

Fund for Belarus Democracy



The Fund for Belarus Democracy (FBD) was launched by the German Marshall Fund of the United States in 2005. Designed as a multifaceted, multiyear, and multidonor program, FBD supports Belarusian democrats, civil society, and independent media as they withstand dictatorship and work toward democracy and human rights, self-determination, and Euro-Atlantic integration. FBD provides project and core grants to civic initiatives, civil society

organizations, and independent media; offers capacity building to key advocates of democratic change; and builds regional links and cooperation between Belarusian democrats and their peers in Europe and North America. FBD also works to raise international awareness of Belarus, and it engages in analytical and policy efforts to bolster Western strategies and support for a democratic and independent Belarus.

Civil Society Support

FBD provides up to 100 small and medium-sized grants annually to civic groups, local and grassroots initiatives, non-governmental organizations, and independent media in Belarus and in the diaspora. These grants empower Belarusian citizens; expand the capacity of civil society; bolster independent information and public debate; nurture Belarusian culture and identity; and support analysis, policy, and advocacy for a democratic Belarus. Grantmaking focuses on Belarus and on neighboring countries with strong communities of exiled Belarusian democrats.

71% In-country

23% Central and Eastern Europe

6% Other Countries

\$ 27.45

Million in Grantmaking

1,627

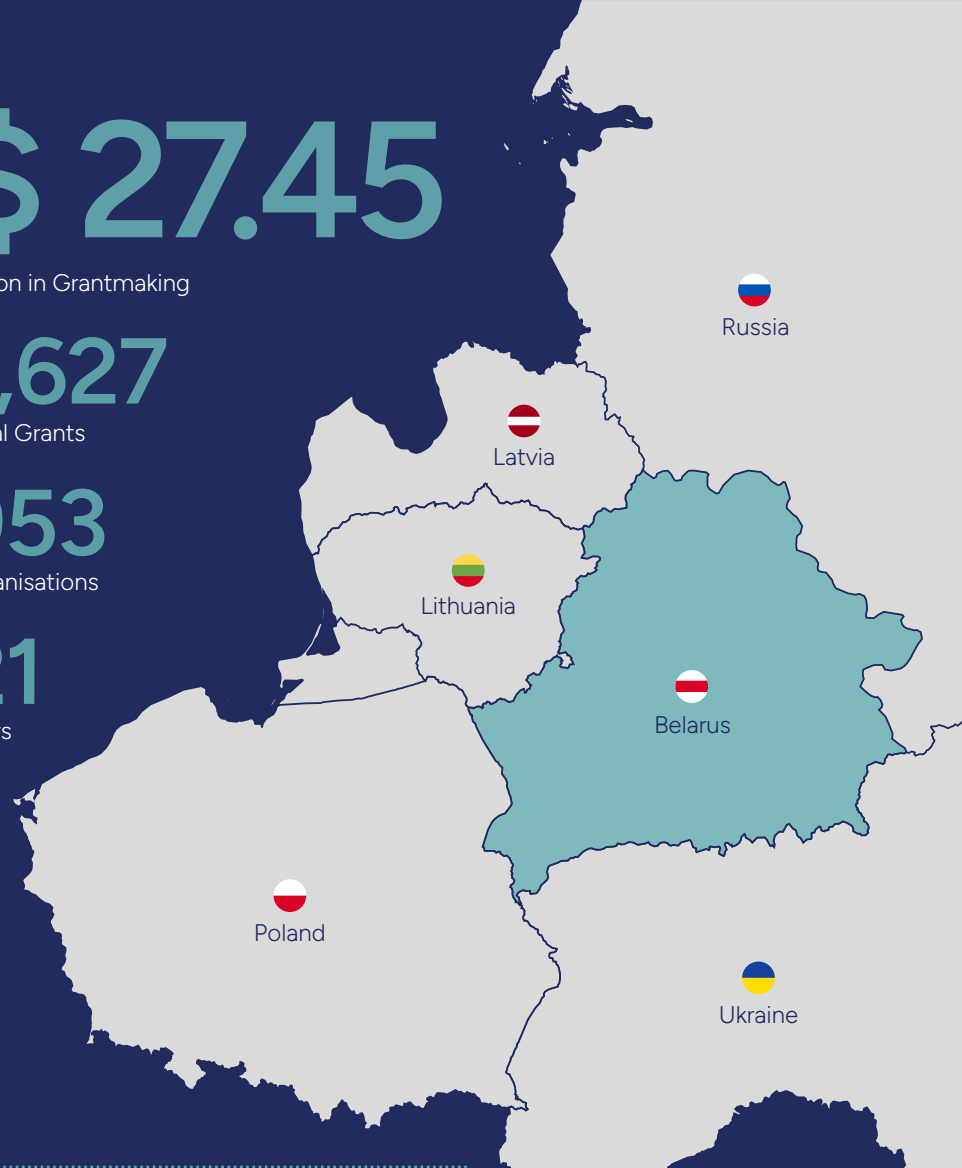
Total Grants

953

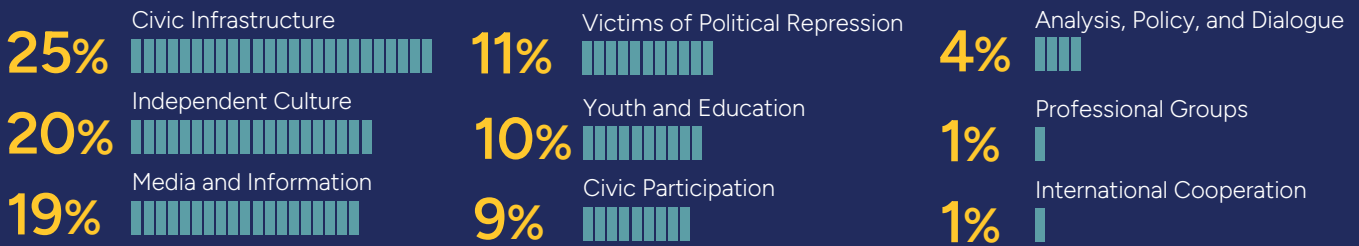
Organisations

21

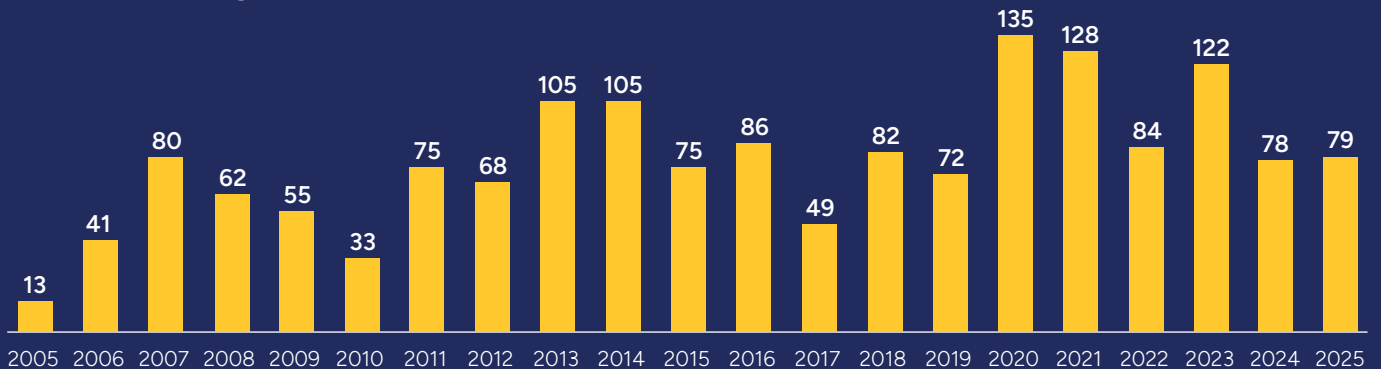
Years



Grantmaking Themes



Grantmaking Timeline



Capacity Building

FBD recognizes the critical importance of capacity building for civil society, alongside financial support. It works with partners to offer comprehensive capacity building programs that combine grantmaking with continuous training in various formats, including workshops, coaching and mentoring, and study tours.

Capacity building focuses on key agents of democratic change such as community organizers, student and youth leaders, independent journalists, social media activists, cultural managers, and exiled democrats. Participants benefit from tailor-made educational formats that advance their own professional development and the capacity of Belarusian civil society overall.



