

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS IN:

ARMENIA

A BRIEF HISTORY

When the Open Society Foundations–Armenia opened its doors in 1997, Armenia’s population was isolated and impoverished due to the war in Nagorno-Karabakh and the economic blockade imposed by Azerbaijan and Turkey. With the collapse of the Soviet-era welfare system, many basic institutions were in need of funding and reform.

The Foundation responded by supplying much-needed equipment, technology and expertise to Armenia’s schools, universities, libraries, and healthcare facilities that were struggling to adapt to the new economic pressures. Beneficiaries included the National Library of Armenia as well as Matenadaran Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, one of the world’s oldest and richest repositories of manuscripts and historical records.

Since then the foundation has supported a broad range of civil society groups, including women’s shelters, investigative journalism outlets, human rights defenders, and organisations monitoring elections and public spending. Today, Armenia is grappling with low levels of public trust in institutions, widespread corruption, and rising inequality. The Open Society Foundations–Armenia continue to support local partners working to promote justice, accountability, and transparency.

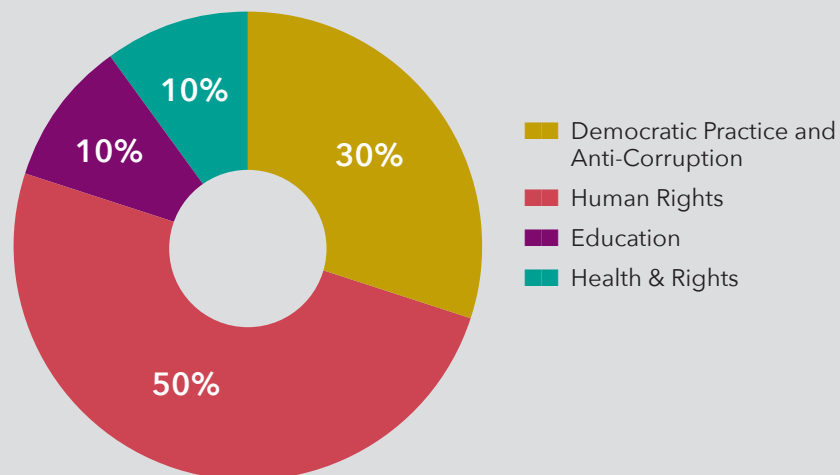
QUICK FACTS

TOTAL NUMBER OF
EMPLOYEES**22**TOTAL NUMBER OF
2017 GRANTEES**147**TOTAL EXPENDITURE
SINCE FORMATION**\$47.7M**

2017 TOTAL BUDGET

\$3.5M

2017 GRANT-GIVING BY SECTOR



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FACTS ABOUT ARMENIA AND THE OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS

01 From 2000 to 2005 the Foundation supported the creation of the first digital library catalogue of books published in Armenian, a project that included developing the first-ever Armenian key-board and visual recognition software.

02 In the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008, the Foundation and its partners provided hot meals, school transportation, and home heating to more than 65,000 Armenians whose families were struggling to make ends meet.

03 Armenia's first community-based mental health institution, the Spitak Care House, was backed by the Foundation. The house has become a model for reform of outdated, closed psychiatric institutions.

04 We also supported the launch of the country's first pro-bono legal advice service, run by students at Yerevan State University, and provided technical advice on the development of a nationwide system of legal aid and public defenders.

05 To give dignity to terminally ill patients, the Foundation worked with the Armenian Ministry of Health to create national standards for palliative care, and funded the training of new specialists focused on end-of-life care.

06 To date, the Foundation has invested \$1.5 million to support the work of women's rights organisations, including providing emergency services to victims of domestic violence.

07 Since 1997, the Open Society Foundations–Armenia has spent some \$5 million to support the development of independent media and award-winning investigative reporting.

08 Our efforts to support citizen participation have included helping local groups that use freedom of information laws to monitor government spending and to combat corruption.

09 Human rights conditions in prisons, police cells, psychiatric wards and homes for the elderly in Armenia are now systematically monitored, thanks to work supported by Open Society. The findings help to shape policy, and to end abuses.