





## OSI Offices

# Supporting the Soros Network

Open Society Institute offices provide administrative, financial, and technical support to the Soros foundations and also operate independent programs. In OSI offices in Brussels and Paris, much of the work involves establishing partnerships with other international donor organizations and government aid programs. The offices in New York and Budapest administer network programs, which address specific issues on a regional or network-wide basis. OSI in New York is also the home of a series of programs that focus principally on the United States. In 2000, OSI also operated an office in Washington, D.C.

## Open Society Institute

The Open Society Institute was established in 1993 to promote the development and maintenance of open societies around the world. OSI does this by supporting an array of activities dealing with educational, social, legal, and health care reform, and by encouraging alternative approaches to complex and controversial issues.

Based in New York City, OSI is a private operating and grantmaking foundation. OSI's activities include network programs, U.S. programs, and other initiatives. Each of these is described in detail in a separate section of this report. OSI assists the other organizations in the Soros foundations network by providing administrative, financial, and technical support.

Network programs administered by OSI include the Children and Youth Programs, which provide young people with a variety of opportunities and resources; the Economic and Business Development Program, which assists small-business entrepreneurs; the English Language Programs, which support English language instruction and the introduction of modern pedagogy; the Public Health Programs, which help improve health care in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union; the Scholarship Programs, which provide academic exchange opportunities for students, scholars, and professionals from Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Mongolia, Burma, and, increasingly, Central Asia and the Caucasus; and the Women's Program, initiated to support the national foundations in dealing with women's issues. A number of other network programs are based in Hungary, at the Open Society Institute–Budapest. Certain programs are administered from both New York and Budapest.

OSI's U.S. Programs support initiatives in a range of areas, including access to justice for low and moderate income people; independence of the judiciary; ending the death penalty; reducing gun violence and over-reliance on incarceration; drug policy reform; inner-city education and youth programs; fair treatment of

immigrants; reproductive health and choice; campaign finance reform; and improved care of the dying. In 2000, U.S. Programs included Criminal Justice, Fellowships, Governance and Public Policy, Medicine as a Profession, OSI–Baltimore, the Program on Law & Society, the Program on Reproductive Health and Rights, the Project on Death in America, the Soros Documentary Fund, the Southern Initiative, Youth Initiatives, and Other U.S. Initiatives.

Other programs based in New York are the Central Eurasia Project and the Burma Project.

OSI also makes funds available to a variety of cultural, educational, and civic institutions and human rights groups. In 2000, a total of \$9,172,000 was provided to such groups through Chairman and Presidential Grants. Major grant payments and commitments included: \$2,500,000 to the International Crisis Group for general support of on-the-spot analyses of international crises; \$425,000 to the International Women's Health Coalition to support projects that protect women's sexual and reproductive health and rights; \$200,000 to the Economic Cooperation Foundation to promote peace in the Middle East; \$225,000 to Global Witness for core funding; \$100,000 to Physicians for Human Rights for general support; \$231,000 to Doctors of the World for general support; \$200,000 to Refugees International for monitoring and advocacy concerning global refugee crises; \$166,667 to the Committee to Protect Journalists' emergency response fund; \$250,000 for a range of activities to the Foundation on InterEthnic Relations; and \$1,000,000 to Human Rights Watch to support fact-finding missions into human rights abuses throughout the world.

In addition, OSI made a \$20,000,000 grant payable over six years for the benefit of a new organization, the Trust for Civil Society in Central and Eastern Europe, to support the long-term sustainable development of civil society and nongovernmental organizations in the region. The grant is part of a \$75,000,000 ten-year program initiated by five foundations and USAID.

The Institute also provided \$16,347,000 to the Iris Foundation for the benefit of Bard College.

2000 EXPENDITURES

\$64,066,000

## Open Society Institute—Brussels

The Open Society Institute—Brussels, established in 1997, acts as a liaison to facilitate collaboration between the organizations of the Soros foundations network and West European partners, including the various institutions of the European Union (EU), bilateral donors, and nongovernmental organizations.

OSI—Brussels assists the various programs and organizations in the Soros foundations network with their efforts to make contact with donors, and informs partner organizations about the mission, activities, and methods of the network. OSI—Brussels also works to raise awareness in European intergovernmental organizations, governments, and opinion-making circles about issues of concern to the foundations in the network.

In 2000, the numerous activities of OSI—Brussels included support to the Soros foundations in the 10 accession countries for the development of their strategies and activities concerning EU enlargement; organization of various donor coordination meetings, including meetings on support for human rights and democracy worldwide and independent media in South Eastern Europe; coordination of Soros foundations network activities related to the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe; and the organization of various campaigns with other Brussels-based international NGOs concerning EU funding for human rights and democracy.

2000 EXPENDITURES

\$669,000

## Open Society Institute—Budapest

The Open Society Institute—Budapest was established in 1993 to develop and implement programs in the areas of educational, social, and legal reform. OSI—Budapest assists the other organizations in the Soros foundations network by providing administrative, financial, and technical support. OSI—Budapest administers network programs, which address specific issue areas on a network-wide basis. OSI—Budapest also supports a variety of other initiatives throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, with an emphasis on human rights, ethnic and minority issues, civil society, and women's issues. OSI—Budapest is located in the Central European University (CEU) complex in downtown Budapest, and its programs draw upon the university's resources.

