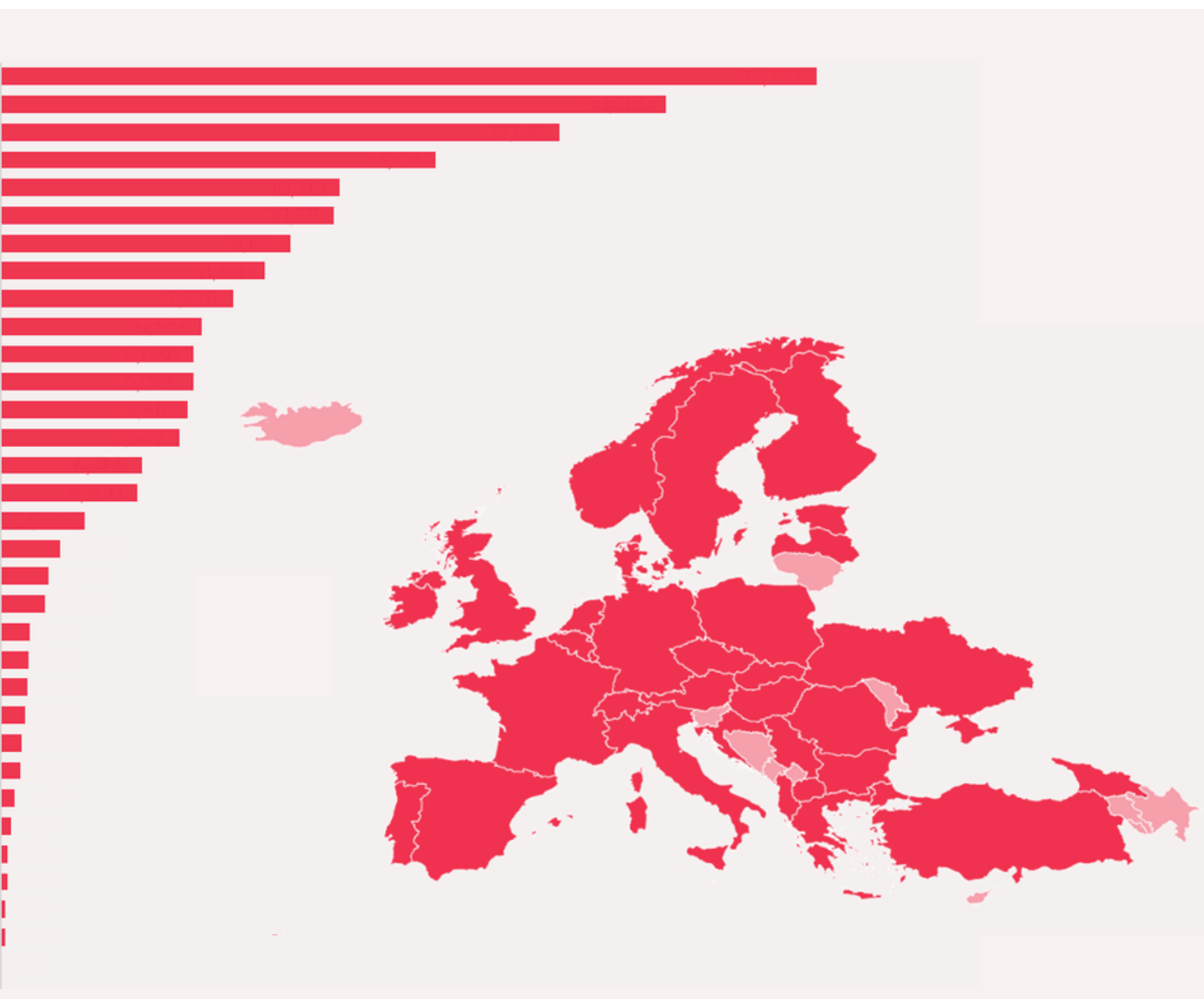


The Fabric of Giving 2025: Public-Benefit Foundation Data in Europe

Analysis of 34 European Countries



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Introduction

This briefing presents the best estimate of the institutional philanthropy landscape in Europe by offering a bigger picture analysis of the philanthropic sectors in 34 European countries. It includes data by country, including total figures for Europe on the number of **public-benefit foundations (PBFs)** as well as their assets and annual expenditure. The aim of this study is to present a snapshot of the state of play of European public-benefit foundations¹ as clearly as possible. Having an up-to-date analysis of the philanthropic sector is vital in understanding the true scale and capabilities of the sector, as well as for informing policymakers and the general public.

This report is part of Philea's commitment to demonstrating the size, diversity and scale of European institutional philanthropy to a range of stakeholders. The briefing builds on and updates the information provided by [the 2023 Public-Benefit Foundations in Europe Report](#), published by Philea. The new data was collected primarily from national associations of donors and experts in the sector, covering 34 European countries, including 23 EU Member States – Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden. The 11 non-EU countries included in the dataset are Albania, Andorra, Georgia, Liechtenstein, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. For more information, please see the “Methodology” section.

While data on the sector is not standardised across Europe, Philea has established clear guidelines through which data was collected and assessed with the intention of maintaining consistency across an otherwise scattered and diverse sector. All limitations are mentioned in the relevant section and transparency of sources is included to the best of the authors' capabilities.

¹ See methodology section for definition of public-benefit foundation.

