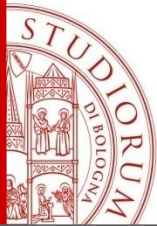


Preschool in Bologna: organisation and management

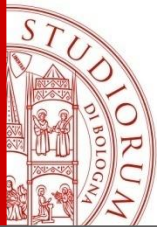
Origin, developments and future critical issues

Warsaw, 16 February 2012



Research background

- Research fellow at the Department of Education and member of CREI (Early Childhood Education Research Centre) – Bologna university
- European Doctorate in Pedagogy investigating professionalism of early childhood education teachers in Bologna pre-schools
- Member of the SIG on professionalism at EECERA: European Early Childhood Education Research Association
- Research projects and field of expertise:
 - CoRe: Competence Requirements of staff in ECEC (Urban, Vandenberg et al.) - UEL & U-Ghent for EC DG-Education & Culture
 - Continuing Professional Development of the Early Years Workforce: Italian Case Study. (P. Oberhuemer) - Deutsches Jugendinstitut
 - Relationship between ECEC and compulsory school education (with Lucia Balduzzi, forthcoming) - Contesting Early Childhood Series edited by P. Moss and G. Dahlberg



Aim and scope of this presentation

- Overview of ECEC system in Bologna (typology of provision, overall management, enrolment rates and breakdown pre-school children population)
- Origin and developments of early childhood education in Emilia Romagna with a focus on Bologna
- The pedagogical identity of Bologna pre-schools
- Qualifying features of Bologna ECEC municipal provision
- The process of statalisation: challenges and opportunities
- The process of parification: universal access to pre-school is guaranteed within an integrated system of public (state and municipal) and private subsidised provision
- Current trends and future directions: the integrated system, issue of quality and sustainability

The context: Bologna, Emilia-Romagna

Split System

- *Nido* (nest) Ages 0-3, under the Ministry of Welfare → children's attendance 30%
- *Scuola dell'infanzia* (Preschool/Kindergarden) Ages 3-6, under the Ministry of Education → children's attendance is 97%

Bologna province, Emilia Romagna (Italy)



Scuole dell'infanzia in Bologna province...



State scuole dell'infanzia
(approx. 46.3% of provision)



Municipal scuole dell'infanzia
(approx. 27.3% of provision)



Private Catholic scuole materne (approx. 26.3% of provision)

