



Irish Network for
Education Worldwide

Budget 2027

**Delivering on Ireland's
Global Education
Commitments**

Ensuring No Child Is Left
Behind

**Irish Network for
Education Worldwide**

Pre-Budget 2027
Submission

Recommendations for Budget 2027

Education in ODA

In 2025, the Irish government in its Programme for Government committed to “significantly increase” the proportion of ODA allocated to education. This commitment was reiterated in the DFAT’s strategy for 2025–2028. Yet, almost halfway through both the lifetime of this government and the strategy period, increases remain limited. Budget 2027 is a critical moment to translate this commitment into action — across both development cooperation and emergency response, with increased direct funding to and through civil society, including locally led organisations.

Part of this commitment is to increase support for the education of young people, particularly girls in low-income countries. With growing global backlash against women’s and girl’s rights, this is more important than ever.

Meanwhile, rising conflict has made education in emergencies increasingly vital. Ireland should continue its longstanding leadership in championing education in emergencies as a life-saving intervention.

Recommendations:

- **Deliver on the commitment to significantly increase the proportion of ODA channelled to education, including to and through civil society.**
- **Ensure that girls’ education, education in low-income contexts, and education in emergencies remain priority areas for Irish ODA.**

Global Funds

The budget processes beginning with Budget 2027 will be pivotal for securing meaningful Irish commitments to the replenishments of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW).

Ireland has been a strong supporter of both funds. Over the past 5 years alone, it has committed €60 Million to GPE, making it the 14th largest global donor, and more than €18 Million to ECW, making it the 11th largest global donor. Ireland has also played an active role in supporting the funds’ governance.

At a time of constrained global financing and rising need, both funds are under pressure, yet remain indispensable. Each serving its distinct and complementary purpose, they are crucial to providing education to children in all contexts, from humanitarian crises to fragile and low-income settings, preventing critical gaps. Ireland’s longstanding leadership in supporting global education, alongside its strong reputation as a trusted negotiator, makes it an indispensable donor and voice for these two funds.

Recommendations:

- **Make meaningful pledges to both ECW and GPE in 2026, at a minimum maintaining previous commitment levels, and lead by example at a challenging moment for global education financing.**
- **Accompany these pledges with continued engagement to strengthen the effectiveness, governance, and impact of both funds.**

EU Presidency

As Ireland has assumed the Presidency of the Council of the EU, with the historic opportunity to help shape discussions on the next MFF, both political leadership and financial commitments on global education will be central to Ireland’s role, as well as to the follow-up work within the Trio Presidency in 2027.

We’re concerned that the European Parliament is at risk of backsliding on its historic leadership in global education. As preparations for the 2028–2034 MFF and the future Global Europe Instrument advance, the previous 10% funding commitment to education is no longer reflected in the proposed framework.

This comes at a time when strategic investment in education within EU external action could not be more important to human development, fighting poverty, economic growth and competitiveness, peace, and long-term global stability.

Recommendations:

Advance equitable, sustainable, and rights-based education financing in EU external action by securing

- **Clear financing benchmarks, including upholding the commitment to allocate:**
 - 10% of the EU’s development cooperation budget to education; and
 - 10% of the humanitarian budget to education.
- **Stronger integration of education and measurable implementation commitments across the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and Global Education Instrument.**

Key Enablers

Delivering on Ireland's 0.7% ODA Commitment

Ireland has reaffirmed its commitment to allocate 0.7% of GNI to ODA, yet progress is moving in the wrong direction. Excluding In Donor Refugee Costs (IDRC), ODA fell from 0.32% to 0.30% of GNI in 2025, putting the 0.7% target further out of reach. Budget 2027 should mark a return to meaningful progress through a 10% increase in ODA (excluding IDRC), alongside a clear, year-on-year pathway to achieving the 0.7% commitment.

Investing in Teachers

The global teacher shortage is undermining learning worldwide. Ireland should support partner countries to train, fairly remunerate, and retain teachers, while championing strong, publicly funded education systems as the most equitable and sustainable way to deliver quality education. Irish funding should not promote the privatisation of education and should support social dialogue, including with teacher unions. Addressing the global teacher shortage should be a flagship objective of Ireland's EU leadership.

Investing in Global Citizenship Education

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) is a key enabler of the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 4 on education and Ireland has earned international recognition as leaders in this area. At a time of rising conflict, climate disruption, democratic backsliding, misinformation, and growing social division, Ireland should strengthen its investment in GCE through a stronger cross-government approach, increased funding for GCE, and dedicated resources across national strategies on the SDGs, climate action, and anti-racism.

The Irish Network for Education Worldwide (INEW)

The Irish Network for Education Worldwide (INEW) represents and connects civil society actors and education stakeholders in Ireland advocating for inclusive, equitable, and safe quality education for all worldwide, with a focus on development and emergency contexts.

As a membership organisation with 29 members, we bring together a diverse range of Irish development and humanitarian aid NGOs, school and university teacher unions, global citizenship education organisations, and more.