Key Findings

Summary of Estimated Total Figures

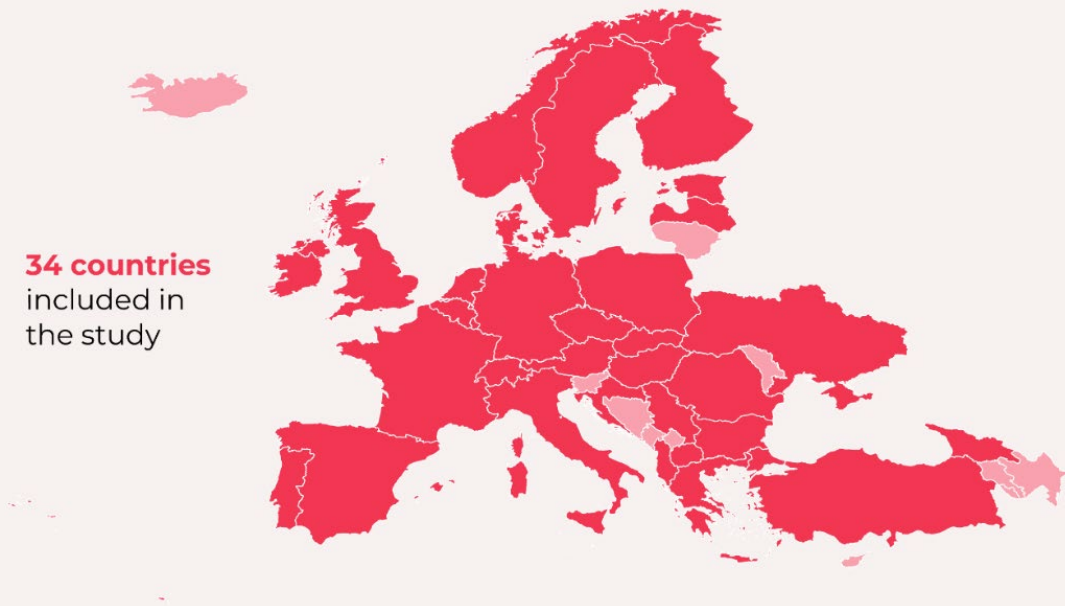
Number of
Foundations
175,000

Total
Assets
€516 bn

Total
Expenditure
€76 bn

What countries participated in the study?

34 countries
included in
the study



Source: Philea (2025)

Methodology

Methodological Enhancements from Previous Iterations

The 2025 iteration of this report presents updated figures that reflect methodological improvements over the 2023 iteration. In this latest version, we have refined the data collection and analysis processes to enhance accuracy and relevance. This means that while the numbers may differ from past figures, they reflect a more accurate capture of data that complies with our description of public-benefit foundations. These improvements include rectifying data for a small number of countries from the previous data collection by taking into account previously unknown contextual information. For this reason, there are unexpectedly large increases or decreases in the figures presented for certain countries. The result of these methodological improvements from the 2023 iteration of the report contributes to a clearer, more accurate representation of the public-benefit foundation landscape in Europe.

Please see below for details on how we arrived at these figures:

Project Preparation

Data was collected specifically on public-benefit foundations. Specific guidelines were developed to ensure appropriate inclusion and exclusion criteria were adhered to. The briefing builds on and updates the information provided by the 2016 “Public-Benefit Foundations in Europe” Report, published by Donors and Foundations Networks in Europe (now part of Philea) and analysed by Candid (previously known as the Foundation Center).

For improved clarity and accuracy in this study, a functional definition for 'public-benefit foundations' has been used in the collection of this data since 2015. This term varies from country to country within Europe, and as such, for the purpose of this report, a foundation is considered to be a public-benefit foundation if it meets the following five criteria:

- 1) They are independent, separately-constituted non-profit bodies.
- 2) They have no members or shareholders.
- 3) They have their own established and reliable source of income, usually but not exclusively from an endowment.
- 4) They have their own governing board.
- 5) They distribute their financial resources for educational, cultural, religious, social or other public benefit purposes, either by:

- Supporting associations, charities and educational institutions or individuals.
- Operating their own programmes.

Therefore, where possible, participants were requested to exclude the following foundation types from the data:

- Private-benefit foundations (foundations which pursue private purposes such as “the advancement of one family, relatives of the founder, trust funds for the education of the founder’s children, etc.”).
- Foundations established and largely operated by the state (because such foundations are not privately governed and do not operate independently from the state).
- Inactive foundations (foundations which are no longer active but have not been removed from public records).
- Other types of public-benefit organisations.

Data Gathering

In the previous iteration of this study, a survey with Philea’s national association members was conducted to collect the relevant data for the report. This was carried out in April 2023 with a smaller selection of countries (26), whereby participants were requested to provide the number, assets and expenditure of foundations in their respective countries through an online survey. A list of the participants can be found in the “Participant Organisations” section of the previous report.

This updated iteration of Philea’s report on public-benefit foundations provides improved and comprehensive backing behind the figures, contextualising the quantitative data and validating the figures, with a focus on improving the accuracy of the data from the previous report. Interviews were conducted, where possible, with participants of the study. Where it was not possible to speak with participants, detailed textual responses were supplied instead. Overall, 34 countries participated in this data collection exercise, sharing their data from a range of sources such as, but not limited to, national databases, public authorities, manual collections from annual accounts of foundations, surveys from participants’ own membership pools and the largest foundations in their respective countries. Not all participants were able to provide data on all three metrics and, in some cases, the data was either partially or completely excluded depending on its suitability to the established inclusion and exclusion criteria (see “Project Preparation” section for the specific criteria). Further details about data collection methods and sources of the study’s participants are outlined in the “Country Zoom-Ins” section of this report.

Data Triangulation

This inclusion and exclusion criteria created a useful initial filtering of data from which the authors could use for analysis (outlined in the “Project Preparation” section of this report). Interviews with participants as well as the legal profiles section on [Philea website](#) also further assisted in ensuring consistency with legal definitions in each of the represented countries. Finally, where possible, data was validated against existing national databases, reports or other officially published material in order to mitigate human error involved in the data entry process by both the authors and participants. After completing this process, and several follow-up conversations with participants, a satisfactory conclusion to the data cleaning process was reached and the data were deemed ready for analysis.

Limitations

The data presented in this briefing offers valuable insights into institutional philanthropy in Europe and represents the best and most comprehensive estimate available. Despite extensive efforts to ensure the highest possible data quality—including the development of a working definition for 'public-benefit foundations' and clear inclusion and exclusion criteria outlined in the “Methodology” section—it is important to acknowledge certain limitations within the data.

Respondents were required to use their judgement and expertise to decide which foundations should be included in the sample based on the given criteria where these categories were not explicit enough. In some countries, the available aggregated data does not permit drilling down and making distinctions between those categories. While we have taken every care to include only public-benefit foundations, some respondents have not been able to completely isolate and remove foundations that do not meet the criteria in cases where the data is not specific enough to allow differentiation between these categories. To this extent, a number of the most prevalent imperfections in the data are outlined below:

Most Common Limitations (General)

- The definition of 'foundation' differs on a country-to-country basis (if a formal definition exists at all).
- There are difficulties with disaggregating data, such as the inability to identify or remove inactive foundations from the data.
- Some reported figures include estimations and extrapolations based on existing data.
- Although in some cases data existed for 2024, an older figure was selected for 2023 to maintain consistency with the rest of the dataset. There are, however, exceptions to this stipulation where it was necessary to include data from 2024, where it was not available for 2023.
- In some cases, foundations are reported as 'active' only if they provided specific paperwork (such as an annual report) or by fulfilling specific criteria. In such cases, this is often a lower-bound estimate of active foundations as not all those who did not make an official report or financial contribution in a given year are inactive.