Overview of provision: state, municipal and private (NFP-subsidised) pre-schools

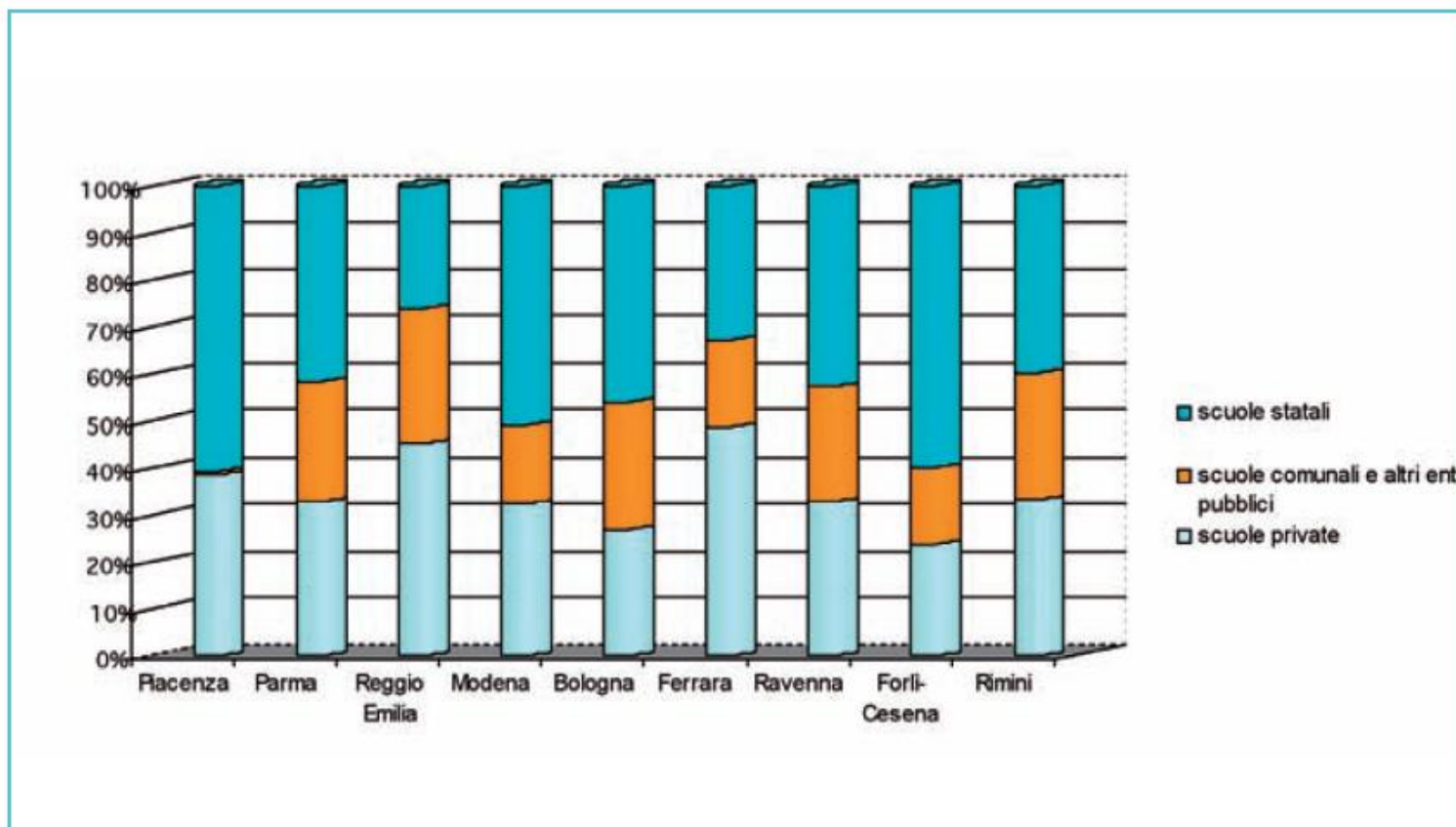
Tavola 14 – Scuole dell'infanzia, sezioni e bambini iscritti per tipologia di gestione. A.s. 2005/2006¹⁰

Provincia	scuole statali			scuole infanzia comunali e di altri enti pubblici			scuole enti privati			v.a.		
	n. scuole	n. sezioni	n. bambini	n. scuole	n. sezioni	n. bambini	n. scuole	n. sezioni	n. bambini	n. scuole	n. sezioni	n. bambini
Piacenza	63	156	3.918	1	2	37	38	97	2.483	102	255	6.438
Parma	58	165	4.031	23	89	2.468	50	126	3.168	131	380	9.667
Reggio E.	60	154	3.578	44	153	3.883	84	261	6.183	188	568	13.644
Modena	116	378	9.230	38	120	3.002	71	239	5.834	225	737	18.066
Bologna	148	455	10.970	87	263	6.467	97	256	6.402	332	974	23.839
Ferrara	45	104	2.316	20	54	1.323	68	150	3.434	133	308	7.073
Ravenna	44	158	3.910	25	83	2.215	53	135	2.994	122	376	9.119
Forlì- Cesena	92	231	5.769	20	63	1.569	37	93	2.290	149	387	9.628
Rimini	47	128	3.208	28	89	2.159	37	98	2.672	112	315	8.039
Regione Emilia- Romagna	673	1.929	46.930	286	906	22.877	535	1.455	35.460	1.494	4.300	105.513

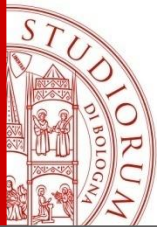
Fonte: Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione – Elaborazioni del Servizio politiche familiari, infanzia e adolescenza, Regione Emilia-Romagna

