced age distribution.*

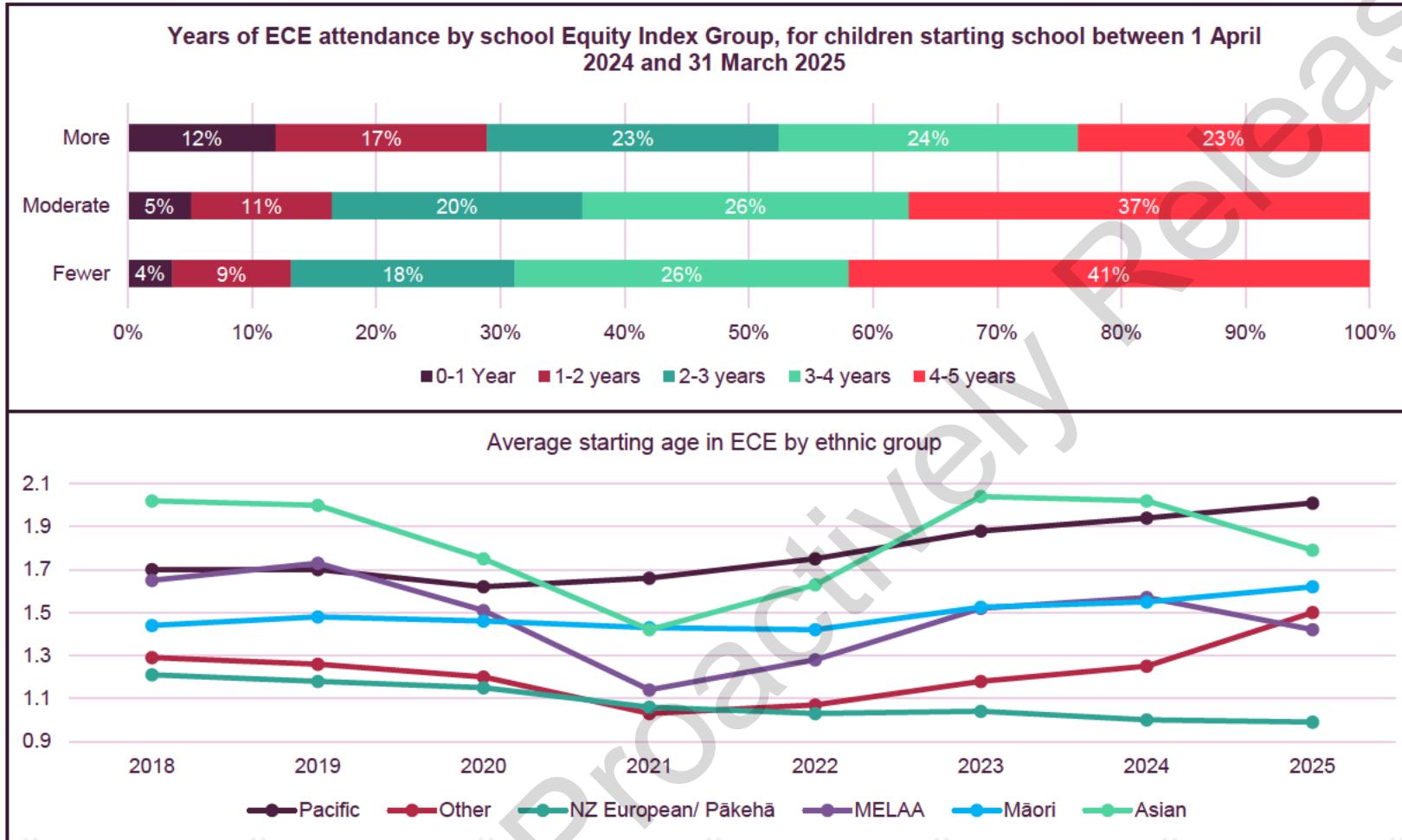
Average hours of participation



ECE Average Attended Hours are Consistent Across Ages – Except for Infants

- Children aged 2 to 5 attend ECE for similar weekly hours, averaging between 20-22 hours.
- Infants (aged 0-1) attend fewer hours, averaging between 16-19 hours per week.
- Children enrolled in home-based and education and care services tend to attend for longer hours on average.