Most Common Limitations (Financial Only)

- Financial data was not as widely available as foundations are often not required to publish annual accounts/reports.

- In some instances, financial data is only partially available, such as only expenditure but not assets, or even only operating expenses and not the entire amount of expenditure.
- Lack of data continuity, including having different sources or different years when the data was collected.
- Discrepancies between the sample of foundations taken for the total number of foundations in a country and the total amount of known income and/or expenditure in the country. In some cases, the financial information is taken from a smaller sample of foundations than what was reported as the total number of foundations present in the country.
- In some cases, foundations with mixed funding models were included in the data. These foundations may rely on a combination of their own resources, fundraising efforts, or both, making it difficult to distinguish and exclude those that are purely fundraising-based.

Country Zoom-Ins

This section offers a brief overview of the state of play of public-benefit foundations through a series of country profiles for each of the 34 participant countries of this study. The quantitative data is shown below, along with the collection year and the data source. The content used for this section is taken either from empirical evidence collected from interviews with participants, previous studies conducted by Philea such as the Philea legal profiles or openly available publications. This highly relevant information supplements the quantitative data by contextualising each country's situation in a digestible fashion.

Albania

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	856	2023	Tirana First Instance Courts
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	-	-	-

About the Data

Foundations in Albania are governed by civil law, have their own legal personality and can be established by one or more natural or legal persons either inter vivos or by way of a will. Foundations in Albania can be established only “for the benefit of and in the interest of the public”. According to the Tirana First Instance Court, the number of registered foundations is 856.

Sources

[Monitoring Matrix on Enabling Environment for CSOs Development, Country Report for Albania 2022](#); Partners Albania for Change and Development; [Philea Legal Profiles](#); Tirana First Instance Courts.

Andorra

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	26	2023	Governmental Register of Foundations
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	-	-	-

About the Data

Local legislation does not oblige foundations to publish their annual accounts (audited or not) or reports. Therefore, getting information about their assets, income or what they allocate to programs can be complicated. Andorra has a public register on public-benefit foundations, which delineates public and private foundations. Only foundations whose funding exceeds €300,000 or its annual ordinary income exceeds €20,000 are required to undertake external auditing (Article 27 of Law 17/2023), resulting in difficulties in assessing true asset and expenditure data for this study.

Sources

[Andtropa](#); [Governmental Register of Foundations](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Austria

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	767	2023	Vienna University of Economics and Business survey
Assets	€7,000 million	2023	Austrian Foundations Association
Expenditure	€112 million	2023	Austrian Foundations Association

About the Data

In Austria, there are different legal regulations for foundations. On the one hand, there are foundations under the Private Foundations Act (PSG), on the other hand under the Federal Foundation and Funds Act (BStFG) and foundations under 9 provincial Foundation and Fund Acts (LStFG) in addition to a number of specific legal bases, such as for the National Foundation for Research, Technology and Development (FTE). Foundations are legal entities established upon the irrevocable transfer of assets that are used for public benefit or benevolent purposes. Private foundations can either act as family offices or exclusively or additionally define public benefit purposes. Of those mentioned in the above table, it can be assumed that there are 434 foundations according to the BStFG and LStFG acts, and 333 privately designated foundations who fulfill and support charitable activities.

Sources

[Austrian Foundations Association Foundation Report 2024](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#); Vienna University of Economics and Business survey (with the support of [the Austrian Federal Interior Ministry of Interior](#), the respective state administrative authorities and [the Compass Verlag gmbH](#)).

Belgium

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	668	2022	King Baudouin Foundation Social Profit DataTrust
Assets	€4,951.26 million	2022	King Baudouin Foundation Social Profit DataTrust
Expenditure	€1,518.72 million	2022	King Baudouin Foundation Social Profit DataTrust

About the Data

The foundation is the result of a legal act from one or several individuals or legal entities that dedicate capital to a specific not-for-profit aim. Foundations can be recognised as being of public utility when they pursue philosophical, philanthropic, religious, scientific, artistic, educational or cultural aims. 'Fondations de création juridique' (2) and 'fondations politiques européennes' (5) were excluded from the data as they did not fit the initial criteria outlined in the study.

Financial information provided by King Baudouin Foundation was taken from the National Bank of Belgium (NBB). This data is publicly available for enterprises via [this tool](#). Expenditure for Belgium includes operating expenses only. Therefore, this figure should be taken as a lower-bound estimate with the total expenditure of Belgian public-benefit foundations, inclusive of other currently unknown expenditure, being a higher figure.

Sources

[Belgium Central Balance Sheet Office](#); [Belgian Federation of Philanthropic Foundations](#); [King Baudouin Foundation Social Profit Data Trust](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Bulgaria

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	3,034	2023	Bulgarian National Register of Non-Profit Legal Entities
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	€23 million	2023	Bulgarian Donors Forum

About the Data

According to the Bulgarian Non-profit Legal Entities Act two types of non-profit organisations are recognised: associations and foundations. Associations are organisations that are membership-based and established by three or more persons or entities united for performing activities that have non-profit objectives. Foundations are property-based and created by a unilateral deed of establishment granting without compensation property for attainment of non-profit purpose. There is another difference between the NPOs depending on the goals they serve: the public or private benefit. Data for the number of foundations were taken from the [National Register of Non-Profit Legal Entities](#) while expenditure data were provided by Bulgarian Donors Forum as per their annual analysis on giving practices and trends in Bulgaria for 2023.

Sources

[Bulgarian Donors Forum](#); [Bulgarian National Register of Non-Profit Legal Entities](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Croatia

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	332	2024	Public Register of Foundations
Assets	€88.5 million	2023	Public Register of Foundations
Expenditure	€32.5 million	2023	Public Register of Foundations

About the Data

Pursuant to the 2019 Law on Foundations, a foundation is recognised as a legal entity and is defined as an asset designated for the perpetual accomplishment of public-benefit or charitable goals. The purpose of a foundation is also considered generally beneficial or charitable if it only concerns persons from a specific profession, national, social, linguistic, cultural, scientific, religious or similar group, persons connected by similar healthcare, social, cultural and other needs and interests, or persons living on a specific territory or covered by the activities of a specific non-profit association, institution or other legal person. A foundation in Croatia is set up for an indefinite period. However, by way of exception, a foundation may be set up for a definite period, until the purpose of the foundation is fulfilled, as defined by the foundation charter. Data were collected by the [Croatian Public Register of Foundations and provided by the Croatian Foundation Forum “For Well-being”](#).

