

UNITED KINGDOM*



0.69% GENUINE AID/GNI

0.70% TOTAL AID/GNI



“This is exactly the moment when we must mobilise every one of our national assets, including our aid budget and expertise, to safeguard British interests and values overseas.”

– Prime Minister Boris Johnson, speaking on the merger of the Department for International Development and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office

MAIN CHANGES IN 2020

2020 saw significant and deep-cutting changes to UK aid infrastructure and practice, which continued the existing trend of aligning UK development with the country's own national interests. First, in June the prime minister announced the merger of the foreign and development ministries, a decision explicitly grounded in the desire to align the UK's diplomatic, security and development interests more closely.

The shrinking of GNI thanks to COVID led to a £1bn package of cuts across the sector, with very little communication about where these fell. Then in November, the government announced its intention to reduce the percentage of ODA from 0.7% to 0.5% GNI, a cut of approximately £4.5 billion. This decision has been widely opposed by the development sector and parliamentarians.

ODA spending in 2020 saw a prioritisation of resources for health in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The UK was the fifth-largest donor to the global COVID-19 emergency, committing \$462 million to meet humanitarian needs globally. The UK also prioritised resourcing and increasing climate finance through its ODA budget, part of its broader ambition of leadership ahead of COP26.

TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS FOR 2021 AND BEYOND

The UK's decision to reduce aid spending to 0.5% will dominate ODA in 2021 and beyond. The cut will severely impact the outcomes of the UK's funded activity and will have potentially far-reaching consequences for its reputation in partner countries. It remains to be seen how soon (or whether) the UK will return to 0.7%, but rebuilding the portfolio to the standards prevailing before the cut will take significant time and resources.

The international development strategy will give a clearer sense of direction for UK ODA. We will continue to see an alignment of development with diplomacy objectives, but we hope this does not lead to the conversion of ODA into a tool for the UK's own interests.

CASE STUDY BOX:



In 2020, the UK continued its strong trend of spending most of its ODA through grants rather than loans, with less than 5% of ODA being delivered through loans. This focus on grants is a long-term UK policy. With grants as the default, loans are used only when there is a reason why this mechanism is most suited for the objective of a particular project. We welcome the continued commitment to this approach, recognising that it is an effective use of ODA which delivers for the world's most marginalised people.

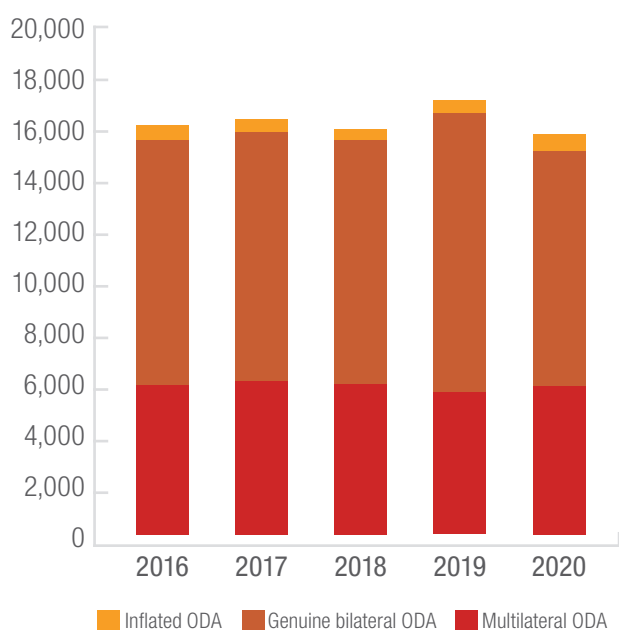
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE UK GOVERNMENT

- Re-establish the legal commitment to 0.7% GNI/ODA, in line with the International Development Act, as soon as possible. Where cuts are made, communicate them early and transparently and focus them where they will cause the least harm.
- Continue to focus on poverty reduction in all decision making and implementation of all ODA, pursuing an inclusive approach that targets resources where they are needed most and that aligns with the SDGs, the aid effectiveness principles, the commitment to leave no one behind and other key international agreements.
- Incorporate the expertise and best practice of the former Department for International Development into the new joint department to ensure that development objectives and approaches continue to be at the centre of both decision making and practice.
- Make sure that all UK ODA is transparent and that all departments spending ODA meet the commitments on aid transparency.

* ODA amounts featured in this section for the United Kingdom have been directly sourced by national platforms from the official OECD sources reported by the national ministries of foreign affairs.

UNITED KINGDOM – GENUINE AND INFLATED ODA

(€ million, constant 2019)



ODA TO LDCS (€ million, constant 2019)

LDC	ODA to LDCs	ODA to LDCS (% GNI)	ODA to LDCS (% total ODA)
2016	5,162.53	0.22	31.42
2017	5,468.33	0.23	32.91
2018	5,309.69	0.23	32.96
2019	5,165.81	0.21	29.88

ODA TO DRM (€ million, constant 2019)

DRM	ODA for DRM	DRM (% bilateral)	DRM (% total ODA)
2016	27.26	0.26	0.17
2017	33.95	0.33	0.20
2018	29.97	0.29	0.19
2019	38.48	0.33	0.22

AID MODALITY (€ million, constant 2019)

Year	Bilateral gross	Grants	Loans	Loans (% of gross bilateral)
2016	10,619.02	10,609.07	9.95	0.09
2017	10,519.59	10,483.10	36.49	0.35
2018	10,339.77	10,318.32	21.45	0.21
2019	11,892.28	11,822.75	69.53	0.58

ODA TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY (€ million, constant 2019)

Gender focus	Bi allocable	Total Screened	Not Screened	None	Significant	Principal	Significant (% of screened)	Principal (% of screened)
2016	9,429.40	9,429.40	0.00	4,634.27	4,247.19	547.93	45.04	5.81
2017	9,416.48	9,416.48	0.00	4,369.85	4,574.90	471.74	48.58	5.01
2018	9,176.68	8,953.19	223.49	3,569.21	4,928.18	455.79	55.04	5.09
2019	10,470.32	9,955.72	514.60	3,657.46	5,705.21	593.06	57.31	5.96

ODA TO SUPPORT CSOs (€ million, constant 2019)

CSO support	Non-CSO	Donor-CSO-Earmarked	International-CSO-Earmarked	Recipient-CSO-Earmarked	Donor-CSO-Core	International-CSO-Core	Recipient-CSO-Core	Total bilateral CSO support, % bilateral	Total bilateral CSO support, % total ODA	Core bilateral CSO support, % bilateral	Core bilateral CSO support, % total ODA
2016	8,727.20	649.20	552.13	180.09	222.87	138.90	10.70	16.73	10.68	3.55	2.27
2017	8,400.86	772.87	581.08	225.48	305.28	110.15	8.19	19.25	12.05	4.07	2.55
2018	8,586.61	463.62	577.21	167.01	250.34	130.18	11.61	15.71	9.93	3.85	2.43
2019	9,994.26	538.61	582.66	148.40	262.25	124.41	23.94	14.41	9.72	3.52	2.37