



Fostering Human Rights among European Policies

Large-Scale FP7 Collaborative Project

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Executive Summary

FRAME is a large-scale collaborative research project funded under the European Commission's seventh Framework Programme (FP7). The theme of FRAME is 'Fostering Human Rights Among European (Internal and External) Policies'. FRAME was carried out by a consortium of 19 research partners from the EU and worldwide, coordinated by the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies.

The context in which FRAME took place was the commitment which the European Union (EU) made in the Treaty of Lisbon, to 'uphold and promote' its 'values', amongst which 'respect for human rights'. This commitment to human rights is however facing a number of challenges of various natures, such as ensuring the coherence of EU policies with the commitment despite a very complex institutional structure. Another challenge is the succession of crises which the EU has had to respond to in the last few years, such as the financial crisis or the refugee crisis in the Mediterranean. It is not always easy for the EU to find an effective response to these crisis which at the same time fully complies with human rights.

FRAME was designed to provide the EU with policy-oriented and strategic research to address these challenges, so as to contribute to the development of a comprehensive and coherent policy for the implementation of the EU's commitment to human rights.

The research programme of FRAME was divided into four clusters of research. The first cluster focused on factors. In order to grasp the complex challenges that human rights governance is facing today, FRAME addressed the following factors (i) the key cultural, economic, historical, legal, political, religious, social and technological factors that may impact human rights; (ii) the EU's conception of human rights, democracy and the rule of law upon which the EU is founded; and (iii) the multi-level institutions and instruments seeking to protect human rights at the EU, international and national levels. The second cluster focused on actors. As a multi-level actor, the EU engages with a variety of actors in order to protect and promote human rights throughout the world, either to partner with them, or to challenge their acts and vision. To appraise the effectiveness of EU engagement, FRAME scrutinized the EU's relations with (i) the UN and global institutions; (ii) regional organisations; (iii) third countries; (iv) non-state actors and (v) the Union Institutions and Member States. The third cluster focused on policies. Coherence is crucial for the EU's aspiration to become a leader in human rights promotion, particularly regarding (i) development and trade; (ii) violations of human rights in conflicts; (iii) freedom, security and justice; and (iv) external human rights and democratisation policy. FRAME critically assessed the EU's integration of human rights concerns into these designated policies. The fourth cluster focused on tools. Bringing together all research findings, FRAME formulated policy recommendations on human rights promotion through the EU's relations and policies, including (i) effectiveness indicators; (ii) policy toolboxes; and (iii) policy proposals and legal, political and operational guidance to facilitate the implementation of human rights mainstreaming in different EU policies.

Over its four years of operations, FRAME produced more than 10.000 pages of original research in the form of freely accessible reports on all the themes above. These results have been widely disseminated through academic and educational publications, policy briefs, multimedia materials and academic and policy events. FRAME expects to have a significant impact on policy, on academic research, and on human rights education in the EU and abroad.

I. Summary description of project context and objectives

A. Context

The context in which FRAME took place was the commitment which the European Union (EU) made in the Treaty of Lisbon (into force on 1 December 2009), to ‘uphold and promote’ its ‘values’, amongst which ‘respect for human rights’ (Arts. 2, 3 and 21 of the Treaty on European Union).¹

FRAME was essentially about providing research-based recommendations to the European Union institutions about the best ways to implement this commitment through its internal and external policies, so as to meet the aspirations of millions of people throughout the EU and the world for dignity, freedom and self-fulfilment. The premise of FRAME was thus that the EU is uniquely placed to protect and promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law in relation to both its own 500 million citizens and citizens around the globe. No other supranational organisation indeed has a deeper commitment to human rights or disposes of such a great variety of policy tools and powers to promote human rights.

The starting point of the research was that, although the EU gradually expanded its human rights actions over the course of the past decades, at the start of the project, implementation deficits and new challenges were emerging, both externally and internally. The project proposal identified, for instance: that EU policies were largely sectoral; that funded projects lacked programmatic consistency; that the EU’s knowledge base on human rights appeared limited; and that turf battles were raging between institutions, bodies and Member States in Brussels and abroad at the United Nations (UN) and other fora, where EU positions increasingly faced objections.

FRAME also identified pressures on the EU’s human rights commitment coming from the outside, as human rights were far from being uncontested and were subject to changing dynamics such as globalisation, new forms of violence and war and new actors that question human rights and democracy norms. Even where international standards were generally accepted, implementation at the national level often remained slow.

FRAME was designed to equip the EU with policy-oriented and strategic research to address these challenges.

Over the course of the project, many of the challenges identified at the outset materialised, some intensified, and new ones appeared, thereby requiring to adjust the focus of a number of reports in real time. The coherence of EU internal and external policies with regard to its commitment to human rights continued to be questioned; the level of knowledge and training of EU officials regarding human rights remained sub-optimal; EU Member States slid back on their human rights and rule of law achievements and obligations; conflicts and other factors such as famine and global warming drove millions of migrants to the EU’s shores, raising questions about respect of their human rights by the EU and its Member States;

¹ A note on terminology: FRAME, including in this report, uses the term ‘fundamental rights’ to designate standards applicable in the EU legal order (catalogued mainly in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights) and uses the term ‘human rights’ to designate standards promoted by the EU in its external relations, in the sense of ‘international human rights’.

while around the world human rights were increasingly violated and undermined in conflict zones such as Syria, but also by increasingly assertive authoritarian governments, including in established democracies.

B. General objective

In light of the above context, the general objective of FRAME was to complement to the on-going evaluation work carried out by the European Commission, thereby answering to the findings and recommendations of recent studies on EU human rights policies, so as to provide the necessary building blocks for the development of a comprehensive and coherent policy for the implementation of the EU's commitment to human rights.