Sources

[Croatian Foundation Forum “For Well-being”](#); [Croatian Public Register of Foundations](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Czechia

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	3,043	2022	Czech Donors Forum
Assets	€831 million	2021	Czech Donors Forum
Expenditure	€150.7 million	2022	Czech Donors Forum

About the Data

In Czechia, foundations and Funds (without endowment) are legal bodies gathering and administrating assets to support third public benefit parties. Since 2014, the "new" Civil Code has been effective, which has brought significant changes to the legal regulation of a significant part of the entities moving in the non-profit field. The new Civil Code now includes the regulation of foundations and foundations. Data were collected from a previous iteration of this report and from the Czech Donors Forum Donation Maps from 2022 and 2023.

Sources

[Czech Donors Forum; Czech Donors Forum Donation Map 2022; Czech Donors Forum Donation Map 2023; Philea Legal Profiles.](#)

Denmark

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	9,155	2022	Statistics Denmark
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	€4,341 million	2022	Statistics Denmark

About the Data

Danish law allows for two types of foundations: enterprise foundations and (non-enterprise) foundations, regulated by the Enterprise Foundation Act (erhvervsfondsloven, EFL) and the Foundation Act (fondsloven, FL). 9,155 is the total possible number of foundations that exist in Denmark, but it is likely that many of these are no longer active or do not align with Philea's working definition of public-benefit foundation.

There are 3,658 foundations in Denmark that reported expenditure in 2022. The expenditure figure of €4,341 million includes also grants that are not deemed public-benefit in Denmark, such as those donated to family or for employee purposes. If these non-public benefit grants are subtracted, the figure for public benefit expenditure is €3,620 million.

Sources

[Philea Legal Profiles](#); [Statistics Denmark](#); [The Knowledge Centre for Danish Foundations](#).

Estonia

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	14	2023	The Good Deed Foundation Estonia
Assets	€8.85 million	2023	The Good Deed Foundation Estonia
Expenditure	€1.23 million	2023	The Good Deed Foundation Estonia

About the Data

There is one legal type of foundation in Estonia, which operates on the basis of the Foundations Act passed in 1995. Philanthropic organisations can also operate in the form of a non-profit organisation (association). A foundation (sihtasutus) is created for the management and use of assets and has no members. Expenditure data collected included a total of €11.23 million euro (€1.23m operational, €10m grants given). Data was collected by [The Good Deed Foundation Estonia](#) through manual analysis of annual reports of foundations in Estonia.

Sources

[Philea Legal Profiles; The Good Deed Foundation.](#)

Finland

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	2,657	2023	Finnish Patent- and Registration Office
Assets	€22,000 million	2023	Association of Finnish Foundations
Expenditure	€580 million	2021	Association of Finnish Foundations

About the Data

Foundations are regulated by the Foundations Act (487/2015). There is no exact definition under the Foundations Act of what a foundation is, but usually it is known as a special fund established by its founder and managed by an autonomous administration to implement a beneficial purpose specified by the founder. Foundations have neither owners, shareholders nor members. A board of trustees ensures that the foundation operates appropriately and is responsible for ensuring that the investments by the foundation are secure and profitable. According to the Income Tax Act, foundations only receive tax-exempt status if they operate “solely and directly for public benefit in a material, intellectual, ethical or social sense”. Data on the number of foundations was taken from the Finish Patent- and Registration Office while financial data was collected by the Association of Finnish Foundations and is based on 226 member foundations by the association.

Sources

[Association of Finnish Foundations](#); [Finnish Patent- and Registration Office](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#); [Statistics Finland](#).

France

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	5,647	2023	Fondation de France: Observatoire Philanthropie & Société
Assets	€41,522 million	2022	Fondation de France: Observatoire Philanthropie & Société
Expenditure	€16,002 million	2022	Fondation de France: Observatoire Philanthropie & Société

About the Data

In France, the foundation is the act by which one or many persons decide the irrevocable assignment of goods, rights or resources to the realisation of a project of general interest and non-profit. There are a number of types of foundations and funds in France, namely: public utility foundations (*fondations reconnues d'utilité publique*), corporate foundations (*fondations d'entreprise*), sheltered foundations (*fondations abritées*) under the aegis of a few public utility foundations, foundations for scientific cooperation (*fondations de coopération scientifique*), university foundations (*fondations universitaires*), partnership foundations (*fondations partenariales*), hospital foundations (*fondations hospitalières*) and endowment funds (*fonds de dotation*). After considering the available data and reviewing the inclusion and exclusion criteria, it was decided that all of these foundations/funds be included in this study for France. Data for this report were taken from the 'Baromètre annuel de la philanthropie' by Observatoire de la philanthropie, Fondation de France (specific sources of data from this study listed below). Please note that figures for 2023 have since been published by Fondation de France in the latest edition of 'Baromètre annuel de la philanthropie'.

Sources: [Étude nationale Fondations et fonds de dotation 2023](#); [Fondation de France: Observatoire Philanthropie & Société](#); [Journal Officiel des associations et des fondations : comptes annuels 2022 fondations et fonds de dotation](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Georgia

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	145	2023	Revenue Service of Georgia
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	-	-	-

About the Data

Georgian legislation does not provide a special legal status for foundations (including charitable foundations). However, the existing legislative framework allows the establishment and operation of foundations. They may be established as a non-entrepreneurial legal entity defined under civil code. According to the Civil Code of Georgia a non-entrepreneurial legal entity (NELE) may perform any activity including pooling assets for the support of charitable, social, cultural, scientific-research and educational activities and then, distributing it for these reasons. This results in difficulties distinguishing typical civil society organisations from foundations, as they essentially have the same legal status. As for charitable organisations, despite the fact that most CSOs conduct charitable activities, according to Georgian law they cannot be automatically considered as charitable organisations. They are required to obtain this status in accordance with Georgian law for tax deduction purposes. The status of a charitable organisation can be granted to an organisation if the latter meets a specific set of requirements, resulting in official data on charitable organisations being easily available. Concerning the data in this report, the figure (145) was collected in accordance with state statistics in Georgia. However, as per Georgian law, these are considered charitable foundations in the absence of a legal definition for ‘foundation’. This figure was narrowed down from a list of 1,300 CSOs obtained from the [Civil Society Institute](#).