Participation trends across demographic groups



ECE participation appears to differ across demographic groups

- Children attending schools facing more socioeconomic barriers tend to have noticeably fewer years of ECE participation before starting school.
- There are also clear differences in the ECE starting age by ethnicity.
- In 2025, the average starting age of children attending ECE ranged from 2-years-old (Pacific) to 1-years-old (European).

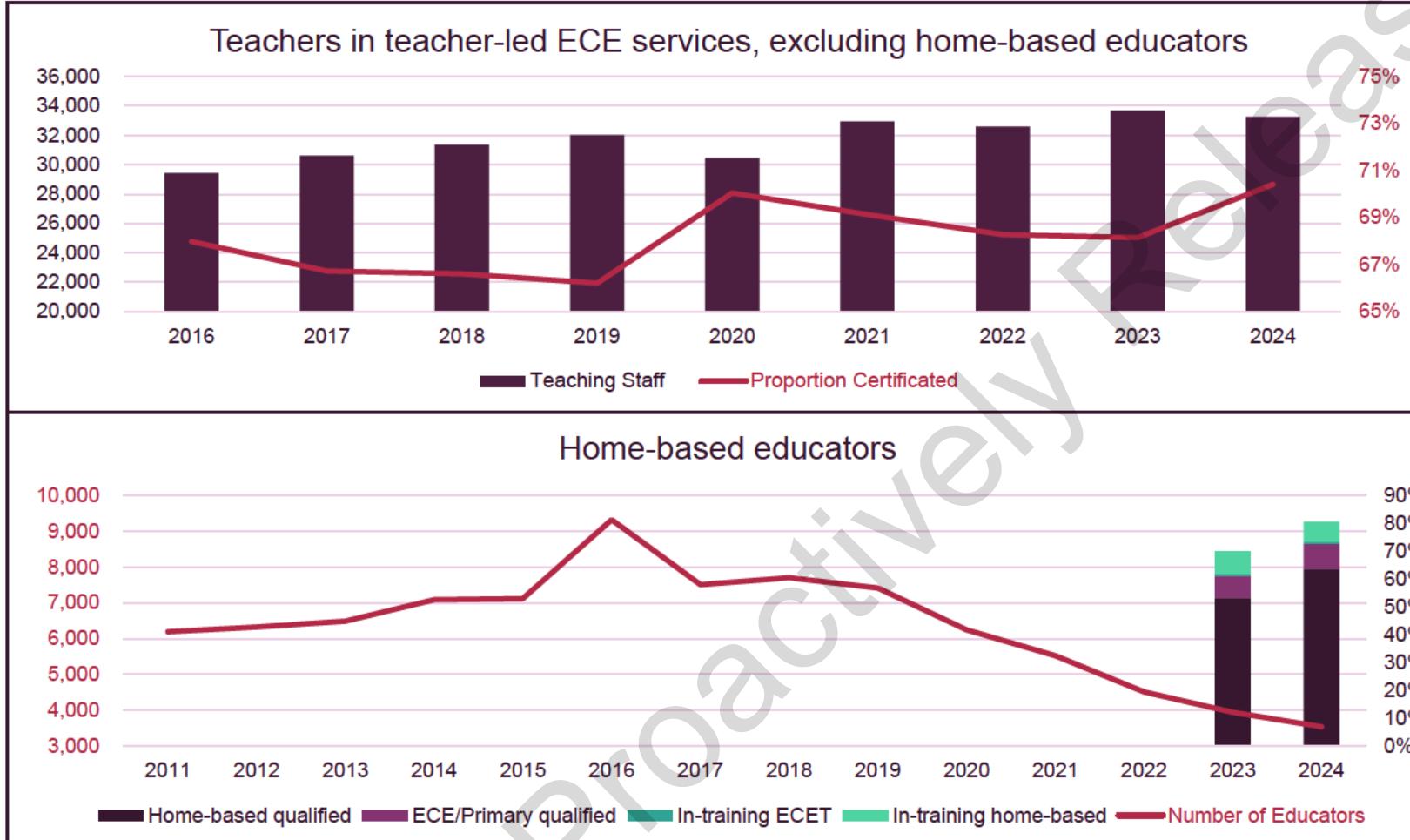
Questions or comments?