Breakdown of children enrolment rates: universal access through integrated provision

Figura 18 – Bambini iscritti alle scuole dell'infanzia. A.s. 2005/2006



Fonte: Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione – Elaborazioni del Servizio politiche familiari, infanzia e adolescenza, Regione Emilia-Romagna



Overall enrolment rates of 3-6 children in pre-schools

Tavola 15 – Rapporto tra bambini iscritti alle scuole dell'infanzia a.s. 2005/2006 e popolazione 3-5 anni all'1/1/2006

Provincia	n. bambini iscritti	popolazione 3-5 anni	% di accoglienza
Piacenza	6.438	6.691	96,22
Parma	9.667	10.456	92,45
Reggio Emilia	13.644	14.970	91,14
Modena	18.066	18.923	95,47
Bologna	23.839	24.526	97,20
Ferrara	7.073	7.146	98,98
Ravenna	9.119	9.203	99,09
Forlì-Cesena	9.628	9.744	98,81
Rimini	8.039	8.167	98,43
Regione Emilia-Romagna	105.513	109.826	96,07

Fonte: Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione – Elaborazioni del Servizio politiche familiari, infanzia e adolescenza, Regione Emilia-Romagna

Breakdown of pre-school population: children with a migrant background

Tavola 16 – Bambini di cittadinanza non italiana nelle scuole dell'infanzia. A.s. 2005/2006¹¹

Provincia	alunni di cittadinanza non italiana	Totale iscritti	%
Piacenza	822	6.438	12,77
Parma	927	9.667	9,59
Reggio Emilia	1.340	13.644	9,82
Modena	2.014	18.066	11,15
Bologna	2.256	23.839	9,46
Ferrara	353	7.073	4,99
Ravenna	613	9.119	6,72
Forlì-Cesena	777	9.628	8,07
Rimini	470	8.039	5,85
Regione Emilia-Romagna	9.572	105.513	9,07

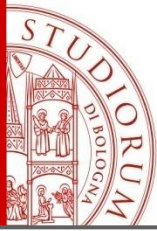
Fonte: Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione – Elaborazioni del Servizio politiche familiari, infanzia e adolescenza, Regione Emilia-Romagna

Breakdown of pre-school population: children with disabilities

Tavola 17 – Bambini disabili nelle scuole dell'infanzia statali, comunali, altri enti pubblici e private per tipologia di disabilità. A.s. 2005/2006

Provincia	bambini disabili per tipologia di disabilità						totale bambini disabili	% sul totale complessivo bambini disabili
	psicofisica	% sul totale bambini disabili	visiva	% sul totale bambini disabili	uditiva	% sul totale bambini disabili		
Piacenza	57	73,08	2	2,56	19	24,36	78	6,97
Parma	80	89,89	3	3,37	6	6,74	89	7,95
Reggio Emilia	119	86,86	5	3,65	13	9,49	137	12,24
Modena	198	93,84	3	1,42	10	4,74	211	18,86
Bologna	247	91,14	5	1,85	19	7,01	271	24,22
Ferrara	66	88,00	3	4,00	6	8,00	75	6,70
Ravenna	83	53,41	1	1,14	4	1,14	88	7,86
Forlì-Cesena	84	95,45	1	1,14	3	3,41	88	7,86
Rimini	80	97,56	-	-	2	2,44	82	7,33
Regione								
Emilia-Romagna	1.014	90,62	23	2,06	82	7,33	1.119	100,00

Fonte: Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione – Elaborazioni del Servizio politiche familiari, infanzia e adolescenza, Regione Emilia-Romagna



The origin of ECEC institutions

‘Civic traditions, the influence of the Church and socialist movement are the three major factors that have determined the development of early childhood educational services and are necessarily the cultural lens through which the existing panorama should be examined’

(Mantovani, 2007)

The influence of the Church: the *Asili*

Before 1960 most pre-schools (*Asili*) were run by **Catholic** affiliated bodies:

Charity purposes
custody of
disadvantaged
children



Pedagogy inspired by **family like model** (Agazzi, 1948)