Sources

[Centre for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia](#); [Civil Society Institute](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#); [Revenue Service of Georgia](#).

Germany

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	25,777	2023	Association of German Foundations ; Foundation Supervisory Authorities survey
Assets	€55,000 million	2023	Association of German Foundations survey
Expenditure	€5,400 million	2023	Association of German Foundations survey

About the Data

According to the German Civil Code (BGB) a foundation is a legal entity without members, endowed with assets dedicated to the permanent and sustainable fulfillment of a purpose specified by the founder. Mostly, these purposes are non-profit in nature. Even though a specific legal form cannot be automatically associated with the term, foundations do possess common features. Examples of legal forms include foundations under public law, foundations under private law, and non-profit limited liability companies (gmbHs). The basic distinction in German legal law is whether foundations are tax-privileged or fully taxable. Foundations that serve only public-benefit, charitable, and religious purposes are tax-privileged. Foundations that (also) serve other purposes, such as private purposes, are not. However, some of the largest foundations in Germany that also distribute funding to public-benefit and philanthropic causes are legally taxable foundations.

In the reported data, the 25,777 foundations are so called 'foundations with legal capacity under civil law'. This is the only legal form of foundations whose total number is known, based on information from the foundation supervisory authorities, which is provided to the Association of German Foundations. The figures for assets and expenditure come from the [60 largest foundations under public and private law in Germany](#). These 60 foundations also include other legal forms than foundations with legal capacity under civil law. Five billion euros - this is the minimum amount that the financially strongest foundations in Germany distribute to fulfil their statutory purposes in 2023. The expenditure figure noted above (€5.4 billion) outlines total expenditure, inclusive of statutory purposes and administrative expenditure. Since only the largest foundations were taken into account and not all annual reports are publicly available, the actual total contribution of Germany's largest foundations to society is much higher.

Sources

[Association of German Foundations survey](#); Foundation Supervisory Authorities survey;
[Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Greece

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	609	2022	Ministry of the Interior Registry
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	€45 million	2022	HIGGS Study on Charitable Foundations in Greece

About the Data

The Greek legal order Law 4182/2013 and Art. 109 of the Greek Constitution regulate public-benefit foundations. Any group of assets disposed by will (testament), or as a donation to serve public purposes and the public benefit is considered to form a public-benefit foundation, which is administered according to the rules incorporated in the deed of establishment and whereby the administration is conducted by natural and/or legal persons (Law Nr. 4182 of 2013, articles 1 and 50). Included in the figure for assets are foundations that have some of their own assets but may receive funding from other foundations or the state. It should also be noted that the expenditure figure excludes some major donations by some charitable foundations directed to the Greek state: e.g. the construction of hospitals. These ad hoc grants are revealed after the completion of the projects.

Sources

[HIGGS](#) Study on Charitable Foundations in Greece; [Ministry of the Interior Registry](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Hungary

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	6,088	2022	Central Statistics Office
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	-	-	-

About the Data

In Hungary, a foundation is a legal person, which serves a long-term public interest. The only uncertainty in the data concerns inactive foundations, the number of which is difficult to estimate. Data was taken from the Central Statistics Office and confirmed by [Hungarian Ökotárs](#).

Sources

[Central Statistics Office](#); [Hungarian Ökotárs](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Ireland

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	159	2021	Benefacts Legacy
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	€80 million	2021	Benefacts Legacy

About the Data

There is no one legal form for foundations in Ireland, and the form that any foundation can take is not prescribed in law. They are most likely to be companies limited by guarantee (without share capital) and operate within the framework of the Companies Acts. Alternatively, they can be set up as a Charitable Trust, established by a trust deed and subject to trust law. Data for Ireland was gathered as part of a report by a third-party, Benefacts, in 2021.

Sources

[Benefacts Legacy](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Italy

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	8,356	2022	Istat
Assets	€41,190 million	2023	ACRI Annual Report 2023
Expenditure	€1,447.5 million	2023	ACRI Annual Report 2023 ; Assifero Internal membership Annual Report

About the Data

In line with the new legislation for the Italian non-profit sector, which came into effect in 2017, the concept of philanthropic organisations was introduced. These entities, recognised as part of the non-profit sector, can be established as either foundations or associations. Their purpose is to deploy money, goods, or services — including investments — in support of disadvantaged individuals or for general-interest purposes. The organisation's name shall contain the indication of a philanthropic body. Philanthropic bodies get the economic and non-financial resources to develop their business mainly from public and private assets, donations and legacies, capital gains and fundraising activities. Foundations must also have their own assets worth a minimum of at least €30,000, whose profits are destined for the specific purpose of social utility. These organisations are under the aegis of [Assifero](#).

Foundations of banking origin, which are represented by [ACRI](#), have a special regulation and definition, and do not appear in the third sector reform. They are also included under the category of 'Foundations'. The figures for assets and expenditure are taken from a study conducted by ACRI in 2023 on 86 foundations of banking origin. Therefore, these figures are not reflective of the entire sector, but rather this subset of foundations.

For Italy's expenditure, the figure for both ACRI (€1,047.5 million) and Assifero (€400 million) were included as one figure as they represent different components of the Italian philanthropy sector. Assifero's expenditure is a lower-bound figure taken from their internal membership of 167 foundations reported in the [Assifero Annual report 2023](#).

Sources

[ACRI Annual Report 2023](#) (for foundations of banking origin); [Assifero Annual report 2023](#); [Istat](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Latvia

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	1,883	2023	Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	-	-	-

About the Data

The Law on Associations and Foundations in Latvia identifies only one type of foundation and does not divide them into different types. Officially, there are 1,883 registered foundations, all of which meet criteria 1, 2, and 4 of Philea's working definition of public-benefit foundation. However, for criteria 3 and 5, there is no publicly available data. The provided data only includes those who have submitted annual reports. The publicly available data do not show the number of foundations failing to submit an annual report, which indicates that the provided figure may be much higher. Moreover, among the foundations included in this figure are non-profits that fundraise for their activities. In Latvia, some prefer to choose this status to avoid the tedious bureaucracy involved with handling membership, choosing instead to operate under the label of 'foundation'. Data for Latvia was provided by DOTS Foundation for an Open Society and collected from the Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia.