It was understood that such building blocks should comprise: (i) a sound knowledge base taking into account the evolving factors, concepts, institutions and instruments underlying the protection and promotion of human rights at the EU, international and national levels; (ii) a critical examination and appraisal of the EU's real and potential contribution to global human rights governance through its engagement with multiple actors and partners and through its multiple policies and instruments; and (iii) a set of indicators, tools and policy proposals allowing for a consistent and tailor-made integration of human rights in EU external and internal actions and policies.

These three different approaches formed the overall structure of the research (see Figure 1) which was structured around four clusters of work, whereby cluster 1 –factors– would cover building block (i); cluster 2 –actors– and 3 –policies– would cover building block (ii); and cluster 4 –tools– would cover building block (iii). Each of these clusters were divided into 14 specific sub-programmes of research ('work packages' or 'WPs' on the chart).

In this way, FRAME aimed to offer creative solutions to enhance the effectiveness and coherence of EU human rights policy and to provide concrete guidance to EU policy-makers to help resolve problems hindering the protection and promotion of human rights in the EU and the world.

C. Specific objectives

In order to achieve the general objective above, FRAME identified a number of more specific sub-objectives for each of these clusters.

1. Objectives linked to factors

A first objective linked to the study of factors which influence the EU's delivery on its human rights commitment was to provide insight into current and emerging key challenges and factors that enable or hinder the protection of human rights in EU external relations and internal policies. These policies do not happen in a vacuum, and therefore it is imperative to understand the contextual factors which are

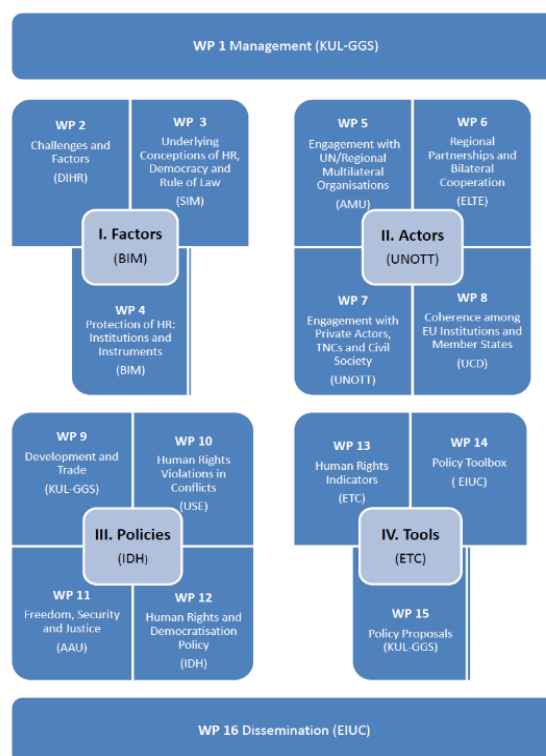


Figure 1: The structure of FRAME research

relevant to them, such as historical, cultural, social, political, legal, economic, ethnic, religious or technological factors. Only after having learned to navigate such context can the EU come up with sensible human rights policies.

A second objective was to elucidate the conceptualisation and operationalisation of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the EU, international and regional organisations and third countries. Indeed, these EU values, despite the international parlance of ‘universal’ human rights, and the universally shared aspiration to the rule of law and democracy, are not neutral and are the object of widely diverging interpretations and approaches within the EU and across the world. As the EU seeks to mainstream such values throughout its Member States and the wider world, it is important to be aware of, and to understand, these differences.

A final objective in this cluster was to appraise the current human rights protection systems (institutions and instruments) at the EU, international and national levels and their interactions. The EU’s commitment to human rights is inserted into a multi-layered human rights protection system, and it is therefore important for the EU to know its place in it and to learn the added value it can bring to it by seeking synergies and avoiding overlaps with other systems.

2. Objectives linked to actors

As indicated, the EU’s commitment to human rights does not take place in a vacuum, and other actors are active in the promotion of human rights, but also in violating human rights. The second set of objectives therefore has to do with the actors, whether allies or foes, which the EU should engage with in order to implement its commitment. These objectives covered state and non-state actors alike.

The first objective in this regard was to assess the EU’s real and potential contribution to global human rights governance through its engagement with the United Nations, as well as with European and non-European multilateral regional organisations, regional partnerships and strategic partnerships with third countries.

The second objective linked to actors was to evaluate the EU’s real and potential engagement with non-state actors, in particular businesses, civil society and NGOs, on human rights issues, be it to induce them to respect human rights, or to engage with them and seek their expertise in the definition of its human rights policies.

The last objective had to do with the EU itself, and its complex institutional construction, which requires the various EU institutions and bodies to engage together in order to arrive at a coherent policy. In order to do this, it was necessary to clarify the division of competences and responsibilities between EU institutions and bodies at the European level and between the EU and the Member States across different policy fields relating to human rights.

3. Objectives linked to policies

After examining the overall context of the EU’s commitment to human rights, and the actor environment, FRAME planned to enter a number of fields of action of the EU to evaluate the impact of selected EU policies on human rights, whether positive or negative, and to make recommendations in this regard. The policies selected for review were trade and development; the common security and defense policy (CSDP);

the policies associated with the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ); and the EU's external human rights and democratisation policy.

