Ex-post evaluation of five programmes implemented under the 2007-2013 financial perspective

Specific programme evaluation: Fundamental Rights and Citizenship (FRC)

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DG Justice

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Executive summary

This final evaluation of the specific programme **Fundamental Rights and Citizenship** (hereinafter referred to as FRC) implemented between 2007 and 2013 was commissioned by DG Justice to ICF International and Milieu Ltd under the Framework Contract for Evaluation and Evaluation-related Services (JUST/2011/EVAL/01).

Objectives and methodology of the evaluation

This final evaluation aims to assess the relevance, coherence and complementarity, effectiveness, sustainability, efficiency and scope for simplification, and EU added value of the FRC Programme. These main evaluation criteria are defined in the following way:

- **Relevance** – the extent to which the actions implemented under FRC logically address its objectives, the wider policy needs of the EU and the needs of the target audiences;
- **Coherence and complementarity** – the extent to which FRC is internally coherent and if there is complementarity and overlap between FRC and other EU instruments at programme level, at the level of the calls for proposals and at project level;
- **Effectiveness** – the extent to which the FRC programme has been successful in achieving its objectives;
- **Sustainability** – whether the results, outcomes and impacts achieved by the projects are sustainable beyond the project funding period. To the extent possible, the evaluation distinguishes between short-term sustainability (dissemination of project results), medium term sustainability (continuation of project results and/ or partnerships), and longer term sustainability (successful transfer of project results to other contexts, organisations and Member States without additional funding or with limited funding only);
- **Efficiency and scope for simplification –** the extent to which the programme has been implemented in a cost-effective way and linked to this, the extent to which the implementation process or reporting requirements are overly complex;
- **EU added value** – the different ways in which FRC provides EU added value both to the EU and to grant beneficiaries and the pertinence of this EU added value, in particular the extent to which Member States could have achieved the same results without EU intervention.

The findings of the evaluation are based on data collected from multiple sources, including: an extensive review and quantitative analysis of the available documentation for 168 grants[1] (134 AGs and 34 OGs) funded by the programme; an online survey (71 respondents) and follow-up interviews (17 interviews) with grant beneficiaries; four interviews with Commission officials who were involved in the programme; as well as a review of programme documentation and other relevant EU policy documents.

Overview of the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme (FRC)

FRC was established by Council Decision 2007/252/EC of 19 April 2007[2] (hereinafter referred to as the 'founding Decision') for the period 2007-2013 as part of the Programme "Fundamental Rights and Justice". The total budget allocated for the FRC programme for its implementation period January 2007 - December 2013 amounted to € 95.2 million.

Objectives of the programme

The general objectives of FRC (set out in Article 2 of the founding Decision) are to:

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[1] The scope of this evaluation is based on the projects for which documentation was made available. Note that documentation for one AG was not available: hence this evaluation covers 168 projects, out of the total 169 projects funded.

[2] Council Decision of 19 April 2007 establishing for the period 2007-2013 the specific programme Fundamental rights and citizenship as part of the General programme Fundamental Rights and Justice, OJ L 110, 27.4.2007, p. 33–39.

- Promote the development of a European society based on respect for fundamental rights as recognised in Article 6(2) of the Treaty on the European Union, including rights derived from citizenship of the Union;
- Strengthen civil society and encourage an open, transparent and regular dialogue with it in respect of fundamental rights;
- Fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and to promote a better interfaith and intercultural understanding and improved tolerance throughout the European Union;
- Improve the contacts, exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities and the legal professions, including by way of support to judicial training, with the aim of better mutual understanding among such authorities and professionals.

The general objectives of the programme are complementary to the objectives pursued by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights established by Regulation (EC) No 168/2007, i.e., to contribute to the development and implementation of Community policies in full compliance with fundamental rights.

The programme's specific objectives (set out in Article 3 of the founding Decision) are to:
- Promote fundamental rights as recognised in Article 6(2) of the Treaty on the European Union and to inform all persons of their rights including those derived from citizenship of the Union, in order to encourage Union citizens to participate actively in the democratic life of the Union;
- Examine, where necessary, respect for specific fundamental rights in the European Union and its Member States when implementing Community law, and to obtain opinions on specific questions related to fundamental rights within its scope;
- Support non-governmental organisations and other bodies from civil society in order to enhance their capability to participate actively in the promotion of fundamental rights, the rule of law and democracy;
- Create relevant structures in order to foster an interfaith and multicultural dialogue at the level of the European Union.

To ensure that the programme reached results consistent with the objectives, the Commission set priority areas of work in each annual work programme. The priority areas determined the focus of activities funded through AGs, as applicants were requested to put forward activities falling within one or more of the priority areas. Each year, priorities could change according to the EU policy agenda and according to the practical needs in the different sectors. The specific objectives were implemented through a set of Annual Priorities.

Target beneficiaries of the programme

The programme targets EU citizens, citizens of participating countries or third country nationals legally residing within the European Union territory and civil society associations, and other groups active in promoting the objectives of the programme.

Funding mechanisms of the programme

As with other programmes of DG Justice's General Programme on Fundamental Rights and Justice 2007-2013, FRC funds actions through three different mechanisms:
- **Action grants** (hereinafter referred to as 'AG') for:
  - **Specific trans-national projects of Community interest** presented by an authority or any other body of a Member State, an international or non-governmental organisation, under the conditions set out in the annual work programme. These projects are co-financed up to 80% of the total costs and form the core of the programme. They may run for a maximum of two years;
- **Operating grants** (hereinafter referred to as 'OG') intended:
  - To co-finance (up to 80%) the activities of non-governmental organisations or other entities pursuing an aim of general European interest (calls for proposal);
  - To co-finance expenditure associated with the permanent work programme of specific organisations mentioned in the legal base (the Conference of the European Constitutional Courts and the Association of the Councils of State and Supreme Administrative Jurisdictions of the European Union), provided that the grants are used to achieve an objective of European general interest;
- **Projects at the initiative of the Commission**, such as studies and research, opinion polls and surveys, formulation of indicators and common methodologies, collection, development and

dissemination of data and statistics, seminars, conferences and expert meetings, organisation of public campaigns and events, development and maintenance of websites, preparation and dissemination of information material, support for and management of networks of national experts, analytical, monitoring and evaluation activities. The Commission uses **procurement procedures** for these activities.

During the 2007-2013 implementation period most of the programme funding was allocated to AGs (48%) and public procurement (40%). The remainder of the budget was allocated to OGs (12%). Public procurement contracts were used extensively under the FRC programme to help in developing and implementing EU policy and legislation, dissemination of EU policy and legislation, and ensuring sustainability of project results.

Lead organisations and main activities in the programme

FRC-funded actions (AGs and OGs) were mainly led by national NGOs, including NGO platforms and networks (46% of all lead organisations), European networks, platforms or forums (19%), or national authorities (6%), research institutes (6%) and universities (6%). Regarding partner organisations, the majority were, again, comprised of national NGOs, including national platforms and networks (55%) and universities (10%).

The main activities implemented within the framework of AGs focused on awareness-raising, information and dissemination (24%), mutual learning, exchange of good practices and cooperation (22%) and analytical activities (20%), support to key actors (15%) and training activities (13%). In the case of OGs, the main implemented activities were awareness-raising, information and dissemination (25%), followed closely by support to key actors (24%), mutual learning, exchange of good practices and cooperation (23%), analytical activities (16%) and training activities (10%). Public procurement contracts focused on studies, conferences, events, maintenance of websites and other IT related tasks.

Main findings and conclusions of the evaluation

Relevance

The programme objectives were considered quite general. This does not necessarily represent a weak aspect of the programme but rather allows the Commission a broad margin of manoeuvre in establishing how to implement the objectives and address the needs on the ground.

The annual priorities were clearly set in a way to contribute to the achievement of the foreseen objectives. They focused on the specific needs of the policy and legislative developments over the programme's duration, and these appear to have been adequately addressed. One exception was the priority area of fostering an interfaith and multicultural dialogue in the EU, which only a handful of projects addressed. In addition, the priorities with regard to the training of the general public or the judicial, legal and administrative authorities or legal professionals on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights were not set consistently over the years. According to the Commission officials interviewed, however, setting policy priorities for the programme in advance which could reasonably be implemented within the next two years was a difficult exercise. In particular, policy priorities that required a more long-term approach were challenging to address in the 24-month cycle of a particular call for AG proposals.

According to grant beneficiaries, the programme and its priorities were relevant to their needs. However, some interviewees called for increased clarity of the calls. Although the majority indicated that they carried out needs assessments to support the development and design of their projects, this was not generally evident in the application forms. While the Commission did not specifically require applicants to carry out and document a needs assessment, doing so would have given grant applicants a much clearer indication of the relevance of their project, provided a baseline upon which to evaluate project success at a later date, and improved the quality of their study. In the absence of a needs assessment, it is challenging to assess whether certain priorities should be dismissed or what issue future priorities should focus on. While projects that are not based on a needs assessment might still be relevant to the target groups' needs, a lack of a needs assessment creates a risk that more relevant means or methods of supporting the target groups may have been possible.

Coherence and complementarity

The evaluation examined both how the FRC programme related to other programmes and the extent to which it was aligned with (coherent) or supported/fed into (complementary) policy initiatives, e.g. action plans, policy roadmaps, legislation. It also considered coherence and complementarity at the level of the FRC's calls for proposals, when priorities are set forth, and at the project level.

The evaluation findings showed that FRC is complementary, in terms of certain objectives and thematic areas and target group(s) covered, with Daphne III, PROGRESS and the Criminal Justice (JPEN) programmes. A strength of the FRC programme is that it enables the financing of projects that may not fit into the narrower focus of other EU funding programmes.

Regarding synergies at the EU and national levels as well as within the programme itself, the evidence gathered showed such synergies were established with other programmes of international donors with similar objectives at the EU and national levels as well as with projects funded by the FRC programme itself. Finally, concerning the programme's coherence with policy developments at EU and national levels, the FRC programme is coherent with national and European policy initiatives.

Effectiveness

Overall, FRC actions were effective in achieving the general objectives of the programme and there is some evidence of useful outcomes, including the achievement of unplanned positive outcomes.

Out of the 169 AGs and OGs implemented during the programme period, 115 were finalised at the time information was made available for this evaluation. Final reports were available only for 70 of them. A review of the Final Reports for these actions found 21 AGs with some evidence of useful outcomes. For example, the 2009/2010 AG project entitled *'I am Roma: Changing Mindsets'* organised workshops and study visits in Roma communities, which reportedly improved the relationship between Roma youth and local youth. However, information on outcomes and impacts was limited, which made it somewhat challenging to assess in general the effectiveness of FRC funding tools in achieving the programme objectives. This is particularly so in relation to OGs as the final report template does not have a section on outcomes. The remainder of information on outcomes or impacts is based on the self-reporting by project managers and partners.

All of the 111 procurement contracts awarded appear to have been finalised, and in a few cases there is evidence of outcomes, e.g., where web-links are provided to final reports or websites.

The actions funded under the FRC programme have made a notable contribution to the objectives it set out to achieve. In particular, the FRC programme has contributed to the implementation and development of EU policy and legislation. OGs were also an effective financing tool for supporting the implementation and development of EU policies and legislation in the area of fundamental rights.

Public procurement contracts were also used to respond to policy developments with regard to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and with regard to children's rights through Eurobarometer publications on these issues and through the organisation of a conference.

According to the qualitative evidence gathered during the mapping of the final reports, over half of all finalised AGs and OGs implemented all their activities as planned. The majority of the projects were able to achieve the planned results on time and to reach the expected target group. No obstacles seriously influencing the implementation of the project's results or objectives were identified.

Moreover, the mechanisms in place for monitoring projects while they are underway did not ensure the provision of feedback to grant beneficiaries in all cases and for identifying lessons learned, good practices, success factors, etc. Many respondents stressed the importance of a proper monitoring system for ensuring the effectiveness of the programme, including for supporting implementation and development of EU fundamental rights and policy legislation.

Sustainability, transferability and innovation

The sustainability of the projects funded through the FRC programme was assessed according to whether the results, outcomes and impacts achieved would continue beyond the project period. Three levels of sustainability were identified in the evaluation: short-term sustainability, which is achieved mainly through dissemination of projects' results; medium-term sustainability, which includes continuation of project results and/or partnerships; and longer term sustainability, which is achieved

mainly through the successful transfer of projects' results to other contexts, organisations and Member States without additional funding (or with limited funding only).

Regarding short-term sustainability, dissemination to a wider public is identified as a key element for ensuring a better impact for the programme. The evaluation found that most grant beneficiaries had established clear plans for disseminating the results of their project/activities. In most cases, such plans foresaw the dissemination of results in more than one language and in more than one country.

On the other hand, the Commission's efforts to disseminate (and monitor) the results of projects were more limited. Commission officials interviewed as part of this evaluation expressed their concern with regard to the lack of a proper mechanism/plan for communicating and disseminating the results of the FRC programme. This severely limited the effectiveness of the dissemination of results achieved under the FRC programme. An improved dissemination mechanism would not only help to better communicate results to policy and decision makers, but would also benefit project monitoring and knowledge sharing.

Regarding medium-term sustainability, at least some actions implemented under the FRC continued once EU funding ended. Some projects had developed sustainable outputs that would continue to be used. Moreover, a number of the project outputs continue to be used for present and future activities, such as training and awareness raising tools, reports, databases, guidelines and network platforms. The evidence collected on continuation of partnerships is contradictory as while the final reports of FRC-funded actions suggested that it was remarkably low, the online survey showed different results with the majority of respondents indicating that the partnership continued after the projects' completion. Moreover, stakeholders interviewed reported that the cooperation built between partners through the project helped establish a network which is still working together on new projects.

Regarding long-term sustainability, overall, project outputs were considered transferable to other target groups or countries, although some adaptation would often be required, e.g. translation or adaptation of a project's methodology to the local context.

Finally, most projects demonstrated innovation in terms of the activities or practices that were implemented, in particular, by targeting groups or introducing aspects that were not researched or addressed before. The methods used also showed evidence of innovation (e.g. tailor-made training methods, participatory approaches, inter-institutional cooperation models, and peer education methodologies).

Efficiency and scope for simplification

Overall, the funding provided to AGs, OGs and procurement contracts appears to have been sufficient to make an impact regarding FRC general objectives, while noting that the first and third objectives were highly ambitious, such that it would be unreasonable to expect that €95.2 million over a seven year period could bring about significant impacts. However, the second and fourth objectives were more realistic, and it is more reasonable to consider whether the available funding was sufficient to make an impact.

Determination of whether the financial resources made available were used efficiently requires an analysis of the inputs (i.e. costs of the project) versus the outputs produced. Since information was only provided concerning the total cost of the grant (whether the commitment or the payment), a full input / output analysis was not possible. In an effort to produce some analysis of project inputs and outputs, a set of projects with similar activities were identified and compared in terms of their overall costs and generated outputs. It appeared that in general resources were used efficiently. This was confirmed by the high ranking assigned by the grant beneficiaries to the efficiency of the implemented actions.

The expected impact of FRC was to contribute to the 'creation of a real fundamental rights culture among all the peoples of Europe'. While this is a hugely ambitious and certainly challenging goal, when looking at project achievements the outcomes and impacts identified would suggest that spending was reasonable, keeping in mind that a number of projects[3] were still to be completed and that outcomes and impacts take time to be realised.

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[3] 115 of the 169 projects mapped had provided a final report.

The Commission's management of the FRC was, overall, perceived as efficient in terms of the requirements imposed on applicants and grant beneficiaries and in view of the support received. Nonetheless, several interviewees highlighted areas that could be improved and simplified in the future. Chief among these areas was the perception that the financial requirements were overly complicated and needed to be simplified. Concern was expressed by a few respondents that the Commission itself did not always respect project timelines, which sometimes had knock-on effects on the project concerned, leading to difficulties in project implementation. It was seen as critical for the Commission to stick to the timeline given for the project in order for everything to run efficiently. Respondents also expressed frustration with the length of time between submitting a proposal in response to a call and receiving notification of a grant award. They asked for the Commission to create a more efficient and quicker way for people to contact them before the call is awarded, perhaps through improvements of the current IT system. Reporting requirements were sometimes considered as burdensome, particularly with regard to financial reporting. The Commission's monitoring arrangements were considered useful; however some respondents experienced difficulties.

European added value

The FRC programme's added-value mainly relates to its transnational dimension within the EU. The programme was created to promote the development of a European society based on respect for fundamental rights and rights derived from citizenship of the European Union. Member States cannot effectively address such aims by themselves. Therefore the programme was designed to require a European response, including the exchange of information at EU level and the wide dissemination of good practices throughout the EU. Cooperation between EU Member States is therefore crucial for the implementation of the programme.

The EU nature of the programme is reflected in the objectives of the programme as well as in relation to the eligibility of actions, as stressed in the founding Decision, the Annual Work Programmes and the Call for Proposals, which required to demonstrate that the proposals would constitute added value at EU level as opposed to national or regional level.

Concerning geographical coverage, the evaluation concluded that not all Member States were equally covered. The geographical coverage of projects and project partners receiving AG and OG funding was uneven, with a few Member States overly represented (Italy, Belgium and France) and others quite under represented (Estonia, Luxembourg and Malta).

The transnational partnerships formed for the implementation of projects increased the geographical coverage of FRC, along with the scope for dissemination of the results between Member States. Moreover, the nature of FRC brought added value to the EU in achieving its objectives of cross-border cooperation, elaboration and dissemination of best practices, and raising wide public awareness about the rights deriving from EU law.

1 Introduction

The present report constitutes the specific programme evaluation of the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme (hereinafter the FRC programme) which was implemented between 2007 and 2013. The report is organised by the main evaluation criteria and corresponding questions. These include relevance, coherence and complementarity, effectiveness, impact and sustainability, efficiency and European added value.

1.1 Methodology and sources of information

This final evaluation of the FRC programme has been developed on the basis of the following information:

■ An extensive review of the available documentation for 134 Action Grants (AGs) and 34 Operating Grants (OGs) funded by the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme (hereinafter 'FRC programme') 2007-2013;
■ A review of programme documentation, such as the founding Decision, annual work programmes and calls for proposals for both grants and public procurement contracts;
■ A review of other information available online – e.g. EU policy documents, websites / founding Decisions of related EU programmes, etc.;
■ A quantitative analysis of the 168[4] projects (AGs and OGs);
■ An analysis of 71 responses to the online survey from FRC programme grant beneficiaries;
■ The write-ups of 17 follow-up interviews with coordinators of projects / organisations receiving FRC grants 2007-2013; and
■ 4 scoping interviews with Commission officials.

1.2 Key characteristics of the programme

1.2.1 Overview and intervention logic

The FRC programme was established by Council Decision 2007/252/EC of 19 April 2007 (hereinafter referred to as the 'founding Decision') for the period 2007-2013 as part of the programme "Fundamental Rights and Justice".

Article 2 of the founding Decision outlines the four general objectives.

These are:

■ To promote the development of a European society based on respect for fundamental rights as recognised in Article 6(2) of the Treaty on the European Union, including rights derived from citizenship of the Union;
■ To strengthen civil society and to encourage an open, transparent and regular dialogue with it in respect of fundamental rights;
■ To fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and to promote a better interfaith and intercultural understanding and improved tolerance throughout the European Union;
■ To improve the contacts, exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities and the legal professions, including by way of support to judicial training, with the aim of better mutual understanding among such authorities and professionals.

The general objectives of the programme are complementary to the objectives pursued by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights established by Regulation (EC) No 168/2007, i.e., to contribute to the development and implementation of Community policies in full compliance with fundamental rights.

The specific objectives are listed in Table 2.1 in the section on Relevance.

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[4] The scope of this evaluation is based on projects for which documentation was made available. Note that documentation for one AG was not available: hence this evaluation covers 168 projects, out of the total of 169 projects funded.

The FRC programme, as with other programmes forming part of DG Justice's General Programme on Fundamental Rights and Justice 2007-2013, funds actions through the following mechanisms:

- *Action grants* in the form of co-funding (up to 80% of the total costs) for specific trans-national projects of Community interest presented by an authority or any other body of a Member State, an international or non-governmental organisation, which may run for a maximum of two years.
- *Operating grants* providing financial support (up to 80%) to the activities of non-governmental organisations or other entities pursuing an aim of general European interest;
- *Operating grants* co-financing expenditure associated with the permanent work programme of specific organisations mentioned in the legal base (the Conference of the European Constitutional Courts and the Association of the Councils of State and Supreme Administrative Jurisdictions of the European Union).
- *Tendered contracts / Public procurement* for undertaking specific actions initiated by the Commission (Commission's initiatives), such as studies and research, opinion polls and surveys, formulation of indicators and common methodologies, collection, development and dissemination of data and statistics, seminars, conferences and expert meetings, organisation of public campaigns and events, development and maintenance of websites, preparation and dissemination of information material, support for and management of networks of national experts, analytical, monitoring and evaluation activities, etc.

