

THE OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS AND GEORGE SOROS

A BRIEF HISTORY

The Open Society Foundations were founded by George Soros, one of the world's foremost philanthropists, who since 1984 has given away over \$32 billion of a personal fortune made in the financial markets.

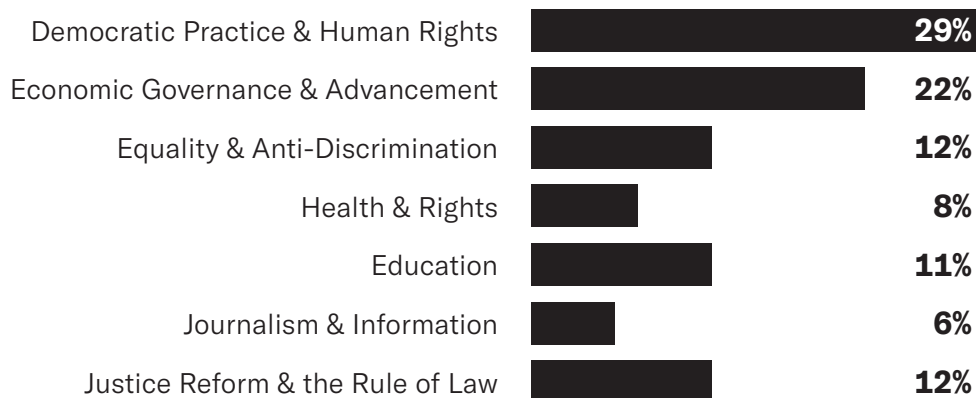
Open Society has supported individuals and organizations across the globe fighting for freedom of expression, transparency, accountable government, and for societies that promote justice and equality. This giving has often focused on those who face discrimination purely for who they are, such as Europe's Roma people, and others pushed to the margins of mainstream society.

Soros has experienced such intolerance first-hand. Born in Hungary in 1930, he lived through the Nazi occupation, which resulted in the murder of over 500,000 Hungarian Jews. In 1947, as the Communists took power, Soros left Budapest for London and then emigrated to the United States, entering the world of finance and investments where he was to make his fortune.

Soros began his philanthropy in 1979, giving scholarships to black South Africans under apartheid. In the 1980s, he helped promote the open exchange of ideas in Communist Hungary; after the fall of the Berlin Wall, he sought to strengthen democratic practice and institutions across East and Central Europe.

With the Cold War over, he expanded his philanthropy to the United States, Africa, Latin America, and Asia, supporting a vast array of new efforts to create more accountable, transparent, and democratic societies.

2018 BUDGET BY SECTOR



QUICK FACTS

Total Budget in 2018:

\$1,005M

Total OSF Expenditure since 1984:

\$14.9B

9 FACTS ABOUT OPEN SOCIETY AND GEORGE SOROS

- 1** The Foundations today include more than 20 national and regional Foundations, each with its own local advisory board; these board members oversee the work and shape funding priorities to meet local needs.
- 2** The first foundation was established in Hungary in 1984, and the newest opened in Myanmar in 2016.
- 3** The foundations provide no more than 33 percent of the funding to the vast majority of the organizations we work with, in order to ensure they maintain their autonomy and establish a sound financial basis for their operations.
- 4** With an endowment of some \$18 billion, the Foundations are the world's third largest philanthropic fund, after the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the United Kingdom's Wellcome Trust.
- 5** Open Society has been the largest private funder of efforts to support Europe's Roma minority.
- 6** Beginning in 1993, we provided tens of millions of dollars for humanitarian aid and relief efforts during the wars in the countries of the former Yugoslavia, especially in besieged Sarajevo.
- 7** We have been working in the United States since 1996. Our U.S. programs account for around 17 percent of our funding work, which includes supporting reform of the criminal justice system and drug laws, strengthening democratic participation, and supporting humane immigration laws.
- 8** Again and again, Open Society have joined policy debates on controversial issues that other funders might avoid. We are proud to work with people who find themselves being shunned by society simply because of who they are.
- 9** Our name reflects the influence on our founder of the philosophy of Karl Popper. In his book *Open Society and Its Enemies*, Popper argues that no philosophy or ideology is the final arbiter of truth, and that societies can only flourish when they allow for democratic governance, freedom of expression, and respect for individual rights.