These policies were selected as they represented a good sample of the many domains of action in which the EU can affect human rights through the exercise of its numerous competences, namely commercial policy, development aid, humanitarian action and military intervention, migration regulation, guaranteeing free movement and security, diplomatic action, project funding, etc. This range of policies is furthermore representative as they fulfil a number of criteria: (i) the degree of competence (exclusive, e.g. trade; shared, e.g. migration); (ii) the pillar and associated institutional implications (first pillar, e.g. AFSJ policies; second pillar, e.g. CSDP); (iii) the focus on human rights (e.g. human rights and democratisation policy) or not (e.g. development). This allows to cover a wide range of potential direct indirect impacts, and a large number of ways in which the EU may intervene to enhance positive impacts and mitigate negative impacts.

The objectives related to different policies areas were (1) to describe and analyze the current state of play; (2) provide in-depth assessment and original empirical research into the impact of these policies on human rights; and (3) to detect structural strengths and weaknesses; and possible actions to address these weaknesses.

4. Objectives linked to tools

The final set of objectives were of a more normative and recommendatory nature, and aimed to provide concrete suggestions to the EU on how to act or how to modify its practices to ensure positive impact on human rights through its policies.

The first objective in this regard was concerned with knowledge and in particular measurement of human rights. It is crucial for the EU to be able to measure the impacts of its envisaged or actual policies on human rights to be able to tailor them for most positive impact. FRAME therefore had as an objective to research the existing human rights indicators which the EU could use in the definition and evaluation of its policies, and to develop new indicators if needed.

The second objective concerned the mapping of the EU's policy toolbox and how the use of different tools (legal, political, diplomatic, financial, etc.) played out in relation to human rights, with a view to making recommendations on a more rational and strategic use of policy tools for a better impact on human rights.

Third, the project sought to collect, summarise and organise the various policy recommendations made throughout the various strands of research in the project, with a particular focus on the technique of policy benchmarking for human rights, namely the linking of policies with human rights objectives, and the setting up of regular monitoring to verify the achievement of the objectives.

5. Overarching objective

In order to maximise the reach and impact of the project on its stakeholders, an overarching objective of FRAME was to valorise and disseminate FRAME's results and recommendations to target groups (e.g., EU and Member State policymakers, civil society stakeholders and intergovernmental institutions) through

various means of communication such as an up-to-date website, education and training activities and expert workshops.

The project concluded its activities on 30 April 2017, and it can be affirmed that all of the above objectives have been achieved.

II. Description of the main scientific and technical results and foreground

This section describes, sub-theme by sub-theme, the results achieved and how they contribute to achieving the general objectives described above.

Each sub-theme relates to one of the work packages (see Figure 1 above) is dealt with in a sub-section below and relates to a work package led by a project partner.

A. Challenges and factors (led by the Danish Institute for Human Rights)

This sub-theme concerned the exploration of the different contextual factors impacting the protection and promotion of human rights by EU policies.

FRAME first sought to map systematically and to conduct a qualitative and quantitative comparative analysis of the key cultural, economic, ethnical, historical, legal, political, religious, social and technological factors that enable or hinder the protection of human rights in the EU's external and internal policies, taking into account challenges brought about by globalisation, with a focus on the access to basic rights.

A report entitled '[Report on factors which enable or hinder protection human rights](#)' provided a qualitative mapping of such factors by examining current human rights challenges associated with historical, political, legal, economic, social, cultural, religious, ethnical and technological aspects that – for better or worse – impact human rights across the EU. The report analysed various aspects of access to basic rights, and the challenges of globalisation. It provided a chapter on each of the above cross-cutting factors, including literature reviews, assessments of current knowledge and impact on human rights in the EU, plus gaps requiring further study.

The results of this report were discussed with policy-makers, relevant stakeholders and other experts during a workshop organised by the work package leader on 12 June 2015 in Brussels. See more information at <http://bit.ly/2tPa3j6>.

The qualitative mapping was complemented by a quantitative mapping report entitled '[Quantitative Analysis of Factors Hindering or Enabling the Protection of Human Rights](#)', aiming to explain variation between countries in terms of the protection of human rights, based on a number of factors, such as levels of economic development, economic policies and types of political and judicial systems. For this report new empirical data was collected and analyzed. The results obtained are well aligned with previous studies and add new insights for how different combinations of conditions/factors affect the protection of human rights.

Going beyond this preliminary analysis, FRAME then sought to offer a critical assessment of selected factors identified in the mapping exercise. A report entitled '[In-depth studies of selected factors which enable or hinder the protection of human rights in the context of globalisation](#)' notably conducted a study of EU internal and external non-discrimination policies linked to particular factors such as religion, ethnicity or socio-economic background. Case-studies were also performed regarding the inclusion of human rights in EU human rights country strategies and CFSP policy and mission documents. Moreover, in order to assess whether information and communications technologies (ICTs) have positive or negative

implications for human rights protection and promotion, a report entitled '[ICT and Human Rights](#)' provided a detailed analysis of the impact of technology on the enjoyment of human rights, with a focus on two specific issues: freedom of expression, and digital defenders.

Finally, in order to ensure that EU policies are designed in such a way as to take these factors into account, including in external relations, FRAME sought to assess the dynamics and interrelations of these factors in selected third countries. A report entitled '[Assessing factors influencing human rights around the world: three case studies](#)' discussed how a wide range of relevant factors are enabling or hindering the enjoyment of human rights in South Africa, India and Peru, and makes recommendations to the EU for taking these factors into account when promoting human rights in these countries.

These results have been further valorised through a number of academic publications (see annexed list).

B. Underlying conceptions of human rights, democracy and rule of law (Led by Utrecht University)

This sub-theme concerned the conceptual underpinnings of the main values promoted by the EU, i.e. human rights, the rule of law and democracy. The reasons for studying such underpinnings were several. First, as indicated above, such values are not neutral and lend themselves to a range of interpretations. The EU should therefore clarify its understanding of these concepts. Second, it is imperative that the EU would also be cognizant of the ways these values are understood in the third countries where it seeks to promote them, so as to avoid the criticism of value imperialism.

