

Irish Development Cooperation

Development policies

Poverty reduction, to reduce vulnerability and increase opportunity, is the overarching objective of Irish Aid. Ireland will support the promotion of human development, human security and justice, the building and strengthening of democracy, the promotion of gender equality and the promotion and protection of human rights.

Development cooperation policies and activities are measured against their contribution to the reduction of poverty and against the progress they achieve towards the development targets set by the international community, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Irish development assistance has grown steadily over the years from modest beginnings to its current size (total ODA in 2010 is estimated to be € 671.4 million).

Priority countries

Irish Aid provides bilateral and multilateral funding for projects in over 90 countries around the world.

Bilateral aid is provided for specific projects in the following UNECE member States:

- Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- Eastern Europe: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation.

Priority areas

Ireland's development cooperation policy has identified four priority issues for poverty reduction:

- Gender equality
- HIV/AIDS
- Environmental sustainability
- Good governance

In addition the following, region-specific strategies have been formulated:

- In Eastern Europe, specifically, Ireland focuses on projects that address poverty alleviation, human rights, governance, strengthening civil society and democratic transition.
- In Western Balkan countries, Ireland is an active participant in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. The key objectives of this pact are Media, Local Democracy and Cross Border Co-operation, Inter-Regional Trade/Investment Compact, Regional Infrastructure, Organized Crime, Migration and Asylum/Refugees.

Coordination and implementation

Irish Aid is the Government of Ireland's programme of assistance to developing countries. The Development Cooperation Directorate, a Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs, is responsible for administering the Irish Aid programme. The Irish development cooperation policy is an integral part of Ireland's wider foreign policy.

Ireland works in close partnership with recipient countries, other donors, multilateral organizations and non-governmental organizations and missionaries. The partnership with beneficiary countries is built on a structured framework for co-operation which identifies the responsibilities of both sides and facilitates regular, open dialogue. It allows the recipient country to lead in the formulation of development strategies, to promote local ownership and capacity building.

To enhance the effectiveness of development policies, Ireland carefully coordinates its activities with the donor community and international organizations such as the World Bank, IMF and the UN Funds and Programmes. The EU is furthermore a critical partner in maximizing the effectiveness of its development assistance.

For more information, please see www.irishaid.gov.ie