The total budget allocated for the FRC programme for its implementation period January 2007 – December 2013 amounted to 95.2 million euro.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the intervention logic underpinning the FRC programme.

Figure 1.1: Intervention logic of the FRC programme
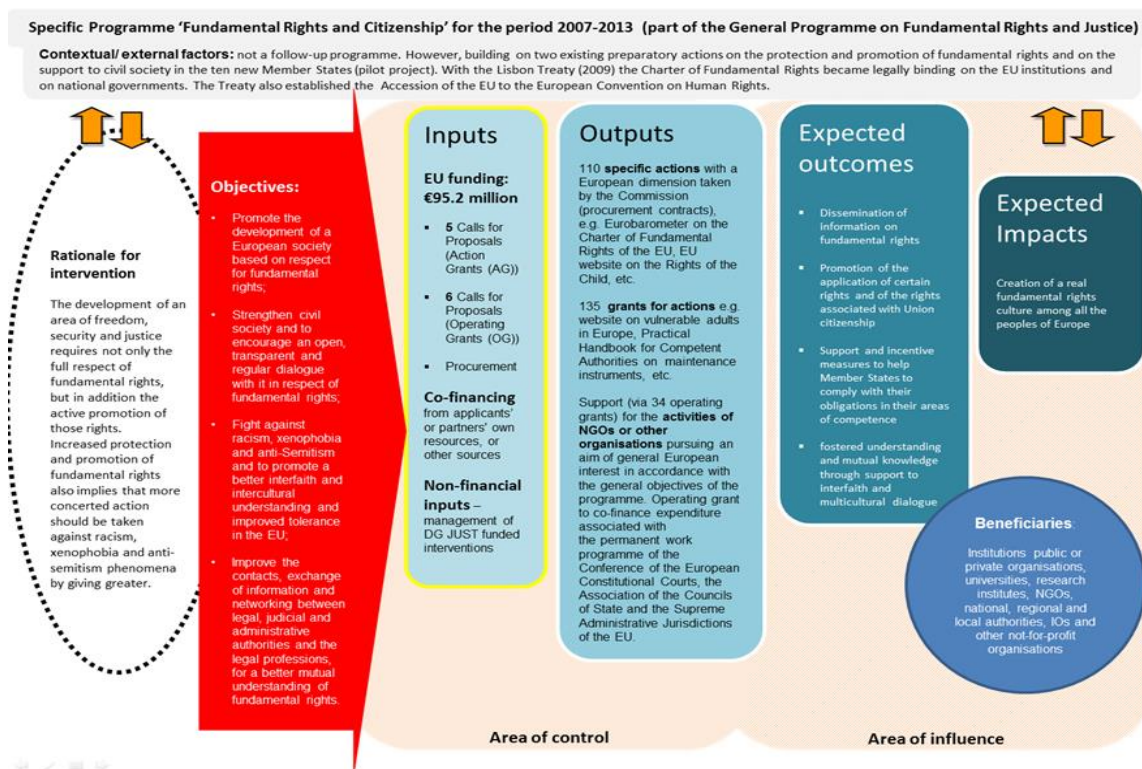
1.2.2 Key characteristics (key elements of the quantitative analysis of the programme)

As described above, the FRC programme funding was made available through action grants (AGs), operating grants (OGs) and public procurement contracts. In the period 2007-2013, the Commission had published:

■ Five calls for proposals for AGs: FRC/AG 2007, 2008, 2009-2010, 2011-2012, 2013[5];
■ Six calls for proposals for OGs: FRC/OG 2007 financial year 2008, FRC/OG 2008 financial year 2009, FRC/OG 2009 financial year 2010, FRC/OG 2010 financial year 2011, FRC/OG 2012 financial year 2012, FRC/OG 2013 financial year 2013;

The Commission also funded 111 Commission initiatives through public procurement procedures.

Table 1.1 summarises the number of different actions funded each year of the programme implementation period.

Table 1.1 Number of actions funded per year

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	TOTAL
Action grants (AG)	18	26	49		42		N/S[6]	135
Operating grants (OG)	3	7	4	6	0	10	4	34
Public procurement	7	19	14	27	13	16	15	111

Specific operating grants

Regarding specific OGs, the legal basis of the programme mentions two associations which may receive OGs to co-finance expenditure associated with their permanent work programme, namely:

■ The Association of the Councils of State and Supreme Administrative Jurisdictions of the European Union. The purpose of this association is to promote exchanges of views and experience on matters concerning the jurisprudence, organisation and functioning of its members in the performance of their judicial and/or advisory functions, particularly with regard to Community Law. The Association has set up a data bank, consisting principally of decisions, advice and studies by its Members relevant to the purpose of the Association, reports and conclusions produced during the colloquiums of the Association as well as other useful information.
■ The Conference of the European Constitutional Courts. This association has never applied for the OGs foreseen by the legal basis of the programme.

Most of the grants (46%) went to national NGOs, including NGO platforms and networks. The next largest number (19%) of projects were led by a European Network/platform/forum, followed by national authorities (e.g. Ministries) (6%), research institutes (6%) and universities (6%). Moreover, 5% of projects were led by local authorities, 4% led by other education/training institutes, 3% by regional authorities, and 5% by other types of organisations. Finally, 0.6% were led by courts, public services and prosecution services.

The composition of the partnerships shows again that the most common partners (55%, or 332 AG partners) are national NGOs, including national platforms and networks. This is in accordance with the general objective of the FRC programme of strengthening civil society. Other categories over 5% included universities (10%, or 52 AG partners), other (9%), research institutes (7%, or 41 AG partners) and local authorities (6%, or 35 AG partners). In addition, 25 AG partners were national authorities, 24 AG partners were European networks/platforms/forums, 18 were other education/training institutes and 13 were regional authorities..

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[5] This evaluation did not take into account the call for 2013.
[6] Not in the scope of this evaluation.

For FRC AG projects, awareness-raising, information and dissemination represent 24% of the activities, followed by mutual learning, exchange of good practices, cooperation (22%), analytical activities (20%), support to key actors (15%) and training activities (13%).

For FRC OGs, awareness-raising, information and dissemination are the lead type of activity at 25%, followed closely by support to key actors (24%), mutual learning, exchange of good practices, cooperation (23%), analytical activities (16%) and training activities (10%).

1.3 Issues raised in the interim evaluation

The mid-term evaluation carried out for the FRC programme in 2010 showed that the programme contributed to the development and strengthening of EU actions in the areas of freedom, security and justice and specifically responded to the need to protect fundamental rights and promote EU citizenship.

However, the mid-term evaluation also underlined that the FRC programme's objectives were rather broad, and partially overlapped with other EU programmes. Such elements therefore affected the focus of the programme.

As regards the coherence of the programme, the annual priorities adopted and the implemented actions were coherent and responsive to EU level policy developments and supported the implementation of EU legislation.

Several factors also demonstrated the EU added value of the actions funded under the FRC programme. The European dimension of the projects in general was found to have helped the dissemination of results. In addition, involving partners from different Member States provided benefits with respect to increasing innovation, exchange of good practice and amplifying impacts. With regard to the efficiency of the programme, resources allocated for the 2007-2010 period were overall efficiently used to deliver the desired results. In addition, the resources available to grant beneficiaries enabled the efficient delivery of outputs, both in terms of producing results as planned, as well as disseminating these results.

However, although overall positive, the mid-term evaluation highlighted the need to further improve the dissemination of results.

With regard to the sustainability of the programme, only a relatively small proportion of organisations were expected to continue their project activities after the funding ceased. With regard to the target groups, evidence showed that the FRC programme for the 2007-2010 period was crucial in enabling organisations to develop and implement certain types of activities which otherwise could not have been put in place.

2   Relevance of the programme

2.1   Relevance of the priorities and funded actions

2.1.1   Relevance of the priorities to the objectives of the programme

The founding Decision establishing the FRC programme sets general and specific objectives (see Table 2.1 below). Whilst the general and specific objectives stated in the FRC founding decision seem rather vague, this does not necessarily represent a weak aspect of the programme. Rather, this allows the Commission a broad margin of manoeuvre in establishing how to implement the objectives and address the needs on the ground. On the other hand, the broadness of the objectives might also result in certain (still relevant) issues receiving less attention than others in practice, as discussed further below.

To ensure that the programme reached results consistent with the objectives, the Commission set priority areas of work in each annual work programme. The priority areas determined the focus of activities funded through AGs, as applicants were requested to put forward activities falling within one or more of the priority areas. Each year, priorities could change according to the EU policy agenda and according to the practical needs in the different sectors.

The mid-term evaluation confirmed the relevance of the FRC Programme stating that the programme contributed to the development of EU actions in the areas of freedom, security and justice, especially with regard to the protection of fundamental rights and the promotion of EU citizenship, and the programme's objectives were overall consistent with the issues that needed to be addressed. Furthermore, the annual priorities set out in the annual work programmes were aligned with the policy orientations of the Commission.

Table 2.1 Alignment between the general and specific objectives of the FRC programme

General objectives	Specific objectives
1) To promote the development of a European society based on respect for fundamental rights as recognised in Article 6(2) of the Treaty on the European Union, including rights derived from citizenship of the Union;	To promote fundamental rights as recognised in Article 6(2) of the Treaty on the European Union and to inform all persons of their rights including those derived from citizenship of the Union, in order to encourage Union citizens to participate actively in the democratic life of the Union;
2) To strengthen civil society and to encourage an open, transparent and regular dialogue with it in respect of fundamental rights;	To support NGO's and other bodies from civil society in order to enhance their capability to participate actively in the promotion of fundamental rights, the rule of law and democracy;
3) To fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and to promote a better interfaith and intercultural understanding and improved tolerance throughout the European Union.	To create relevant structures in order to foster an interfaith and multicultural dialogue at the level of the European Union.
4) To improve the contacts, exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities and the legal professions, including by way of support to judicial training, with the aim of better mutual understanding among such authorities and professionals.	To examine, where necessary, respect for specific fundamental rights in the European Union and its Member States when implementing Community law, and to obtain opinions on specific questions related to fundamental rights within this scope;

For the scope of this evaluation, the priorities set for each year's work programme are grouped together under the general areas of 1) rights of the child, 2) combating racism/homophobia/intolerance, 3) data protection, 4) citizenship 5) training on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Annex I presents these priorities in full alongside the general objectives with which they align.

The priorities do not map exclusively onto particular programme objectives. In some cases, projects focusing on a specific priority area may address more than one programme objective. For example priorities on fighting racism, homophobia and anti-Semitism may be aimed to implement in practice the promotion and development of European society based on respect for fundamental rights and to strengthen civil society encouraging a dialogue on fundamental rights as well as fighting racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. However, none of the priorities is incoherent with the programme objectives.

Rights of the child

The first annual work programme in 2007 introduced the priority focussing on the protection of the rights of the child following the adoption of the Commission Communication 'Towards an EU strategy for the rights of the child'. The aim of the Commission was to better promote and respect children's rights as they are listed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, through activities such as awareness raising campaigns and analysis of specific needs of the children. This priority area fits within the broader objective of promoting fundamental rights, and the consistent prioritisation of this area over the years is therefore relevant.

The 2011 annual work programme mentioned in particular that priority would be given to projects focusing on the protection of children involved in judicial proceedings and on children's participation in development of policies affecting them. In the latter case, the aim was to fund projects that would support development of models aimed at empowering children's participation in local, national and regional policy. This focus was kept also in the 2012 and 2013 annual work programmes. In 2013, projects supporting the active participation of children from vulnerable groups including Roma children in policies affecting them were also prioritised.

Combating racism/homophobia/intolerance

The 2007 annual work programme made the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism a priority, which is in line with the FRC programme's general objective on this issue. The aim was to promote actions aimed at fighting stereotypes and racist attitudes, speech and violence through initiatives aiming at fostering mutual understanding and at developing cross-community approaches. In 2008 one more priority was added -- the fight against homophobia – which aimed at better identifying and fighting homophobic attitudes and stereotypes. These two priorities were maintained unchanged until the end of the programme in 2013.

However, whilst the FRC programme's general and specific objectives on this area also include promotion of interfaith and multicultural dialogue, the Commission did not make this a specific priority over the years. This might have been under the assumption that interfaith and multicultural dialogue was included in the specific priority focussing on the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism. However, as discussed below, the relative lack of projects actively promoting interfaith and multicultural dialogue could be due to the fact that this was not set as a priority in the FRC annual work programmes.

Data protection

The founding Decision does not mention the issue of data protection and privacy rights, yet the Commission already made this a priority area in the 2007 annual work programme. As with children's rights, this priority area fits within the broader objective of promoting fundamental rights, and is therefore relevant to the objectives of the FRC programme. In 2007, the priority was to promote activities informing the public about this issue. The 2008 work programme gave further focus by specifying that projects on reinforcing children's privacy and on the risks to privacy posed by electronic means e.g. identity theft and phishing, would be priorities. It also gave priority to projects aimed at enhancing new privacy technologies and at awareness raising campaigns especially promoting the European Data Protection Day which since 2008 occurs on 28th January. In 2011, an additional priority was established -- to improve the cooperation between data protection authorities. No further changes were made to the priorities in this area during the programme period.

Active participation in the democratic life of the Union, i.e., citizenship

The founding Decision mentions, as a specific objective, 'to inform all persons of their rights including those derived from citizenship of the Union, in order to encourage Union citizens to participate actively in the democratic life of the Union'. This is therefore a highly relevant area, and it has been given priority throughout the programme period. For example, as a follow up to Commission concerns with regard to the low turnout in the 2004 European Parliament elections, the 2007 annual work programme made it a priority to promote civic education initiatives in order to increase participatory democracy in 2009 European Parliamentary elections. Particular focus was given to projects targeting to EU citizens that are not nationals of the Member States in which they reside.

Such priority was kept unvaried until 2011, when additional priorities were specified, including 'Address the gender imbalance in participation in the European Parliament elections' (aimed at increasing the participation of women as voters and as candidates), 'Raise awareness and improve knowledge about the EU rules on free movement, in particular Directive 2004/38/EC', and 'Facilitate sharing of knowledge and exchange of best practices on acquisition and loss of citizenship'.

This set of priorities was kept also for the 2012 and 2013 annual work programmes, except that the priority on addressing the gender imbalance in participation in the European Parliament elections was not mentioned in the 2012 work programme, but reappeared as a priority in the 2013 annual work programme. No clear reason for such a shift was identified.

Training on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

Under one of its general objectives, the founding Decision includes improving contacts, exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities', including 'support to judicial training, with the aim of better mutual understanding among such authorities and professionals'. Accordingly, the 2008 annual work programme introduced a priority focussing on training on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, aimed at improving the knowledge and understanding of legal, judicial and administrative authorities and legal professionals on the principles enshrined in the Treaty on European Union and in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. This priority was maintained unchanged until the 2012 annual work programme, in which priority was also given to educating the general public, with a specific focus on projects aimed at directing individuals who believed their fundamental rights had been violated towards the appropriate authorities.

This shift in priorities could be explained by the fact that in 2010 the European Commission adopted a 'Strategy on the effective implementation of the Charter'[7] and it committed to prepare annual reports to better inform citizens on the application of the Charter and to measure progress in its implementation. According to the findings of the 2010 annual report[8] citizens often did not understand when the Charter applies. Such lack of knowledge was also highlighted in April 2012 by the Flash Eurobarometer 340[9].

In 2013 the focus shifted again to training judicial and administrative authorities and legal professionals. Moreover, projects aiming at training national authorities, in particular law enforcement authorities, in the areas of the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and homophobia were strongly supported. The focus of the 2013 priority is consistent with the aim of the overall FRC programme which has prioritised activities aimed at fighting racism, homophobia and intolerance over the years.

The research carried out for this evaluation was not able to clarify why informing the general public about the principles promoted in the Charter was a priority only in 2012. The training of legal professionals and judicial authorities may have been considered more efficient as

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[7] European Commission 'Communication from the Commission – Strategy for the effective implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the European Union', COM(2010) 573 final, 19 October 2010.
[8] European Commission, '2010 Report on the application of the EU charter of Fundamental Rights', available at http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/files/annual_report_2010_en.pdf.
[9] European Commission 'Flash Eurobaromenter 340 – The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union', April 2012.

they are the figures to whom citizens would refer in case of violation of rights. However, a more consistent approach over the years would be advisable.

In conclusion, the priorities of the annual work programmes and AG calls for proposals overall met the objectives of the programme, as defined in the legal base. However, given that promotion of interfaith and intercultural understanding is mentioned as a general objective and that creation of relevant structures to foster an interfaith and multicultural dialogue at EU level is a specific objective, the omission of this as a priority area for projects should be reconsidered.

Relevance of the projects to the main priority areas

From 2007 to 2013, 'relevance' was a main award criterion for selecting grant beneficiaries, particularly for AGs. Its importance for AGs went from 20% in 2007 to 30% in 2013. This increase in the importance of relevance of the AG projects to the call priorities was in line with the recommendations contained in the mid-term evaluation, i.e., to accentuate the impact of the programme through streamlining the annual priorities and giving more value to the relevance of the projects vis-à-vis the priorities and therefore the objectives.

As shown in Table 2.2 below, during the years under consideration (2007-2012, as the 2013 AGs were not included in the scope of this evaluation), the largest number of projects were those funded under the area of the **fight against racism, xenophobia, homophobia, anti-Semitism** etc. (see Section 2.1.1). Within this area, the largest number of projects (63) focussed on the priority addressing the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, with far fewer projects (17) focussing on homophobia. Given that homophobia remains a sensitive issue in the EU, it might be worth reflecting on whether and how to encourage more projects in this area in the future.

Within the same area, and as confirmed by some of the Commission officials interviewed, only a couple of AGs aimed at creating relevant structures in order to foster an interfaith and multicultural dialogue in the EU. For example, the 2008 AG '*Discrimination free schools*' developed an interactive educational package (e.g. video, websites and best practice catalogue) for elementary and secondary school teachers and students in Denmark, Bulgaria and other EU Member states. This package focused on racism, xenophobia and religious intolerance and on the importance of intercultural and interfaith dialogue aimed at cross-community understanding and respect. This trend could, in part, be explained by the fact that some projects had a cross-cutting nature and therefore could still be covering aspects of interfaith and multicultural dialogue in the EU, as part of the wider objective to promote fundamental rights. However, as mentioned above, in order to better implement the objectives of the programme, consideration could be given to prioritise activities addressing multicultural and interfaith dialogue, and in particular to creating relevant structures towards this end.

Table 2.2 Relation between AG projects and main priority areas

	2007	2008	2009-2010	2011-2012
Protection of the rights of the child	1	11	15	8
Active participation in the democratic life of the Union	5	3	6	2
Address the gender imbalance in participation in the European Parliament elections	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Raise awareness and improve knowledge about the EU rules on free movement, in particular Directive 2004/38/EC	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
Facilitate sharing of knowledge and exchange of best practices on acquisition and loss of Union citizenship	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
Total number of EU citizenship projects per year	5	3	6	7
Combating racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism	10	10	25	18

	2007	2008	2009-2010	2011-2012
Fight against homophobia: Enhanced/improved understanding and tolerance	N/A	7	7	3
Training and networking between legal professions and legal practitioners	N/A	2	3	2
Informing on where the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights applies and where to turn to if fundamental rights are violated	N/A	N/A	N/A	6
Total number of EU Charter projects per year	N/A	2	3	8
Data protection and privacy rights	3	4	4	3
Total number of projects per year	19	37	60	47

The second most chosen area over the years was the one focussing on the **right of the child**. The number of projects was rather low in 2007 (only one project carried out), but the numbers of projects increased over the years, for a total of 35 projects (21% of the total) carried out in this area during the programme period.

