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The Legacy of Germany's Middle East Aid Policy During Chancellor Angela Merkel's Term of Office

German foreign aid under the leadership of Chancellor Merkel was characterized by insufficient transparency. Germany allocates tax money to organizations which claim to provide humanitarian aid, promote peace and advance stability in regions of conflict.

Foundations

Political foundations reflect the ideology of respective parties represented in the Bundestag and are considered to be independent. However, foundations receive funds according to their representation (seats) in the Bundestag. International missions of the party-affiliated foundations maintain controversial connections. They are known to cooperate with employees who are members of EU-designated terrorist organizations, such as the PFLP. A few days ago, the Israeli government outlawed six Palestinian NGOs - Addameer, Al Haq, Bisan Center, Defense of Children International-Palestine, Samidoun and the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) - for having connections to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP); one of the most violent factions of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).¹

The financing of EU-listed terrorist organizations through aid projects leads to a destabilization in the Middle East, endangers the security of the State of Israel and poses a threat to the lives of Jews.

The parties of the 19th Bundestag were represented by²

- Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (**SPD**), budget 2020: EUR 194 million, mainly from federal budget
- Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (**CDU**), budget 2019: EUR 209 million, of which EUR 199.9 million from the federal budget and EUR 114.8 million for projects abroad
- Heinrich Böll Foundation (**Alliance 90/The Greens**), budget 2020: EUR 75 million, of which 85% from federal budget and 37% for international cooperation
- Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (**Die Linke**), budget 2020: EUR 81 million, mainly from federal budget via ministries, 68% for projects abroad
- Hanns Seidel Foundation (**CSU**), budget 2019: EUR 74 million, half for projects abroad
- Friedrich Naumann Foundation (**FDP**), budget 2019: EUR 72 million

Largest donor nation to UNRWA

Germany has become the largest UNRWA donor since 2018, contributing EUR 174 million in 2020. It has carried out projects with NGOs in refugee camps in which members of Hamas, PFLP and Islamic Jihad operate.

A report from UNRWA Monitor breaks down current projects at UNRWA as well as the funding channels of the German federal government.³

During Chancellor Merkel's term in office, the German government did not insist on conditioning funds to UNRWA on the eradication of anti-Semitism and incitement in UNRWA education, at a time when UNRWA declares it allocates 58% of its \$ 1.5 billion budget to education.⁴

¹ <https://www.algemeiner.com/2021/10/22/israeli-defense-minister-gantz-outlaws-prominent-palestinian-ngos-for-ties-to-pflp-terrorist-organization/>

² <https://www.bpb.de/nachschlagen/lexika/handwoerterbuch-politisches-system/202095/politische-stiftungen>, see: 3. Political foundations and parties

³ <https://unrwa-monitor.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Deutsche-Unterstützung-fur-die-UNRWA-Aug2021.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.unrwa.org/how-you-can-help/how-we-spend-funds>