

The Balkan Trust for Democracy at a Glance

The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID,) and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation have joined together to create the Balkan Trust for Democracy, a unique \$25 million grantmaking initiative to support good governance in Southeastern Europe. The Balkan Trust is the product of a public-private partnership between the organizations above.

Program

The Balkan Trust for Democracy will strengthen democratic political institutions in Southeastern Europe through two principal programs:

- *Linking Citizens with Government*, by giving grants to local and national organizations working to improve citizen engagement with government, monitoring of government performance, and improving citizen understanding of their rights and responsibilities; and
- *Cooperation and Collaboration*, by supporting sub-national and trans-Balkan collaboration among governments, NGOs, civic initiatives, and other institutions working to improve understanding and cooperation throughout the region.

The Balkan Trust will be based in Belgrade and will make grants in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia.

Grants will go to indigenous civic groups and NGOs, local and regional governments, educational institutions, and the media. Funds will also promote cross-border cooperation and region-wide political, social, and economic development.

Structure

The Balkan Trust is designed to operate with a small, experienced staff who will actively seek out and incorporate expertise from a wide variety of partners. A management committee of experts from Southeastern Europe and from key international organizations will be appointed and charged with oversight of the institution's strategic development.

Grants will be reviewed by a grantmaking committee comprised of GMF staff and selected others from partner institutions and from the region. Project proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis and grant decisions will be made monthly. These committees will ensure that the Trust's programs are effective, responsive to local needs, and complementary to other initiatives supported by the international community.

Financing

The Balkan Trust has an initial endowment of \$25 million. GMF has contributed contribute \$10 million, plus an estimated \$2 million in administrative expenses over the first ten years. In addition, USAID has committed \$10 million and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation \$5 million. Additional partners will be sought after the Balkan Trust becomes operational.

Partners

USAID is the principal foreign assistance agency of the U.S. government. The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) is an American grantmaking and public policy institution founded in 1972 through a gift from Germany. Its mission is to promote transatlantic cooperation and understanding. The Mott Foundation, founded in 1926, is a private philanthropy committed to supporting projects that promote a just, equitable, and sustainable society.

For more information regarding the Balkan Trust for Democracy, please contact Sandi Phinney in Bratislava at sphinney@gmfus.org, Phillip Henderson in Washington, D.C. at phenderson@gmfus.org or Heather Goldman, USAID Regional Program Officer in Budapest at hgoldman@usaid.gov.