The third group of projects includes those focussing on EU **citizenship**, a total of 21 projects (13% of the total) over the programme period. Most were in the area of active participation in the democratic life of the Union. The priority areas focussing on the gender imbalance at the EU election and on raising awareness and improving knowledge about the EU rules on free movement were addressed by only two projects for each priority. Such low number might be explained by the fact that such specific priorities were introduced only in 2011. The issue addressed by the latter priority was also rather technical and only few organisations might have had the adequate resources in terms of knowledge and expertise to tackle it.

Next was the priority area of combating racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, where 17 projects (10% of the total) were carried out during the programme period.

In the area of **training on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights,** six projects were carried out under the priority aimed at training the general public on the principle of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, while seven projects focussed on training of legal professionals (8% of the total). This might reflect a perception on the part of organisations that education of the general public would require less specialist knowledge than the training of legal professionals. It is interesting that in 2011-2012, when applicants could choose between two different priorities, one focussing on training of legal professionals and the other focussing on the training of the general public, only projects focussing on the latter priority were selected.

The area of **data protection** and privacy rights was consistently prioritised over the years and there was no major shift in specific priorities. However, the number of projects (14, or 9% of the total) carried out in such area varied between three and four per call, which can be considered a low share especially considering that this is an area where the EU has been particularly active in developing new policies and legislation.

The above analysis looks at the relevance of the projects carried out with AGs to the main priority areas. It is also important to consider whether the OGs awarded were relevant to the priority areas. The main organisations receiving OGs were the European Network of Ombudsmen for Children (ENOC), the Fair Trials Abroad Trust (operating as Fair Trials International) and the Jesuit Refugee Service – Europe. The activities of the ENOC are highly relevant to the priority area of rights of the child, and therefore it is appropriate that it received continuous funding for the first two years of the programme and also between 2011 and 2013. The activities of Fair Trials Abroad, which received continuous funding in the first two years of the programme, are relevant to fundamental rights, including rights derived from citizenship of the Union and training of legal professionals, particularly concerning fundamental rights. The Jesuit Refugee Service – Europe, which received continuous funding between 2008 and 2010, is active on fundamental rights in general.

2.2 Relevance of the priorities and selected actions to the policy initiatives and policy developments

2.2.1 The relevance of the priority areas for policy / legislative development

The priorities established in the context of the FRC Programme and set forth in the calls for proposals were overall consistent with EU policy developments over the programme's duration, and appear to have adequately addressed those policy developments. The process to select the programme's priorities mainly happened within the policy unit according to the policy agenda and practical needs identified in each sector. The entire hierarchical chain was involved and different DGs could be consulted. This process was put in place to make sure that the priorities were consistent with the EU policy development.

For example, from 2010 one focus of the EU policy agenda with regard to citizenship was the promotion of gender balance in participating in the European Parliament elections. The following year, the annual work programme of the FRC made this one of its priorities.

According to the Commission officials interviewed, however, setting policy priorities in advance that could reasonably be implemented within the next two years was a difficult exercise. Policy priorities that required a more long-term approach were challenging to address in the 24-month cycle of a particular call for AG proposals.

Moreover, it is not always clear whether the priority areas selected were the most relevant for contributing to the development of policies and legislation in the future, or whether they were mainly viewed in the context of implementing policy developments already in place or pending. In the case of the policy area **Rights of the child,** the 2011 call for proposals mentioned that projects to support the protection of children involved in judicial proceedings would be given priority – a possible indication of an area where the Commission was considering a future policy development.

2.2.2 The relevance of the selected projects to policy / legislative development

As already discussed, the FRC programme has been closely linked to the main policy developments and legal instruments in the area of fundamental rights of EU citizens since its beginning, and regular efforts have been made to align the FRC with new policy and legislative developments through the setting of priorities in the calls for proposals.

The evidence gathered through the online survey showed that a number of projects aimed at supporting policy or legislative developments through, for example, producing legislation or policy mapping, comparative analysis, policy recommendations, and evaluation of legislation and/or policy. Some examples of relevant funded actions and the specific policies/legislation they were targeting are provided in Box 2 below. Not all actions sought to influence policy; however, those which did (as shown below) were directly supporting EU and national policy/legislative developments and implementation.

> **Box 2 Examples of FRC Programme funded actions aimed at supporting policy making / legislative developments**
>
> - The 2007 OG of the European Network of Ombudsman for Children aimed at drafting recommendations at national and European level for practical improvements in the development and implementation of legislation regarding children's rights.
> - The 2008 AG funded project 'Improving care and welfare for children' *(Améliorer la prise en charge etl'accueil des mineurs)* promoted the harmonisation in the EU Member States of their legislation concerning unaccompanied children.
> - The 2009-2010 AG funded project '*PAW-Privacy at Workplace'* aimed at mapping European and national legislation regarding privacy protection at workplaces. It also compared German and Hungarian legislation in this field assessing the effect of the European legislation on the national provisions.

Implementation of the activities supported by the FRC programme resulted in a wide range of outputs, from support to key actors in the form of training to support and advice services

such as helplines. The largest share of outputs (40% of the 806 outputs identified via the mapping of project documentation) were related to awareness-raising activities, and included books and promotional campaigns (116), press conferences/releases (47) and campaigns (18). Reports formed the next largest share of outputs (31%), while activities focussing on mutual learning produced 15% of the outputs including workshops and focus groups (64) and the establishment of new networks (25).

A number of these projects resulted in outputs specifically targeting policy makers. For example, many projects produced reports that were aimed at decision makers, and these reports often included more than one 'type' of output. For example, a report could include an evaluation of legislation/policy and then make policy recommendations. Other outputs may also have included a policy component, for example events and press conferences.

The use of public procurement also enabled the FRC programme to respond to the policy developments identified above. For example, a 2001 public procurement contract with an international market research firm was used to gather opinions concerning the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. The results were published in April 2012 on the Flash Eurobarometer 340. This came one year after the Commission (2011) annual report on the Application of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the Council Conclusions on the Commission Report (2011). Public procurement was also used to organise in 2014 a conference on the assessment of the training needs of public officials and legal practitioners on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Similarly, a 2009 contract was used to carry out a qualitative study on the rights of the child. The results were published in October 2010 on the Eurobarometer. That same year the Commission published its Consultation (2010)121 on the Communication on the Rights of the Child (2011-2014) and its Communication (2010) Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors (2010-2014).

2.3 Extent to which the priorities and selected actions meet the needs of the target group

2.3.1 Extent to which needs assessments were undertaken

A needs assessment is a systematic process for determining and addressing needs, or "gaps" between the current status quo and a desired state. The majority (77%) of survey respondents indicated that the project/activities were designed on the basis of needs assessments, and this was also confirmed by the interviewees, with 10 out of 17 stakeholders indicating that their organisation had identified the needs of their target audiences through in-depth research. However, the robustness of the methods used to assess the needs varied, with some interviewees (four out of 17) basing such assessments on their in-house knowledge and/or that of their partners and others (six out of 17) using a more elaborate methodology. This could include undertaking in-depth research, such as a review of national, European and international literature, and then validating their findings through consultation with national and international experts. Some also tested their assumptions by consulting the target national and international audiences through interviews and surveys. For example, one of the beneficiaries indicated that they consulted legal experts with specific knowledge in the field of research (i.e. interaction between social and judicial investigations) in order to have a clear understanding of the issue and of the methodology to adopt in carrying out the project.

The robustness of the method used for the needs assessments could not be assessed by this evaluation as the needs assessments carried out were not part of the project documentation. Moreover, needs assessments are not a mandatory requirement for the grant beneficiaries that are therefore not obliged to carry them out.

As priorities are set according to the needs on the ground, in absence of needs assessments it is challenging to assess whether certain priorities should be dismissed or what issue future priorities should focus on. For example, such an assessment might be important for considering whether there is a need for projects focussing on interfaith and multicultural dialogue, given that recent events suggest the importance of such efforts in the EU.

2.3.2 Extent to which the grant beneficiaries and the target groups found the programme relevant to their needs

The FRC was a popular programme with large numbers of applications received. The total number of applications in fact varied from a minimum of 66 in 2007 to a maximum of 257 in 2011-2012 for AGs. For OGs the lower number of application was 11 in 2007 and the higher number of applications was 52 in 2010.

The majority of respondents to our online survey had received more than one grant under the FRC programme, and they considered the priorities identified by the Commission in the calls as relevant to both the specific needs of the target group (80%) and to the needs of their home country (86%).

The overall conclusion that the programme and its priorities were relevant to grant beneficiaries was confirmed during the stakeholder interviews. The majority of the people interviewed (10 out of 17 interviews) were satisfied with the priorities as set in the calls for proposals, whilst only two out of 17 interviewees were not satisfied with the calls. One stated that it was not clear from the calls whether certain specific types of activities (e.g. development of media content) were covered or not, which made it difficult for them to assess whether the programme was fully relevant to their organisation, partnership and planned project activities. However, this only represents individual views and is not representative of the general level of satisfaction of the grant beneficiaries.

All interviewees except one reported that their projects had been well-received by their target groups, but they were not able to provide further information on which aspects of the programme had been more or less relevant. However, as no research was conducted among end beneficiaries, it is not possible to confirm such statements.

3 Coherence and complementarity

3.1 Complementarity with other EU programmes and synergies

3.1.1 Complementarity with respect to objectives and thematic areas

The analysis has found complementarity as well as some overlap in terms of main objectives and thematic areas between the FRC and the DAP, ISEC[10], EBF[11], ERF[12], EIF[13], JPEN[14], FP7[15] and PROGRESS[16] programmes. The objectives and thematic areas have been selected through the analysis of the information gathered from the specific programmes' website and the founding decisions of each specific programme.

The FRC focus on the protection of fundamental rights in general includes protection of the **rights of children**. The DAP includes children among the vulnerable groups it aims to protect against violence[17]. ISEC also refers to the protection of children among its general objectives, and in particular to protect children from becoming victims of crime. In their focus on refugees and displaced persons, the ERF and the EIF also include the protection of children among their aims, albeit those children who are among their target groups.

The objectives of **combating racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism** and **homophobia,** which are part of the FRC's remit on protection of fundamental rights in general, are shared inter alia by the PROGRESS and FP7 programmes. PROGRESS, which aims inter alia at the protection of persons from discrimination, has a narrower focus in that it is focused on helping to achieve the economic and social objectives set out in the Europe 2020 Strategy. DAP's focus on ensuring protection from violence against certain vulnerable groups also has complementarities with this area.

The most scope for complementarity as well as potential for overlap was identified with respect to the objective of **training and networking between legal professions and legal practitioners.** The FRC programme's objective in this area is very broad, i.e. *to improve the contacts, exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities and the legal professions, including by way of support to judicial training, with the aim of better mutual understanding*, though focussed on training related to fundamental rights in general. The scope for complementarity as well as overlap is largest with DG Justice's JPEN and JCIV programmes. JPEN, JCIV and the FRC programmes aim at improving the training of the members of national judiciaries. JPEN funds, however, can be allocated only to activities in the area of criminal justice, while JCIV funds, can be allocated

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[10] Council Decision 2007/125/JHA establishing for the period 2007 to2013, as part of the General Programme on Security and Safeguarding Liberties, the Specific Programme 'Prevention of and Fight against Crime', OJ L 58/7, 24.2.2007, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:058:0007:0012:EN:PDF.

[11] Decision No 574/2007/EC establishing the External Borders Fund for the period 2007 to 2013 as part of the General programme Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows, OJ L 144, 6.6.2007, p. 22–44, available at:http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:144:0022:0044:EN:PDF.

[12] Decision No 573/2007/EC establishing the European Refugee Fund for the period 2008 to 2013 as part of the General Programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows' and repealing Council Decision 2004/904/EC, OJ L 144/1, 6.6.2007, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:144:0001:0021:EN:PDF.

[13] Council Decision 2007/435/EC establishing the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals for the period 2007 to 2013 as part of the General programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows', OJ L 168/18, 28.6.2007, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:168:0018:0036:EN:PDF.

[14] Council Decision 2007/126/JHA establishing for the period 2007 to 2013, as part of the General Programme on Fundamental Rights and Justice, the Specific Programme 'Criminal Justice', OJ L 58, 24.2.2007, p. 13–18, available at:http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:058:0013:0018:en:PDF.

[15] Decision No 1982/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013), OJ L 412, 30.12.2006, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32006D1982.

[16] Decision No 1672/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity-Progress, OJ L 315, 15.11.2006, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:02006D1672-20100408.

[17] European Commission website, Daphne III Funding programme, available at: http://ec.europa.eu/justice/grants/programmes/daphne/index_en.htm and Decision No 779/2007/EC establishing for the period 2007-2013 a specific programme to prevent and combat violence against children, young people and women and to protect victims and groups at risk (Daphne III programme) as part of the General Programme 'Fundamental Rights and Justice', OJ L 173, 3.7.2007, p. 19–26, available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32007D0779&from=en.

only to activities in the area of civil justice. Therefore JPEN and JCIV are more focussed than FRC[18].

Several other EU funding programmes are active in training of legal professionals, including the DG HOME EBF[19] and ERF programmes. However, training under the EBF targets specific groups of legal practitioners, namely those who deal with exploitation or false or forged travel documents[20]. Similarly, the ERF also targets a special group, namely staff members of local authorities interacting with those being received in the host country[21], thus the scope for overlap is minimal.

In conclusion, the most scope for complementarity was identified with respect to the JPEN and PROGRESS programmes. Potential complementarities were also identified with the DAP and ISEC programmes. The analysis identified no overlap with CIPS[22] (Terrorism & other Security-related Risks), RF[23] (European Return Fund) and DPIP[24] (Drug Prevention and Information Programme).

3.1.2 Complementarity with regard to the management of the programme

The FRC covered only projects that were transnational in nature; national-level activities were covered only in so far that they were part of a larger transnational action. The FRC was implemented by direct management, along with the other funding programmes in place to support the EU policies of justice, rights and equality during the 2007-2013 financial perspective. Under so-called direct management, all programming and operational work is carried out by the European Commission (EC), which retains full responsibility. Every year, each programme adopts its annual work programme, setting funding priorities. Direct management was also the form for implementing the ISEC and CIPS programmes.

On the other hand, all Asylum, Migration and Integration Funds[25] and the EBF were implemented by shared management. This means that each EU State implements the Funds through national annual programmes on the basis of multiannual programming. Shared management has a broader risk of overlap with other EU-funded programmes in that each Member State implements the Funds through multiannual national programming.
Direct management potentially ensured complementarity between different programmes and avoided overlaps, through the Commission's internal consultation within a Directorate General and between different Directorates General. As the programmes were managed by different Directorate Generals, the potential risk of overlap cannot be entirely excluded. However, direct management has also provided other ways for the Commission to enhance complementarities and avoid overlaps, by setting funding priorities in the calls for proposals and by using public procurement where gaps were identified.

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[18] Council Decision 2007/126/JHA establishing for the period 2007 to 2013, as part of the General Programme on Fundamental Rights and Justice, the Specific Programme 'Criminal Justice', OJ L 58, 24.2.2007, p. 13–18, available at:http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:058:0013:0018:en:PDF.

[19]Decision No 574/2007/EC establishing the External Borders Fund for the period 2007 to 2013 as part of the General programme Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows, OJ L 144, 6.6.2007, p. 22–44, available at:http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:144:0022:0044:EN:PDF.

[20]Decision No 574/2007/EC establishing the External Borders Fund for the period 2007 to 2013 as part of the General programme Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows, OJ L 144, 6.6.2007, p. 22–44, available at:http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:144:0022:0044:EN:PDF.

[21]Decision No 573/2007/EC establishing the European Refugee Fund for the period 2008 to 2013 as part of the General programme Solidarity and management of Migration Flows and repealing Council Decision 2004/904/EC OJ L 144, 6.6.2007, p. 1–21, available at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32007D0573&qid=1417688047041&from=EN.

[22] Council Decision 2007/124/EC of 12 February 2007 establishing for the period 2007 to 2013, as part of the General Programme ''Security and Safeguarding Liberties'', the Specific Programme ''Prevention, Preparedness and Consequence Management of Terrorism and other Security related risks'', OJ L 58, 24.2.2007, available at http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/justice_freedom_security/fight_against_terrorism/l33262_en.htm.

[23] Decision No 575/2007/EC of 23 May 2007 establishing the European Return Fund for the period 2008 to 2013 as part of the General Programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows', OJ L 144/45, 6.6.2007, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:144:0045:0065:EN:PDF.

[24] Decision No 1150/2007/EC of 25 September 2007 establishing for the period 2007-2013 the Specific Programme 'Drug prevention and information' as part of the General Programme 'Fundamental Rights and Justice', OJ L 257/23, 3.10.2007, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:257:0023:0029:EN:PDF.

[25]European Return Fund (RF), European Refugee Fund (ERF) and European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals (EIF).

3.1.3   Complementarity with regard to end beneficiaries

The FRC programme is targeted at EU citizens, citizens of participating countries or third country nationals legally residing within the European Union territory and civil society associations, among other groups active in promoting the objectives of the programme (Article 6 of the Founding Decision).

Several of these target groups are also addressed by other EU funding programmes. However, in practice the target groups only partially overlap. For example, whereas the founding decisions of the FRC, JCIV and JPEN programmes mention the broad category of European citizens, the DAP Founding Decision mentions the specific target groups of 'children, young people and women who are, or risk becoming, victims of violence'.

The target group '**Third Country Nationals legally residing within the European Union territory'** is also addressed by the four funds under the Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows programme, i.e., EBF, RF, ERF and EIF. However, these are quite specific in their objectives as well as their target beneficiaries, so potential for overlap is minimal.

'**Civil society associations',** including non-governmental organisations, trade unions and religious communities, are one of the main targets of the FRC programme, There appears to be a large scope for complementarity with the DAP, JPEN and PROGRESS programmes with respect to this target group, with less scope for complementarity with the ISEC and DPIP programmes.

Finally, the category '**Other groups active in promoting the objectives of the programme'** is very broad, including law enforcement agencies or judicial authorities. Since this category is also targeted by six of the funding programmes examined, i.e., DAP, JCIV, and JPEN from DG JUST, ISEC and DPIP within the programme 'Security and Safeguarding Liberties', and the EBF, this target audience appears to offer the most scope for complementarity as well as the highest potential for duplication of effort. The priority given in the various calls for AG proposals from 2008 on to projects aimed at training of legal, judicial and administrative authorities on the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and homophobia, as well as on the area of fundamental rights is in line with the FRC programme's objectives. However, given the focus on judicial training in the JPEN and JCIV programmes, there may be ways of achieving synergies, by integrating fundamental rights training in other training programmes funded by DG JUST.

3.2   Complementarity at the level of calls for proposals

The process of developing annual priorities within the FRC annual work programme is one mechanism for ensuring coherence between the FRC and other EU programmes and policies. These programmes, and in particular the annual priorities, are developed with the support of various actors, within and beyond the European Commission. In this respect the programme reflects a range of policy priorities in the development of the annual priorities.

A review of the priorities set for the key thematic areas identified the following instances where priorities were set with a view towards achieving coherence and complementarity and avoiding overlap:

- Protection of the rights of the child: The 2008 and 2009-2010 calls for AG proposals mentioned support for projects on children who are victims of crimes, which is complementary to the DAP programme.
- Combatting racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and homophobia: The 2008 and 2009-2010 calls for AG proposals similarly mentioned support for actions aimed at fighting stereotypes whose persistence or diffusion are at the roots of inter alia violent incidents, which is partly complementary to the DAP.
- Under the priority 'Fight against Homophobia', the 2008 call excluded actions that duplicate activities in the framework of non-discrimination in the area of employment. The 2009-2010 call had a similar exclusion. These are both aimed at avoiding overlap with PROGRESS.
- Citizenship and active participation in the democratic life of the Union: The priorities set in the various calls for proposals range from awareness raising about participation in EU

elections by EU citizens resident in another Member State to exchange of best practices concerning acquisition and loss of EU citizenship. Across the various calls for proposals this priority area does not appear to afford many opportunities for complementarity.

■ Training on the EU Charter and networking between legal professions and legal practitioners: The 2011-2012 call excluded projects aimed mainly at the creation of new websites, in order to avoid overlap with projects already being carried out, presumably contracted via public procurement. The 2013 call specifically prioritises projects to encourage authorities handling complaints on fundamental rights to establish admissibility check lists, and requests project proposals to state their complementarity and added value with work carried out by the FRA.
Data protection and privacy rights: Under this priority area, the 2011-2012 call mentions inter alia a focus on 'reinforcing children's privacy in the on-line environment', which forms an internal complementarity with the priority area 'protection of the rights of the child'.

