

STUDY: ALMOST EVERY 4TH JUDGE AT THE ECHR IS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH SOROS

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According to one study, almost a quarter of the judges at the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) have close ties to Soros NGOs and yet still decide cases involving Soros NGOs.

By **Thomas Röper**

As always, when I report on studies, I also look at the study and above all I am interested in who commissioned and paid for it. In this case the study comes from the European Center for Law and Justice. This is a sub-organisation of the American Center for Law and Justice, an organisation of evangelical Christians in the USA who fight for conservative values including a ban on abortion. But this NGO does not limit itself to these issues, it also stands up for human rights and freedom of expression.

Nevertheless, this organization has made me suspicious as the author of the study entitled "NGOS AND THE JUDGES OF THE ECHR, 2009 - 2019" (1) and I have carefully examined the study. More about this in a moment. First of all, we shall come to the conclusion of the study that can be found in the abstract (i.e. the summary) of the study.

„NGOs have an increasing influence on and within international institutions, particularly within the human rights protection system.

This report shows that at least 22 of the 100 permanent judges who have served on the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) between 2009 and 2019 are former officials or collaborators of seven NGOs that are highly active before the Court. Twelve judges are linked to the Open Society Foundation (OSF) network, seven to the Helsinki committees, five to the International Commission of Jurists, three to Amnesty International, and one each to Human Rights Watch, Interights and the A.I.R.E. Centre. The Open Society network is distinguished by the number of judges linked to it and by the fact that it funds the other six organisations mentioned in this report.

Since 2009, there have been at least 185 cases in which at least one of these seven NGOs is officially involved in the proceedings. Of these, in 88 cases, judges sat in a case in which the NGO with which they were linked was involved. For example, in the case of Big Brother Watch v. the United Kingdom, still pending before the Grand Chamber of the ECHR, 10 of the 16 applicants are NGOs funded by the OSF, as are 6 of the NGOs acting as third

parties. Of the 17 judges who have sat in the Grand Chamber, 6 are linked to the applicant and intervening NGOs.

Over the same period, there were only 12 cases in which a judge withdrew from a case, apparently because of a link with an NGO involved in the case.

This situation calls into question the independence of the Court and the impartiality of the judges and is contrary to the rules which the ECHR itself imposes on States in this area. It is all the more problematic as the Court's power is exceptional.

It is necessary to remedy this situation. To this end, greater attention should be paid in particular to the choice of candidates for the posts of judges, avoiding the appointment of activists. This report also proposes solutions to ensure the transparency of interests and links between applicants, judges and NGOs, and formalise the procedures of withdrawal and recusal."

These are strong accusations, which I have - as far as I was able to - verified. In the study, all the judges are listed by name. Since they are judges from all European countries, I did not find their biographies in a language I could understand in all cases. In the case of the judges for whom I found biographies that I could understand, the accusations made and the judges' connections to the Soros Foundations (2) have been confirmed. I did not find any mistake in this study, but I cannot guarantee that there is no error at all.

The study lists on 25 pages in detail which judges were connected with Soros. Some were founding members of his organizations in different countries. So the connections are quite close and are shown in detail in the study on pages 7 and 8.

Well, one can think about Soros and his goals (3) as one pleases, and my critical attitude towards him, and also towards his power over the formation of opinion through the media (4), is well known. But even if one thinks he is good, one cannot approve of the fact that activists who have fought for certain goals and have been well paid for doing so, subsequently, as judges at the highest European Court of Justice, make decisions that affect their former employers and fellow campaigners. No one should deny that there is a conflict of interest here.

On pages 15 and 16 of the study, examples are given of cases in which judges had to decide on cases in which their associated NGOs were involved.

„Regarding the Helsinki Committees, six of the seven judges linked to these organizations have sat in cases in which these committees have acted as applicants or as third parties. Judges Yudkivska, Grozev, Garlicki, Karaka² and Kalaydjieva have sat respectively in four, six, eleven, seven and twelve cases, in which a Committee has acted as a third party, and in four, two, eight, three and nine cases in which a Committee was an applicant. Judge Šikuta sat in two cases in which a committee acted as a third party. For Judge Grozev it was the Bulgarian Committee of which he was a founder and member from 1993 to 2013.“

I repeat that I was not able to check the study completely, but that I could not find any errors in the study during my research.

So if the study is telling the truth, then we must look very carefully at the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights that directly or indirectly affect Soros and his interests.

Sources:

1. <https://eclj.org/ngos-and-the-judges-of-the-echr?lng=en>
2. <https://www.anti-spiegel.ru/2018/ngo-oder-wir-man-die-politik-anderer-staaten-bis-hin-zu-einem-putsch-von-auben-beeinflussen-kann/>
3. <https://www.anti-spiegel.ru/2019/europawahl-soros-fuerchtet-um-die-kontrolle-ueber-die-eu-und-fordert-mehr-zentralisierung-der-macht/>
4. <https://www.anti-spiegel.ru/2019/wie-und-von-wem-die-westliche-presse-gesteuert-wird/>

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