ECE workforce



ECE workforce composition and qualifications



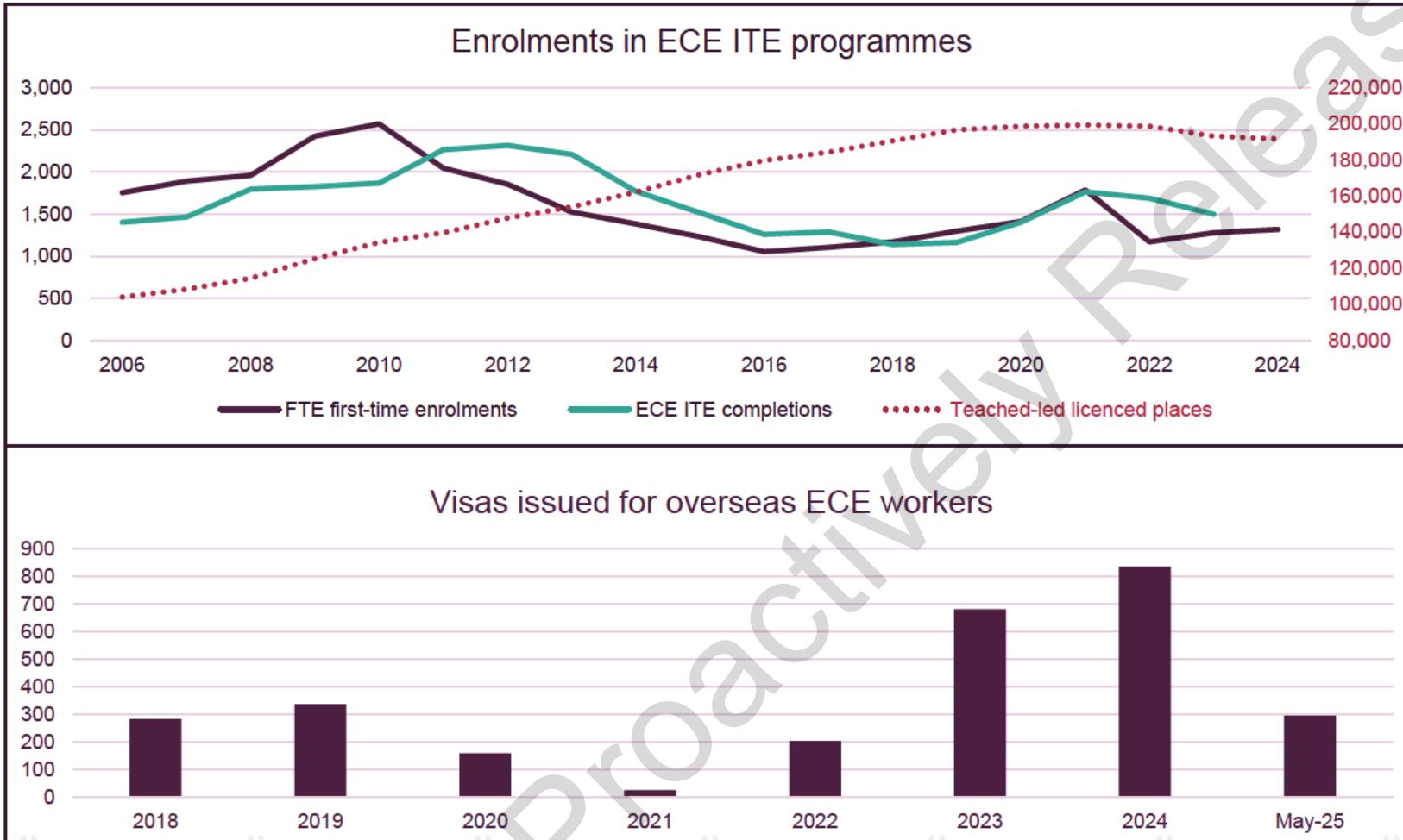
Workforce stability with rising credentials:

