

SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)

School year: 2020–2021

- School Meals Programme

Lead Agency: Department of Social Protection

NATIONAL LAWS, POLICIES, AND STANDARDS

- National school feeding policy
- Nutrition**
- Food safety**
- Health
- Agriculture
- Private sector involvement

Line item in the national budget...

- Yes No No response

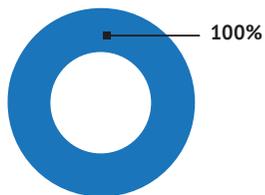
BUDGET

Total: USD 66,677,604

- Government: USD 66,677,604
- International donors*: USD 0
- Private sector: USD 0
- Other donors: USD 0

Includes funding from the United States Department of Agriculture Yes No No response

*International donations by United Nations agencies or non-governmental organizations often represent funding from multiple donors.



INFRASTRUCTURE

All schools in Ireland have electricity, clean and piped water, and flush toilets. Most foods for the School Meals Programme are purchased in processed form and not prepared in a kitchen.

SPECIAL NOTES

Some population numbers from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) were used to complete this report. The European Union's school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme is not included in this report, although it was operational in Ireland during the 2020/2021 school year.

MEALS/SNACKS/MODALITY

- Breakfast**
- Lunch**
- Dinner
- Snacks**
- Take-home rations
- Other

- Grains, cereals**
- Roots, tubers
- Legumes, pulses, nuts
- Dairy products**
- Eggs
- Meat**
- Poultry**
- Fish
- Green, leafy vegetables**
- Other vegetables
- Fruits**
- Oil
- Salt
- Sugar

- Dairy milk**
- Yogurt drink
- Fruit juice
- Tea
- Water**
- Other

Prohibited food items: Unhealthy food items

FOOD SOURCES

- Purchased (domestic)**
- Purchased (foreign)
- In-kind (domestic)
- In-kind (foreign)

COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

- Handwashing with soap
- Height measurement
- Weight measurement
- Testing for anemia
- Deworming treatment
- Eye testing/eyeglasses
- Hearing testing/treatment
- Dental cleaning/testing
- Menstrual hygiene
- Drinking water
- Water purification

COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Food and nutrition
- Agriculture
- School gardens
- Hygiene
- Health
- Reproductive health
- HIV prevention
- Physical education

The checked items were provided in most or all participating schools.



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SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS

CHILDREN RECEIVING FOOD, 2020–2021

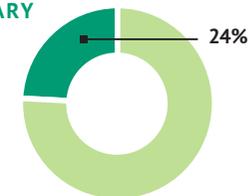
School level	Total	# Enrolled	# Receiving food
Pre-school	128,075	99,857	3,048
Primary school	548,693	561,411	146,796
Secondary school	371,588	379,184	69,643
Total	1,048,356	1,040,452	219,487



COVERAGE: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Total number primary and secondary school-age children: 920,281

Receiving school food: 216,439



Food was also provided to some students in...

- Pre-schools**
- Vocational/trade schools
- Other

NUTRITION

School feeding program(s) included/involved the following:

- Fortified foods
- Bio-fortified foods
- Micronutrient supplements
- Nutritionists involved**
- Special training for cooks/caterers in nutrition
- Objective to meet nutritional goals**
- Objective to reduce obesity

Food items fortified/biofortified:

Not applicable

Micronutrients:

Not applicable

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

At least two nutritionists were involved in school feeding in Ireland. Nutritional requirements for food baskets are intended to prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity.

STUDIES CONDUCTED

None

RESEARCH NEEDED

Not specified

AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Jobs created by school feeding programs*

- 0 Cooks and food preparers
- Transporters
- Off-site processors
- Food packagers and handlers
- Monitoring
- Food service management
- Safety and quality inspectors
- Other

**If blank, no response was provided.*

Farmers were involved with the school feeding program(s)...

- Yes No No response

Other private sector (for profit) actors were involved...

- Yes No No response

There was a focus on creating jobs or leadership or income-generating opportunities for...

- Women Other groups
 Youth No response

There was community engagement (by parents or others) in the school feeding program(s)...

- Yes No No response

Were there links between food banks and the school feeding program(s)?

- Yes No There are no food banks in this country.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In the School Meals Programme, each participating school is provided funding in order to procure a company to supply school meals. Competitive processes are followed to allocate school feeding contracts.

CONTACTS: IRELAND

Agency: Department of Social Protection

Website: <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/29a3ff-school-meals-scheme/>

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Among the recent successes related to school feeding in Ireland, a hot school meal pilot program was undertaken in 2019. The objective was to identify whether a hot meal could be provided to schools that lacked any on-site cooking facilities. This pilot program was deemed a success, and the hot meal program has since been scaled up to additional schools. A robust monitoring system ensures that there is no mismanagement or corruption in the School Meals Programme.

EMERGENCIES/COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Schools in Ireland were closed for several months in early 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic caused the number of students fed through the School Meals Programme to decrease, along with the frequency of school feeding. However, while schools were closed, packages of food were provided to be picked up at school or were delivered to students' homes to prepare and eat at home.



SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAMME

Lead implementer(s): Department of Social Protection

OBJECTIVES:

- To meet educational goals
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals

MODALITIES OF PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH FOOD:

- In-school meals
- In-school snacks

FREQUENCY AND DURATION:

- Five times per week during the school year

TARGETING:

Targeted towards schools in disadvantaged areas that have been identified as needing additional assistance

HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2020–2021 SCHOOL YEAR?

School level	# Students	% Girls	% Boys
Pre-school	3,048	–	–
Primary school	146,796	–	–
Secondary school	69,643	–	–
Total	219,487	–	–

FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:

Grains, cereals	Poultry	Dairy milk
Dairy products	Green, leafy vegetables	Water
Meat	Fruits	

* *fortified*

FOOD SOURCES:

100% Purchased (domestic)	0% In-kind (domestic)
0% Purchased (foreign)	0% In-kind (foreign)

If blank, no response was provided.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The School Meals Programme began operating in 2000 and was active in 1,353 public schools in the 2020–2021 school year. The objective of the program is to provide regular, nutritious food to children who are unable, due to lack of high quality food, to take full advantage of the education provided to them. The program is an important component of policies to encourage school attendance and educational achievement in Ireland.