

Congress Begins Investigating Influence Of George Soros In European Politics

 [mintpressnews.com/congress-begins-investigating-george-soros-influence-in-european-politics/225227/](https://www.mintpressnews.com/congress-begins-investigating-george-soros-influence-in-european-politics/225227/)

February 24,
2017

After years of veiled accusations condemning the “empire” of organizations controlled and funded by Hungarian-born billionaire George Soros, U.S. lawmakers have finally decided to open an official investigation into allegations that Soros has subverted European governments that resist neoliberal policies.

Earlier this month, Rep. Christopher Smith, a Republican from New Jersey, and other lawmakers announced an investigation into the U.S. Embassy’s activities in Macedonia, demanding answers from Ambassador Jess Baily regarding Soros’ possible influence in the Balkan nation.

On Feb. 2, Independent.mk, a Macedonian English-language news agency, reported that Smith told a Macedonian television correspondent:

“[I]t seems that the U.S. government funded organizations that have taken sides, specifically, the side of the socialists, which is absolutely unacceptable. I think this is illegal and we will examine this case to the fullest extent.”

Concern over Soros’ impact on Macedonian politics emerged early last month after Nikola Gruevski, the former Macedonian prime minister, told Republika newspaper, “If it were not for George Soros behind it with all the millions he pours into Macedonia, the entire network of NGOs, media, politicians, inside and out ... the economy would be stronger, we would have had more new jobs.”

The issue drew even more attention after a group of prominent Macedonian journalists launched “Stop Operation Soros,” a campaign aimed at countering the billionaire’s “subversive” activities in the country.

On Jan. 17, Sen. Mike Lee, a Republican from Utah, wrote a letter which also questioned the use of USAID money that had been granted to Soros-linked organizations, such as the Open Society Foundations.

Lee expressed his concern over reports that this money had been used to further decidedly partisan causes, writing:

“Unfortunately, I have received credible reports that, over the past few years, the US Mission to Macedonia has actively intervened in the party politics of Macedonia, as well as the shaping of its media environment and civil society, often favoring groups of one political persuasion over another.”

More specifically, Lee's congressional staff, who have met with Macedonian lawmakers, claimed to have received information showing that U.S. money has been used to fund violent left-wing riots in the small, broadly conservative nation, as well as the dissemination of a Macedonian version of Saul Alinsky's "Rules for Radicals."

Fox News reported that in a Feb. 9 response to Lee's inquiries, the State Department denied that U.S. government assistance had funded partisan causes in Macedonia. However, the agency did confirm that USAID has provided three sizeable grants to Soros-funded groups within the country since 2002.



George Soros, left, chairman of Soros Fund Management and founder of The Open Society Institute, speak with Volodymyr Groysman, Ukrainian parliament speaker in Kiev, Ukraine, Monday, Jan. 12, 2015. (AP/Anastasiia Sirotkina)

One of these grants — highlighted on the USAID website — shows that the Foundation Open Society - Macedonia (FOSM) received \$4.8 million from USAID for "The Civil Society Project." This project aimed "to empower Macedonian citizens to hold government accountable" and allegedly trained hundreds of Macedonians "in youth activism and the use of media instruments." The State Department, in its reply to Lee, also noted that USAID had recently funded a new project with four organizations, including FOSM, at an estimated cost of \$9.5 million.

Recent criticism of Soros' alleged meddling in international politics has by no means been limited to Macedonia. On Feb. 10, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán called out Soros during his annual state of the union address, saying:

"Large-bodied predators are swimming here in the waters. This is the trans-border empire of George Soros, with tons of money and international heavy artillery. [...] It is causing trouble ... that they are trying secretly and with foreign money to influence Hungarian politics."

Soros' influence on European politics, though not officially confirmed, has come to light in recent years, largely due to leaked email correspondence between the billionaire and powerful figures in the international political arena. Most recently, WikiLeaks revealed Soros' intimate contacts with the Clinton State Department upon its release of the now infamous "Podesta Emails," hundreds of emails leaked from the Gmail account of John Podesta, Hillary Clinton's campaign chairman. In addition, Soros' role as "puppet master" of the post-coup Ukrainian government was confirmed by a series of leaks in 2015.