

Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020

2011/0344(COD) - 29/06/2018 - Follow-up document

In accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1381/2013 establishing a rights, equality and citizenship programme for the period 2014 to 2020, the Commission presents a report on the interim evaluation of the implementation of the programme.

The reference period for the interim evaluation is the first half time of the programme's implementation, **from 2014 to mid-2017**. The evaluation covered the 2014, 2015 and 2016 annual work programmes. The 2017 work programme, on the other hand, has been analysed chiefly in terms of design and structure, but not in terms of execution. As a reminder, the programme has a general objective and nine specific objectives and is implemented by the Commission via direct centralised management.

Participants and partnerships: the evaluation of the partnerships formed has shown also an appropriate representation of beneficiaries by type of organisation (39% of the total beneficiaries are non-profit organisations, while only 5% are private for-profit entities), but an **uneven geographical composition** of the participating organisations. Italy and Spain are the countries with the largest number of applying organisations, followed by the Greece, the United Kingdom, Romania and Bulgaria. Organisations from the same six countries account for about **50%** of funded action grants. The Commission states that it will work on the achievement of a **greater geographic balance** among the beneficiaries.

Budget: the total programme's budget for the period 2014-2020 is EUR 439 473 000. In terms of amount planned, the biggest specific objective is the one on **preventing violence against children**, followed by the one on non-discrimination. Together these two objectives absorb more than 20% of the committed budget (26%). The **demand for programme funding** has continued to be high throughout the implementation of the programme.

Projects selected: the report notes that in the period covered by the 2014-2016 annual work programmes, **352 projects** have been funded. On average, and looking at the awarding rate of calls for proposal in 2014 and 2015, this ranges between 7% and 27% for almost all the specific objectives, which is quite low. Data for 2014 and 2015 have shown that the specific objectives that attracted the **highest number of applications** are the ones related to the promotion of non-discrimination and prevention of violence. In general, the report notes that according to stakeholders, projects financed by the programme seem to have **higher quality and to be more innovative** than those funded at the national level.

Main achievements of the Programme: the results of the evaluation show that the programme is performing generally well at mid-term with regard to its general and specific objectives in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence/complementarity/synergies and EU added value. The report notes the **crucial role** played by the programme in the development of a European area of equality and rights was especially important in the beginning, where the effects of the economic crisis and the related political developments in Europe could still be felt in many Member States.

The key results achieved across the specific objectives are: (i) the **improved skills** and competences of professionals; (ii) the contribution to **systemic change** by project results, including better tools, procedures, services and policies; (iii) positive progress in delivering improvements in the **level of knowledge** of EU law and EU policies, rights and values; (iv) the programme is **highly effective** in meeting the needs of the relevant target groups.

The report notes the following **areas for improvement**:

Gender mainstreaming and rights of the child: both these issues have dedicated specific objectives. However, the report notes that there is scope for strengthening the protection of women facing multiple disadvantages and mainstreaming the protection of children. Equality bodies and bodies representing the interest of children should be more involved in the **setting of programme priorities**.

The promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities: all applications submitted under this specific objective have been awarded. The mainstreaming of rights of rights of disabled people across all programme phases needs to be increased, in particular through a direct link with the [EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020](#) and a **more involvement** of bodies representing the interests of disabled people in the setting of Programme priorities.

Equity: the programme does not seem to capture the needs of people suffering from multiple disadvantages, as the specific objectives do not support synergies and actions for groups falling under two or more of them. Improvements are needed in this regard. In addition, **co-financing** seems to be a barrier for small non-governmental organisations wishing to participate in the programme.

Monitoring indicators: the report notes the difficulty of attributing changes in the global indicators to the interventions of the programme itself, since the other factors may be involved. The monitoring indicators selected for measuring the achievements of the programme are overall adequate, but some improvements could be implemented.