HUNGARY
Leave policy and early childhood services

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Early childhood services

- Divided system:
  - „bölcsőde” for children under 3
    - about 8-9% of the age group in centers
  - „óvoda” for children between 3-6
    - about 92% of the age group in centers

- Services under the auspices of Welfare and Education, respectively
Brief history of bölcsőde

- First center established in 1852
  - Aim was: to look after children of poor mothers while they worked
- Extensive development after the Second World War
  - Aims were to support women’s equality and right to study, to work and to motherhood
Brief history of óvoda

- First center established in 1828
  - Aim was: to provide protection for children from poor families

- Extensive development after the Second World War
  - Aim was: „upbringing”, to support children’s development
Types of leave

- Maternity leave: 24 weeks, up to 4 weeks before birth. 70% of earnings.
- GYES: Until the child’s 3rd birthday. Flat rate payment.
- GYED: from the end of the maternity leave period until the child’s 2nd birthday. 70% of earnings up to a ceiling.
- GYET
Types of leave

- **Maternity leave**
- **Maternity leave or GYES**
- **Insured**
  - Maternity leave
  - GYED
  - GYES
- **Not insured**
  - Maternity leave or GYES
  - GYES

Age of child (years):

- 0
- 0.5
- 1
- 1.5
- 2
- 2.5
- 3
Brief history of GYES and GYED

- Maternity leave 1884, 1927, 1953
- GYES and GYED aimed to promote births
  - GYES was introduced in 1967
  - GYED was introduced in 1985, abolished between 1996 and 2000
Average HUF / month / person for leaves and average salary
Number of women employed and taking up leave

[Graph showing the number of women employed and taking up leave from 1992 to 2001 for different age groups and economic statuses.]
Number of children enrolled in nurseries and of people on leave
Average number of people taking up GYES and GYED
Reasons for unmet childcare need

- **No after school care**
- **No place in óvoda**
- **Disabled child, no help**
- **Sick child, no help**
- **Expensive**
- **No place in bölcsőde**
- **Other**

The diagram shows the distribution of reasons for unmet childcare need, with the highest percentages being 'Expensive' and 'No place in bölcsőde.'
Discussion points

- Need- or supply-driven services?
- Influences on bölcsőde places
  - Financing
  - Attitudes / ideology
  - Leave policies
  - Difficulties returning from leave