Sources

[DOTS Foundation for an Open Society; Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia; Philea Legal Profiles.](#)

Liechtenstein

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	1,391	2023	Liechtenstein Foundation Supervisory Authority
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	-	-	-

About the Data

In Liechtenstein, a foundation is a legally and economically independent special-purpose fund which is formed as a legal entity (juristic person) through the unilateral declaration of the will of the founder. Liechtenstein recognises two types of foundations: private-benefit foundations and public-benefit foundations. The figure above refers to public-benefit foundations, which are supervised by the Foundation Supervisory Authority (STIFA) to ensure that the foundation's assets are managed and used in accordance with its purpose and that contemporary foundation governance is maintained.

Private-benefit foundations may also choose to place themselves under STIFA supervision. Additionally, Liechtenstein's flexible foundation law recognises mixed foundations, which allow for greater flexibility in planning. Data was provided by VLGST – Vereinigung liechtensteinischer gemeinnütziger Stiftungen und Trusts e.V. and initially collected from the Liechtenstein Foundation Supervisory Authority.

Sources

[Liechtenstein Foundation Supervisory Authority](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#); [VLGST – Vereinigung liechtensteinischer gemeinnütziger Stiftungen und Trusts e.V.](#)

Luxembourg

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	219	2021	Luxembourg Ministry of Justice
Assets	€360 million	2023	Fondation de Luxembourg
Expenditure	€85 million	2023	Fondation de Luxembourg

About the Data

According to Luxembourg law, foundations are endowed or fundraising non-profit organisations that are involved in philanthropic, social religious, scientific, artistic, educational work, sports or tourism. According to the FA ("Foundations of 21 April 1928"), there is only one type of foundation recognised in Luxembourg, pursuing non-profit or public-benefit purposes. Data on the number of foundations were collected for Luxembourg from the Ministry of Justice as part of a previous iteration of this report and have not been updated since then. Assets and expenditure information were taken from Fondation de Luxembourg only, with the expenditure figure including the cumulative total given to charitable projects.

Sources

[Fondation de Luxembourg](#); [Luxembourg Ministry of Justice](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Netherlands

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	5,910	2022	Geven in Nederland 2024
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	€2,136 million	2022	Geven in Nederland 2024

About the Data

In the Dutch Civil Code Book 2, Article 285-307, a foundation ('stichting') is defined as 'a legal person created by a legal act which has no members and whose purpose is to realise an objective stated in its statutes using capital allocated to such purpose'. Dutch Endowment Funds can also have the form of an association ('vereniging') - in accordance with the Dutch Civil Code Book 2, 26-52. Additionally, foundations and associations can apply for the fiscal public benefit status ('algemeen nut beogende instelling', or 'ANBI'), if 90% of total annual spending benefits the public good. Among a representative sample of all public-benefit organisations registered with the fiscal authorities in 2022, Giving in the Netherlands (Bekkers, 2024) reported that 13% were endowment funds. This means that there are an estimated 5,910 endowment funds in the Netherlands. For the same sample total expenditure (including overheads) in 2022 was estimated at €2,136 million. Foundations in the Netherlands do not have to report the value of their assets in financial statements. Many foundations do not do so voluntarily. As a result, the total value of assets of foundations is not known.

Sources

[Geven in Nederland 2024](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

North Macedonia

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	215	2022	Central Registry of North Macedonia
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	€15 million	2022	Central Registry of North Macedonia

About the Data

Foundations are regulated by the Law on Associations and Foundations. The legal definition is as follows: “A foundation shall be a legal entity, established for the purpose of acquiring and governing of property and assets, in accordance with this Law” (article 27, LAF). There is no other law in which other legal types of foundations are prescribed. Foundations can pursue a variety of purposes, with just a few limitations defined in the LAF. Information on public-benefit foundation assets is not available in public records. Based on the available information there are no endowed foundations in North Macedonia. Data for this study was collected by the [Central Registry of North Macedonia](#) and provided by [Konekt Association](#).

Sources

[Central Registry of North Macedonia](#); [Konekt Association](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Norway

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	6,332	2022	Norwegian Foundation Register
Assets	€20,000 million	2022	Norwegian Foundation Register
Expenditure	€5,100 million	2022	Norwegian Foundation Register

About the Data

In Norway, a foundation is understood as a capital asset made available by testament, endowment or other lawful act to be used independently for a specific purpose of a non-profit, humanitarian, cultural, social, educational, financial or other nature. A legal entity that meets the conditions laid down in the first sentence is a foundation pursuant to this Act, regardless of whether it is designated as a legacy, institution, fund or otherwise. However, the Norwegian Government is working on revising the Norwegian foundations legislation. The figure included for the number of foundations was taken from a 2022 report which recorded the total number of assets that year. Although there is a register that continually updates the number of foundations in the country, this figure was chosen to maintain continuity for Norway's data. Data on assets and expenditure were taken from the Foundations' annual accounts delivered to the Norwegian public annual account register (Regnskapsregisteret). Data on expenditure include the sum of operating costs, labour costs and commodity costs.

Sources

[Philea Legal Profiles; The Norwegian Foundation Authority Annual Report 2022; The Norwegian Gambling and Foundation Authority Annual Report 2023; The Norwegian Foundation Register.](#)

Poland

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	21,000	2023	Klon/Jawor Association
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	-	-	-

About the Data

There is no explicit legal definition of a foundation in Polish law. Foundations are understood as easily manageable assets dedicated to some social cause and registered as a foundation and are established with the sole aim of serving a public-benefit purpose. A vast majority of Polish foundations do not have an endowment and are used as a vehicle for collecting external funding for their activities. Additionally, a significant source of their funding is public money (provided for public utility services contracted by local governments). The basic act that regulates the principles for the establishment and operation of foundations is the Law on Foundations, which is part of the administrative law. In the public register, there are 35,476 foundations. It is estimated that 60% of these are active, which equates to approximately 21,000 foundations. There are a small number of foundations with significant endowments but there are no data on their number, assets and expenditure.

Sources

[Klon/Jawor Association](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#); [Polish Donors Forum](#); [REGON Register](#).

Portugal

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	884	2019	Portuguese Foundation Centre
Assets	€8,100 million	2019	Forbes Portugal
Expenditure	€1,700 million	2019	Forbes Portugal

About the Data

Foundations are non-profit organisations created through the initiative of one or more individuals or legal entities (founders). They are recognised by the authorities and are obliged to maintain a balance within their board, which must ensure that the purpose as assigned by the founders is preserved, this being to contribute to issues of public interest. Data for Portugal were collected as part of the previous report on public-benefit foundations with no updated information available to update this profile.