3.3 Complementarity at project level

The previous section, which discusses the scope for complementarity between the FRC programme and other EU funding programmes, finds little evidence of overlaps. Indeed, the mid-term evaluation of the FRC did not mention any potential overlaps between FRC and other EU funding programmes.

The current evaluation found such scope for complementarity in a number of projects implemented under the FRC programme. For example:

■ The project called '*Children Deprived of Liberty in Central and Eastern Europe: Between Legacy and Reform*'[26] led by the Bulgarian NGO, Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, focused *inter alia* on the following objectives: assessing the compliance of conditions for the placement of children in institutions depriving them from liberty with international standards on liberty and security of children; facilitating reforms and exchange of best practices; increasing awareness; helping to integrate children's rights, particularly in the area of deprivation of liberty, in the EU's fundamental rights policy and provide reliable data for evidence-based policies. Depriving children of liberty through institutionalisation is arguably a form of violence, and it is possible that this project could also have been funded by the DAP programme. However, as noted above, the fact that this project is funded through the FRC programme puts the focus on the importance of ensuring the protection of all children as a fundamental right, and therefore is coherent with the FRC's overall objectives as well as priorities.

■ The operating grant[27] awarded in 2007 to the European Network of Ombudsmen for Children supported the collection of quality information on *inter alia* the extent to which children can exercise their rights. The information gathered by the ENOC might be useful also in the effort to protect children from violence, and therefore the activities funded through the FRC OG have scope for complementarity with DAP.

■ The 2011-2012 project called '*Combatting Human Rights Violations Associated with Islamophobia*', led by the Islamophobia Monitoring and Action Network (IMAN) of the FEMYSO, aimed *inter alia* at the creation of a single reference point, in the form of a website, for victims, professionals and NGOs, on redress for Islamophobic incidents. This element of the initiative seems to be complementary to one of the JPEN objectives, that of providing support to victims of crime.[28].

■ The project led by the Centre for the Study of Democracy called '*Assisting and reintegrating children victims of trafficking: promotion and evaluation of best practices in source and destination countries (ARECHIVIC)*' had the objective of facilitating the reintegration of child victims of human trafficking into society. Other financial programmes, such as DAP and JPEN also target the situation of victims of human trafficking. However, whereas FRC targets victims and other stakeholders, JPEN

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[26] Mapping document prepared for the purpose of this study.
[27] Reference to the exact title of the project is not provided in the mapping document.
[28] Mapping document prepared for the purpose of this study.

focuses on those working for national judiciaries. While DAP also aims at protection of child victims of human trafficking offences, the specific activity of reintegration fits better within the broad umbrella of the FRC Programme.

While these projects are on the one hand complementary to the objectives and beneficiaries targeted by other EU funding programmes, the much narrower focus of these other programmes means they may not have been the appropriate mechanism for providing project funds. One quite positive aspect of the FRC programme is therefore that its overall reach enables the financing of projects that may not fit into the narrower focus of other EU funding programmes.

3.4   Synergies created between projects

The interviews with the Commission's programme officers, together with the online survey and the review of relevant documentation provided by the Commission were the main sources of information on the synergies created at EU level.

The online survey revealed that various synergies had been established with other projects funded by other EU and national programmes.

Out of 29 respondents, 14 mentioned that they had established synergies with other FRC projects. Moreover, 21 reported that they had established synergies with projects funded by other EU programmes and 23 reported that synergies had been created with other national/regional programmes with similar objectives. Seven survey respondents stated that synergies with projects funded by other programmes of international donors were created[29].

Examples of the types of synergies established provided by respondents to the online survey included the following:

■ The leader of the project 'Assisting and reintegrating children victims of trafficking: promotion and evaluation of best practices in source and destination countries (ARECHIVIC)' noted that the project was able to link closely with projects funded under other EU programmes and with projects financed by international donors (e.g. GRETA project of the Council of Europe[30]). The project also established synergies with projects of other Member States, in particular with activities of the Slovak National Commission. This was considered beneficial in establishing additional mechanisms for cross-border cooperation in this area. The leader of the same project also referred to synergies with projects financed through the ISEC programme and through the Norway Fund.

■ The leader of the project 'ICUD (Internet: Creatively Unveiling Discrimination)' noted that during the implementation phase of the project they closely cooperated with leaders of other projects with similar objectives financed by FRC and DAPHNE III. The project leaders exchanged experience and information on the outcome of the projects, which enabled the project teams to learn from each other and to become more effective in combating this form of discrimination. The leader noted that members of the management team presented the project and its deliverables at conferences/seminars/ meetings organised under other projects, and thereby were able to disseminate their methodology and findings to a broader audience.

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[29] There is a slight methodological issue with this data: not all respondents had the option of replying "no" or "I don't know", because these two categories where only added after the survey was already running. A total of seventeen of the respondents considered in this report did not have this option and therefore of the 33 not providing a response to this question, 17 may have replied "no" or "I do not know" had they been given the option.
[30] Council of Europe project 'Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings' (GRETA), available at: http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/trafficking/docs/monitoring/GRETA_en.asp.

4 Effectiveness

4.1 Extent to which the results of the projects sufficiently address the programme objectives

4.1.1 The priority area relating to children's' rights

As mentioned in Section 2.1, the aim of the Commission in setting this priority area was to better promote and respect children's rights as they are listed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child through activities such as awareness raising campaigns and analysis of specific needs of the children. The majority of the outputs produced under this priority area (102 out of 143) related to awareness raising and analytical activities and were consistent with the aim of the priority (e.g. events, books or other published material and studies or guidelines on the promotion of children's rights). For example, one project entitled '*Children's voices: exploring interethnic violence and children's rights in the school environment*' produced state of the art reports which gave an insight in a general context on ethnicity issues and interethnic violence in 5 European Member States. Also the quantitative research surveys and the qualitative research field surveys provided information and an insight into the topic of interethnic violence in the school environment, forms of violence and the extent of the phenomenon. The project '*Right to Justice: Quality Legal Assistance for Unaccompanied Children*' produced an in-depth research report on legal assistance to unaccompanied minors on a subject that was not researched before. A guiding principles tool was also developed.

In the period under consideration 18 projects were finalised under this area, with seven of them showing some evidence of useful outcomes. The box below provides an example.

> **Box 4.1 Example of positive outcomes in the area of children's rights**
>
> The 2009/2010 AG project entitled '*Protecting the right of child-victims of crimes to psychological assistance and child-friendly interviewing procedures*' aimed at enhancing professional knowledge of specialists working in the area of diagnosis and intervention. According to the Final Report, the specific knowledge and practical professional skills of participants to the training in four Member States (Poland, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania) appear to have been strengthened. As a result the quality of the assistance to their clients (children and families) increased. The project created 58 networks of organisations in the participating Member States. The specific training courses organised were followed by 107 professionals and the national conferences focussing on more generic aspects of the issue were attended by 2,037 participants. The social campaign "Bad touch" had significant media coverage and reached general public via different channels (including 5,000 campaign leaflet, 6,000 booklets and 5,000 brochures). The Final Report concludes that the campaign message was well absorbed and 'it can be assumed that at least a part of society changed its opinion about the phenomenon of child sexual abuse, which is often a hidden problem'.
>
> The 2009/2010 AG project entitled '*Minor Rights - Access to justice for children at risk of social exclusion*' aimed at enhancing the knowledge of legal practitioners of children's rights to access to judicial protection in five Member States: Italy, Greece, Spain, UK and Sweden. The activities focussed on exchanging information and good practices through local workshops, where legal practitioners could study innovative models of interventions regarding legal assistance to children at risk of social exclusion. According to the Final Report, legal practitioners benefited from the project activities by enhancing their knowledge on children's rights to access to judicial protection. Children (children at risk of social exclusion) benefitted from such activities by having the opportunity to rely on a network of practitioners that could assist them also in complex proceedings such as migration proceedings.

While the activities implemented by the project appear to have been effective in addressing this priority area, in terms of the outcomes achieved, the assessment is based on the information provided by the grant beneficiary via self-reporting. Unless information is gathered from target groups, a robust assessment of the outcomes of awareness raising activities focusing on changing public perceptions of certain issues is not possible.

4.1.2   The priority area relating to racism, homophobia and anti-Semitism

The priorities focusing on racism, homophobia and anti-Semitism were set with the aim to promote projects fighting stereotypes, discrimination and violence as well as through initiatives fostering mutual understanding and developing cross-community approaches.

A number of AGs developed reports, training, and educational materials related to the fight against racism, homophobia and anti-Semitism. An example of this type of project was the 2009-2010 AG project of the German Autonomia Foundation entitled *"One Europe! Transnational Network of Citizens Actions promoting Intercultural Understanding and Mutual Respect",* which carried out activities in over 20 localities in the participating countries (Denmark, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Germany) aimed at bringing a message of tolerance to local youth and their sports teams. Also, the projects entitled '*Football for Equality- Challenging racist and homophobic stereotypes in and through football'* and '*Football for Equality- Tackling Homophobia and Racism with a Focus on Central and Eastern Europe'* produced outputs raising awareness on the issue of homophobia in football. These included "love football-hate sexism" stickers, jerseys with a logo saying "football for equality", an anti-racism event in Prague, three information events in Hamburg, a comedy by the No Mantinels group dealing with homophobia in football, an annual tournament against racism and intolerance, an anti-homophobia conference at Eurogames, Budapest and awareness raising action days at Fans' Embassies at EURO.

In the period under consideration 39 projects carried out under this area were finalised. Six projects on racism, xenophobia and anti- Semitism and two projects on homophobia showed some evidence of useful outcomes. Examples are provided in the box below.

Box 4.2 Examples of positive outcomes in the area relating to racism, homophobia and anti-Semitism

The 2009/2010 AG project entitled *'I am Roma: Changing Mindsets'* aimed at increasing awareness amongst local actors engaged in antidiscrimination work and youth on the issues faced by Roma people through the organisation of workshops on and study visits in Roma communities. As a result of the activities carried out, the relation between Roma youth and local youth reportedly improved. According to the Final Report, local youth also gained a better understanding of Roma culture.
The 2009/2010 AG project entitled 'It takes all kinds - fighting homophobia in schools (ITAK)' aimed at increasing awareness on homophobia and transphobia in school through the creation of specific websites for schools and the publication and distribution of guidelines in schools. The Final Report states that middle and high school students increased their awareness on LGBT discrimination and negative stereotyping and that students seemed also to have modified their attitude with regard to LGBT persons. The perception of the grant beneficiary is that the project contributed to reduce homophobic and transphobic bullying in the schools were it took place.

The number of AG projects (80) carried out in the area of fight against racism, homophobia and anti-Semitism is high (see Section 2.1.2) compared to the other priority areas. Given the large number of projects, it is reasonable to assume that the activities carried out contributed to some extent to address some of the issues prioritised, such as racism and xenophobia. However, the smaller number of projects covering the fight against homophobia (17) as well as the lack of data on outcomes of the activities makes it difficult to assess the overall effectiveness in addressing the priority area as a whole.

The mapping of final reports and the interviews with grant beneficiaries also revealed only a few projects focussing on interfaith and multicultural dialogue. As already mentioned, this was confirmed by some Commission officials interviewed, who mentioned that while some projects had a cross-cutting nature, in general interfaith and multicultural dialogue was not given sufficient priority at the stage of the priority setting (see Section 2.1.1) and in selecting the projects. Their recommendation for the next programme was to prioritise projects focussing on this issue.

4.1.3   The priority area relating to data protection

The initial aim of the Commission in setting this priority area was to promote activities informing the public about data protection issues. Over the years the priority area focussed on reinforcing children's privacy and on the risks to privacy posed by electronic means as well as on improving the cooperation between data protection authorities. According to the quantitative analysis of the 169 actions carried out under the FRC programme, the activities implemented by the projects under this area were mainly awareness raising activities (e.g. published material, promotional material and events) and research activities such as data collection and surveys. Other outputs related to mutual learning activities, such as studyvisits and workshops. The project entitled '*Données personelles des droits? Sensibiliser et informer les jeunes citoyens européens*' produced a good quality output, a comic in 4 languages, in order to disseminate information to young people about their rights to privacy and data protection online. The outcomes of the project are also considered valuable (see Box 4.3 below). Also, the project entitled '*Children Protecting Personal Data and Privacy*' created ''Sheeplive'' cartoons, an online pedagogical tool for primary school teachers to educate children on their data protection and privacy rights. These are nationally recognised in Slovakia as the best known cartoons, have been translated into all EU languages and have been disseminated to Russia and China.

Out of the 14 projects implemented in this area, seven reports were finalised. Whilst it was difficult to find a representative example of a useful outcome, the box below provides some evidence of effectiveness on this priority issue.

> **Box 4.3 Example of positive outcomes in the area of data protection**
>
> The project *"Données personnelles des droits? Sensibiliser et informer les jeunes citoyens européens*" led by the Ligue des droits de l'Homme (LDH) addressed the threats to the personal data of EU citizens due to the conservation of data gathered via public records or social networks without the knowledge of users in combination with the use of new identification technology. The project published a comic book entitled "Sous surveillance" with the aim of educating and informing young adults about the issue of personal data protection in the use of information technology and communication. The comic book was published in four different languages (French, English, Czech, Catalan) and 80,000 copies distributed. This tool has seemed to have been very successful as young people have given their feedback that they have become more aware of their rights.

4.1.4   The priority area relating to citizenship

The priority area relating to citizenship includes a set of priorities focussing on participation to the democratic life of the Union by all citizens, including EU citizens that are not nationals of the Member States in which they reside. Over the years more specific priorities were added, e.g. one addressing gender imbalance in EU Parliament elections. It is a priority area characterised by a focus on very specific and sometimes technical issues (e.g. awareness of the rules set forth in Directive 2004/38/EC on free movement of citizens) that might require a specific and rather technical knowledge. This factor might explain the rather low number of projects carried out (21) and the consequent low evidence of outcomes.

The activities carried out in this priority area were mostly based on awareness raising, information and dissemination. For example, the project entitled '*Citizens IT Consular Assistance Regulation in Europe'* produced good quality outputs including a comparative study on the consular protection laws and practices in the Member States and a database containing relevant national, European and international legal material.

Ten projects falling under this priority area were finalised and of these, five showed some evidence of outcomes, including the project described in the box below. In general, however, the data on outcomes collected through the final reports and through the interviews with grant beneficiaries was not sufficient to provide a general assessment of the level of effectiveness of these activities in addressing this priority area.

> **Box 4.4 Example of positive outcomes in the area relating to citizenship**

The 2009/2010 AG project entitled '*Access to rights and civil dialogue for all'* aimed at increasing awareness and improving knowledge on electoral rights and citizenship among migrants. The project reached the targeted communities through the use of communities' networks. In Belgium, the project had direct impact on Polish participation to local elections by gathering Polish candidates in public events and by promoting the registration of Polish immigrants in electoral lists. According to the Final Report, the project could also have had an impact on other migrant groups as the information it disseminated concerned more than just the targeted communities. It concluded, however, that the real impact of the project's activities on the participation of the targeted foreign citizens' communities to local and European political life was hardly measurable.

4.1.5 The priority area relating to training on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

Over the years, the aim of this priority area was to improve the knowledge and understanding of legal, judicial and administrative authorities and legal professionals as well as the general public on the principles enshrined in the Treaty on European Union and in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Project activities in this area were primarily based on training and on mutual learning, exchanges of good practice and cooperation, aimed at achieving better mutual understanding among authorities and professionals.

Only two projects carried out under this area were finalised and both projects showed some evidence of outcome, as per the box below.

Box 4.5 Examples of positive outcomes in the area relating to training on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

The 2009/2010 AG project entitled *'Fundamental Rights Education in Europe-F.R.E.E.'* developed fundamental rights curricula for the three criminal justice branches targeted by the project (the police, the judiciary, and the penitentiary branch) and then carried out training of police, penitentiary and judicial personnel (for a total of 154 participants) in four different Member States. The final conference led to the creation of a diverse network of professionals and organisations sharing the goal of respecting fundamental rights in Europe. The Final Report stated that the outcomes of the project could not be assessed as they would be evident only at a later stage. However, the project partners were discussing the possibility of a follow up process in order to estimate the extent to which the goals of the projects were achieved and the target groups benefited from the activities performed.

The rather low number of finalised projects and of evidence of outcomes makes it challenging to assess the overall effectiveness of the implemented activities in addressing the priorities set within this area. Moreover it is difficult to assess the outcomes of training activities without a systematic evaluation of the knowledge and skills gathered by the target group. The setting up of a systematic evaluation procedure (e.g. questionnaire, exams, follow up interviews) to be performed some times after the training would be advisable in order to assess the effectiveness of the activities performed. As per the box above, some grant beneficiaries would support this approach in assessing the project outcomes.

4.1.6 The operating grants

Operating grants are intended to co-finance the operating expenses that enable a body to be independent and to implement the activities envisaged in its work programme. The activities should contribute to the development and implementation of one or several objectives of the FRC programme (OGs do not relate to priorities).

The analysis of the project documentation showed that most of the OGs were provided to organisations that aimed to promote fundamental rights in general and to encourage active participation in democratic life of the EU.

Out of 34 OGs, 29 were finalised between 2007 and 2013. The activities carried out mainly related to awareness raising, advocacy and lobbying to national or EU institutions. For example, the 2010 OG provided to Transparency International enabled it to carry out activities aimed at achieving the objective of creating lasting structural change at EU level to comply with anti-corruption rules. Activities included advocating for the creation of a new EU

anti-corruption policy, a new code of conduct for the European Parliament, and EU policies promoting a reform of the financial services sector.

The 2010 OG to the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children supported its activities aimed at promoting and safeguarding children's rights and contributed to the development and implementation of European policies promoting children rights.

As in the case of AGs, it is challenging to assess the effectiveness of this type of funding tool in achieving the programme objectives, because of a lack of information about outcomes and impacts. It should be noted that the OGs reporting methodology is different from that used for AGs. Although for both funding tools the drafting of final reports is foreseen, the final report templates are different for the two instruments. Whilst the AG final report template has a section specifically requiring the description of outcomes, the final report template for OGs does not have an equivalent section on outcomes.

4.1.7   The public procurement projects

Under the public procurement component of the FRC programme, 111 contracts were awarded. The information provided for the evaluation includes the total amount of the contract, the name of the lead contractor and whether the contract was for carrying out studies, events or IT related tasks. From the information gathered, it can be seen that in 2010 there were nine public procurement contracts carried out under the area of the rights of the child, four public procurement contracts carried out under the area of citizenship and three public procurement contracts carried out under the area of data protection. Moreover, additional information could not be gathered from the Commission. The observations below should therefore be viewed with some caution in that they are based on limited information.

From a close scan of the project titles, it appears that nine of the contracts were awarded for the purpose of carrying out public opinion research such, as the Eurobarometer qualitative study on the European citizenship and cross-border mobility of August 2010, the Eurobarometer qualitative study on the Rights of the child of October 2010 and the Flesh Eurobarometer 340 on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union of April 2012.

In addition, two contracts were awarded to carry out studies in the field of citizenship, e.g. a 2007 conformity study of Member States' national implementation measures transposing Community instruments in the area of citizenship of the Union and a 2012 study on practical implementation of the legal framework of all Member States concerning formalities and procedures related to the issuance of residence documents under Directive 2004/38/EC. At least one study was carried in the field of data protection. Among the contracts aimed at performing IT related tasks, four were awarded in the field of citizenship with the aim to update the consular protection website.

These contracts all appear to have been finalised, and it can be assumed that their outcomes contributed to the achievement of the programme objective. In a few cases there is evidence of outcomes, e.g., where weblinks are provided to final reports or websites (10% of the total public procurement projects were provided as a sample to be reviewed, as specified in the terms of reference of this assignment). However, the general lack of information on what happened with the funding provided for these contracts makes it difficult to assess the overall effectiveness of this funding tool in achieving the programme objective.

4.2   The contributions of the projects to the implementation and development of EU and national policies and legislation

4.2.1   The action grants

A number of actions funded under the FRC programme contributed to the development of legislation and policy. Some projects were specifically aimed at reaching policy makers at national and EU level, by different methods, for example, by organising meetings to involve policy makers, by inviting them to workshops and/or other dissemination events or inviting them to briefings/conferences, and – according to project partners – policymakers were

reached. Indeed, a large majority of survey respondents (60 out of 65) reported that policy makers responded to the information provided by the project/activities. Out of these, 60% reported that policy makers had shown some interest in the project while in 32% of the cases they had shown a lot of interest.

