

A BRIEF HISTORY

The Open Society Foundations has been working in Europe since George Soros established his first foundation in Hungary in 1984—at the start of his effort to help the countries of Central and Eastern Europe make the transition from Communism. Today, Open Society has expanded to become the largest private funder of groups that work for human rights, justice and democracy around the world, working through more than 20 national and regional foundations.

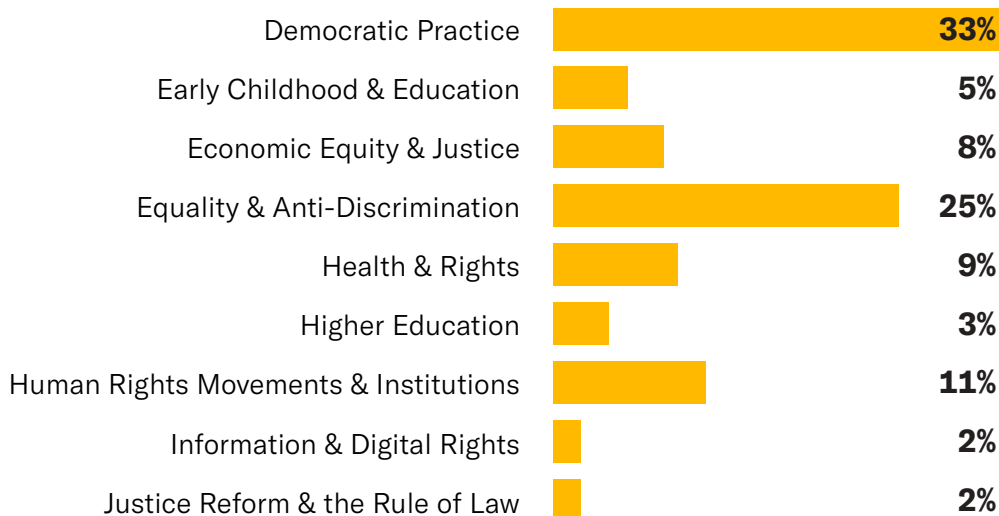
In Europe, our grant-giving effort is led by the Open Society Initiative for Europe (OSIFE), headquartered in Barcelona, while the Brussels-based Open Society European Policy Institute (OSEPI) pursues advocacy and policy work with the institutions of the European Union. In addition, offices in London and Berlin host global thematic programs, working on issues such as human rights, education and access to healthcare. Five national foundations also work in Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia.

Just under ten percent of Open Society’s annual budget funds support work in Europe.

This work is shaped by Open Society’s commitment to the idea that a flourishing democracy needs active citizen participation—not just at election time, but in the everyday business of local and national decision-making. It involves seeking answers for difficult issues, and listening to people who find themselves pushed to the edges of society.

More than three decades after the fall of Communism, Europe’s search for prosperity and stability faces new political challenges rooted in profound global technological and economic change. The Open Society Foundations remain committed to the idea that finding the way forward requires everyone to be involved in the decisions that shape the future.

EUROPE: 2020 BUDGET BY THEME



Total Budget for Europe in 2020:

\$93M

Total Global Budget in 2020:

\$1.2B

9 FACTS ON OPEN SOCIETY IN EUROPE

- 1** The Open Society Foundations joined the German government and the Council of Europe to launch the Berlin-based European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture in 2017, the first arts institution of its kind focused on the work and history of Roma artists.
- 2** Our efforts to defend civil liberties across Europe include supporting dozens of national human rights watchdogs and the Berlin-based Civil Liberties Union for Europe, which seeks to give a unified voice to its national member organizations in European debates.
- 3** We support the participation of parents and professionals in building more inclusive and effective systems for early childhood care and for schooling.
- 4** Open Society has supported the creation of the European Implementation Network, an independent, Strasbourg-based group that provides independent monitoring of the implementation by national governments of the judgements of the European Court of Human Rights.
- 5** We have worked with police forces in cities in Spain, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom on efforts to eliminate racially-biased identity checks, searches and stops.
- 6** We provide support for local groups who work with refugee and migrant communities to support their successful integration in their host countries.
- 7** Our efforts to fight discrimination have included supporting groups that monitor racist attacks in Italy and Greece, supporting campaigns to uphold women's rights and gender equality from Ireland to Poland.
- 8** Our Mental Health Initiative has supported successful efforts in Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and elsewhere to reform the care of people with mental disabilities—by moving away from long-term institutional confinement in favor of supportive community living.
- 9** We support independent journalists, human rights defenders, whistleblowers and anti-corruption campaigners to upgrade their IT and physical security, to respond to legal challenges, and to promote fact-based public debate.