113

Projects Completed



910+

Analyses



78+

Policy Debates



14

Analytical Yearbooks



Culture

87 Participants

44 Individual Projects

25 Study Tours



Social Media

4,820 Participants

51 Campaigns

315 Trainings

128 Meetups

17 BarCamps

95 Open Data Projects



Students

230 Participants

11 Individual Projects

87 Study Tours

158 Campaigns



Journalists

169 Participants

48 Trainings

10 Study Tours

572 Articles

560k+ Readers

Policy and Analysis

Belarus represents an extraordinary challenge for democracy and geopolitics in Europe. FBD believes that continuous analysis and informed policy debate of Belarus is critical for the long-term success of the country's democratic movement and its international partners. FBD provides substantial support to develop the analytical

capacity of independent Belarusian think tanks and experts. It fosters their cooperation, outputs, and international networking and visibility. In so doing, FBD aims to improve the strategies of Belarusian democrats, international policy and assistance for a democratic Belarus, and regional dialogue and understanding.

FBD Impact Highlights

FBD empowers local communities in Belarus

The **CENTER FOR NEW IDEAS** was established in 2012 as an alternative intellectual platform for young and reform-minded Belarusians. It has become a think tank aimed at exploring development opportunities for regions of Belarus. Its Barometer of Belarusian Cities

assesses authorities, economic prospects, social infrastructure, environmental conditions, and demographic trends at the local and regional level. It produces influential city ratings that help to guide local development and retain human capital.

FBD prioritizes democratic engagement in Belarus

In order to strengthen participation and active citizenship among Belarusians, FBD supports numerous civic initiatives and projects inside the country. FBD directs its assistance to individuals and groups that are actively engaged in grassroots activism, community development, democratic advocacy, and social change. In so doing, FBD helps a vibrant and resilient civil society to grow in Belarus.



RADA Market, a fair of social youth initiatives in Vilnius, Lithuania, in 2023

FBD strengthens the voice of young Belarusians

RADA, the Belarusian National Youth Council, has long played a central role in strengthening the democratic participation of young Belarusians. Now in exile, it continues its support for Belarusian youth groups and organizations. RADA actively assists political prisoners, documents rights violations, advocates the rights of Belarusian young people, and builds the capacity of youth organizations in Belarus and in the democratic diaspora.



Rehearsal during a musical residence at the House of Creators, 2023

FBD promotes Belarusian language, culture, and identity

The **BELARUSIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURE** supports artists in exile. It works to preserve and advance Belarusian culture, including through its resource centre in Lithuania and a versatile granting program. In

facilitating cultural projects inside and outside Belarus, the organization aims to develop the transformative potential of culture for the long-term democratization of Belarus.

The art residence **HOUSE OF CREATORS** was established in

Warsaw, Poland, in 2021 as a safe haven for repressed Belarusian artists and former political prisoners. Since then, over 300 residents have benefited from personalized support, medical and psychological rehabilitation, and an enabling environment for artistic creation.

The **CHYRVONY VERAS AWARD** (Red Heather Awards) was established by the community of Belarusian filmmakers and film critics. In response to the severe political repression faced by independent culture in Belarus, the award honors Belarusian filmmaking and promotes it worldwide. The inaugural awards ceremony took place in February 2024 during the Berlinale film festival in Berlin, Germany.

FBD supports the democratic Belarusian diaspora

The **CENTER FOR BELARUSIAN SOLIDARITY**, established in Warsaw, Poland, in September 2020, is a support platform providing legal, material, psychological, and family assistance to Belarusians fleeing repression in their home country. Since its creation, it has assisted more than 68,000 Belarusians, as well as over 700 Ukrainian families. The Center's weekend school has offered educational and recreational activities to more than 3,000 Belarusian and Ukrainian children.



Weekend school for Belarusian and Ukrainian children in Warsaw, Poland, 2023

KUT is a small cultural space in the heart of Poznań, Poland. It brings together Belarusian initiatives, creative communities, and interest groups, serving as a hub for lectures, exhibitions, and workshops. KUT focuses on showcasing local Belarusian artists and communities with diverse cultural approaches, while also collaborating with Polish and Ukrainian partners to produce interdisciplinary events spanning art, music, theatre, and more.



Volha Stryzhniova conducts a workshop at My Bar in Poznań, Poland, 2023



Minsk Forum 2023 in Vilnius, Lithuania

FBD fosters links between Belarusian civil society and its peers in Central and Eastern Europe

The **MINSK FORUM** has been a key platform for civil society and regional cooperation since its establishment in 1997. Organized by the German-Belarusian Society, this annual conference has brought hundreds of Belarusian experts and activists together with peers from across Europe. Initially focused on historical and academic themes, escalating political tensions in Belarus and the region have transformed the forum into a vital arena for democratic debate.