- The proportion of certificated teachers has gradually increased over-time.*

As of June 2024:

- Most registered (85%) and unregistered (59%) teachers were permanently employed.*
- 58% of certificated and 43% of uncertificated teachers were employed full-time.*
- Home-based educator numbers have declined sharply, while the proportion of home-based qualified educators has risen.*

ECE ITE Enrolment and Workforce Trends



ECE Workforce Increasingly Supported by Overseas Teachers:

- *Enrolments in ECE ITE programmes have declined over-time (despite an increase in licensed places).*
- *Currently, 35% of ECE full-time equivalent (FTE) enrolments are international students, compared to 16% in Primary, and 11% in Secondary.*
- *The number of visas issued to overseas ECE teachers has doubled compared to pre-COVID levels, with 2025 figures tracking slightly higher than 2023 figures and lower than 2024.*

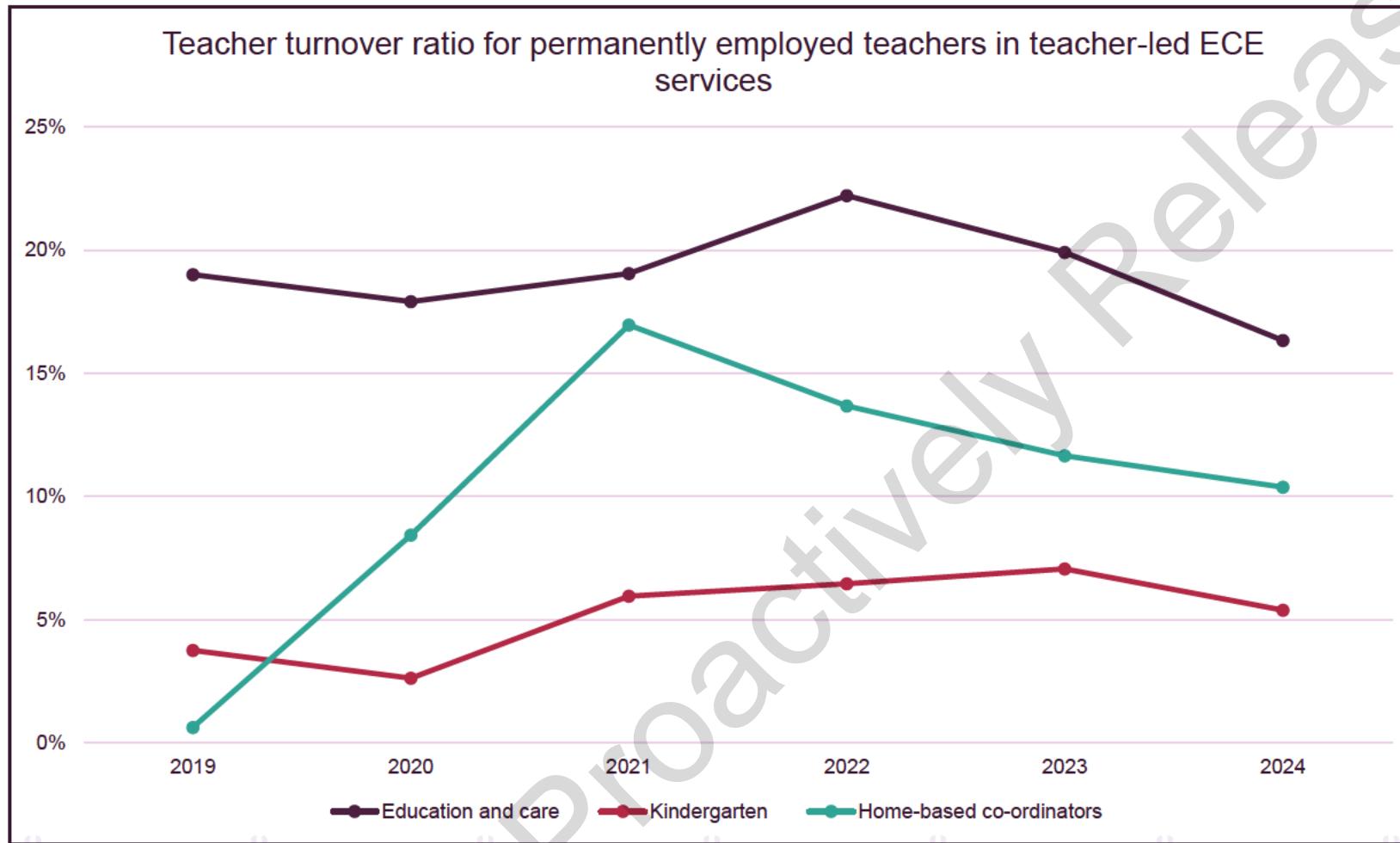
ECE vacancies in the Education Gazette

Number of positions listed on the Education Gazette								
Contract type	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	July 2025*
Contract	22	4	2	5		6		
Fixed-term	378	369	370	432	402	431	344	172
Long-term relieving	42	38	15	23	35	15	36	17
Permanent	4,791	4,928	3,836	5,018	5,614	5,401	3,477	1,575
Total	5,233	5,339	4,223	5,478	6,051	5,853	3,857	1,764

Drop-off in vacancies in the Education Gazette

- Permanent positions consistently made up the majority of listings in the Education Gazette.
- Ignoring the drop during 2020 (which may have been COVID-influenced), vacancies remained relatively stable, ranging between 5,000-6,000 positions annually.
- A sharp decline occurred in 2024, with listings dropped well below the period average.

Teacher turnover ratios



Turnover patterns across different service types

- Kindergartens consistently show the lowest turnover rates among permanently employed teaching staff.
- Home-based co-ordinators experienced a sharp rise since 2019.