In that spirit, FRAME first sought to critically analyse and assess, both theoretically and empirically, the concepts of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in EU law (Treaties and legislation) and its conceptualisation and operationalisation underlying EU internal and external policies. The mapping of the current theoretical debates relevant to this line of work was performed in an early report entitled '[Concepts of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law: a literature review](#)', which laid a broad foundation for the rest of the project, as it focused on the conceptualisation of the notions of human rights, democracy and rule of law in recent academic literature and emphasised that human rights, democracy and rule of law were all contested concepts, and were continually subject to questioning and revision. Though the chief focus of the report was on conceptual questions, it recognised that practical questions regarding the implementation and promotion of human rights, democracy and rule of law are closely related.

A more applied approach to the conceptual choices made by the EU throughout its relevant policies was thus used in a second report entitled '[EU Human rights, democracy and rule of law: from concepts to practice](#)', which situated the way the EU's conceptualises and operationalises human rights, democracy and rule of law in the wider debate addressed by the first report. The conclusions of the report were in short that the EU adopts quite thick conceptions of human rights, democracy and human rights, but struggles to ensure implementation and coherence of such ambitious views.

The findings of these reports were discussed with academics and practitioners during a workshop entitled 'FRAME-ing Inclusive Approaches to EU Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law'. This workshop took place in Utrecht on 22 January 2015. More information on debates and on the Keynote speech can be found at <http://bit.ly/2w5HAUJ>.

Seeking to confront the EU conceptions of its values to those held in the wider world, FRAME performed a comparative analysis of the content and interpretation of these concepts in selected third countries and international and regional organisations. This allowed to concretely identify shared or different conceptions compared to EU-held convictions and inform EU policy-making.

A report entitled '[Conceptions of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in selected third countries](#)' provided an overview of the interpretation of the main elements of human rights, democracy and human rights in India, South Africa and Peru. Likewise, a report entitled '[Human rights, democracy and rule of law: Different organisations, different conceptions?](#)' discussed the notions of human rights, democracy and the rule of law as they are conceptualised and internalised by the following international organisations: the United Nations, the African Union, the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The conclusions of these reports have identified widely diverging conceptions of human rights, despite the professed universality of the notions, but also widely diverging priorities in the implementation of the human rights agenda.

A final report entitled '[Human rights concepts in EU Human Rights Dialogues](#)' shed light on the actual convergences and divergences between the EU conceptions and practices and those of the countries and organisations with which it holds a dialogue, with a focus on the dialogues with the African Union, China, India, Morocco and Peru. The report concluded with an examination of how the institutional settings of the dialogues impacts their content, and identified the following overarching conceptual challenges: state sovereignty; the critique of double standards; universality and cultural diversity; indivisibility; when conceptions patten; and the politicisation of conceptual differences.

These results provided an important theoretical basis for the rest of the project, and notably provided conceptually sound and coherent working definitions of the (core elements of) three concepts which could be used in particular in the study of indicators, and as benchmarks in recommendations for a more effective EU human rights policy.

The results contained in these reports were further valorised in academic publications (see annexed list).

C. Protection of Human Rights: Institutions and Instruments (led by the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights, Vienna)

As part of the effort to place the EU's human rights commitment into the regional and global institutional and normative context, so as to identify the EU's added value, FRAME set out to map current human rights protection systems (institutions and instruments) including gaps and interactions, tensions and contradictions.

A first report entitled '[International Human Rights Protection: Institutions and Instruments](#)'. This report identified relevant institutions for the protection of human rights at the national, regional and international levels, including governmental as well as non-governmental organisations. It also presented the instruments used at different levels, especially global and regional treaties as well as political agreements and non-binding instruments. Attention was also given to the cooperation between these organisations in order to map the network of human rights institutions, with a specific focus on their interactions with the EU in this international governance network.

This mapping was complemented with a second report entitled '[The Global Human Rights Protection Governance System](#)', which identified gaps, tensions and contradictions in the regional and global human

rights protection governance system. In order to tackle the quantity of institutions, instruments and levels involved, the report focused in particular on the regional level. The first part of the report dealt with the European level, while the second part concentrated on regional human rights systems in Africa, the Americas and Asia and highlighted gaps, contradictions and tensions of human rights institutions and instruments in these regions. These studies allowed to acquire an understanding of how global and regional human rights protection systems have been evolving as a response to the factors mentioned above, in particular in the face of rapid technological changes, and in interaction with the attitudes, conceptions and values of the EU.

The results of this analytical mapping were presented 30 October 2014 at a FRAME workshop in Vienna, where presentations by renowned academics and practitioners were followed by lively debates among the panellists and other workshop participants. (see [programme at http://bit.ly/2h80rKE](http://bit.ly/2h80rKE) and [summary at http://bit.ly/2vPt6Y0](http://bit.ly/2vPt6Y0)).

Moving on to an assessment of the monitoring function of human rights protection systems, FRAME focused on an increasingly important institutional mechanism, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) for which quality standards of human rights monitoring, the UN Paris Principles, are gaining widespread recognition. A report entitled '[International Human Rights Protection: The Role of National Human Rights Institutions – a Case Study](#)', discussed the UN Paris Principles and the relevant international framework, delineated the concept of monitoring before conducting four case studies on the NHRIs of India, Morocco, Peru and South Africa, and on the regional, European level and offering analyses on the coordination and collaboration of NHRIS on a European (regional) level. In relation to the EU, this report noted that the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) had the potential, given its position in the institutional framework, to act as a form of 'European NHRI'. In relation to the engagement of the EU with NHRIs in third countries, the report concluded that much greater systematic and formalised engagement was needed.