Civic traditions: Municipal governments

City-state self-government in the Middle Age: networks of horizontal collaboration that survived until now in the community life of Municipalities in Northern-Central Italy (Putnam, 1992)

Civic traditions: ethic of civic involvement, social responsibility and mutual assistance (Putnam, 1992)

FIGURE 5.1

Republican and Autocratic Traditions: Italy, c. 1300

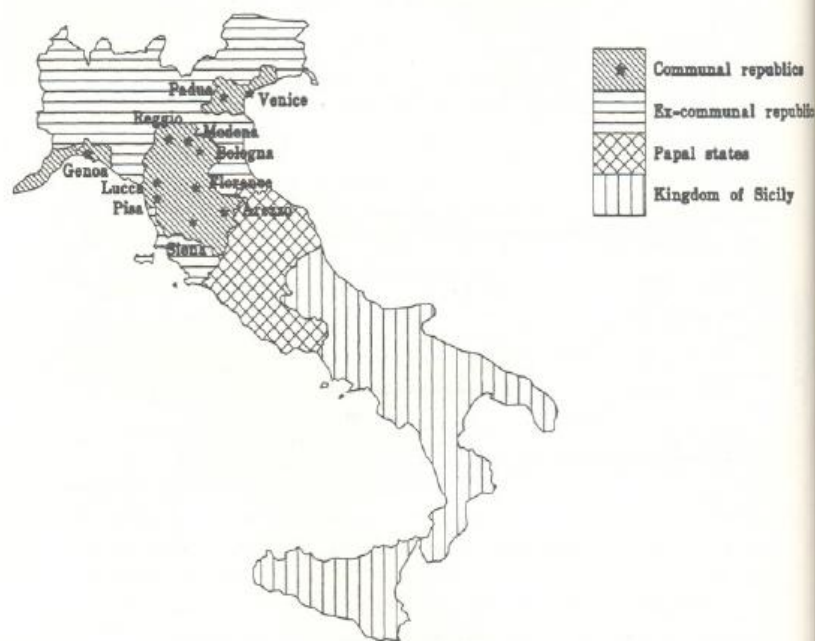


FIGURE 5.2

Civic Traditions in the Italian Regions, 1860–1920



The socialist movements (1960s)

- Political concern for the value of democracy, equality and peace (after World War II)
- Collective movements claiming rights:
 - womens' movements
 - social justice movementsclaiming equal opportunities for children coming from low-social classes
- movements for civil rights of children and people with disabilities*



Gestione sociale

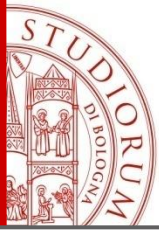
- pre-schools were initially built by self-organised groups of parents and teachers
- then moved under the management of municipalities that ensured economic and cultural growth within public sector (*responsiveness of local governments*)
- a participatory approach to ECEC still mark distinctively municipal pre-schools and affected compulsory school regulations (*parents committees*)

When the State became involved in ECEC (1968) half Italian children were already attending pre-school on a regular basis

