

# Update on Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System

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October 8, 2025

Children's Early Years Division



# Background

- CWELCC system launched in 2022, with aim to make licensed child care more affordable, accessible, and inclusive, especially for communities with the greatest need.
- Wellington-Guelph CWELCC directed growth target (2022 – 2026): **1,719** spaces
  - ❖ Including full-time centre-based spaces and licensed home child care

# Update

As of September 30, 2025, all **1,719** CWELCC spaces are now allocated across Wellington-Guelph, spanning both *centre-based* and licensed *home-based* child care

# Update

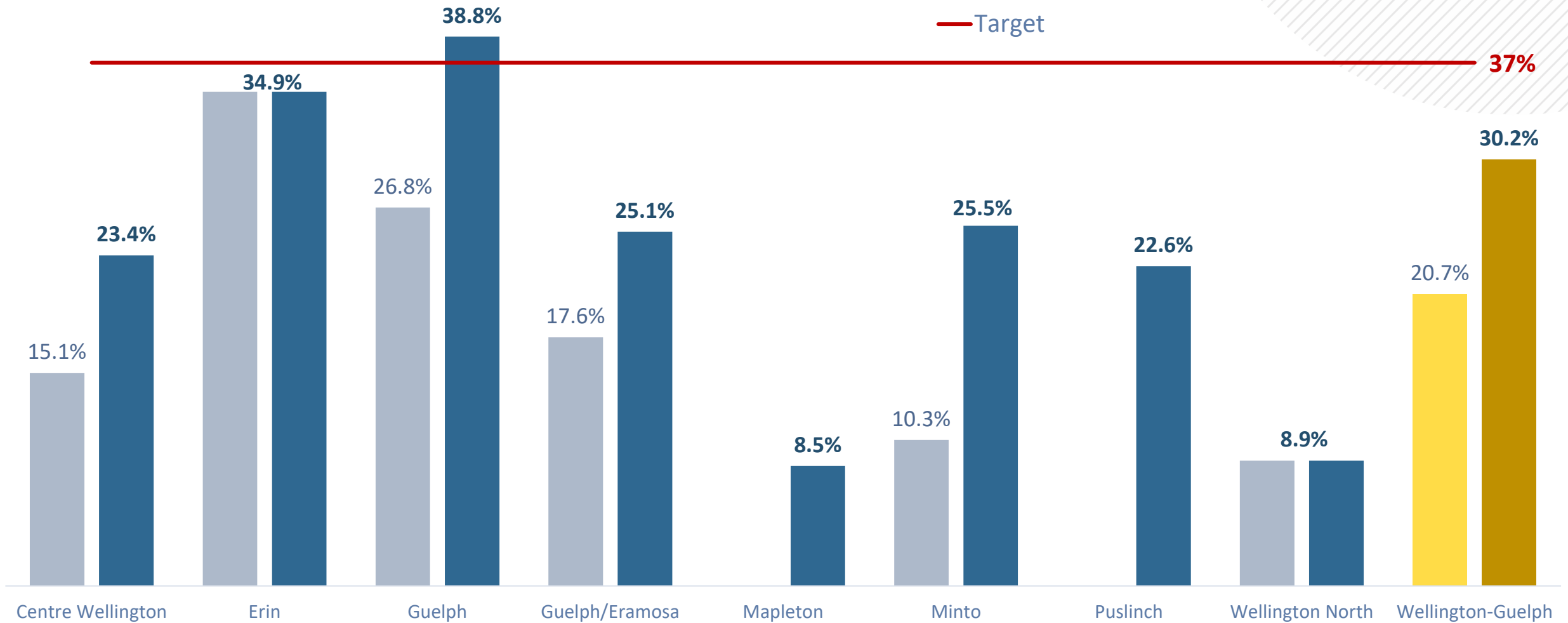
Wellington-Guelph CWELCC Space Growth	Centre-Based Spaces	Home-Based Spaces	Total Spaces
Pre-CWELCC (2021)	2,107	180	<b>2,287</b>
CWELCC Spaces - Currently in Operation	2,437	522	<b>2,959</b>
CWELCC Spaces - Planned	552	198	<b>750</b>
<b>Projected CWELCC Spaces (By December 2026)</b>	<b>2,989</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>3,709</b>

Projected Wellington-Guelph CWELCC Access Rate for *Centre-Based* and licensed *Home-Based* Spaces: **36%, one percentage point below** Ontario's 37% benchmark

# Update

## Access Rates for Full-Time Centre-Based Licensed Child Care

- Pre-CWELCC Centre-Based Access Rate (2022)
- Projected Centre-Based Access Rate (December 2026)
- Target



Projected access rates include planned spaces.

# Update

- Centre-based access shortfalls will exist in every lower tier municipality in Wellington County:
  - ❖ Wellington-Guelph current average access rate (centre-based only): 26.1%
  - ❖ Provincial Target: 37%
  - ❖ Shortfall: 732 additional centre-based spaces needed to meet the target
  - ❖ Current CWELCC funding cannot support this gap
  - ❖ Only Guelph is projected to meet the 37% target by 2026

# Summary

- 3,709 CWELCC spaces projected by end of 2026, meeting the directed growth target of 1,719 spaces
- Access rate (centre and licensed home-based spaces) projected at 36%, just shy of the 37% Provincial target
- However, when considering the 37% Provincial target, there is a 732 space shortfall in centre-based spaces for all lower tier municipalities in Wellington County
  - ❖ These spaces are currently not eligible for CWELCC funding.

# Summary

- Waitlists are growing, especially for CWELCC centre-based spaces
- Fee reductions have eased affordability, but access barriers persist for priority populations
- Future planning should focus on:
  - ❖ Supporting rural municipalities
  - ❖ Expanding both centre-based and licensed home child care
  - ❖ Reducing barriers for non-profit operators
  - ❖ Advocating for sustained investment in the CWELCC system from senior level of governments past 2026

# Recommendation

That the Joint Social Services and Land Ambulance Committee recommend to County Council to receive the report, Update on Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System, for information



**Thank You!**