Positive responses by policy makers took a range of forms. Survey respondents reported unanimously that policy makers had participated in project-related events. Other involvement of policy makers included distribution of communication materials (reported by 59% of respondents) and providing additional funding to support continuation of (some) of the projects' activities (reported by 30% of respondents). A smaller but nonetheless significant proportion of respondents (18%) noted that their projects' outputs and results had led to policy makers shaping new policy developments or to adjustments in existing policies. In these cases the projects could certainly be considered as having made an effective contribution to development of legislation and policy.

It is also noteworthy that 51% (out of 70) of respondents reported that they had received positive attention from policy makers which had been additional to their expectations. This additional attention indicates that certain projects had an impact greater than originally foreseen, such that they could be considered effective.

Whilst these survey responses point to a positive reception by policy makers of the outputs of the projects, it is important to keep in mind that the number of the respondents to the survey is less than half of the number of the projects funded. Moreover, data on the extent of the impact of the projects gathered through the final reports are limited. Whilst a definitive assessment of the extent to which national or European policy makers were duly informed about the outputs of the projects and whether these were taken into account in the policy and legislation making processes is not possible, the box below gives examples of projects that made contributions to the implementation and development of policy and legislation.

> **Box 4.6 Examples of projects contributing to development and implementation of policy and legislation**
>
> In the priority area relating to childrens' rights, the 2009/2010 project carried out in France entitled 'Improving the implementation of the right of asylum for foreign isolated minors in the European Union' aimed at providing support to the relevant European Union bodies on identifying new normative requirements in the area of asylum with regard to unaccompanied minors, thereby contributing to the development of European policies on the rights of the child. The analysis of the project documentation and the follow up interviews however do not provide further information on whether the outcomes of the project were in fact taken into account in the development of policies or children's rights.
>
> With respect to racism, homophobia, and anti-Semitism, the 2008 AG project carried out in Italy entitled 'Citizens in Diversity - A four-nation study on homophobia and fundamental rights' focussed on the need to fight homophobia and discrimination at European level in order to promote LGBT fundamental rights through analytical and research activities. Review of the project documentation confirmed that the project contributed to national policy and legislation development. The final research report was in fact used by a Member of the Italian Parliament to support a proposal for a law against homophobia.
>
> Concerning data protection, the 2009/2010 AG carried out in Belgium and entitled 'PIAF (A Privacy Impact Assessment Framework for data protection and privacy rights)' conducted awareness raising campaigns particularly targeting data protection authorities and policy-makers, to encourage the Commission and Member States to adopt a progressive privacy impact assessment policy. The project was carried out while the EU data protection framework was under revision. The Final Report did not specify whether the outcomes of the projects were taken into account during that revision. However, it did note that the PIAF consortium was consulted by the competent authorities of some Member States in their consideration of whether to introduce privacy impact assessments. It can be therefore assumed that this project contributed to some extent to the development of national policies in this area.
>
> Finally, in the priority area relating to training on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the 2011/2012 AG project entitled 'EU Charter of Fundamental Rights in Practice' provided training for

judges and legal professionals in Germany and other coutries, leading to a better understanding of its fundamental principles and scope and therefore to a better application of the EU legislation in national courts. Similarly, the 2011/2012 AG project entitled 'Making the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights a living instrument' aimed to enhance the practical applications of the Charter at national level through assessing its impact on the legal order and practice of Member States of the EU. In addition to training activities, it elaborated guidelines on how to make use of the Charter provisions in assisting individuals affected by human rights violations.

4.2.2 The operating grants

Section 4.1.6 already provides examples of how OGs contributed effectively to achieve the objectives of the programme. For example, Transparency International used the 2010 OG it received to advocate for better EU policies in the area of anticorruption, including the EU Parliament Code of Conduct and the enhanced Transparency Register for more robust EU lobbying rules. The same year the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children used its OG for its activities aimed at contributing to the development and implementation of European policies promoting children rights.

In light of the above, it can be concluded that the OGs were an effective financing tool for supporting to the implementation and development of EU policies and legislation in the area of fundamental rights.

4.2.3 The public procurement

As already mentioned in Section 4.1.7, the use of public procurement enabled the FRC programme to respond to policy developments with regard to the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and with regard to children rights through Eurobarometer publications on these issues and through the organisation of a conference.

Whilst the information on the 111 public procurement contracts awarded under the FRC programme is not sufficient to identify the purpose of all contracts, the evaluator is able to state from first-hand knowledge the purpose of two of the contracts. Both of these were relevant to implementation and development of EU legislation, namely, a 2007 contract for a conformity study of Member States' national implementation measures transposing the Community instruments in the area of citizenship of the Union and a 2012 contract for a study on the practical implementation of the legal framework of all Member States concerning formalities and procedures related to the issuance of residence documents under Directive 2004/38/EC on free movement of citizens.

In light of the above, it can be concluded that public procurement contributed to some extent to the implementation and development of policies and legislation.

4.2.4 Importance of a proper monitoring system to ensure the programme's effectiveness

In interviews with both grant beneficiaries and Commission officials, several persons stressed the importance of a proper monitoring system for ensuring the effectiveness of the programme, including for supporting implementation and development of EU fundamental rights policy and legislation. They were of the opinion that the current system, based largely on reporting, was not enough for capturing and further reviewing project results and for making such information available to policy makers.

In the first years of the FRC programme, between 2007 and 2010, a type of monitoring mechanism was in place that enabled DG Justice to carry out onsite visits to FRC-funded projects. However, from 2011 on, this regular monitoring was reduced due to lack of human resources.

Suggestions for an adequate monitoring system included, as a minimum, a mandatory meeting for each project with Commission financial and policy officers where the beneficiaries would present their interim results. It was felt that such a mechanism would encourage beneficiaries to provide good results. Such a system could also include on onsite visits by Commission officials as well as an online monitoring mechanism where each project

manager would update the Commission on the progress of the projects and communicate with other project managers working in the same fields in order to exchange information and good practices.

It was suggested that it would be effective to audit and monitor several projects implemented by the same organisations at the same time, but at different stages of their life-cycle. This would be helpful to assess the impacts of the programme in practice and could also be used to encourage achieving more effective results.

4.3 Effectiveness of the projects in achieving their own objectives

4.3.1 Effectiveness in completing planned activities and producing (all) planned outputs

According to the quantitative evidence gathered during the mapping of the final reports, over half of all finalised AGs and OGs (70 out of the 115 grants for which final reports were available) implemented all their activities as planned. In some cases, achievement of this entailed changes to staff or required searching for additional funding. Nonetheless, these fluctuations had a minor impact on the development of the funded actions (in fact, 63% of the 71 respondents to the online survey indicated that these changes had no impact to the outcomes of their actions). For example, in the 2007 AG project '*ARIES – Against Racism in Europe through Sport',* although one of the original partners had to be replaced by another organisation and although changes were made in the project staffing, all of the project's objectives were achieved.

As noted above, the majority of survey respondents stated that they were able to achieve all (61%) or most (39%) planned results on time, and 97% were able to reach the expected target groups. Moreover, out of 72 respondents, 61% reported that they considered that their project made a significant difference to the thematic area they were working in, and only 13% did not consider their project as having made a significant difference. For example, one project manager interviewed stated that his/her project had made a difference in the fight against homophobia because for the first time in Italy and Hungary heterosexual people had been involved in activities concerning this issue, and this had contributed to greater awareness among the public and perhaps to greater understanding.

Another project result involved the training of law enforcement authorities. The project manager for the 2010 AG project entitled *'Fundamental Rights Education in Europe – F.R.E.E.'*, in a follow-up interview, affirmed that her project had made a difference on human rights education of police officers, prison guards and judicial authorities. In her opinion the impact of such training was relevant especially with regard to police officers in Greece, Italy and Romania, where - according to the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights - cases of violation of human rights by law enforcement authorities are recurrent. Yet in these countries, police officers had never received training on such issues before.

Frequently in the course of a project's duration, internal or external circumstances may change such that the implementation of the project and its activities may be affected. When asked if such changes had occurred and the impact they had had on the project, 47 of the 72 project partners responding to the survey reported that they had experienced staff changes, and in 19 cases more than one staff member had had to be replaced. Other changes included a need to search for additional funding for implementation (11 projects). Despite such disruptions, most respondents (63% out of 51) reported that the change(s) had no impact on the implementation of the project/activities, and 27% reported that the change(s) had had a minor impact. Only 5 respondents (10%) reported that the change(s) had a major impact.

Regarding the effect of these changes on outcomes, out of 50 respondents, 74% reported that the change(s) had no impact on the outcomes of the project/activities and 18% believed that there had been a minor impact. Again, only 8% of survey respondents stated that the change(s) had a major impact on the outcomes of the project/activities. Most of the grant recipients thus displayed considerable resilience: they were able to take effective measures

to address any problems caused by the changes in circumstances without undue negative effect on the project and its activities.

4.3.2 Effectiveness in achieving planned objectives

Out of 71 respondents to the on-line survey, 61% stated that they had achieved all the planned objectives and 39% stated that they had achieved most of the planned objectives.

During follow-up interviews project partners also cited positive factors that contributed to effective implementation of projects and activities. Chief among these positive influences was when project partners developed good relationships. Such good cooperation was considered even more valuable when it involved public and private entities.

Somewhat surprisingly, no obstacles seriously influencing the implementation of the projects' results or objectives were identified, either in the course of the mapping of the projects, the online survey or the follow-up interviews. Respondents to the survey were also asked to report on the extent to which their projects had reached unexpected positive results. Out of 66 respondents, 52% indicated that they were able to implement additional activities to those initially expected. Similarly, out of 70 respondents, 51% reported that they had received attention from policy makers which had been additional to their expectations, and 72% had been able to disseminate additional outputs.

In a related question, survey respondents were asked about any unexpected negative results. Again, out of 70 respondents, the vast majority (99%) indicated that there had been no unexpected negative effects, thus confirming this positive trend.

The analysis of the final reports and the replies of grant beneficiaries to the online survey and follow up interviews with them suggest that overall the immediate outcomes of the projects were achieved. Some of the reasons mentioned by grant beneficiaries for such achievement are the good relation among partners, the large interest (sometimes going over expectation) shown by the target groups in the activities implemented, positive feedback received by groups other the ones initially targeted and the attention from policy makers in project activities.

5 Sustainability, transferability and innovation

The sustainability of the projects funded through the FRC programme is assessed according to whether the results, outcomes and impacts achieved will continue beyond the project period. Three levels of sustainability were identified in the evaluation: short-term sustainability, which is achieved mainly through dissemination of projects' results; medium-term sustainability, which includes continuation of project results and/or partnerships; and longer term sustainability, which is achieved mainly through the successful transfer of projects' results to other contexts, organisations and Member States without additional funding (or with limited funding only).

5.1 Short-term sustainability: dissemination of project results

5.1.1 Effectiveness of the Commission's dissemination

In general, the Commission's efforts to disseminate the results of projects have been limited. The lack of effective means for the Commission to share information concerning the FRC programme was already mentioned in the mid-term evaluation, and this evaluation did not find any additional communication resources and measures set in place. In particular, the FRC programme lacks a dedicated way to share results of one project with other beneficiaries, so as to spread best practices.

The lack of a proper mechanism / plan to communicate and disseminate the results of projects funded under the FRC programme was confirmed by the Commission officials interviewed for this evaluation. They noted two different groups who could benefit from such a dissemination mechanism:

■ Stakeholders involved in activities related to the FRC programme objectives, including funding applicants or beneficiaries of the programme;
■ EU policy makers and particularly Commission staff, including those managing the FRC programme.

Each of these groups has a different need. EU policy makers, including Commission staff, might find the analytical results, mutual learning lessons and other aspects from the projects helpful in the effort of designing better policies, including for implementation of the FRC programme. For them, it could be useful to get information highlighting the overall results of the programme, as well as the results of key projects. On the other hand, stakeholders could benefit from having access to information about the activities and successes of other projects, so that they could consider how to build on the best practices of others. This might require a more structured dissemination of project results.

One of the main ways the Commission uses to disseminate information is via its website (according to Commission representatives interviewed for this evaluation, few other means of dissemination are utilised). Since this website is available in all Member State official languages, posting brief summaries of the projects funded on a special FRC programme web platform could help inform stakeholders in other Member States about activities, events and networks and could form a type of guidance on best practice. At the end of each project, the summaries could be updated with web links to the actual outputs achieved, where possible. This would require a systematic gathering of summary information on the FRC projects and their outputs, for publication on line.

One of the mechanisms available to the Commission for its own initiatives, such as information dissemination, is that of public procurement. Over the course of the 2007-2013 FRC programme, the Commission committed a total of 12.6 million euro for public procurement, out of a total budget allocation of 20 million euro during the programme period. Unfortunately, the summary excel sheet provided for this evaluation gives only limited information about the 111 public procurement contracts issued, and no additional information could be gathered via interviews, despite several attempts. The excel sheet does indicate whether specific contracts were used for studies, events or information technology (IT). Assuming that the term 'events' refers to activities related to awareness raising (e.g., expert meetings and conferences), approximately 5.3 million euro, or 34,1% of available funds,

might have been spent on dissemination-related activities. Another 1.3 million euro, or 10.2%, was devoted to IT, which might also have included updates of Commission websites related to the FRC programme's objectives.

From the limited information available, therefore, it is not possible to determine whether and how these public procurement funds were used to disseminate project results. However, given that only 63% of the funds allocated under the FRC programme for public procurement were actually committed, it does appear that funding is available to the Commission for more active dissemination of project results.

5.1.2 Effectiveness of the grant beneficiary's dissemination

As noted earlier, the main types of activity covered by both the AG and OG-supported projects are related to awareness-raising, information and dissemination. Indeed, 346 of the total of 806 outputs tallied during the project mapping exercise -- the largest share of project outputs – were linked to awareness raising and dissemination. Outputs included books, films and other published materials, as well as events such as conferences, seminars, and press conferences and support and advice services e.g. information and advice website and helplines.

With regard to the dissemination of results, the majority (89%) of the respondents to the online survey reported to have a clear plan for dissemination of the results of their project/activities. The dissemination plans provided that the results would be disseminated in more than one language (93% of respondents) and in more than one country (100% of respondents).

Project partners reported having disseminated the results of the projects and increased their visibility by a range of means, including: seminars, conferences and other events, information leaflets, websites and electronic tools (e.g. videos and mobile applications), publication of reports and theme publications reflecting the conclusions reached in the activities and policy recommendations. For example, the 2008 AG project *'Colourful but Colour Blind'* produced several films in which the members of the target group reflected their experiences. These films were then screened at events, such as conferences and other venues in which the project was presented, thus increasing the impact of the project.

Part of grant beneficiaries' success in disseminating the results of their projects may be attributable to the fact that they were asked to describe their dissemination strategy in the grant application form. For the purposes of this evaluation, a review was carried out of selected applications to assess the quality of these dissemination strategies. These were then compared to what the grant beneficiaries said concerning dissemination of the project results in their final reports.

The descriptions in the AG applications varied from a rather uninformative description of what the organisation had achieved in the past in terms of media coverage, to one which stressed that one of its work streams was devoted to advocacy and dissemination and described in detail how dissemination would be occurring throughout the duration of the project None of the applications reviewed provided details concerning how they would adapt dissemination to the target group and most of the corresponding final reports were vague about whether the target group was reached.

But there were exceptions. For example, the application submitted by the Center for the Study of Democracy in Bulgaria for the project '*Assisting and reintegrating children victims of trafficking: promotion and evaluation of best practices in source and destination countries (ARECHIVIC)'* described in detail how dissemination was built into the project activities (see box on next page). The Final Report confirms that these outputs and more were achieved.

Note that the Commission has considerable opportunity, through the process of selecting applications for grant awards, to review the appropriateness of an applicant's dissemination strategy and perhaps strengthen it. While it appears that the dissemination of project results by the grants beneficiaries was generally effective, in the absence of continued monitoring by project partners, it is difficult to assess the long-term impact of their dissemination efforts.

Box 5.1 Examples of FRC-funded projects with effective dissemination of outputs

The project *"Données personnelles des droits? Sensibiliser et informer les jeunes citoyens européens"* led by the Ligue des droits de l'Homme (LDH) in partnership with two European networks AEDH and EDRi, and a Czech and Spanish organization, addressed the threats to the personal data of EU citizens due to the conservation of data gathered via public records or social networks without the knowledge of users in combination with the use of new identification technology. The project looked at EU legislation on these issues as well as the national legislation in nine Member States, developed recommendations which were presented to the EU institutions, and published a comic book entitled "Sous surveillance" to educate and inform young adults about the issue of personal data protection in the use of information technology and communication. The comic book was published in four different languages (French, English, Czech and Catalan) and 80,000 copies were distributed.

The project *'Assisting and reintegrating children victims of trafficking: promotion and evaluation of best practices in source and destination countries (ARECHIVIC)'* led by the Center for the Study of Democracy in Bulgaria, together with partners in Austria, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia and Sweden, built dissemination into most project activities. These included a conference on best practices, dissemination of a Handbook on the Reintegration of Children Victims of Trafficking in printed and electronic formats, and development of a web-based interactive tool to be used by the six project partners to research, identify and describe best practices in their national contexts and from other Member States. In addition, the project gathered input from child victims as well as their parents via an innovative computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI) system that operated in several European languages. In addition to multiple workshops and a second international conference that took place the last month of the project, each project partner carried out a range of other dissemination activities, including publication and distribution of National Handbooks and other dissemination events on transnational, national and local levels.

5.2 Medium-term sustainability: continuation of results

5.2.1 Continuation of project/activities implemented

The mapping of the projects showed that just under half (81 out of 169 grants) reported that they had developed sustainable outputs that would be/were used after the funding from the programme had stopped, and seven reports stated that the partnerships established outlived the project. A number of projects have also produced outputs that continue to be used for present and future activities. For example, the project *'Exchanging good citizen participation practices for the promotion of an active citizenship in the European Union (ESPACE)'* developed several outputs including awareness-raising materials and activities in four languages, mutual learning initiatives and national networks which continued in useused after project completion. Also, the project *'When the innocent are punished - Children of imprisoned parents, a vulnerable group'* developed several sustainable outputs including the publication of a report and a summary entitled 'Eurochips' which was distributed in four languages to at least ten Member States and which continues to be used to promote the rights of children with imprisoned parents.

The survey confirmed that sustainable results were achieved for a good portion of the projects. Out of 72 respondents, 44 (61%) reported that their projects made a significant difference to the thematic area they are working in. They also reported a high response from policy makers to the funded projects. They noted a 100% rate of participation by policy makers in project related events, such as seminars, conferences, workshops etc. In 59% (33) of the projects surveyed, policy makers had responded by distributing communication material (e.g. brochures, leaflets, flyers etc.); 30% (17) of the policy makers involved had provided additional funding to support continuation of (some) of the projects' activities; and 23% (13) of policy makers involved had established/supported other projects that used elements of the project (approach/method, one or more activities etc.). Finally, 18% (10) of policy makers shaped a new policy development/action plan/legislation or by adjusting existing ones using as a basis the project's outputs and results.

These survey results were confirmed by several interviewees. They noted that some of the project outputs led to positive responses from policy makers either by supporting the project or by shaping new policies taking into account the results of the project[31].

5.2.2 Continuation of partnerships after projects' completion

While the mapping found direct evidence of only 7 out of 168 projects continuing the partnerships established[32], survey results were much more positive. They suggested that many of the projects enabled the establishment of partnerships or networks which continued after the projects' completion. Out of the 71 respondents to the survey, 48 (68%) reported that their partnerships did or will continue after completion of the project.

Stakeholders interviewed reported that the cooperation built between partners through the project helped establish a network which is still working together on new projects. For example, the project '*Children's Voices: Exploring interethnic violence and children's rights in the school environment*' helped to establish a new international network of researchers dealing with issues of ethnicity and interethnic violence, with the aim of raising awareness among educators, children and the general public. The partners involved in the project "*Données personnelles des droits? Sensibiliser et informer les jeunes citoyens européens*" also reported they planned to continue using the network established by the project.

5.2.3 Continuity of use / financial sustainability of project outputs

A number of the project outputs continue to be used for present and future activities, such as training and awareness raising tools, reports, databases, guidelines and network platforms. Stakeholders interviewed confirmed that sustainable outputs developed through their projects ranged from training material, methodological tools, awareness raising materials, and so on, and resulted in a better understanding of the issue by key stakeholders such as policy makers. For example, the outputs of the "*Hate Crimes against LGBT persons - development for a hate crime toolkit*" project continue to be used for future activities, such as the toolkit used for training police. In addition, ILGA-Europe will use the content of the project website to ensure the availability of the materials.

