

Global Issues

Table 10.1: United Nations development indicators by region and worldwide

Region	GNI per capita (US\$ PPP)*	Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	Expected Years Schooling	Maternal Mortality Ratio**
Least Developed Countries	3,006	64.9	10.1	354
Arab States	14,391	71.3	11.9	128
East Asia and Pacific	16,138	76.2	14.5	78
Europe and Central Asia	19,763	73.6	15.5	21
L. America and Caribbean	15,109	73.7	14.8	85
South Asia	6,972	68.4	11.9	132
Sub-Saharan Africa	3,666	60.6	10.3	516
OECD	46,318	80.1	16.6	21
Worldwide total	17,254	72.0	13.0	215

Source: UNHD Report Human Development Index 2023/24, Tables 1 and 5, pp.277, 296

Notes: * Gross National Income (GNI) Data adjusted for differences in purchasing power parity ** ratio of the number of maternal deaths to the number of live births expressed per 100,000 live births. The comparable rates for Ireland are: GNI per capita: \$87,468; Life Expectancy: 82.7; Expected Years Schooling: 19.1; Maternal Mortality 5.

Table 10.2 Possible pathways to ODA targets 2025-2030

Year	ODA €m	% of GNI*	Increase required €m
2025	1,780.0	0.54	
2026	1,985.7	0.57	205.7
2027	2,204.0	0.60	218.2
2028	2,436.1	0.64	232.1
2029	2,676.6	0.67	240.5
2030	2,934.4	0.70	257.8

Calculations: *Social Justice Ireland* – based on estimates of Ireland's macroeconomic prospects contained in Budget 2025: Economic & Fiscal Outlook (2024) and author's calculations.

Global Issues

Inequalities



Our world is becoming increasingly unequal. The wealthiest 1 per cent of people own almost half of all global wealth, while 3.6 billion people are living below the World Bank poverty line. Economic power continues to be centred in the Global North - an estimated US\$1 trillion is extracted annually from the South through the global financial system and flows North. US\$47 billion is lost to lower-income countries through tax abuse, with up to 99.4 per cent going to wealthy countries. An annual 2 per cent decrease in inequality would be sufficient to end extreme poverty within 20 years (Oxfam, [2025](#)). The UN Human Development Report 2023-24 points to some of these inequalities between various regions of the world, as shown in Table 10.1 (UNDP, [2024](#)). Today, average life expectancy is 20 years higher for people in the richest countries compared to those in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Official Development Assistance (ODA)

It is concerning that PfG only makes one reference to Overseas Aid and that is to be found in the Protecting our Environment section. There is a commitment to ensuring 'continued support for climate finance delivered through Ireland's Overseas Development Aid programme, particularly in areas where communities are vulnerable to climate impacts'.

Whilst Ireland has committed to reaching targets for ODA, Climate Finance, and Loss and Damage. It is critical that Government recognise that these are three separate obligations under three different agreements, as explored by Migrations in Our Common Home: Planning for Change - Climate Change and Migration (Social Justice Ireland, [2022](#)) and contributions to each should be disaggregated from one another.

Ireland still lacks a strategy for reaching the UN-agreed ODA target of 0.7 per cent of national income and we call on the Government to develop such a strategy with a view to reaching this target by 2030. We must continue to recover lost ground in relation to our ODA commitments. Given Ireland's current and projected economic growth, we believe that Government should commit to reaching the UN target of 0.7 per cent of GNI* to be allocated within the next five years. In Table 10.2, we propose a possible pathway to reaching the UN target.

This pathway sees Ireland achieve the UN target of 0.7 per cent over the next five years. Here again we use GNI* as a more realistic measurement of Ireland's national income, making the target all the more achievable. These allocations should not include the increase in expenditure in respect of the Ukrainian crisis, which should be ring-fenced and warehoused. They should also not include our commitments to Climate Finance or Loss and Damage.

Policy Priorities

- Uphold the value of solidarity and take a human-rights first approach to foreign, migration and international development policy.
- Renew the commitment to meeting the UN target of contributing 0.7 per cent of national income to ODA by 2030 and set a clear pathway to achieve this.
- Disaggregate our commitments to Climate Finance and Loss and Damage from our ODA target, and accelerate progress towards fulfilling these commitments.