- Across all service types, the most frequently recorded reason for turnover was teachers moving to another teaching role within the ECE sector, accounting for approximately 37% of total turnover.

Questions or comments?



Data gaps, opportunities for collection and analysis

Available data

There is a wealth of data in some areas:

Examples include:

- ELI (Early Learning Information) database. There is information down to child level, hourly level on bookings, on attendance.
- Edumis/Pouratō. Good information on MoE expenditure under current settings. Detailed information on what has been paid to services, though there is a lag based on trimester information capture and funding system.
- Annual ECE census – some good long-term trend information based on snapshots from the service, children, staff. It's at a more aggregate level, based on a census carried out in June each year.

Gaps

Gaps/unclear picture in some areas:

- Overall system cost – fees/parental expenditure.
- Clear granular data on workforce and salaries.
- Outcome information/school readiness.
- Service level finances (e.g. when compared with schools).

Proactively Released

Limitations

Data existing does not always mean it is usable due to quality or consent issues:

- Some collections are for specific purposes and may not be used outside of those purposes/have quite substantial restrictions.
- Some data can only be used or provided at an aggregate level like IDI work.
- Analysis can sometimes be contingent on information sharing agreements which can be time consuming to set up.
- The current shift between payment systems EDUMIS>Pouratō may mean some data is not yet available for analysis.

Collecting new data can be challenging:

- Resource and system limitations on collecting new data - particularly for the whole of system.
- Getting adequate responses can be difficult (both in number, and in representation).



He mea tārai e mātou te mātauranga
kia rangatira ai, kia mana taurite ai ūna huanga.

We shape an education system that delivers
equitable and excellent outcomes.