



# **Evaluation of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) 2014-2020**

## **Final Report Executive Summary June 2017**

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## **External Evaluation of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights**

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## Executive summary

This report presents the evaluation of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) 2014-2020<sup>1</sup>. The evaluation aims at identifying whether the instrument itself is fit for purpose to deliver EU resources towards achieving EU's external policy on democracy and human rights. The analysis considers the situation both at start of the planning period (2014) and currently. It also considers the place of the EIDHR within the wider set of external financing instruments (EFIs).

The evaluation concludes that EIDHR was relevant at adoption (1 January 2014) and has remained relevant since then. The instrument was closely aligned with all major human rights and democracy challenges worldwide at adoption and is sufficiently broad in its objectives, scope and priorities to encompass and respond to emerging or evolving human rights and democracy challenges since adoption. The EIDHR was based on all major EU policies and guidelines at adoption and remains relevant when it comes to implementing new EU policies since then, including but not limited to the current EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy and the Sustainable Development Goals. Although it is difficult to measure effectiveness at this early stage, the fact that activities and expenditure are increasing is an indicator that the EIDHR is on track to meet the specific objectives included in the Regulation. There has been a marked increase in levels of commitment and expenditure when it comes to human rights defenders (HRDs) and support to civil society organisations (CSOs) to address the shrinking space for civil society, support to economic, social and cultural rights, marginalised groups, and increasingly to the rights of those forcibly displaced. Support to democracy (including election observation, where the EIDHR is the only EFI that allows direct support to be provided) and other key human rights issues has also continued and increased.

The EIDHR is also becoming increasingly efficient - support expenditure has remained stable and low; there has been an improvement in the time taken from commitment to payment; and the average size of contracts has increased in the current period. The EIDHR has also made very good use of the possibilities for flexibility in the Common Implementing Regulation (CIR) that have allowed it to respond more quickly and efficiently to human rights and democracy crises and emergencies than the previous EIDHR. Despite its modest budget, the EIDHR is able to fill gaps and add value to support provided by Member States and other key development partners (DPs). Unlike Member States and other DPs, the EIDHR combines support to both democracy and human rights holistically and, given its worldwide focus, support under the EIDHR reaches far more countries than support by Member States. The EIDHR (when read with the CIR) also contains numerous unique features that allow it to complement and create synergies with other EFIs – most notably the ability to provide support to HRDs and CSOs without requiring the consent of governments in host countries that allows support to be provided to issues governments may not want to address; and the ability to provide support to unregistered individuals and organisations that helps to address the shrinking space for civil society and that make the EIDHR more responsive to human rights and democracy crises and emergencies. The EIDHR also includes significant support to election observation and international and regional human rights instruments and mechanisms to ensure that all key actors in human rights and democracy are supported. And support under the EIDHR also provides invaluable information for the EU at both HQ and Delegation levels for ongoing political dialogue and diplomacy. It is thus a key added-value to the EU policy toolbox.

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EU) No 235/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014, OJ L77, p 85.