The results contained in these reports were further valorised in academic publications (see list annexed).

D. Engagement with the UN/Regional Multilateral Organisations (Led by the Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan)

As indicated above, one of the main angles of the FRAME research programme concerning the EU's engagement with other actors in furtherance of its commitment to human rights was engagement with other international organisations. FRAME therefore sought to systematically study how the EU interacted and sought synergies with global (United Nations, or UN) and regional (European and non-European) international organisations. The objective was notably to critically assess this engagement with a view to more strategic prioritisation and greater impact.

Concerning the EU's engagement with the UN, the project first sought to map the engagement of the EU within and towards UN human rights bodies critically assess this engagement from a policy and institutional perspective with a view to enhancing the EU's position, role, inclusion in and impact upon these bodies. A report entitled '[EU human rights engagement in UN bodies](#)' offered in this regard an analysis of legal and policy frameworks relevant to the EU's presence and activities within the UN human rights system. It described the major priorities, venues, tools and features of the relationship between both organisations, using case studies on selected topics (such as the EU's financial contribution to the

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) or stance on the notion of ‘right to development’) to identify both positive developments and achievements as well as areas of concern. From a more normative perspective, this report analyzed the post-Lisbon developments and long-standing features of the engagement of the EU with UN Human Rights Bodies, taking into account matters such as the EU’s leadership within the UN human rights system as well as the mutual influence between both organisations. The report developed a set of conclusions regarding the institutional framework in which EU participation to the EU takes place, substantive goals and objectives pursued by the EU at the UN, tools and methods used by the EU when engaging the UN, and closes with critical reflections on the effectiveness, coherence and credibility of the EU’s action in the UN Human Rights fora.

The findings on EU-UN engagement were shared and discussed with experts during a closed workshop (see details at <http://bit.ly/2v5uZC7>) organised in Poznan on 26-27 September 2014. This event allowed the research team to share views and experiences with representatives of the Member States and the EEAS directly engaged in human rights activities at the UN.

Moving on to the EU’s engagement with regional organisations, the focus was both on the EU’s engagement with European organisations, namely the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); and with non-European organisations with a focus on Africa (African Union), the Americas (Organization of American States), Asia (ASEAN), and Islamic Countries (the League of Arab States and the Organization for Islamic Cooperation).

On EU engagement with European regional organisations, a report entitled ‘[EU engagement with other European regional organisations](#)’ mapped the EU’s engagement with the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and analyzed how the EU could increase its impact on the normative and technical work of these organisations. The report analyzed the legal and institutional framework of the EU’s cooperation with the CoE and the OSCE, as well as human rights priorities and common human rights standards. With regard to the CoE, particular attention was paid to the EU’s pending accession to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Four case studies complemented the report, addressing in turn the influence of the ECHR on the EU legal order with regard to the right to a fair trial, the Venice Commission, EU-CoE Joint Programmes, and EU-OSCE cooperation in Ukraine.

On EU engagement with non-European regional organisations, four case-studies were delivered. The first case-study was entitled ‘[Engagement with regional multilateral organisations. Case study: OIC and League of Arab States](#)’. The second case-study was entitled ‘[The EU’s engagement with regional multilateral organisations. Case study: African perspective](#)’. The third case-study was entitled ‘[Engagement with regional multilateral organisations. Case study: ASEAN Perspective](#)’. The fourth case-study was entitled ‘[The EU’s engagement with regional multilateral organisations. Case study: Inter-American perspective](#)’. These case-studies follow a similar structure and discuss the institutional framework in which cooperation takes place; the substantive goals of the cooperation for what concerns human rights; the tools and methods through which the EU engages these organisations; and the EU’s and its Member States’ financing of these organisations.

The results of this line of research were presented at a workshop organised on 26 and 27 October 2015 in Poznan (see programme and summary at <http://bit.ly/2vdxW49>).

Additionally, the findings contained in these reports were discussed in a number of policy-oriented conferences, such as the 57th ISA Annual Convention on ‘The International Human Rights Regime as an Anchor for Peace: Comparative regional perspectives’ on Thursday, 17 March 2016 (see summary at <http://bit.ly/2uHYojr>) or in a panel entitled ‘EU’s engagement with the UN and regional organisations’ organised at the 2016 [AHR Conference](#) in Utrecht on 2-3 September 2016. Likewise, the findings present in these reports were further valorised in academic publications (see list annexed).

E. Regional Partnerships and Bilateral Cooperation (Led by Eötvös Lorand University, Budapest)

Other important actors which are relevant to the implementation of the EU’s commitment to human rights are third countries, and in particular strategic partners and large foreign powers such as the BRICs or the United States. FRAME therefore aimed to assess bilateral cooperation – dialogues, partnerships and associations – of the EU with regional partners and third countries on human rights promotion and protection, in particular focusing on the European Enlargement Policy, the European Neighbourhood Policy, relations with ACP countries and bilateral cooperation with emerging economies and the US.

This line of research implied to conduct a mapping and assessment of the human rights instruments the EU uses as part of its regional and bilateral relationships as well as the consistent and qualitative integration of human rights in the EU’s external policy towards these regions and countries, which was done in a report entitled ‘[Mapping, analysing and implementing foreign policy instruments](#)’. This report provided a systematic overview of the main sources of criticism as well as the most important attempts, in the literature, to justify the role that human rights play or should play in EU external relation, with a focus on the need for EU policies to be coherent with its commitment. This report also provided a typology of tools and instruments which the EU uses in its external relations (partnerships, diplomatic tools, unilateral measures, etc.), as such typology was largely missing from the literature. This was done with a focus on the enlargement process, i.e. the area where the EU’s impact has so far proved to be the most substantial.