8 DICEMBRE 1967
Pubbliche Elezioni
CONSIGLI DIRETTIVI
"COMITATI SCUOLA - SOCIETÀ"
(per Comitati Gestori-Insegnanti)

QUARTIERI	SEGGI	ORARI
BARCA	1 Ufficio di Quartiere Piazza Giovanni XXIII 2 Scuola Materna (Michelli) Via Ruggiero Onesti, 8	
BORGO	1 Centro Ricreativo (Lavino di Mezzo) Via M. C. Lepidi, 2057	dalle ore 9 alle 12 e dalle ore 14,30 alle 17,30
PANIGALE	2 Scuola Materna - Mazzini Via Legnana, 2 3 Scuola Materna Villa May via Panigale, 18 4 Scuola Materna Birra Bel Via Annapolce, 13 5 Polisportiva Casteldebole - via Fagnola	
CORTICELLA	1 Ufficio di Quartiere - via M. Corbelli, 2659 Via Zanardi, 226	
LAME	1 Biblioteca - Centro Ricreativo Via Zanardi, 226 2 Scuola Materna - via Brenner, 226	dalle ore 9 alle 13
MURRI	1 Scuola Capuzzo Privilegiata Dini, 4	
SAFFI	1 Ufficio di Quartiere - Via Saffi, 34 2 Ufficio Comunale - via della Scala, 21	dalle ore 9 alle 12 e dalle ore 14,30 alle 17,30
S. DONATO	1 Ufficio di Quartiere - via S. Donato, 58 2 Scuola Materna Via Mastrelli, 2 - Zona S. Donato 3 Scuola Materna Via del Filare, 150 - Zona Filare - S. Donato	dalle ore 9 alle 12,30 e dalle ore 14,30 alle 18
S. RUFFILLO	1 Scuola Materna - via C. Albi, 25 2 Ufficio di Quartiere - via Testena, 562	dalle ore 9 alle 12 e dalle ore 14,30 alle 17,30
S. VIOLA	1 Ufficio di Quartiere - via E. Panente, 159	dalle ore 8 alle 14
S. VITALE	1 Ufficio di Quartiere - via del Parco, 12	dalle ore 9 alle 12,30 e dalle ore 14,30 alle 18,30
CENTRO - GALVANI	1 Scuola Materna - "Carducci", Via Dante, 3 - viale Palazzina Montagnola Anpi - Via Imeneo, 22	dalle ore 9 alle 13
IRNERIO	1 Asa - Pubblica Istruzione Via Solignoli, 2 - ex Mura S. Felice	
MARCONI	1 Ufficio di Quartiere - Piazza Golden, 4	
MALPIGHI		

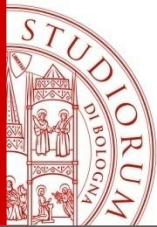
I Comitati:
Bolognina, Costa-Saragozza e Mazzini promuoveranno le elezioni entro breve tempo.
POSSONO VOTARE NEI RISPETTIVI QUARTIERI I CITTADINI INTERESSATI ALLA VITA DELLA SCUOLA, CHE ABBIANO COMPIUTO IL 16° ANNO DI ETÀ.



Pedagogical identity of Bologna preschools

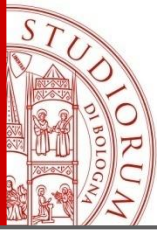
The vision of Bruno Ciari, pedagogical director of Bologna pre-schools from 1966 to 1970:

- education as an emancipatory experience aiming at the social and cultural promotion of children as citizens (*'children's right to education begins at 3 years'*)
- school should be aimed at promoting a more democratic and equal society
- therefore educational institutions should be run as democratic communities: fighting segregation (abilities/social classes) by creating a common cultural ground



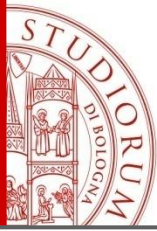
Pedagogical identity (contd)

- educational purposes should be negotiated through collective decision-making processes that involve teachers, auxiliary staff and parents on an equal basis (*gestione sociale*)
- the responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating educational activities should be shared equally among team members → *co-presence* and *collegiality*
- professional development carried out through collective work and *shared reflectivity* within the community of educators → generating new knowledge starting from practice in dialogue with other institutions (eg. University)



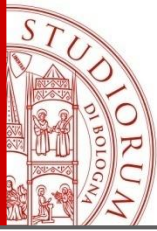
Pedagogical identity (contd)

- Pre-school should be providing a fully educational experience:
 - new pedagogical insights (Dewey, Bruner, Vygotskij): education <> society
 - educational methodology focused on child-initiated activities and on the interaction among peers → teacher as a *mediator* (“*apprestare situazioni educative*”) rather than an *instructor*
 - Planning, documenting and revising practices collectively focusing on children’s needs (observation)



