

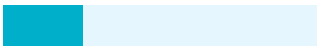
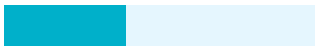


Early childhood education

Early childhood education (ECE) is often seen as an opportunity to get a head start in schooling. Information gathered from the PILNA System Questionnaire shows that, although each country has policies regarding ECE, the structure and compulsory nature varies across participating countries. As part of PILNA, students were asked to indicate their ECE history using the following categories: ‘Yes, for 1 year’, ‘Yes, for 2 years’, ‘Yes for 3 years of more’, or ‘No’.

ECE attendance

Table STT1.1

Percentage of students who attended ECE

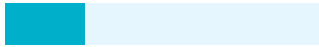
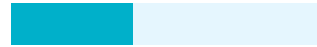
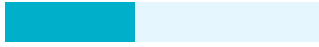
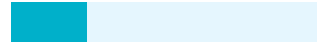
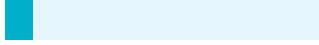
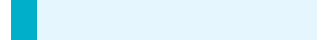
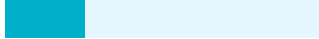
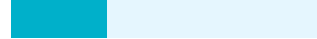
Category	Grade 5	Grade 7
Did not attend ECE	 25%	 38%
Attended ECE	 75%	 62%

Students who attended at least one year at ECE versus those who did not attend, RMI, PILNA 2021:

In Marshall Islands, over 60% of grade seven students and over 70% of grade five students participating in PILNA 2021 had attended at least one year of ECE. This was similar, on average, for boys (67%) and for girls (68%). There are differences, however, in the amount of time that students spent at ECE prior to their schooling. Table STT1.1 shows these ECE differences by grade five students and grade seven students in Marshall Islands in PILNA 2021.

Table STT1.2

Percentage of students attended ECE and duration

Category	Grade 5	Grade 7
	 25%	 38%
	 41%	 24%
	 9%	 8%
	 25%	 30%

ECE attendance and duration of attendance, RMI, PILNA 2021

ECE attendance and student performance

Statistical testing was done to learn whether there was a difference in student performance between students who had attended at least one year of ECE and students who had not attended any ECE. This was done at both the grade five and grade seven levels. No differences were found at either level for the Marshall Islands across all domains – numeracy, reading and writing.

What does this mean?

The majority of students who participated in PILNA 2021 attended ECE for at least one year. Larger proportions of grade five students attended than grade seven students, showing ECE attendance rates may be increasing over time.

In Marshall Islands, there were no differences in performance between those who attended ECE and those who did not for both year levels and all three domains.

Regionally, no differences were observed for grade five students, but a positive association was noted for ECE attendance and grade seven students performing at or above the expected level in all domains. It is not known why differences were found for grade seven students and not grade five students regionally, but the findings suggest the possibility that ECE could have a positive effect on performance that may become noticeable only in later years of schooling. Given the diversity of ECE throughout the region, however, these results should be looked at in local contexts.