



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Impact Assessment Board

Brussels,
D(2011)

Opinion

Title

**DG DEVCO - Impact assessment on the European Instrument
for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)**

(draft version of 8 August 2011)

(A) Context

Following up on the over-arching proposal for the next multi-annual financial framework (MFF) for EU spending adopted on 29 June 2011, the Commission is currently preparing a series of follow-up proposals providing a legal basis for sectoral spending programmes and establishing their specific budgetary arrangements. In the area of external action, these include proposals for various financial instruments which should be supported by impact assessments including the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). According to the Commission June MFF Communication, this will focus on two activities. First, there will be strengthened support for the development of thriving civil societies and to their specific role as actors for change and in support of human rights and democracy. This will include a reinforced capacity for the EU to react promptly to human rights emergencies as well as stronger support to international and regional human rights observations and mechanisms. Second, support will be given to electoral observation missions and improvement in electoral processes. Total proposed allocation for the 2014-2020 period is €1.4 bn (2011 prices).

The IAB has focused on the policy choices not yet fixed in the MFF June package.

(B) Overall assessment

The report requires further work on a number of issues. First, the report should better explain the shortcomings of the current Instrument in the problem definition section, providing evaluation evidence and examples whenever possible. Second, it should better indicate the impact of the proposed budget increase and clarify the estimate given for the absorption capacity. Third, the report should describe the (specific) objectives more clearly, and the impact analysis section should better assess the effectiveness of proposed options to address the key problems. Finally, the report should separate the analysis of the impacts of the options and the comparison of options.

(C) Main recommendations for improvement

(1) Better explain the shortcomings of the current Instrument. On the basis of the evaluations on specific interventions supported through the EIDHR, the problems and their underlying drivers should be identified, with clear and balanced references to positive and negative results. Clear references should be made to specific evaluations to support this. The problems, their size and drivers should be presented in a more structured way, and the causal links between the experiences with the current Instrument and the problem drivers should be better explained. The report should better explain the statements in sections 2.3 and 2.4 regarding the presumed absorption capacity and back them up with concrete evidence.

(2) Indicate the impact of the proposed budget increase. The report should clearly indicate the current budget allocation for the Instrument with a more comprehensive breakdown per activity. In view of the budget increase proposed under the MFF June Package the report should explain what this will imply for the potential scope and effectiveness of the Instrument. It should also clarify the estimate given for the absorption capacity.

(3) Strengthen the objectives and options sections. The report should more clearly define specific objectives, addressing the key problems identified in the problem definition, and their drivers. On that basis the report should better define options that are clearly responding to these problems to establish a clear intervention logic. It should discuss whether any options implying spending less on certain aims, reprioritisation and concentration or adjustment of the eligibility criteria, have been considered. The presentation of the current 'sub-options' (in fact elements of the preferred option) should be improved, and the impacts of sub-option 2 (Maintaining the insertion of EU Elections Observation Mission) should be presented.

(4) Present the comparison of options more transparently. The report should separate the analysis of the impacts of the options, and the comparison of options as required by the IA Guidelines. It should better assess the effectiveness of proposed options to address the problems. It should provide a summary table that compares the options on the basis of clear criteria (i.e. effectiveness, efficiency and coherence).

(D) Procedure and presentation

The report should be made more consistent with regard to the level of the analysis, and focus more specifically on the EIDHR. Clear references should be provided throughout the report to information on the number of projects financed or of calls for proposals launched. The annex mentioned on p.7, that should provide "a sample of projects and results ..." should be attached to the report.

(E) IAB scrutiny process

Reference number	2011/DEVCO+/004
External expertise used	No
Date of IAB meeting	14 September 2011