Network programs based at OSI—Budapest include the Arts and Culture Network Program, which works with the Soros foundations to support an autonomous and innovative art sector, and to promote change in cultural policy; the Constitutional and Legal Policy Institute, which supports the legal reform efforts of the foundations; the East East Program, which provides a network for the sharing of experience and information among formerly communist countries; the Higher Education Support Program, which promotes the advancement of higher education throughout Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union; the Institute for Educational Policy, which helps the network's foundations maximize the impact of their education programs; the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative, which promotes democratic and effective government at sub-national levels; and the Network Media Program, which acts as a consultant for Soros foundations and other organizations working on media-related projects.

In late 2000, a new Information Program was created by merging the formerly separate Internet Program in New York, the Network Library Program,

and the Center for Publishing Development, including the Electronic Publishing Development Program. The mission of the new program is to promote the equitable deployment of knowledge and communications resources for civic empowerment and effective democratic governance. OSI–Budapest also operates the Roma Participation Program, which promotes Romani efforts to strengthen the Romani community, and the EU Accession Monitoring Program, which monitors selected aspects of the European Union accession process in the 10 candidate states of Central and Eastern Europe. A number of other network programs are based at the Open Society Institute in New York, and some programs are administered from both New York and Budapest.

In addition to the above, OSI–Budapest, together with the CEU Center for Policy Studies, continues to support the International Policy Fellowships program. For more information about the Fellowships, see page 102.

2000 EXPENDITURES

\$17,606,000

## Open Society Institute–Paris

The Open Society Institute–Paris acts as a liaison and resource office to help foster cultural and educational exchange programs between Soros foundations and other Western European countries, particularly France.

Since 1997, OSI–Paris has focused primarily on the Belarus Project. With the exception of this project, all other operational and grant-giving programs are being phased out. The Belarus Project, which was initiated in 1997 when the Belarus Soros Foundation was forced to close, continued in 2000 to support the development of open society in Belarus through a number of projects. For more information on this effort, see page 150.

OSI–Paris and the East East Program cosponsored

the 2000 summer program in Strasbourg, which addressed the question “Can One Get Rid of One’s Own Past?” Travel expenses were provided for participants from Greece and from Turkey.

In February, meetings were held in Paris to discuss plans for the new Open Society Initiative for West Africa and to consider the development of OSI initiatives in Indonesia. In December, a grant was approved for a French NGO, Est-Liberté, to undertake an exploratory mission to Moldova.

OSI–Paris continued to translate and evaluate proposals and grant requests and to direct them to appropriate Soros foundations and network programs. It also assisted OSI employees with obtaining visas and recruited instructors in France as part of the Civic Education Project.

The final remaining funds were disbursed in 2000 for a multiyear grant awarded in 1994 to support the monthly Visegrad supplement to four major daily newspapers in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. By facilitating the exchange of information on cultural, social, political, and economic issues, the supplement encourages intellectual ties between the Visegrad countries.

2000 EXPENDITURES

\$254,000

## Open Society Institute–Washington, D.C.

The Open Society Institute’s office in Washington, D.C., represented the Soros foundations network and its affiliated organizations with the U.S. government, Congress, Washington-based international institutions, nongovernmental organizations, media, and the diplomatic community. The office served as a conduit of information and contacts between the global Soros foundations network and the Washington-based

international assistance and policymaking communities. The Washington office also acted as a liaison in developing program cooperation and civil society support between OSI's network of international foundations and programs and U.S. government agencies as well as other partners.

Working often in coalition with other non-governmental organizations and independent policy centers, the Washington office advocated for broader international support for civil society, human rights, democratic reform, and conflict prevention in countries and regions where Soros foundations or programs operate. When network foundations and associated institutions of civil society, including independent media, came under specific pressure in their own countries, OSI's Washington office assisted in their defense.

The Washington office also assisted the organizations of the Soros foundations network in developing partnerships to advance reform in countries undertaking democratic transitions. The office facilitated contacts for network officers, grantees, and civil society leaders when they visited the U.S. capital to keep Washington decision-makers informed about developments in transition countries. The office was actively involved in helping develop international partnerships for major civil society and independent media projects, including in the countries of the former Yugoslavia.

Having accomplished many of its objectives, the Washington Office closed in June 2001.

2000 EXPENDITURES

\$684,000

## OSI Ombudsman

In order to provide maximum transparency about the Soros foundations network's operations and grantmaking, the governing board of the network established the position of OSI Ombudsman in 1997. The role of the Ombudsman is to receive complaints, both internal and external, about acts or practices that appear to constitute an abuse of authority. In cases where Soros foundations have not themselves created a similar position, the ombudsman is empowered to review complaints against Soros foundations.

In 2000, the office of the Ombudsman inquired into three cases involving procedures related to grant applications, competitions, and scholarships. In addition, the office of the Ombudsman reviewed 32 cases of conflict of interest during 2000. None of the cases brought to the Ombudsman's attention suggested a pattern of abuse and therefore no policy changes were recommended to OSI.

The types of complaints that should be addressed to the ombudsman include rudeness, negligence, invidious political or personal favoritism or bias, dishonesty, or other misfeasance in dealing with grant applicants, partner organizations, or the general public. Since May 2001, Irena Veisaite has served as the OSI Ombudsman. The Ombudsman can be reached at OSI Ombudsman, Open Society Fund–Lithuania, Didzioji str. 5, 2001 Vilnius, Lithuania.