Sources

Forbes Portugal; [Portuguese Foundation Centre](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#).

Romania

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	4,466	2022	Romanian National Data Portal
Assets			
Expenditure			

About the Data

A foundation is defined as a non-profit entity, established to represent public interest or the interest of a community. Although there are some statutory differences between a foundation and an association, there is no fundamental difference in the way they work. Based on the above and the data processed for [FDSC's \(Fundația pentru Dezvoltarea Societății Civile\) latest report](#) at the beginning of 2024, there were 19,046 foundations registered in the National Register. This figure includes a significant number of inactive foundations. The quantitative data included for Romania is a best estimation. The only way to assess how many are active/inactive is to identify whether or not the organisations have been submitting their annual financial statements (which is required by law for any registered entity). The estimated number of foundations who submitted financial statements for 2022 was 4,466 (based on public data published in 2023 on the [Romanian National Data Portal](#)). Figures for the assets and expenditure for Romanian public-benefit foundations were not included in this report due to the difficulty in disaggregating this data for relevant foundations and non-relevant organisations that do not serve the public-benefit in accordance with the working definition for public-benefit foundations previously outlined in the methodology section.

Sources

[Philea Legal Profiles; Research Center for Civil Society; România 2024. Sectorul neguvernamental. Profil, tendințe, provocări., \[The non-governmental sector. Profile, Trends, Challenges\].](#)

Serbia

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	918	2023	Serbian Business Registers Agency
Assets	€242.9 million	2023	Serbian Business Registers Agency
Expenditure	€73.3 million	2023	Serbian Business Registers Agency

About the Data

According to the Law on Foundations and Endowments, these entities are by definition of public-benefit and can only be registered as such. Regulation surrounding the opening and closure of foundations is relatively lenient, and it is much easier to register and manage a foundation than other forms of non-profit organisations, such as an NGO/CSO. Therefore, it is common to see a change in figure in the number of foundations from year to year. Data were initially collected from [Serbian Business Registers Agency](#) and provided by [CatalystBalkans](#).

Sources

[CatalystBalkans](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#); [Serbian Business Registers Agency](#).

Slovakia

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	442	2022	Finstat; The Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic Register of Financial Statements
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	€90.77 million	2022	Finstat; The Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic Register of Financial Statements

About the Data

In Slovakia, a foundation is defined as a purposeful grouping of property established for the support of publicly beneficial purpose as defined in the Law on Foundations adopted in 2002. The law defines the key characteristics of foundations, and specifies clearly the key roles of foundations, which are: a) To provide financial and non-financial means from the assets of the foundation to third parties to fulfil a public benefit purpose. b) To administer its assets, including the assets of foundation funds (donor advised funds and affiliated funds to the foundation without legal subjectivity). Slovak jurisdiction recognises only one legal type of foundation – the one described above. All other classifications such as “corporate foundation”, “family foundation”, “community foundation”, “independent foundation” and others that are used in the public domain describe some salient characteristic of the given foundation but bear no relevance to the law. Also of note in Slovak foundation law is that foundations (and other non-profit organisations) may receive a tax assignment from legal entities as part of their income tax payment or from individuals who have paid income tax. This donation must be used for public-benefit purposes and may be up to 2% of a firm’s income tax payment or 2% of an individual income tax payment (3% if an individual volunteered for at least 40 hours in a given year) as per [The Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic - Tax Assignment](#).

In terms of data on the number of foundations, the provide figure includes the number of foundations that submitted their financial statements to the register of the Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic. While 507 foundations were registered in 2022, the analysis works with the number 442. In terms of the figure for expenditure, [The Centre for Philanthropy report on philanthropy in Slovakia](#), provides a breakdown of expenditure made by foundations in Slovakia.

Sources

[Finstat](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#); [The Centre for Philanthropy report on philanthropy in Slovakia](#); [The Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic - Tax Assignment](#); [The Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic Register of Financial Statements](#).

Spain

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	10,511	2020	Spanish Association of Foundations
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	€17,594 million	2020	Spanish Association of Foundations

About the Data

Foundation Act 50/2002 defines foundations in Article 2.1 as non-profit organisations, whose assets are, according to the wishes of the founders, allocated permanently to the fulfilment of general-interest purposes. The foundation must have assets that are allocated permanently to achieve general-interest purposes defined by the founder. Foundations cannot pursue any private purpose such as giving benefits to the founder or the founder's family. 10,511 "active" foundations were provided for this report by the Spanish Association of Foundations, these were noted as foundations that are functioning in some capacity. There was a total figure of approximately 15,900 foundations in 2020, the difference (about 5,400) being foundations that were not active and therefore not taken into consideration.

Concerning information on financial data, this was obtained from a number of regional databases in Spain containing information on foundations, which covered data from the annual accounts of approximately 5,200 foundations. Financial data extrapolated from this smaller number of foundations in the sector offers a larger picture of public-benefit foundations in Spain than would be possible by using the smaller figure alone. A figure for income was also provided, but this was excluded from the report as only assets are considered suitable for the study, the estimated figure for which being €17,278 million.

Sources

[Philea Legal Profiles; Spanish Association of Foundations.](#)

Sweden

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	17,631	2024	Swedish County Administrative Boards
Assets	€45,210 million	2024	Swedish County Administrative Boards
Expenditure	€922.655 million	2024	Foundation Annual Reports; Swedish County Administrative Boards

About the Data

In Sweden, a foundation is defined as an: (1) an asset or property that (2) has been set aside from the donor(s) (3) to be administrated separately and permanently (4) with the aim of a specific purpose. The principal rule is that foundations, unless otherwise stated in the founding documents, are to be managed in perpetuity, but there is the possibility to create spend-down foundations. Foundations can pursue any legal purpose that the founder has specified. Only purposes defined as public benefit will however be tax exempt. Data on the number of foundations were taken from [Swedish County Administrative Boards](#) and subsequently processed, cleaned and provided by [The Association of Swedish Foundations](#). Swedish foundations are required to register at a County Administrative Board if they have over c. €30,000 of capital. Therefore, the true figure for the number of foundations may be higher. Asset and expenditure data is more difficult to collect for Swedish foundations. The expenditure figure included in this report contains grants given only.