However, the evidence gathered suggests that the projects funded through the FRC programme relied heavily on EU funding to deliver their results, and looked to further EU funding to fully realise the full potential of their outputs. Indeed, the majority (65%, or 46) of survey participants indicated that further funding was needed to guarantee the financial sustainability of the project/activities, thus ensuring that these had the desired effects.

The follow-up interviews with grant beneficiaries identified a number of specific elements where further funding was needed to ensure continuity of use, mostly with the view to further disseminate the projects' outcomes and to transfer (parts of) the project:

■ Translation activities (e.g. guides, reports) to disseminate outputs also in other Member States;
■ Maintenance of the website where the results are published;
■ Follow-up activities to ensure continuance of the project's results (e.g. conference, events, responding to demands and questions regarding the project's results, etc.);
■ Production of follow-up material such as a best practice guide;
■ Extending the results to a wider group of beneficiaries;
■ To support the take-up of the results achieved within a Member State in other Member States (e.g. comparative analysis, exchange of best practices);
■ Training activities (especially adapting developed training programmes to other contexts).

Note, however, that 10 out of 17 interviewees also stated that elements of their (AG) projects could be continued without additional funding. This included such elements as the

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[31]Information gathered through follow up interviews.
[32] It is noted that final reports were only available for part of the projects mapped, which may explain the low figure.

coordination of an experts network. (e.g. the project '*It takes all kinds - fighting homophobia in schools (ITAK)*') and some types of awareness raising activities (e.g. the project '*I:CUD (Internet: Creatively Unveiling Discrimination)*'). Moreover, 13 (20%) of the 65 survey respondents stated that further funding had already been ensured, either from other EU sources or renewed FRC programme funding. In some cases, the organisation funded the follow-up activities itself.

5.3 Long-term sustainability: transferability of project results

Data from the online survey and follow-up interviews show that a large number of outputs produced could be transferred to other EU Member States, particularly materials which, once translated, can be disseminated and used in other countries within the framework of other projects with similar objectives. Methods of approach may also be transferred to serve other target groups and beneficiaries, particularly any "best practice aspect" of the output, which can be used in other contexts and projects.

In a number of cases, minor conditions affecting the transferability of the projects' outputs were reported. These mostly relate to the need to translate the outputs in other languages, or to adapt the project's methods or outputs to the country-specific or local context by consulting with local stakeholders.

Most survey respondents confirmed the transferability of their projects' outputs to other EU countries. For example, the training course prepared in the context of the project *'Fundamental Rights Education in Europe – F.R.E.E.'* can be used in all Member States as they are available online and they are copyright-free. They are available in the language of the country participating in the transnational partnership established for the project. However, translation into other languages would be required to ensure the wider use of the courses.

Another project entitled *'Football for Equality – Challenging racist and homophobic stereotypes in and through football'* organised exhibitions and workshops on the issue of discrimination in the football sector. Project partners from different Member States coordinated with stakeholders within the national and local networks/football groups active in this sector to set up the events. In the follow up interview, the project manager stated that the projects' outputs could be transferred to other Member States easily by coordinating with national and local stakeholders to better tailor the events to the country specific context.

5.4 Innovation

Although the FRC calls for proposals make no explicit reference to the term innovation and there is no specific award criteria related to it, innovation is an important element to consider when granting funding to projects through an EU programme. In terms of the FRC programme, innovation was assessed in particular in terms of:

- The priority addressed by the project;
- The group / end beneficiary targeted;
- The method / activities utilised:
  - in order to support / target these groups
  - in order to achieve the priority
- The partnership created.

The mapping of the projects indicated that 120 out of 168 projects could be considered innovative in terms of the method/approach, one or more of the activities, the partnership or other project elements. The survey results confirmed this finding. The majority of respondents (74%) considered their project/activities to be innovative. With regard to the different innovative elements of projects:

- 57% indicated that one or more activities/practices are/were innovative;
- 51% indicated that the method/approach to the project was innovative;
- 39% considered that their project was target groups that had not been reached previous to the project;
- 35% reported their projects as innovative in terms of partnership.

The stakeholders interviewed considered 'ground breaking' research in an area not previously studied as innovative. For example, one of the projects compared the heterosexual perspective and the LGBT perspective in the discussion on the fight against homophobia.

Other activities considered especially innovative included practices actively involving target groups, e.g. by setting up web-based platforms, initiating intra-community discussions, use of role models, mapping of communities' resources, and establishment of new networks. For example, at the beginning of the *'Combatting Human Rights Violations Associated with Islamophobia'* project led by the Forum of European Muslim Youth & Student Organisations , the fight against Islamophobia lacked a pan-European dynamic. Since the project, a network of 23 organisations in 8 different countries has been established, i.e., the Islamophobia Monitoring and Action Network, or IMAN. They share a common tool to collect and analyse data on Islamophobic acts in Europe, using a standardised methodology.

Other innovations included tailor-made training methods, participatory approaches (e.g. child participation method), inter-institutional cooperation models, and peer education methodologies. For example, the Eurogames -Twinning module used in the context of the project led by the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC) aimed at exchanging organisational know-how and expertise between two events organised in two Member States. The team organising an event in one Member State would accompany the team organising a similar event in another country. This allowed for a transfer of knowledge on how to organise such an event but also to an exchange of best practices on how to address LGBT issues.

6 Efficiency and scope for simplification

6.1 Efficiency

This section considers the extent to which the funds made available through the FRC programme were sufficient to achieve the programme objectives. It then evaluates the level of programme absorption, i.e., the amounts committed compared to those allocated and the amounts paid compared to those committed. This approach assumes that a lower absorption rate indicates sufficiency of resources allocated.

An assessment of whether the resources spent were reasonable (i.e. proportionate) to the anticipated and achieved impacts has to first consider the kinds of impacts expected at programme and project levels and whether this was reasonable considering the amount made available to the programme and the projects. It can then consider whether these impacts were achieved (as discussed in section 4 on Effectiveness) in a cost-effective way.

The general objectives of the FRC Programme related to (1) promoting the development of a European society based on respect for fundamental rights; (2) strengthening of civil society and encouraging an open and transparent dialogue in respect of fundamental rights; (3) fighting against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and promoting improved tolerance throughout the EU; and (4) improving the contacts, exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities and the legal professions, with the aim of better mutual understanding. The first and third objectives are highly ambitious, such that it is unreasonable to expect that € 95.2 million over a seven year period could bring about significant impacts. However, the second and fourth objectives are more realistic, and it is more reasonable to consider whether the available funding was sufficient to make an impact.

The allocation of resources among funding tools can also be examined, including whether such allocation was efficient. Finally, an evaluation of whether the amounts available per project were sufficient for the implementation of their objectives, and to allow them to make a difference in their respective policy area(s) can consider the extent to which projects incurred an over- or underspend, as well as the extent to which they generated the desired results, outcomes and impacts with the amount made available.

6.1.1 Extent to which financial resources made available were sufficient

The FRC programme had an initial budgetary provision of € 95.2 million over the period 2007-2013, broken down into an annual provision of between € 10.6 and € 15.50 million. The funding was provided via grants (i.e., AGs and OGs) and public procurement contracts. A detailed breakdown for the initially planned budget per implementation year and funding tool for the period 2007-2013 is provided below in Table 6.1.

Table 6. 1 Planned budgetary breakdown for the FRC programme (2007-2013)

| | Available Budget for Grants and Contracts | | | | | | | |
| | Projects (action grants) | | Operating grants | | Commission initiatives | | Total Annual Budget | |
Year	Value (€)	%	Value (€)	%	Value (€)	%	Value (€)	%
2007	5,505,000	51.9%	2,100,000	19,8%	2,995,000	28,3%	10.60 M	100%
2008	5,800,000	50,0%	2,100,000	18,1%	3,700,000	31,9%	12.00 M	100%
2009	9,200,000	64,8%	1,300,000	9,2%	3,700,000	26,1%	14.20 M	100%
2010	10,195,000	73,9%	1,400,000	10,1%	2,205,000	16,0%	13.80 M	100%
2011	8,740,000	63,3%	1,000,000	7,2%	4,060,000	29,4%	13.80 M	100%
2012	12,235,000	80,0%	1,000,000	6,5%	2,065,000	13,5%	15.30 M	100%
2013	10,900,000	70,3%	1,000,000	6,5%	3,600,000	23,2%	15.50 M	100%
	62,575,000		9,900,000		22,325,000		95.20 M	

FRC - Annual Work Programmes (2007-2013)

Over the course of the programme the total amounts of annual funding allocated gradually increased. This reflected the general practice of the Commission. The yearly allocation of funds is determined at the beginning of the seven-year programme period, within the context of the EU budget. Small adjustments are then made annually, with allocations becoming higher towards the end of the programme period, once the programme is well underway.

The largest proportion of the budget was distributed via AGs with an average of 70.3% of funds allocated in this way each year, corresponding to € 62.6 million. The remainder of the budget was allocated to OGs (10% or € 9.5 million)[33] and to Commission initiatives (21% or € 20 million).

Table 6.1 shows the amounts allocated for the various funding tools. However, these were not the amounts actually committed by the Commission. The quantitative analysis of the 169 grant projects included over the implementation period (which does not include the projects awarded grants under the 2013 AGs) found that the total budget committed to AGs was € 46,460,022, or some 90% of the total funding of € 51,675,000 that had been allocated to AGs for years 2007 to 2012.

Whilst the amounts committed to AGs are close to the original allocations, the situation is different for OGs, which received significantly less funding than initially envisaged. The amount of budget actually committed to OGs was € 3,459,900, or some 39% of the total funding of € 8,900,000 that had been allocated for OGs for years 2007 to 2012.

According to the alignment between the budgets allocated, committed and paid to date are rather closely aligned for the AGs over the various calls for proposals during the programme period. The funds actually paid out, compared to those committed during the 2007 AG, 2008 AG and 2009-2010 AG, show a very high absorption rate of some 87.5%.

As already noted above, only 39% of the funding allocated for OGs during the programme period was actually committed. But a closer look at the commitments made during the 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2013 calls for OGs, compared to the funds actually paid out, shows a similarly high absorption rate of 88%.

The other funding tool available under the programme was public procurement. During the implementation period €12,595,652 was actually committed[34], for a total of 111 public procurement contracts awarded during the programme period. This comes to 56.4% of the total allocated budget of €22,325,000. Over 10% of this budget was committed to IT services and more specifically the development and maintenance of the consular protection website[35] and of the website on the right of the child[36].

Compared to the situation with OGs, the 56.4% of allocated funding actually committed to procurement appears to be more closely related to the ambitions of the programme. In any case, the low levels of funding actually committed to these two funding tools would suggest that the original funding allocated was overly generous or could indicate inefficiencies in the programme's implementation.

For example, the fact that the amounts actually committed by the FRC programme are less than those originally allocated might be attributable to a potential overlap between the FRC programme objectives and target groups and other EU funding programmes (e.g. DAPHNE III or JPEN). Applications for projects potentially addressing FRC objectives and target groups might have been submitted to other EU programmes.

Although less than what was originally planned by the Commission, these committed resources still seem to be reasonable, considering the programme's ambitious objectives and the scale of the problem.

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[33] Note that there is a slight discrepancy of € 0.4 million between the above table and other figures supplied for this evaluation. The reason for this discrepancy has not yet been identified.
[34] This is based on the separate figures provided by the Commission on public procurement contracts.
[35] Available at http://ec.europa.eu/consularprotection/index.action.
[36] Available at http://ec.europa.eu/0-18/.

The lower levels of actual commitment might also reflect a lack of good proposals, but it is clear that there was a high demand for project funding, in terms of applications versus selected projects. Out of a total of 678 FRC applications for AGs submitted between 2007 and 2013, only 135 projects (i.e. 19%) were selected. The highest number of AGs was funded through the 2009-2010 AG call for proposals, followed by that of AG 2011-2012, AG 2008 and AG 2007. It is normal that the number of applicants/ beneficiaries is higher for the 2009/2010 and 2011/2012 AG calls for proposals (as well as the OG 2011) in that the calls covered two budgetary years.

In total, 135 AGs and 33 OGs were funded by FRC. The highest number of operating grants was awarded during the OG 2011 call for proposals. Out of a total of 135 applications for OGs submitted between 2007 and 2013, only 33 projects (i.e. 24%) were selected. The much lower number of OGs might be attributable to the specific nature of the funding tool, which is aimed at providing support to particular types of transnational organisations and structures.

For AGs, project budgets ranged from as little as € 98,925 to several projects in the range of € 800 - 900K, with one project budget reaching € 3 million. The average project budget committed per AG was € 414,822, ranging from € 299,954 (AG 2007) to € 503,283 (AG 2011-2012).

For OGs, the average committed amount was € 133,073, ranging from € 62,109 (OG 2009) to € 192,536 (OG 2008). The lower average value of OGs can be explained by the nature of the grant, as an OG is intended to co-finance the operating expenses that enable a body to have an independent existence and to implement a range of activities envisaged in its work programme. The duration is also shorter as it corresponds to one financial year of the beneficiary organisation, whereas AGs could last two years and cover a whole partnership of organisations. As regards AG projects, it is worth noticing that in 2009-2010 the average duration of the projects was also longer (22.2 months, compared to 18.2 in 2007 and 19.5 in 2011-2012).

6.1.2   Extent to which the financial resources made available were used in an efficient way

Determination of whether the financial resources made available were used efficiently requires an analysis of the inputs (i.e. costs of the project) versus the outputs produced. Since information was only provided concerning the total cost of the grant (whether the commitment or the payment), it is not possible to identify the costs of individual outputs and thus establish unit costs as benchmarks. In addition, the data on outputs was identified through the mapping exercise of all projects, and the quality and completeness of this information varied greatly as it depended entirely on the level of detail provided in the final reports. Without information on costs of specific activities / types of expenses, it is not possible to provide a full input – output analysis.

As noted above, the initial total budget planned for implementation of the FRC Programme over the period 2007-2013 was € 95.2 million, of which € 62.5 million was actually committed. Given that not all actions have been completed, the total amount paid is not yet knowable, but overall, underspend appears to be low on average (less than 12% of the committed value).

With this money, the FRC was able to fund 135 AGs, 34 OGs and a total of 111 procured actions. The good spending levels and high numbers of grants suggest that the financial resources were used in an efficient way. For procured activities, it appears that all those contracted and completed to date were fully paid, which would imply efficient use of available resources.

In an effort to produce some analysis of project inputs and outputs, this assessment identified a set of projects with similar activities and then compared them in terms of their overall costs and generated outputs. In total, 24 projects (17 AGs and seven OGs) had implemented a combination of only two types of activities, namely analytical activities and awareness-raising activities.

Annex 2 and Annex 3 present the outputs identified for each. Annex 2 puts the 17 AGs together and then arranges them from the grant with the lowest value to the highest value. Annex 3 presents the same type of information, but for the seven OGs identified. This provides an indication of the lowest 'unit costs' which were achieved by a successful project, as a type of benchmark for assessing the cost-effectiveness of other projects. However, such benchmarks can only be indicative, given the large variation among programme beneficiaries and contexts.

As Annex 2 and Annex 3 show, the grant budgets vary substantially. For AGs with only the two types of activities, the budgets varied from € 99,750 to € 742,116. For OGs focusing on the two types of activities, the budgets ranged from € 81,200 to € 300,000. The lower amounts for the OGs in the sample reflect the fact that these grants are for one year only, and by the fact that only one organisation is funded, whereas under action grants a partnership of organisations is funded.

A review of the information gathered from the final reports via the mapping exercise showed that nearly all action grants carried out some type of analytical activity: these included data collection and analysis, surveys, methodological development, mapping and other similar activities which were subsequently presented in a report or study. In the case of the 17 AGs carrying out only analytical and awareness type activities, the main reasons for price differentials for analytical activities appear to relate to:

■ Publication costs: the number of paper copies or CD-ROMs produced containing the outputs of the analytical and related activities
■ The development and delivery of training related to the analytical activity
■ The development of guidance materials related to the analytical activity
■ Translation/interpretation costs

The analytical activities were then often linked to awareness-raising activities, which then disseminated and presented the results to a wider audience, for example through presentations at events, the organisation of events, through websites (developed or expanded for the occasion) and by producing dissemination materials such as leaflets, brochures, newsletters, etc. The main reasons for price differentials for awareness activities seem due to:

■ Publication costs: the number of leaflets and other promotional materials produced
■ The size of the conferences organised
■ The extent to which seminars, workshops and other events were international or not
■ Translation/interpretation costs

However, a scan of Annex 2 and 3 do seem to indicate that some projects made more efficient use of the resources available than others. Several AGs of less than € 300,000 produced similar or even more outputs than some AGs exceeding this amount. However, several of the higher budget AGs appear to have reached out to larger target audiences, e.g. through higher number of publications and higher numbers of participants. Moreover, some of the outputs developed might have been particularly costly, such as the development of a film or an online game. The seven OGs show proportionally higher outputs for the budgets provided, but this is in part attributed to the fact that many of the activities developed would have been part of the organisation's day-to-day business, rather than being set up from scratch, which is the case for the majority of AGs.

In addition to giving a sense of the cost relationship between inputs and outputs, Annex 2 and Annex 3 also reveal the strong links between analytical and awareness-raising activities. Grants often started with data collection and other research activities, which were then used as the basis for analytical reports, as well as for training and guidance, and then disseminated via a range of other outputs, e.g. websites and events. This is an indicator of efficient use of funding.

On the basis of the above, it appears that in general resources were used efficiently, with the exception of a few grants which show relatively few outputs when considering their total

budget. This may indicate some inefficiency, but it could also be due to a failure to clearly report on outputs in the final reports.

In addition to the above information, compiled from the mapping exercise, it is also relevant to look at how the grant beneficiaries ranked the various activities and outputs against this criterion. The efficiency of the implemented actions was in general rated high, with the majority of actions considered as value for money. Of the six activities rated by survey respondents:

- 29 (66%) of those that implemented 'training activities' rated them as "best value for money";
- 30 (57%) of those that implemented 'mutual learning, exchange of good practices, cooperation' rated them as "best value for money";
- 32 (48%) of those that implemented 'analytical activities' rated them as "best value for money"; and
- 29 (43%) of those that implemented 'awareness-raising, information and dissemination' rated them as "best value for money".

Other types of activities, such as maintenance of hardware/software and support and advice services, were evaluated as less cost-efficient. More details were provided by stakeholders in the follow-up interviews, as per Box 6.1 below.

> **Box 6.1 Stakeholder views on which activities were cost-effective**
>
> - **Research and analytical activities were cost efficient because of the potential impacts**. One interviewee said '*' the research activities were very efficient because we reached a large number of people (approx. 210 persons) that we did not expect to reach at the beginning''*. Another interviewee stated that '*'the comic was very costly regarding the time to analyse and conduct the research but the result was worth it''*.
> - **Awareness raising, information and dissemination activities were considered especially cost-efficient** by 16 out of 17 interviewees, because of low costs. One said that '*'community events reached the target groups well with quite small costs incurred*''. Another stressed that "*the elements of digital dissemination/communication-simple flyers, email, twitter, using digital rather than paper-takes huge cost out and has a higher impact.*
> - **Conferences and meetings can cost but are very effective**. One interviewee said that '*'putting together stakeholders in a seminar from different institutions and EU Member States was the most effective way to engage them and was cost-effective*''.
> - Finally, **mutual learning, exchange of good practices and cooperation were also viewed as value for money**. One interviewee said that "*the testing of tools and methods implemented in cooperation with local actors was very cost efficient as it has a multiplier effect and not as much travel costs were incurred*'. Another stated that '*'the workshop of the small group of experts, although there are travel costs involved. What we can achieve in a small group is very efficient, while bigger events are less cost efficient''*.

6.1.3 The extent to which the resources spent were reasonable in comparison to the impacts

As per the intervention logic presented in section 1 above, the expected impact of the FRC Programme was the 'creation of a real fundamental rights culture among all the peoples of Europe'. This is a huge goal, not only because of the scale of the ambition compared to that of the programme, but also because the actions funded by the FRC can only aim to contribute to the types of improvements that could cumulatively build such a culture across the diverse regions of the EU. However, on that level of the individual projects, and keeping in mind that a number of the projects[37] were still to be completed and that it requires time for certain outcomes and impacts to be realised, the outcomes and impacts identified would certainly suggest that spending was reasonable when looking at project achievements.

