

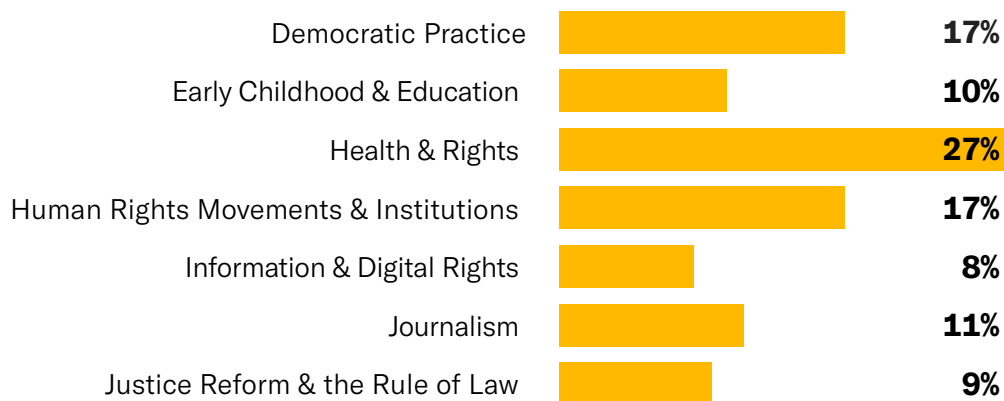
# KYRGYZSTAN

The Soros Foundation–Kyrgyzstan was established in 1993, one year after Kyrgyzstan emerged as an independent state from the collapse of the Soviet Union. It closed down in early 2024 following changes in local funding requirements. Similar to the other foundations set up by George Soros across the former Soviet Union, the Soros Foundation–Kyrgyzstan worked to help the country transition to a more open, democratic society.

The foundation's early work included funding the modernization and reform of crumbling education and health systems. The foundation, led by an advisory board of distinguished local civil society leaders and activists, developed into a grant-making organization based on flexibility and innovation in a crowded field of international donors.

Over 30 years, the foundation's work ranged from supplying water to rural communities to refining laws on data protection. All of this work, however, continued to be guided by the Open Society Foundations' fundamental aims of promoting justice, democratic governance and human rights.

## KYRGYZSTAN: 2020 BUDGET BY THEME



Total Budget for  
Kyrgyzstan in 2020:

**\$4M**

2020 Budget  
for Eurasia:

**\$53.2M**

# 8 FACTS ABOUT KYRGYZSTAN

## AND THE OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS

- 1** The foundation's support for Kyrgyzstan's education system started in 1995 with a program of intensive investment in teacher training and equipment that included translating text books into both Kyrgyz and Uzbek languages.
- 2** Open Society has been an advocate for a health-focused approach to drug policy in Kyrgyzstan. Our grantee Socium launched a needle-exchange program in 1999, followed by Central Asia's first methadone program in 2002.
- 3** In 2014, the foundation worked with health officials and partners to facilitate the sale of generic drugs in Kyrgyzstan, significantly reducing the costs for healthcare providers and for individuals.
- 4** Starting in 1997, the foundation spent more than \$400,000 on fibre-optic cables and other hardware to improve Kyrgyzstan's connections to the internet, while donating computers and other equipment to schools, NGOs, libraries, and universities, and providing them with free internet access.
- 5** SFK has been a major funder of efforts by Bizdin Muras to build a Kyrgyz-language version of Wikipedia, and, through a partnership with Google, to improve the quality of Kyrgyz translations offered by the search engine.
- 6** The foundation played an important role in supporting Kyrgyzstan's transition from analog to digital television transmission. This included funding public information campaigns to explain the change, and providing technical support to the government.
- 7** SFK has been among the principle international supporters of government efforts to reform Kyrgyzstan's criminal justice system, funding input from international experts, supporting exchange visits, and organizing training for lawyers, judges and prosecutors.
- 8** The foundation's commitment to improve access to justice goes back more than 20 years, through its efforts to establish legal clinics run by students which have helped resolve legal disputes for disadvantaged clients.