Sources

Foundation Annual Reports; [Philea Legal Profiles](#); [Swedish County Administrative Boards](#); [The Association of Swedish Foundations](#)

Switzerland

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	13,721	2023	CEPS Database; Report on foundations in Switzerland 2024
Assets	€140,000 million	2022	Report on foundations in Switzerland 2023
Expenditure	€3,500 million	2022	SwissFoundations

About the Data

While the term “foundation” is not legally defined in Swiss law, Art. 80 et seqq. Zivilgesetzbuch (ZGB – Swiss Civil Code) provides the legal framework for foundations in Switzerland. According to Art. 80 ZGB the formation of a foundation requires assets being endowed for a specific purpose. The €3,500 million figure is a lower-bound estimation on spending of grantmaking foundations, not included are the expenditures of operating foundations (such as Inselspital, Fondation Beyeler etc.). The €140,000 million figure for assets is taken from a sample of 12,038 foundations, which includes not just grantmaking foundations but foundations of other distinctions too as it is not currently possible to disaggregate this particular data. Assets of grantmaking and operating foundations also cannot be differentiated at present. Hence the numbers on assets and expenditures are not on the same sample of foundations.

Sources

[CEPS Database; Philea Legal Profiles; Rapport sur les fondations en Suisse 2024; Report on foundations in Switzerland 2023; SwissFoundations.](#)

Türkiye

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	4,300	2024	General Directorate of Foundations Türkiye
Assets	-	-	-
Expenditure	€569.2 million	2024	General Directorate of Foundations Türkiye

About the Data

Foundations in Türkiye are defined as legal entities that have goods and rights which are endowed by real and legal persons for a defined and continual purpose. There are different categories of foundations in Türkiye:

'Mazbut Foundations' (*foundations whose founder's lineage has ended or whose management has been transferred to the state*), 'Mülhak Foundations' and 'Esnaf Foundations' (*Family-Controlled Foundations and Guild Foundations*), 'Cemaat Foundations' (*Minority Foundations*), 'New Foundations' and 'Branch Representations of Foreign Foundations'. Mazbut Foundations, Mülhak Foundations and Esnaf Foundations are those established during the period of the Ottoman Empire. New Foundations are those formed after the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye in 1923 and are considered part of what is today described as civil society. Therefore, in the evaluation of figures, data related to new foundations have been included.

In Türkiye, the official definition of public-benefit status is highly restrictive and granted to a limited number of organisations through a Presidential Decree. Thus, for the necessary data that meet Philea's inclusion criteria, TÜSEV had requested disaggregated data from the General Directorate of Foundations. Specifically, they requested from the General Directorate of Foundations the number of foundations that exclude the private-benefit foundations (foundations that work for the interest of a highly specific group of people), inactive foundations and foundations established and largely operated by the state. The General Directorate of Foundations provided the number of foundations that meet the requested criteria, their incomes (not assets) and expenditures.

The total expenditure is 19,185,000,000 Turkish Lira or €569,218,950 as of March 2024 (exchange rate calculated based on the monthly exchange rate provided by InforEuro).

Sources

[General Directorate of Foundations Türkiye](#); [Philea Legal Profiles](#); [TÜSEV](#).

Ukraine

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	7,328	2019	State Fiscal Service
Assets	€421 million	2019	State Fiscal Service
Expenditure	-	-	-

About the Data

There is no basic legal definition of a foundation in Ukrainian law. Separate laws regulate public law foundations (e.g., Culture Fund) and private law foundations, for both business activities (e.g. investment funds, non-government pension funds), and for private or public benefit. Data was collected from the State Fiscal Service in the previous iteration of this report, with no available updates for the current iteration.

Sources

[Philea Legal Profiles; State Fiscal Service.](#)

United Kingdom

Data Metric	Figure	Year	Source
Number of Foundations	10,719	2023	360Giving ; UKGrantmaking
Assets	€128,985 million	2023	360Giving ; UKGrantmaking
Expenditure	€14,115 million	2023	360Giving ; UKGrantmaking

About the Data

In the UK there is no specific legal form for foundations required by law. However, they can be established in various forms, such as charitable trusts, companies limited by guarantee, or unincorporated associations, depending on the preferences of the founders and the intended structure of the organisation. The terms trust and foundation are used interchangeably to describe charities with private, independent and sustainable income that fulfil their charitable goals mainly by funding and supporting other organisations and individuals. The quantitative data for the UK was collected from the [UKGrantmaking](#) platform and excludes fundraising grantmakers and member/trade funded organisations. Grantmaking expenditure (where known) is €6,820 million.

Sources

[Philea Legal Profiles](#); [UKGrantmaking](#).

Summarised Table of Data Collected

Country	Number	Assets (Millions €)	Expenditure (Millions €)
Albania	856	-	-
Andorra	26	-	-
Austria	767	7,000	112
Belgium	668	4,951.26	1,518.72
Bulgaria	3,034	-	23
Croatia	332	88.50	32.50
Czechia	3,043	831	150.70
Denmark	9,155	-	4,341
Estonia	14	8.85	1.23
Finland	2,657	22,000	580
France	5,647	41,522	16,002
Georgia	145	-	-
Germany	25,777	55,000	5,400
Greece	609	-	45
Hungary	6,088	-	-
Ireland	159	-	80
Italy	8,356	41,190	1,447.50
Latvia	1,883	-	-
Liechtenstein	1,391	-	-
Luxembourg	219	360	85
Netherlands	5,910	-	2,136
North Macedonia	215	-	15
Norway	6,332	20,000	5,100
Poland	21,000	-	-
Portugal	884	8,100	1,700
Romania	4,466	-	-
Serbia	918	242.90	73.30
Slovakia	442	-	90.77
Spain	10,511	-	17,594
Sweden	17,631	45,210	922.66
Switzerland	13,721	140,000	3,500
Türkiye	4,300	-	569.20
Ukraine	7,328	421	-
United Kingdom	10,719	128,985	14,115
Total	175,203	515,910.51	75,634.58

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About Philea

Philea – Philanthropy Europe Association nurtures a diverse and inclusive ecosystem of foundations, philanthropic organisations and networks in over 30 countries that work for the common good. With individual and national-level infrastructure organisations as members, it unites over 10,000 public-benefit foundations that seek to improve life for people and communities in Europe and around the world. Philea galvanises collective action and amplifies the voice of European philanthropy, and in all it does, it is committed to enhancing trust, collaboration, transparency, innovation, inclusion and diversity. www.philea.eu.