

UKRAINE

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has thrust the Open Society Foundations' Kyiv-based [International Renaissance Foundation \(IRF\)](#) onto the frontlines of the country's struggle for survival. As the largest independent funder of Ukraine's vibrant array of civil society and citizen's groups for more than three decades, IRF was immediately engaged in the vast emergency response to the Russian assault. Its evolving work has included: supporting the evacuation and relocation of civilians; funding efforts to deliver emergency medical supplies and to protect emergency personnel; backing efforts to protect independent journalists and media; and supporting investigations of war crimes committed during the conflict.

In addition to expanding its direct funding of IRF, Open Society also launched the [\\$50 million Ukraine Democracy Fund](#), making a \$25 million pledge in March 2022, that was then matched by other funders. Internationally, the fund has worked to expand international support for Ukraine. Within the country, it has supported a range of civil society groups, around priorities that include promoting accountable government decision making, and advocating for people most directly affected by the Russian full-scale invasion.

Open Society has contributed over \$230 million in grants to Ukraine, benefiting millions of people—including more project funding over the past decade than to any other country in Europe.

UKRAINE: 2023 EXPENDITURES

Total Expenditures for
Ukraine in 2023:

\$20.9M

Total Expenditures in Europe and Central Asia in 2023:

\$219.9M

Total Global Expenditures in 2023:

\$1.7B

9 FACTS ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL RENAISSANCE FOUNDATION

- 1** The foundation was established in Kyiv in April 1990, shortly before Ukraine became independent from the Soviet Union in August 1991. Prior to the 2022 Russian invasion, IRF had satellite offices in Odessa, Kharkiv, Lviv, and Dnipro, and employed more than 60 people.
- 2** The foundation supported civil society advocacy for Ukraine's 2014 Association Agreement with the European Union, and subsequently for the 2017 agreement providing visa-free travel for Ukrainians across the 26 countries of the European Schengen Area. Since 2022, when Ukraine received EU candidate status, IRF has supported Ukrainian civil society to prepare for the accession to the European Union.
- 3** The foundation has supported numerous reintegration programs for veterans of the Russian-Ukrainian war, which has helped thousands of former military personnel return to civilian life.
- 4** The foundation and its grantees were active supporters of the creation of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine in 2014, and helped lawmakers develop a new anticorruption law that required public officials to declare their assets.
- 5** In 2015, local groups supported by the foundation brought about wholesale reform of the Ministry of Health's system for procuring HIV and tuberculosis medication and other essential medicines, after they exposed overwhelming evidence of corruption among Ukrainian distribution firms.
- 6** IRF backed a multiyear campaign to establish an independent public service broadcaster that led to the launch of the National Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine in 2015.
- 7** In the early 1990s, IRF supported the modernization of Ukraine's Soviet-era educational system; today the foundation continues to support the Ministry of Education's ongoing "New Ukrainian School" reforms that seek to advance an inclusive and participatory approach to learning and critical thinking.
- 8** The foundation was the first international donor to provide emergency grants to civil society organizations after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Since 2022, the foundation has supported more than 1,000 projects that help enhance Ukrainian resilience.
- 9** IRF has actively supported the development of Ukraine's legal aid system, which now includes a country-wide system of community-based paralegals and online tools dedicated to promoting ordinary people's access to the protections of law.