

Ireland - 2024 Biennial report on the implementation of the Child Guarantee

This overview highlights extracted from the first Biennial report on the implementation of the Child Guarantee in Ireland. It is not exhaustive nor does it evaluate the report.

Roll-out of key services

Early childhood education and care: A review of the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). Enhancements of the *National Childcare Scheme* and adoption of the *National Action Plan for Childminding 2021-2028*. The *Equal Start* funding model supports participation in ECCE for disadvantaged families. Reform of the childcare system.

Education and school-based activities: Expansion of the *Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools Programme*. Provision of free books to primary school students within the *Free Education Scheme*. Establishment of the *Supporting Traveller and Roma Programme*. Development of the *Literacy, Numeracy, and Digital Literacy Strategy* and review of the *School Transport Scheme*.

Healthy meal each school day: The *School Meals Programme* provides funding towards provision of regular, free, nutritious meals to children.

Healthcare: Improved access to medical doctors, extended to children aged six, supports early identification of diseases and developmental issues. All children receive free vision screening and vaccines provided free of charge. Funding for period poverty mitigation.

Adequate housing: Adoption of the *Youth Homelessness Strategy*.

Local poverty action plans: Ireland plans local child poverty action plans in the *Children and Young People's Services Committees* areas.

Resources

- [Full Biennial report on the implementation of the Child Guarantee](#)
- [Eurochild Ireland Country Profile 2023](#)
- [Ireland Child Guarantee National Action Plan - An overview](#)

Monitoring and Evaluation

The *Roadmap for Social Inclusion in Ireland* aims to establish a new national child poverty target. It is part of a broader government strategy, supported by new indicators and longitudinal studies like *Growing Up in Ireland* and the *State of the Nation's Children* report, which provides the most up-to-date data on the *National Set of Child Wellbeing indicators*.

Funding to implement the Child Guarantee

The report provides an overview of Ireland's funding for each service type. *Young Ireland*, the *National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2023-2028*, identifies child budgeting as a key action within the policy framework's enabling environment. A cross-government approach focuses on child poverty in the 2024 Budget.

Target groups

The target groups have been listed in the National Action Plan and [Eurochild's overview](#).

Lessons learnt and further development

- *Young Ireland* aims to develop a Cross Government Children and *Young People's Research Programme* from 2024 to 2028.
- There is a need to include a gap analysis to enhance data on vulnerable children and integrate children's data with broader equality frameworks.
- Coordination among agencies and policymaking alignment are crucial for improving services and outcomes, supported by ongoing efforts to involve children and young people in decision-making processes.

Relevant trends

- The percentage of children experiencing consistent poverty decreased from 6.3% to 4.8% between 2021 and 2023.
- In 2021, 72.9% of AROPE children and 84.7% of non-ARPE children were in very good health.
- 21.8% of AROPE children and 2.5% of non-ARPE children were living in a household unable to keep the home adequately warm in 2022.
- In 2022, 14.9% of AROPE children and 1.4% of non-ARPE children were living in a household facing cost overburden.
- The number of children living in a household facing severe housing deprivation was 7.5% for AROPE children and 1.2% for non-ARPE children in 2020.
- In 2022, 16.1% of AROPE children and 5.2% of non-ARPE children were living in an overcrowded household.