Addressing the EU’s human rights policies from a more normative perspective, the project then set out to evaluate the concrete human rights impact of the EU’s engagement with third countries, through various strands of foreign policy, with a view to identifying and formulating policy recommendations on how the EU can enhance its impact, as well as to look for creative ways to improve the credibility and consistency of the EU’s external policy from the point of view of human rights. These case-studies each evaluated the human rights situation in the regions or countries considered, based on reports of domestic and international human rights organisations. The guiding questions were: what are the most important developments in the area of human rights during the selected time frame?, what are the outstanding human rights issues?, and thus what are the main human rights priorities? These questions served as a basis to evaluate the local impacts of the EU partnerships considered.

First of all, enlargement policy was studied in a report entitled ‘[The role of human rights in the EU’s external action in the Western Balkans and Turkey](#)’. This report sought to demonstrate, on the basis of three country case studies, how the EU’s tools and instruments operate in the enlargement context, what

human rights priorities these instruments reveal, how these priorities have changed over time and how consistent they have been, and what they reveal about the weight and place of human rights within the EU's general conditionality policy.

Second, the EU's policy in the context of deep and longstanding partnerships with strategic regions such as the southern neighbourhood, the eastern neighbourhood, and the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of States (ACP countries) was studied in a report entitled '[The role of human rights in the EU's external action in the Eastern Partnership, the Southern Neighbourhood and in Sub-Saharan Africa](#)'. This report allowed to identified three categories of EU partners in these regions: 1. states of the Eastern Partnership; 2. states of the southern neighbourhood, and 3. the states of sub-Saharan Africa, which show. These groupings were based on States' economic and political weight and their willingness/readiness to cooperate with the EU. The analysis showed that the three groups were also different as far as the perspective of their relations with the EU. Namely, States of the Eastern Partnership and southern neighbourhood matter more for the EU than sub-Saharan Africa as a whole by the intensity of relations, which also has an impact on the EU's leverage regarding human rights.

Third, the EU's engagement with large emerging economies such as China, India and South Africa was assessed in a report entitled '[Bilateral relations with China, India and South Africa](#)'. This report addressed similar ways in which the relations between the EU and these countries could foster (or not) the EU's objective of promoting human rights, namely: 1. Human Rights dialogues and consultations; 2. EU influencing and empowering local actors (such as NGOs or CSOs); 3. the link between Human Rights and economic/trade relations; and finally, 4. criticism formulated by these countries against the EU.

Finally, the role of human rights in the EU's relationship with one of its closest allies, the United States, was studied in a report entitled '[The Role of Human Rights in EU-US bilateral Relations](#)'. This report provided an overview of the main similarities and differences between the EU and the US regarding human rights, and sought to measure the influence of the EU on the United States on human rights issues based on three case-studies: 1) capital punishment 2) data protection and surveillance programmes and 3) the problem of extraordinary rendition. The report concluded that the EU's position and available space for action is different in all of these fields. Regarding capital punishment, the EU has a firm and standard position according to the report. Analysis of data protection and surveillance programmes showed a two-way impact, since actions of the US, the EU and EU Member States have had impacts and consequences on the legislative developments on both sides of the Atlantic. Finally, extraordinary rendition analysis showed the US' direct and strong impact on EU Member States.

The results of the project on this sub-theme were discussed during a workshop organised in Budapest on 18 and 19 January 2016 on 'The Role of Human Rights in the EU's Regional Partnerships and Bilateral Cooperation' (see programme and summary at <http://bit.ly/2eSWAjG>), and were further valorised in academic publications (see list annexed).

F. Engagement with Private Actors, TNCs and Civil Society (Led by the University of Nottingham)

After having analyzed the potential of EU engagement with State actors, namely international organisations and strategic State partners, FRAME also sought to survey how the EU harnessed the potential of non-State actors for in meeting the challenges of protecting and promoting human rights in EU external relations and internal policies. This first entailed to map the positive and negative impacts of

non-state actors on human rights. This was done by a report entitled '[The positive and negative human rights impacts of non-state actors](#)', which identified some of the challenges faced by the EU in seeking to protect and promote human rights in its external relations and internal policies through effective engagement with non-state actors (NSAs) and made some preliminary conclusions as to the potential for a fruitful engagement with select non-state actors such as businesses, NGOs or human rights defenders.

Taking a more analytical perspective, FRAME also sought to identify the problems and suggest ways forward in strengthening this engagement while recognising that, in an age of globalisation, deregulation and privatisation, NSAs have been identified not only as defenders or promoters of human rights, but also as perpetrators of human rights violations, or complicit in them. FRAME thus sought to critically examine the methods by which positive contributions of non-state actors as deliverers or providers of human rights goods or services are facilitated and rewarded, while adverse human rights impacts of non-state actors are prevented or mitigated. These issues were tackled in a report entitled '[Improving EU Engagement with Non-State Actors](#)', which involved qualitative research concerning EU engagement with a variety of NSAs on human rights, notably using interviews of high level officials, both within the EU and among non-state actors, to understand the challenges and problems both sides encounter in their engagement with each other. In particular, this report critically evaluated the effectiveness of EU's approach towards NSAs through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) and the European Development Fund (EDF). The overarching approach of the financial instruments utilised by the EU is to incentivise good performance and sanction poor results and this includes directly funding NSAs where they are achieving better results than State actors. This report presented a critical reflection on how NSAs are facilitated and rewarded through these funding mechanisms.