Qualifying features of Bologna municipal pre-schools today

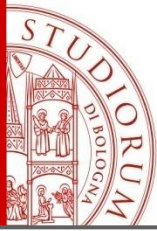
- a right based approach to ECEC focused on children participation (pedagogy and universal access)
- a flexible organisation of educational initiatives grounded on collegial practices: inter-class and small-group project work made possible by co-presence
- democratic participation of parents in educational decision-making (*comitato di scuola*) and active involvement in the life of the school
- staff professionalisation through collegial meetings, ongoing pedagogical support (*coordinatore pedagogico**) and professional development opportunities (CPD = 80 hrs/year) focused on localised needs



Qualifying features of Bologna municipal pre-schools today (contd)

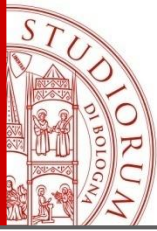
- infrastructure sustaining research and innovation through inter-institutional networking: system of pedagogical coordination, documentation and research centre, University
- high degree of consultation with municipal and regional administrations responsible for policy-making at local level (political responsiveness)

ECEC institutions are constantly evolving in order to address the changing needs of children and their families within the local community



The statalisation process (1990s)

- State intervention in Bologna ECEC provision only started in 1994 when municipal pre-schools were partly statalised within a wider scheme rearranging national school system
- State intervention also ***increased the quantity of provision*** although at the time concerns about ***quality*** were raised both by ECEC experts and parents
- in Bologna a certain degree of continuity was granted in the framework of collaboration between municipal administration and local agency of the education ministry (Bonfiglioli, 1994):
 - realisation of inter-institutional pedagogical projects aimed at qualification of state pre-schools
 - participation of state pre-school teachers to CPD opportunities organised by municipal coordinators

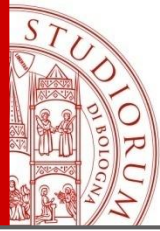


The statalisation process (contd)

Key-features of state pre-school provision compared to municipal provision:

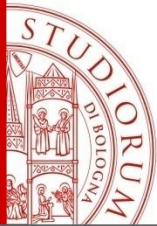
- less time for co-presence and collegial meetings
- less access to professional development opportunities (not mandatory)
- lack of continuous investment in innovation and research (experimental projects are carried out more sporadically and have a limited impact)
- school director (managing a large number of pre- and primary schools) instead of pedagogical coordinator (responsible for a relatively small number of ECEC institutions, focused on the early years)

→ Risk of *schoolification* of early childhood pedagogy?



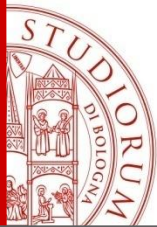
The process of parification (2000)

- Context of ***economic constraints***
- Non-state pre-schools (municipal and private NFP) are acknowledged with an equal status to state pre-school which entitle them to receive annual funding
- As municipal and private NFP (mostly Catholic) pre-schools constitute ***40% of provision*** at national level non-financing might imply closing and additional financial burden for the State
- In order to apply for equal status and state funding non-state school have to follow national curriculum guidelines and meet certain ***quality requirements*** in relation to:
 - > educational planning and staffing
 - > collegial participative bodies
 - > inclusion of special need children



Current trends...

- Transition from a political vision of competing ideology (Catholic / lay movements; public / private) to a vision of an ***integrated system***
- key-issues at stake: ***quantity*** (universal provision), ***quality*** and ***sustainability*** in a time of constraint of public expenditure

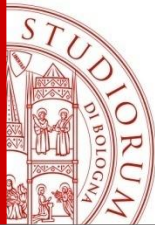


...and a way forward?

The experience of pedagogical exchanges realised by Emilia-Romagna region:

- ***disseminating*** wealth of ***knowledge*** and ***practices*** (against insularity of experiences and isolation of ECEC institutions)
- ***creating a shared culture*** for the education of young children (against schoolification) across the public and private sector
- promoting the ***professional development*** of ***teachers*** and ***pedagogical coordinators*** (against the dis-investment on quality)

Undertaking collective actions toward the re-elaboration of a culture of childhood through an active engagement of parents and professionals; fostering cooperation among institutions as form of mutual learning for addressing changing societal needs



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