

OPEN SOCIETY IN TURKEY

The Open Society Foundations, founded by George Soros, are the world's largest private funder of groups that work for human rights, justice, and government accountability around the world, with an annual budget of just over \$1 billion. We work in more than 120 countries around the world, through a network of more than 20 national and regional foundations, each guided by an advisory board of leading local experts and thought leaders.

Open Society has been working in Turkey since 2001, and in 2008 it established a national Turkish foundation based in Istanbul. Working with a wide range of local partners, the foundation has been closely involved in supporting Turkey in the long, and currently stalled, EU accession process. Its other priorities have included strengthening education standards, protecting women's rights, combatting discrimination, and helping with the response to the Syrian refugee crisis.

All the activities of the Open Society Foundations in Turkey were regularly audited and approved by both the Ministry of the Interior and the General Directorate of Foundations.

In November, 2018, the foundation announced its closure due to a baseless government campaign to misrepresent its positive contributions to Turkey's social and economic development.

OPEN SOCIETY FUNDING IN TURKEY

- In 2018, before our foundation in Turkey was shut down, it provided around \$2 million in grants to civil society organizations.
- Since 2001, Open Society has invested over \$35 million in projects in Turkey.
- In line with our global policy, our funding accounted for no more than a third of a recipient's total budget.
- Our funding partners have included a range of national, multilateral, and private development institutions, including organizations from the United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, and the European Union.

9 FACTS ABOUT OPEN SOCIETY IN TURKEY

- 1** In line with our global effort to promote informed public debate on critical social issues, Open Society has been a significant funder of several leading Turkish public policy research institutes.
- 2** The foundation's support for Turkey's now stalled EU-accession process included funding the Independent Commission on Turkey, a group of distinguished European political figures that produced three reports from 2004 to 2014 analyzing the challenges and opportunities of EU membership.
- 3** In 2017, the foundation funded the most comprehensive survey to date of the Syrian refugee population in Turkey, interviewing 2,000 Turkish citizens and 8,000 refugees. The results provided valuable new insights for policymakers into the needs and attitudes of both host communities and the refugees themselves.
- 4** The foundation's work to support equal treatment for disabled people included backing "accessible" film festivals that seek to make film-going accessible to everyone—by removing barriers that prevent people with disabilities from going to the cinema.
- 5** The foundation's response to the Syrian refugee crisis included supporting schooling for young refugees, Turkish language lessons for Syrian teachers, and backing the launch of a "refugee council," to enable Turkish, Syrian, and other NGOs to share knowledge and build relationships.
- 6** Open Society is a major supporter of Europe's Roma communities. In Turkey, the foundation's efforts have included helping launch a school and arts studio, and backing a youth orchestra, as well as broader efforts to support Roma voices and representation.
- 7** Open Society's foundation in Turkey promoted public dialogue and debate over issues that remain taboo in mainstream Turkish society.
- 8** In line with the global work of the Open Society Foundations, our foundation in Turkey supported groups that work for freedom of expression and which fight censorship in the arts.
- 9** Our women's rights work has included funding efforts to stop violence against women in the predominantly Kurdish southeast of Turkey.