These findings were presented and discussed at a Workshop organised in London on 3 July 2015 (see summary, keynote and programme <http://bit.ly/2eSWDvS>).

Likewise, a later report entitled '[Structures and mechanisms to strengthen engagement with non-state actors in the protection and promotion of human rights](#)' further identified steps that the EU can take to streamline and strengthen the engagement with NSAs – understood as encompassing businesses, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and international financial institutions – in the protection and the promotion of human rights. This report notably examined three cross-cutting issues, which are applicable to EU engagement with all types of NSAs: public consultations, transparency and coherence. Furthermore, specific mechanisms and structures strengthening the engagement of the EU with each group of NSAs individually were scrutinised.

As indicated, an important part of the EU's engagement with non-state actors also has to do with putting in place effective mechanisms through which non-state actors who are responsible for perpetrating human rights violations can be held accountable within a multilateral framework of human rights due diligence consistent with international instruments such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and other global and EU initiatives to promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). These issues were studied by a report entitled '[The EU's engagement with the main Business and Human Rights instruments](#)', which examined the extent to which the EU is promoting and tracking business responses to five of the most important international CSR guidelines and standards, namely the UN Guiding Principles, the Global Compact, the OECD Guidelines, the ILO Tripartite Declaration and ISO 26.000. The report concluded that, to the exception of the UN Guiding Principles, the EU's action to promote these instruments was limited to hortatory language and soft measures. The theme of the contribution of the

EU to the Business and Human Rights Agenda was further explored during an international conference organised in Seville on 20 and 21 October 2016 (see programme and details at <http://bit.ly/2v5t40p>).

A report entitled '[Case Study on Holding Private Military and Security Companies Accountable for Human Rights Violations](#)', examined the issue of the accountability of private military and security companies accountable for human rights violations and identified the key factors or criteria underpinning the effectiveness of grievance mechanisms. The case study then analysed a number of grievance mechanisms at operational/company level, national level and international level to see whether they meet these criteria for effective grievance mechanisms. In particular it looked at five judicial and non-judicial remedies: the grievance mechanism operated by the Private Security Company Aegis; the National Contact Points system operated under the auspices of the OECD; the UK judicial system; the Association established by the International Code of Conduct for private security providers; and the European Court of Human Rights.

The findings contained in these reports were further valorised in academic publications (see list annexed).

G. Coherence among EU Institutions and Member States (Led by University College Dublin)

A final actor with which the EU has to reckon in order to effectively implement its human rights commitment is itself and its very complex institutional system and intricate and multi-layered set of competences. A major challenge of the EU is to ensure that the action of all institutions in the exercise of all competences be *coherent*, that is, have a positive impact on the EU's human rights commitment. This struggle for coherence includes coordinating the actions of the EU itself and of its Member States.

Delivering this research first entailed to analyse questions of coherence of the EU's internal and external policies in the field of human rights across different policy fields such as the CFSP, the CSDP, development policy, commercial policy, migration and asylum, AFSJ and counterterrorism, and this along a number of dimensions: vertical coherence between EU policies and the diverse policies of Member States and horizontal coherence between EU institutions. This mapping allowed to provide a holistic and critical assessment of the EU's human rights policy and solutions of international relevance for incoherence problems.

The first part of the mapping was completed in a report entitled '[Coherence of human rights policymaking in EU institutions and other EU agencies and bodies](#)', which examined policy coherence in the context of human and fundamental rights in the EU from a 'horizontal' perspective by analysing the competences and responsibilities of EU institutions and bodies that initiate policies in fundamental and human rights in light of recent institutional developments brought on by the Lisbon Treaty. The report identified three aspects of the EU's policy environments along which coherence issues may arise: organisational structures, policy regimes and interests. Finally, the policies and instruments, together with the competences of the institutions were analysed to identify (in)coherence along these three dimensions in EU human rights policies as they have developed since the entry into effect of the Lisbon Treaty. To illustrate these findings, this report conducted a mini-study of migration and asylum practices as well as discussion of EU commercial and development policy in relation to horizontal coherence.

A subsequent report entitled '[EU and Member State competences in human rights](#)' examined the vertical aspect of coherence, namely between the EU and its Member States, by focusing on the key statements of EU actors with regard to vertical coherence and considering their implementation in policies in a number of fields, including multilateral and bilateral action. These included policies governed by the competences conferred on EU institutions and Member States, including those where the EU has 'exclusive' competence, like trade, and their interaction with policy areas with shared competence, like development. In contrast to these areas where competences are supposed to be clear, the report also examined policies with more 'intergovernmental' characteristics, such as the CSDP and CFSP.

After this detailed diagnosis of coherence issues was established, FRAME sought to identify how institutionalisation and reform of the EU's human rights policy can contribute to a more consistent and coherent policy. It concluded that any credible proposal for reform, especially of an institutional nature, needs to be grounded in the realities of practices, and therefore the approach taken by the final report entitled '[Policymakers' Experiences Regarding Coherence in the European Union Human Rights Context](#)', was to present the tendencies towards coherence or incoherence which can be discerned from a large number of interviews with EU and domestic human rights policy-makers, and to draw inspiration from them. On the whole structural incoherence dominated the accounts of interviewees, who recognised it could lead to other sources of incoherence, including policy or interest-based incoherence. The complexities of the institutional set up of EU human rights policymaking clearly emerged, revealing a picture of competing processes, structures and mandates overwhelming the policymakers themselves. On one hand, there appeared to be too many processes taking place at the same time, with some overlap. On the other hand, the resources to follow all such processes as well as carrying out the necessary human rights related work were regularly reported to be limited and insufficient. A number of concrete recommendations – emerging from the views of the interviewees and informed by further analysis – have been put forward in the final section of this report.