With some € 62.5 million, the FRC was able to fund 135 AGs, 33 OGs and a total of 111 procured actions. An analysis of the reports from finalised projects to date found that 53 (or

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[37] 115 of the 169 projects mapped had provided a final report.

62%) of the finalised[38] AGs and 28 (or 68%) of the finalised OGs showed evidence of having obtained outcomes and impacts. The lack of evidence concerning the other finalised projects may be due to confusion over the distinction between outputs and outcomes. In addition, outcomes and impacts take time to manifest themselves and that for many projects these would not yet have been observable at the time of writing their final report.

It is also important to keep in mind that the resources spent were awarded by a competitive process. Because a much higher number of applications were received than eventually selected (on average, 19% of AG applications received and 24% of OGs), the Commission was able to apply the selection criteria rigidly and to choose those applications which appeared to bring most EU-added value and the best value for money. This increases the likelihood that impacts were achieved at a reasonable cost.

In general, the evidence suggests that AGs and OGs achieved their planned results and met their objectives and did this at a reasonable cost. Very few respondents noted that the resources made available were insufficient. The high number of outputs achieved (over 800, as counted during the mapping exercise) and the fact that several respondents reported on having achieved significant outcomes is one indication that the positive impacts were produced at a reasonable cost. However, as noted earlier, the cost information available gives only the total budget of the project. Without further detail about the inputs needed to produce specific outputs, it is not possible to determine whether a given output was produced at a reasonable cost.

One measure of the reasonableness of the cost compared to the outcomes and impacts achieved is that the majority of the 71 grant recipients who responded to the online survey stated that they were able to achieve all or most planned results on time. In particular, 61% indicated that all activities were achieved as planned and 39% stated that most activities were achieved on time. However, the fact that many respondents indicated a need for further funding to fully achieve the desired impacts may point at costs not being so reasonable if more than one project/action was needed to reach expected effects.

Considering the significant number of projects and the outcomes and impacts achieved, the amount of money spent appears reasonable. Out of the 17 interviewees, all 17 indicated that either some, most or all activities implemented were cost efficient. One interviewee provided concrete examples: ''*the investment in the fair action weeks to fight against homophobia and the poster campaigns was quite small, yet the output was quite considerable. The investment in the exhibition, educational activities and panel discussions was larger [in comparison] but it reached a huge amount of people*''.

As mentioned in section 4, the evidence gathered via the online survey confirmed that the projects had an impact on EU policy and legislation development and implementation, with 51.4% of 70 respondents reporting that the project/activities implemented were either a significant or a major contribution to the implementation of EU law.

In addition, most projects were able to reach the expected target group. As mentioned in Section 4, 69 out of 71 survey respondents reported being able to reach the expected target groups. Moreover, 61% of 72 respondents reported that their project made a significant difference to the thematic area they were working in. In this regard, 49 out of the 72 survey respondents (68%) thought that other actors working in the same policy area would consider their project/activities as "leading the way forward".

Out of 17 interviewees, 8 indicated that their project made a significant difference to the thematic area they are working in while 9 indicated that other actors working in the same policy area would considering their project/activities as ''leading the way forward''. One interviewee indicated that '*the model created can be used to address the needs of other vulnerable groups/minorities*''. Another interviewee stated that ''*we have involved heterosexual people in a discussion about homophobia. We were the first ones to do this in Italy and Hungary''.* Therefore, in light of the positive impacts achieved, e.g., most projects reached the expected target groups and the majority of projects made a significant difference

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[38] In total, 135 AGs and 34 OGs are considered to be finalised.

to the thematic area they were working in, the amount of money allocated to the FRC programme may be considered reasonable.

6.1.4 Extent to which the allocation of funds among different tools was efficient

As stated in the Founding Decision, the funding tools primarily served the following purposes:

- Action grants: specific transnational projects of Community interest involving at least two Member States or at least one Member State and one other state which could either be an acceding country or a candidate country,
- Operating grants: support to the activities of NGOs or other organisations, pursuing an aim of general European interest regarding the general objectives of the programme
- Procurement: specific actions taken by the Commission including studies and research, opinion polls and surveys, seminars, conferences and experts meetings, organisation of public campaigns and events, development and maintenance of websites, support for and management of networks of national experts, monitoring and evaluation activities.

As discussed above, while around € 98.2 million was initially allocated to AGs as a funding tool, € 62.5 million euro was finally committed. Budget absorption of AGs (payments as a share of commitments) was overall high, i.e. 88%. Considering the above, funding to AGs appears to have been allocated in an efficient manner[39], especially when taking into account the 'newness' of the programme, the outputs and results achieved (see also section 4 above) and the findings of the input/output analysis above. OGs received considerably less than initially allocated (€ 3.5 million instead of € 9.9 million), but budget absorption of OGs was overall acceptable. As for AGs, OGs funding allocations appear to have been efficient.

While each of the funding tools had a clear focus, procurement could, to some extent, overlap with the activities undertaken by AGs and OGs. During the implementation period, the Commission committed € 12.6 million on a total of 111 procurement contracts (or 56.4% of the initially allocated budget of €22.3 million). Some 55.6% of expenditure on procurement was committed to studies; 34.2% on events, and 10.2% on IT-related contracts. Whilst the proportion of allocated funding actually committed is higher than that achieved for the OG funding tool, it still remains significantly under-used, which could have negatively affected the Commission's interests in e.g. programme monitoring and dissemination of programme results at the EU level.

Following stakeholder consultation, inefficiencies in relation to committing these funds mainly related to insufficient resources and capacity within the Commission to properly plan procurement, follow the implementation of projects and use their results. During this evaluation, no evidence of poor contract performance was reported, which confirms the impression that the use of public procurement was reasonably efficient.

Finally, as already noted, the funding tools were implemented through a competitive process, using calls for proposals (for the grants) and calls for tender (for procurement), which attracted high numbers of applications. Whilst this would suggest an efficient allocation process of the grants, the low funding levels of OGs, as already highlighted, raises questions about the efficiency of the OGs as a funding tool to achieve the ambitious objectives of the FRC programme.

6.1.5 Extent to which the amounts per project were sufficient for the implementation of their objectives and to allow them to make a difference

The majority of finalised projects to date show evidence of outcomes and impacts relevant to the objectives of the FRC programme, e.g., 53 (62%) of the 85 finalised AGs. The proportion of finalised OGs showing evidence of outcomes and impacts was even higher –

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[39] Several programme evaluations, including Youth in Action, the EGF, the ESF and the EU Structural Funds suggest that an absorption rate >80% is acceptable especially when a programme is introducing innovation and/or requiring new stakeholders to work together. A 'typical' absorption evolution starts between 60-70% to then, towards the end of the programme period, arrive at 80-95% (and in some cases even 100%).

28 out of 41 finalised OGs (68%). Among the outcomes and impacts achieved were a number that were directly related to the objectives of the FRC programme, and thus appropriate. It should be noted that a review of final reports showed that the ''impacts'' referred to by grant beneficiaries often constituted outputs. This makes it difficult to assess whether the reported impact, in comparison to the inputs, resulted overall in more efficiency.

Nonetheless, the links that grant beneficiaries were able to make between the projects/activities and policy makers on both national and EU level supported the objectives of strengthening civil society as well as improving the contacts, exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities.

With respect to sufficiency, 85% (or 61 out of 72) of the grant beneficiaries who responded to the survey stated that the level of funding they had received for their project was sufficient for them to carry out the activities as planned (see Section 5 on sustainability). Though 17% (11 out of 65) of the respondents indicated that they had to search for additional funding to implement the activities planned, the need for additional funding mainly related to the need for co-financing FRC projects. In addition, ten out of 17 interviewees indicated that they looked into obtaining further funding from other sources. Moreover, though 46 of 65 respondents (65%) indicated that further funding was needed to guarantee the financial sustainability of the project/activities, only 10% (5 out of 51) of survey respondents commented that the need for additional funding had a major impact on the implementation of their activities. This supports the finding that the amounts allocated were sufficient in light of the outcomes achieved by most of the projects. However, 15 out of 17 interviewees indicated that in order to *sustain* the results, further funding is needed. A further indication of appropriateness is that 88% (or 62 out of 72) of the survey participants did not think that their organisation could have implemented the project and activities without funding from the EU. Moreover, the majority of projects/activities did not receive further funding from other instruments.

6.2   Scope for simplification

6.2.1   The application phase

On the basis of the data collected, requirements for applicants to access FRC funding were assessed as overall appropriate. The procedure for submitting an application was regarded as straightforward by most stakeholders consulted through the online survey. Out of 72 respondents to this question, 51% strongly agreed with the statement ''the procedure for submitting an application was straightforward'', while 32% partially agreed, for a total positive response of 83%.

Most survey respondents assessed the assistance they had received from the Commission as positive overall. Out of 72 responses to the survey, most strongly agreed (47%) with the statement ''we have received good support from the Commission during the application procedure'', while 28% partially agreed, for a total of 75% positive responses. Nevertheless, 20% of respondents did not know or did not express their opinion. This could suggest that a number of applicants were not aware of the possibility to receive support from the Commission during the application procedure.

One interviewee stressed that '*the management staff of the Commission were very friendly and very helpful for any question we raised*''. However, another interviewee stated that "*before responding to the call, the Commission only provided one email address which could be used to contact them. It often took them a very long time to answer their emails*".

The vast majority of respondents to the on-line survey perceived the information provided to applicants during the call for proposals and application process as clear and easy to understand, and straightforward. Out of 71 respondents to this question, most grant recipients (50%) strongly agreed with the statement "the information in the calls for proposals was clear and easy to understand'', while 44% partially agreed. In addition, detailed guidelines for FRC grant applicants were available on the DG Justice website.

Nevertheless, 18% of the 70 respondents to the online survey reported having to request help from persons with specific expertise and knowledge on the procedures in order to respond to the call, although 37% did not. A quarter of the respondents confirmed that they knew of organisations/projects/practitioners that did not respond to the call for proposals due to the complex/difficult requirements of the call.

One interviewee noted '*'more explanations and more clarity of the main objectives of the call would be useful. If you have previous experience with other calls you know how to adjust to the rules, otherwise it can be complicated to understand the objectives and the rules....The real problem was a misunderstanding with the finance section. The project officer and the financial section of the Commission are separate bodies. There was confusion as to which were non-eligible costs''*. Another interviewee stated that '*'some small organisations would shy away from applying if they knew all the complications that were involved''*.

The majority of survey respondents were satisfied with the technical and IT system. Out of 71 respondents to this question, 32% strongly agreed with the statement "the technical systems/IT provided via the Commission tools have allowed us to work efficiently'', whereas 41% partially agreed. However, one interviewee noted that '*'the IT system/software used to download/upload application form did not work and as a result we were unable to upload the project application on time''*.

6.2.2 Reporting requirements and monitoring arrangements

In light of the fact that the EU is providing funds for these grants, grant beneficiaries considered it reasonable to provide information on the activities they had carried out with the funds provided. More than half of survey respondents considered reporting arrangements to be appropriate. In particular, 39% out of 71 respondents considered reporting arrangements concerning the progress and achievements of the project/activities to be appropriate, while 35% partially agreed, for a total of 74% positive responses.

One survey respondent stressed that '*'In previous years, we have also had situations in which different parts of the Commission had adopted different approaches to key questions such as the eligibility of expenditure or the approval process for project adjustments, staff changes etc. Having said that, it appears that real efforts are being taken to address these challenges. I welcome in particular the introduction of kick-off meetings, the increased involvement of the policy team in terms of discussion about project outputs (and how these could be strengthened) and the creation of improved guidance on managing grants''*.

However, several complained about burdensome reporting requirements. One survey respondent emphasised that '*'the support from the Commission could have been better with regard to the progress/interim report. We didn't receive any feedback at all about our progress/interim report. The financial rules were also quite bureaucratic; there could be more flexibility concerning minor changes within the budget estimate''*. Another survey respondent noted that '*'the downside of very strict and extensive reporting demands is that many small NGOs would not seek EU funds again, and would not benefit from really good funding opportunities which the EU has to offer''*.

One interviewee suggested it '*'would be better if the Commission said that for every change beyond €10,000 for example please come to us, if it costs less you can make the decision yourselves. Also a conference call could be arranged for every quarter where we can update the Commission on the project and this is where we take issues that we have had*''.

At the same time it was recognised that stricter documentation of budgetary changes would help with the financial reporting. It was also seen as important to have more involvement by partners in this area, e.g., by getting information to them early on concerning the financial details that would need to be reported.

As for the Commission's monitoring arrangements, these were considered as partially good and helpful during the implementation of the project/activities by 39% of respondents out of 72 respondents. Nevertheless, 14% of respondents partially disagreed or even strongly disagreed with the statement '*'the Commission's monitoring arrangements are good and have been useful''* and 5% strongly disagreed. Respondents considered it particularly

important to get timely feedback from the Commission on projects' progress/interim reports, so that corrections could be made if necessary.

6.2.3 Duration of the grant

In general, given the Commission's interest in overseeing the development of the projects throughout the grant period, the one year duration for OGs and the two year duration for AGs can be considered sufficient in order to achieve the objectives of the programme. Some 72% of survey respondents indicated that the duration of the grant was sufficient / appropriate.

Indeed, some grant beneficiaries were quite efficient in this respect. For example, within an 18-month period, the project entitled ARIES: Against Racism in Europe through Sport was able to hold 4 workshops and round tables to train 300 students and 40 teachers, establish a network, produce articles and hold TV interviews which reached 40,000 people, produce photos, video clips, and brochures, hold sports tournaments and establish a website.

However, a limited duration can limit the scope of ambition for a project. Indeed, another 28% of survey respondents did not agree that the duration of the grant was sufficient. Several considered the duration of grants as too limited in time in order to achieve the desired outcomes. One interviewee stressed that '*'action grant projects of 3 years give better opportunities to reach more sustainable results. Also, the duration of the grant of 1 year for the operating grant would be sufficient if the selection results would have been announced quicker*''. Several other respondents to the survey highlighted their difficulties with the duration of the grant, as listed in Box 1 below.

> ### Box 6.2 Respondents on difficulties they had with the duration of the grants
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> ■ *"Although the grant was sufficient to complete research and education and training material development it was not sufficient to carry out and then evaluate more in depth advocacy work derived from the research".*
>
> ■ *"In terms of planning, it is very difficult when we are awarded the grant three months after we should have started spending it (without knowing whether we are getting the grant or not). Particularly in relation to operating grants to support ongoing EU-wide networks, one year funding arrangements cause considerable difficulties. In particular, it makes it hard to plan work into the future and raises particular challenges when (as often happens) the funding is not confirmed until long into the relevant financial year.*
>
> ■ *''The project duration of 24 months is too short. This especially applies to those EU policies which in the Member State are weakly developed or absent. Sometimes it is impossible in a 24 month period to explain to people, implement practices, to develop a national policy, to conduct researches and to submit reports to the Commission. I believe that the duration of the project should be differentiated from the expected type of activities. For example, if it is a new policy initiative, or requires extensive research, the project is expected to last 3 years''.*

6.2.4 Recommendations

Overall the management of the application and implementation phase of the projects by the Commission were considered positive. The introduction of kick off meetings, the involvement of the policy team in discussions on project outputs and the provision of improved guidance on managing grants were seen as positive developments. Nonetheless, several interviewees highlighted areas that could be improved and simplified in the future. Chief among these areas was the perception that the financial requirements were overly complicated and needed to be simplified. One interviewee stressed that '*'there could be more flexibility concerning minor changes within the budget estimate*''.

Linked to this was the concern expressed by a few respondents that the Commission itself did not always respect project timelines, which sometimes had knock-on effects on the project concerned, leading to difficulties in project implementation. It was seen as critical for the Commission to also stick to the timeline given for the project in order for everything to run efficiently. Linked to the previous suggestion, respondents also expressed frustration with the length of time between submitting a proposal in response to a call and receiving notification of a grant award. They asked for the Commission to create a more efficient and

quicker way for people to contact them before the call is awarded, perhaps through improvements of the current IT system.

Finally, in certain instances where a project is particularly ambitious in the outcomes it wishes to achieve, the Commission might consider the possibility of extending the duration of the grant.

7 EU added value

7.1 The EU nature of the programme

In general, funding within the FRC programme is only available to activities with a clear European 'added value'. This means that activities must transcend national or local interests to become truly 'European', i.e. having European relevance, coverage and impact.

The FRC programme's added-value mainly relates to its transnational dimension within the EU. The programme was created to promote the development of a European society based on respect for fundamental rights and rights derived from citizenship of the European Union. Such aims have implications that Member States cannot effectively address by themselves. The programme was therefore designed to require an international response comprising a coordinated and multidisciplinary approach, including the exchange of information at EU level and ensuring wide dissemination of good practices throughout the EU. Cooperation between different countries is therefore crucial for the implementation of the programme.

The EU nature of the programme is reflected in its legal basis outlining the objectives of the programme, as well as in the criteria to receive funding laid down in the calls for proposals. Art. 2 of the funding Decision stipulates that one of the general objectives of the programme is to contribute to the development and implementation of "Community policies in full compliance with fundamental rights". The EU dimension is further promoted via the criteria to receive funding and the theme of projects, as laid down in the funding Decision, the annual work programmes and the calls for proposals.

With regard to AG recipients, the annual work programmes and calls for proposals laid down the requirement to form transnational partnerships "of at least two eligible organisations (an applicant plus minimum one partner) from two different eligible countries (i.e. from two different EU Member States)''. As regards OG recipients, organisations must carry out activities with a European dimension involving at least 14 of the EU Member States. Article 9(5) of the funding Decision also states that one of the evaluation criteria for selecting operating grant applications is the "geographic impact of the activities carried out".

The funding decision stipulated, in Art. 4(b), that the AG will fund "specific transnational projects of Community interest". The annual work programmes and calls for proposals subsequently required projects to cover a theme of relevance to the EU. For example, the annual work programmes set out the annual priorities indicating the EU efforts in the area of fundamental rights, e.g. the protection of the rights of the child, fighting homophobia and combating different forms and manifestations of racism and xenophobia, and required the projects to complement these. In the calls for proposals it was also a requirement for projects to demonstrate that they will constitute an "added value at EU level as opposed to national or regional level".

7.2 The geographical coverage of the projects funded

7.2.1 Member State participation according to distribution of lead and partner organisations

The amount of lead organisations and thus the number of projects implemented differs significantly across Member States. For example Figure 7.1 shows that the majority of FRC AG projects were led by organisations established in Italy, followed by Belgium, France, Spain and the United Kingdom, whilst low numbers were found in e.g. Cyprus, Romania and Luxembourg. It follows that FRC projects have tended to be led by a select group of Member States, whilst other Member States were only involved to a limited extent.

Lead organisations were particularly clustered within two Member States: Italy and Belgium. In total 33% (57) of all projects were led by these two Member States. Some Member States did not lead any FRC projects, such as Estonia. However, when looking at the partner organisations, the Member State participation is more evenly spread; out of all Member States, only Malta and Luxembourg participated with less than five partner organisations.

Figure 7.1   Total number of organisations participating in FRC projects, including lead (left) and partner (right) organisations
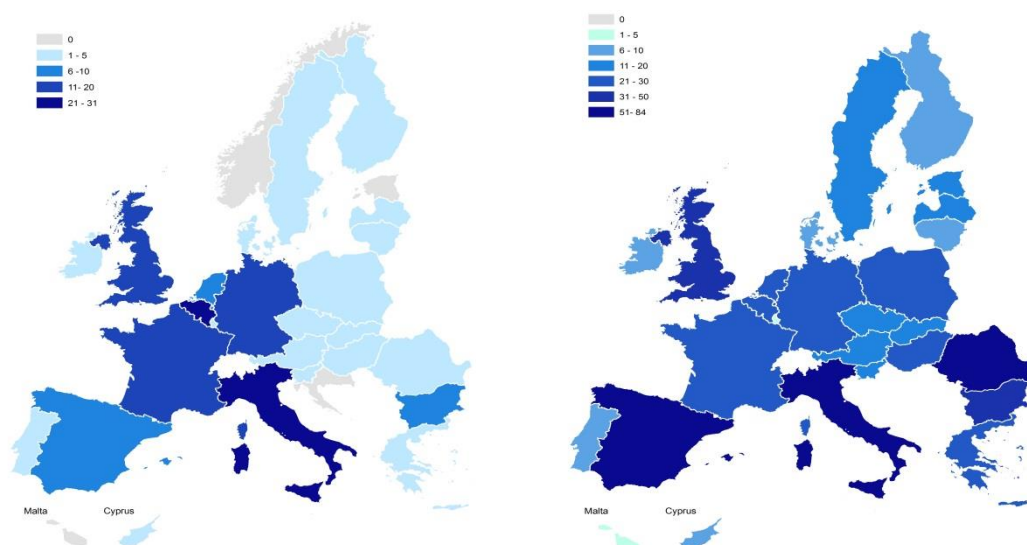
Much of the FRC programme funding was committed to projects where an Italian organisation was a lead (25%), followed by Belgium (13%) and France (10%). This funding distribution closely follows the distribution of the number of projects led by Member States. Distribution of funding by MS of the lead organisation is presented in Figure 7.1 (left). However, the figure does not show the spread of committed funding among project partners, but rather assumes that all of the committed funding was allocated to the country of the lead organisation. As this was not the case in reality (projects were transnational and project partners also received part of the funding) the figure should be interpreted with caution.

