

## Children in Pre-school Education

The Education Act defines the group of children in the last year before starting compulsory school attendance and the group of children with special education needs; it differentiates between disabled children, children with health impairments and socially disadvantaged children. The table below demonstrates nation-wide statistical data on the division of children in the past school year

Table 2 Children in pre-school education

Monitored parameters – Czech Rep. (according to the IIE)	Situation in the school year		Trend
	2009/2010	2010/2011	
Total number of children in PE	314,008	328,612	+
Share of five-year old children (%)	28.8	29.1	+
Share of children with SEN (%)	2.8	2.9	+
Share of foreign nationals in PE (%)	1.2	1.3	+
Share of children younger than 3 years in PE (%)	9.8	10.0	+
Share of children whose compulsory school attendance was postponed (%)	21.1	20.5	-
Number of denied applications for enrolment in PE	29,632	39,483	+

The total number of children in pre-school education was 328,600, which means a year-on-year increase of 4.7 %. The share of **five-year old children** in the total population was 97.9 %, which almost exactly corresponded with the number value specified in the long-term objective of 2007 (98 %). A negative phenomenon was the considerable increase in the **share of rejected applications for enrolment in pre-school education** – up to 26.7 % of the total number of applicants. The rise in the number of applications for enrolment in pre-school education which were denied (a total number of 39,483) represented a year-on-year increase of 33.2 %. An above-average rate of rejected applications was seen in the Central Bohemian region (37.8 %), in the South Moravian region (36.6 %) and in Prague (32.5 %). A negative development in the number of rejected application is signalled by a year-on-year comparison in the Pardubice region (an increase by 61.1 %), the Liberec region (an increase by 58.1 %) and in the Moravian–Silesian region (an increase by 47.5 %).

The moderate decline in the number of children whose compulsory school attendance was postponed appears to be a positive phenomenon (20.5 %).

The share of **children younger than three years** has slightly increased (to 10 %). Problems related to the care for children below three years have not yet been solved with regard to legislation and finance.

The **share of children in pre-school education with special education needs (SEN)** has moderately risen and taking a republic-wide average it reached 2.9 %. In total 3,303 children enjoyed **institutional** care in special kindergartens whilst 9,236 children with SEN were educated in ordinary kindergartens. The proportion of children attending special classes within **group** care was 79.3 % and the rate of **individual** care was 20.7 %. One positive signal was the moderate increase in options of individual care.