The committed funding per Member State of lead organisation was further divided by population, to account for differences in Member State size (see Figure 7.2 right). Assuming that the committed money to lead organisations was not shared with partners outside the Member State of the lead organisation, then between 0.50 – 0.60 € per capita was committed in Belgium and Slovenia. Other Member States received less than 0.30 € per capita.

Figure 7.2   Allocation of FRC committed funding by lead organisation (left) and by lead organisation per capita (right)
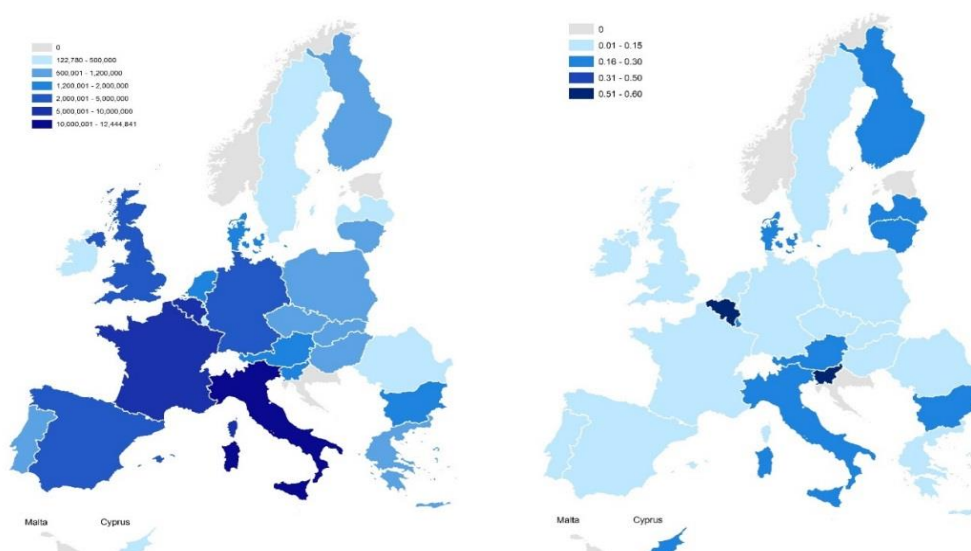
7.2.2 Structure of the partnerships

Figures 7.3 further highlights the partnership structure of the Top 3 Member States with the highest number of lead organisations located in Italy, Belgium and France. The figures show that Italian lead organisations were more likely to partner with Italian partners (21 projects) followed by Spanish partners (14 projects) and Romanian partners (13 projects). This could reflect a preference for teaming up with partners in countries with similar languages. However, in total, Italy partnered with 22 different Member States.

Belgium lead organisations commonly partnered with organisations from United Kingdom (eight projects), Spain (seven projects), Belgium (six projects), Greece (six projects) and Romania (five projects). In total, Belgium partnered with 24 different Member States.

France commonly partnered with Italy (four projects), Belgium (four projects) and France (four projects). In total France partnered with 14 different Member States.

**Figure 7.3   Partnership structure for the Top 3 Member States of lead organisations**
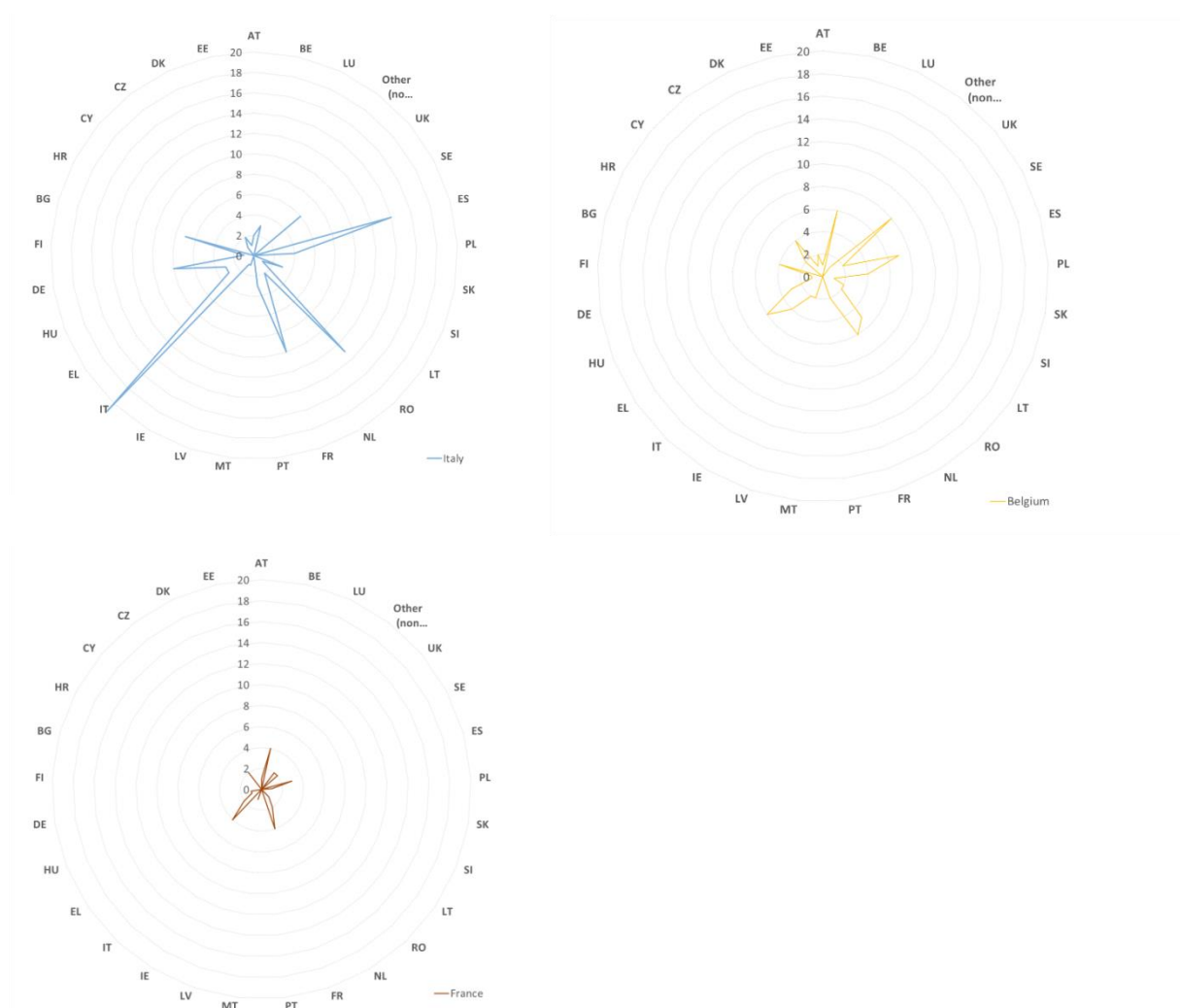
7.2.3 Analysis of the geographical coverage of the programme

The FRC programme did not cover all Member States equally. The coverage of Member States largely reflects the number of applications received by different Member States. In total 813 applications were received for project funding through FRC programme. The highest number of applications was submitted by Italian organisations (174) followed by

organisations from Belgium (77) and France (69). This top three applicant Member States submitted 39% of all applications for funding from the programme.

Figure 7.4   Total number of applications in FRC projects (right) and the success rate by MS (left)
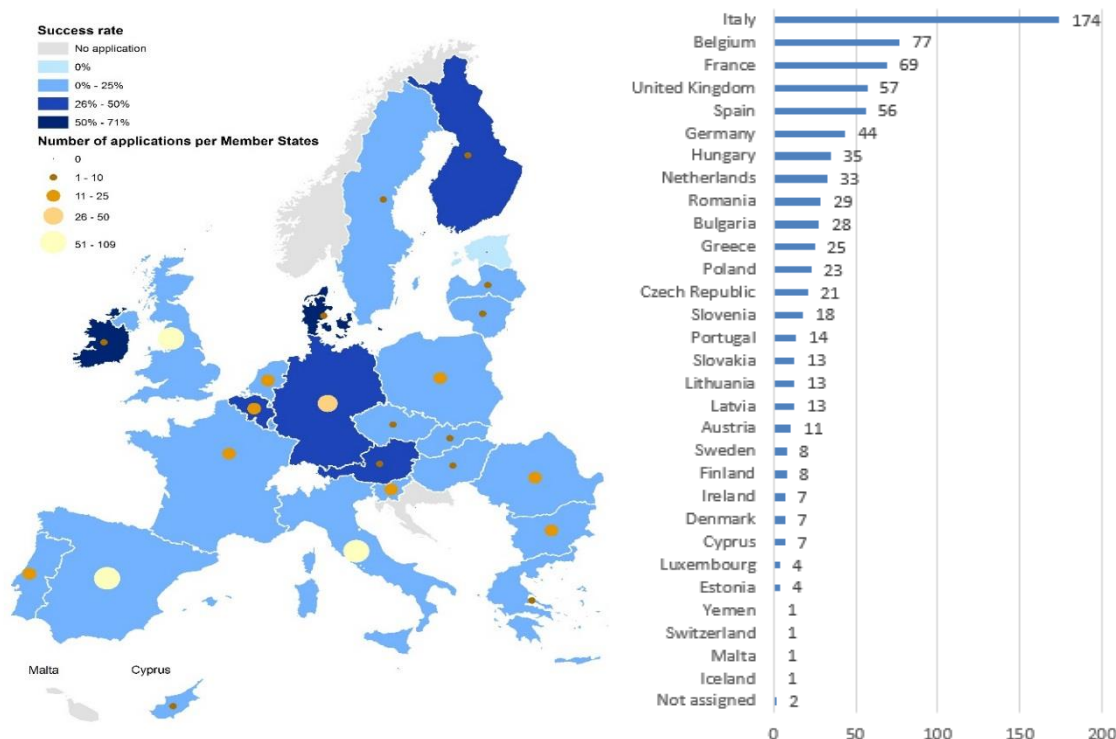
The success rate of the submitted applications was the highest for Denmark and Ireland, followed by Finland, Austria, Belgium and Germany. Estonia and Malta applied but did not succeed to obtain the funding from the FRC programme. It should be noted again that these success rates were calculated based only on the applications for which MS could be identified.

7.3   The added value of the programme for grant beneficiaries

For grant beneficiaries responding to the online survey and follow up interviews, the transnational partnerships brought specific benefits to their organisation, which no other funding source would have enabled on the same scale. Indeed, most survey respondents (88%) stated that the project/activities would not have been implemented without EU funding.

The partnership approach has resulted in an increased knowledge-base of participating organisations as evidenced by the survey results. Out of 59 respondents, the majority confirmed that the partnerships resulted in more knowledge/expertise in the topic area, enabled networking to consist of (more) international partners, and brought about more knowledge on policy and practice in other countries. The partnership also contributed, though to a lesser extent, to more knowledge on relevant EU policies and EU legislation.

The specific benefits of the transnational partnership to grant recipients also facilitated reaching the goals set by the Community as described in the section below.

In addition, the transnational partnerships further extended the scope for dissemination of the results. Both the survey results as well as stakeholder consultations indicated that the good working relations between partners had enabled organisations to reach all target groups (including those difficult to reach) and had ensured a wide dissemination of the achieved results.

With regard to experience of the transnational partnership, the majority of the respondents to the online survey had a positive experience, i.e. out of 71 respondents 75% said that good working relationships have been established with transnational partners and that the programme fostered an exchange of experience and lessons learned across Member States. However, despite overall satisfaction with the partnerships, it is worth noting that 13% (or nine out of 70) of the respondents of the online survey strongly agreed and 41% (29 respondents) partially agreed with the statement that it would have been useful to involve partners from additional countries.

The follow-up interviews confirmed the specific benefits of transnational partnerships (i.e. in particular increased knowledge-base and extension of the scope for dissemination) and gave further evidence of the existence of good working relations between partners.

Box 7.1 below provides some examples concerning the advantages of having transnational partnerships under FRC as outlined by project partners during follow up interviews.

Box 7.1 Benefits & added value of transnational partnerships

■ *'The partners were selected among the best individuals or institutions in the relevant fields. They had therefore the relevant know how to carry out the tasks and the adequate management experience to make sure that the product provided was good quality and delivered on time''.*

■ *''Each partner exchanged their local experiences and shared it with audiences. We divided the work according to what each partner could do best (e.g. In Brussels organising media, In the UK adding discourse to racial discrimination)''.*

7.4 Added value for the EU in achieving EU objectives

In addition to the added-value for grant recipients, the survey indicates that the implementation of projects added value insofar as they contributed to achieving the Community's objectives. The analysis of survey data indicates that each type of activity contributed to multiple objectives drawn from the founding Decisions of the various funding programmes, although some activities mainly served to achieve one main objective in particular. For example, analytical activities mainly contributed to the consistent and coherent implementation of Union law (25%), while mutual learning mainly contributed to developing mutual understanding among national authorities and professionals from different countries (32%).

The majority of survey respondents reported that the project/activities implemented made a significant or major contribution to: creating practical tools and solutions that address cross-border or Union-wide challenges. They also considered the project/activities as having contributed to the elaboration and dissemination of best practices; to improving cross-border cooperation and to raising wide public awareness about the rights deriving from EU law. In particular, some respondents elaborated that the project/activities implemented contributed to other general (EU) objectives, such as improving the quality of information concerning minorities in the European Union and improving the NGO's role in promoting children's rights at EU level and in other Member States. Box 7.2 below gives some of the responses of interviewees when asked how their project had contributed to achieving EU objectives.

Box 7.2 Examples of how FRC projects contributed to achieving EU objectives

■ *"We organised a closing conference with participants from 15 EU Member States. We sent newsletters on project achievements/activities to all EU Member States. This project brought discussion and created a common understanding of the importance of good relations at EU level and the importance of combatting anti-discrimination and racism in society."*

■ *"The final conference involving EU and national decision-makers proved to be of great value, as the Commission Coordinator for the rights of the child participated, and she agreed to take some of the recommendations on board and to try to promote them in the Commission."*

■ *"We established an EU wide knowledge on Justice and Home Affairs issues as a result of the numerous EU policy papers we have made available to the public online."*

8 Conclusions

8.1 Relevance

■ Overall, the priorities of the calls and the actions that were funded can be considered relevant to the programme objectives and to the development and implementation of EU policies and legislation.

■ In general, the AG and OG calls met the needs and interests of the main target group. However, some interviewees raised the need to increase the clarity of the calls especially when questions arose in relation to whether specific types of activities were covered.

■ Only a handful of projects were aimed at fostering an interfaith and multicultural dialogue in the EU and fight against homophobia.

■ The priorities with regard to the training of the general public or the judicial, legal and administrative authorities or legal professionals on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights were not set consistently over the years.

8.2 Coherence and complementarity

■ The FRC programme is coherent with national and European policy initiatives. Moreover, it is complementary with other EU funding programmes e.g. Daphne III, PROGRESS and JPEN, in terms of objectives and thematic areas and target groups. However, this complementarity also carries the risk of potential overlap with those programmes.

■ Some projects funded under the FRC programme were complementary to the objectives and beneficiaries targeted by other EU funding programmes. A strength of the FRC programme is that it enables the financing of projects that may not fit into the narrower focus of other EU funding programmes.

■ At project level, synergies were established with other programmes of international donors with similar objectives at the EU and national levels as well as with projects funded by the FRC programme itself.

8.3 Effectiveness

■ The actions funded under the FRC programme have made a notable contribution to the objectives it set out to achieve. In particular, the FRC programme has contributed to the implementation and development of EU policy and legislation.

■ However, the data provided in the final reports and the interviews was not sufficient to enable an assessment of the specific level of effectiveness of these activities in achieving the programme's objectives. For example, neither the final report template nor the guidelines providing instructions for completing the template gave a clear explanation of the difference between outputs and outcomes. Therefore, the final reports reviewed tended not to differentiate between the projects' outputs and outcomes.

■ The robustness of the method used for the needs assessments carried out by the projects could not be assessed by this evaluation. Needs assessments are not a mandatory requirement for the grant beneficiaries.

■ In the absence of needs assessments it is challenging to assess whether certain priorities should be dismissed or on what issues should be prioritised in the future.

■ The majority of the projects were able to achieve the planned results on time and to reach the expected target group. No obstacles seriously influencing the implementation of the project's results or objectives were identified.

■ The mechanisms in place for monitoring projects while they are underway do not ensure the provision of feedback to grant beneficiaries in all cases and for identifying lessons learned, good practices, success factors, etc.

■ The FRC programme presents gaps as regards to communicating and disseminating project results to EU policy makers and to other project managers that could benefit from those results.

8.4 Sustainability

■ Overall, the FRC programme's projects generated sustainable results in terms of long-term impacts, continuation of activities and partnership building.

■ Evidence of continuation of partnerships established for a project after the project had ended was strong. However, whether activities initiated during a project continued depended on the type of activity and whether continuation required further funding.

■ Many of the projects' outputs and results were considered transferable to other target groups or countries. In more than half of the projects the outputs have already been successfully implemented in another country.

■ Sometimes projects' material and tools required some minor changes, such as translation and adaptation of the project's method to the local context, in order to be of use to other organisations addressing similar issues.

■ The dissemination of project results by the grants beneficiaries was generally effective. However, in the absence of continued monitoring by project partners, it is difficult to assess the long-term impact of their dissemination efforts.

■ Many of the projects or aspects of the projects were considered innovative, particularly by targeting a group or element that was not addressed or researched before, by the tools developed for target groups or by the use of an innovative method or approach. The majority of projects/activities were also considered as leading the way forward by actors working in the same policy area.

8.5 Efficiency and scope for simplification

■ Overall, funding provided to AGs and OGs appears to have been appropriate and sufficient. Of the total funds allocated for AGs for years 2007 to 2012, some 90% was committed and of that, 88% actually spent, indicating a high absorption rate for AGs.

■ For OGs, only some 39% of the total funding allocated was actually committed, though of those amounts, the same percentage as above (88%) was actually spent, again indicating a high rate of absorption.

■ The efficiency of the allocation of funds among the different funding tools was overall appropriate. The amount of money spent was considered reasonable in comparison to the positive effects achieved. The amounts available per project were regarded as sufficient for the implementation of the project's activities and objectives.

■ Overall, the management of the FRC programme was efficient in terms of the requirements imposed on applicants and beneficiaries and the support received. However, some organisations encountered difficulties with the application and implementation process.

■ Reporting requirements were sometimes considered as burdensome, particularly with regard to financial reporting.

■ Overall, the Commission's monitoring arrangements were considered useful; however some respondents experienced difficulties.

8.6 EU added value

■ The FRC programme has provided good European added value. It has contributed to the development and strengthening of EU actions in the areas of freedom, security and justice and has particularly responded to the need to protect fundamental rights and promote EU citizenship.

■ The programme's main added value is its transnational dimension, which is reflected in its design. The main aim of the programme is to promote the development of a European society. Projects must cover a theme of relevance to the EU and be implemented by transnational partnerships between Member States.

■ The transnational partnerships resulted in specific benefits, e.g. increased knowledge-base of participating organisations and a wider dissemination of good practices.

■ The geographical coverage of projects and project partners receiving AG and OG funding is uneven, with a few Member States overly represented and others quite under represented.

ANNEXES

Annexes are provided in a separate document.