The advanced and preliminary findings related to these objectives were presented and discussed at the workshop in Dublin on 13 September 2016 (see programme and summary at <http://bit.ly/2tPnbor>).

These findings were further valorised in academic publications (see list in annex).

H. Development and Trade (Led by the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies)

This line of research inaugurated the project in-depth analysis of the impact of selected EU policies on human rights so as to form a concrete picture of the actual implementation of the EU's commitment to human rights on the ground.

FRAME's research on trade and development policy first sought to assess how human rights were currently integrated into EU policies on development and trade and the extent to which this was translated in concrete policy instruments and tools, but also to analyse the various EU institutional structures responsible for developing and implementing human rights policies in development and trade and the challenges in creating a coherent and consistent framework for implementing human rights into EU action. To this effect, a report entitled '[The integration of human rights in EU development and trade policies](#)' mapped the different ways in which human rights have been leveraged through EU trade and development policies. In the trade sector, international agreements, the generalised system of

preferences (GSP) and specific regulations including beyond trade issues were addressed. In the field of development, a number of instruments are surveyed for the way they include human rights conditionality, such as the EIDHR. The report paid close attention to the actors involved in the various policies, and notably the extent to which their interactions impede or foster the adoption of coherent policies. The new role of the European Parliament as a veto player in Trade negotiations was particularly studied. Overall, the report found that the inclusion of human rights concerns in EU trade and development policies was fairly systematic, but identified issues in regard of their coherence and implementation, which have the potential to reflect badly on the credibility of the EU's pledge to let its external relations be guided by human rights.

The findings of this report were complemented by another report entitled '[The integration of EU development, trade and human rights policies](#)' explored the practical implementation of EU trade and development policies targeted at addressing complex human rights challenges facing lower income countries through two case-studies. In both cases it was identified that these human rights challenges arose from industrialisation linked to economic development – the ready-made garment (RMG) industry in Bangladesh and the extractive industries in Mozambique. The challenges identified included: exploitation; gender issues; corruption; the operation of commercial interests in supply chains; rapid economic growth alongside wide inequalities; a low level of education; low skilled work and shrinking or narrow civil society space. This report proposed a number of recommendations on how the EU can tackle these challenges in its goal of supporting sustainable development and promoting human rights in the countries studied.

FRAME also recognised that, in order for trade and development policies to consistently have a positive impact on human rights, the EU needed to equip itself with methods to monitor the effectiveness of the integration of a human rights dimension within its trade and development policies, and therefore sought to analyze the extent to which such methods and mechanisms were present and how they were performing. In a report entitled '[The impact of EU trade and development policies on human rights](#)', FRAME studied EU human rights impact assessment practices *ex ante* and *ex post*. The general *ex-ante* practices on fundamental rights impact assessments were studied, as well as specific practices in relation to development programmes and trade agreements (sustainability impact assessments, or SIAs). Assessments *ex post* were also studied through a methodological study of the evolution of freedom of assembly and collective bargaining rights in 13 countries with which the EU has a trade agreement. The functioning of the sustainable development chapter inserted in the EU-Colombia agreement was also surveyed in a case-study.

These results have been extensively discussed at the international conference organised in Brussels on 11 December 2015 by the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies. This event was well attended by EU officials and CSO representatives featured keynote lectures by Ms Sandra Gallina, Director for Sustainable Development at DG Trade and by Mr. Fernando Frutuoso De Melo, Director General of DG DEVCO. See the programme and pictures [here](#).

From a more forward-looking perspective, FRAME sought to study the contribution which the EU can make as part of its development and trade policies to counter the erosion of basic rights in lower income countries, in particular through EU initiatives to improve the international regulatory frameworks on the enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPR) and trade negotiations and agreements. This was done

through a report entitled '[The impact of international global governance and regulatory frameworks in trade](#)'. This report sought to look at the potential of EU trade policies to actually act as a force for 'good global governance' and help protect third countries against an erosion of basic rights, such as access to food, to health, or to housing, and this through two extensive case-studies located in different fields. The first case-study addressed the issue of forestry management and the associated human rights, through the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) programme in Ghana. The report assessed the extent to which the EU is able to promote instruments of good forestry governance through innovative bilateral instruments such as Voluntary Partnership Agreements and various systems of legality verification. The conclusion which this case-study suggested is that such a unilateral trade policy seeking to leverage human rights in a sector in which the EU does not have a direct stake may raise doubts as to its effectiveness in countering the erosion of basic rights, owing to a number of factors. The second case-study looked at intellectual property chapters included in free trade agreements negotiated by the EU to assesses the extent to which these treaty provisions achieve the correct balance between intellectual property rights and the human right to health, or whether they favour one or the other interest. This was illustrated with review of the place of intellectual property issues in the negotiations between the EU and India. The conclusion was that the EU at times risk undermining human rights protection when it pursues its trade policies with too little regard for the balance which must be achieved between its direct interests and the protection of human rights.

These results were further valorised in academic publications (see list annexed).

I. Human Rights Violations in Conflicts (Led by the University of Seville)

There is arguably no greater threat to human rights than when an armed conflict arises, and therefore, given its commitment to human rights, there should be no greater goal to the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) than to mitigate the negative human rights impacts of conflicts. In order to determine how this should best be done, FRAME first surveyed contemporary human rights violations, especially against vulnerable groups, within the context of conflicts among and within states, between and within communities.

In a report entitled '[Human rights violations in conflict settings](#)', FRAME provided a comprehensive survey of conflict-related human rights violations on the basis of existing databases, with a focus on the role of non-state actors as perpetrators of human rights violations and on particularly vulnerable groups in current conflict settings. The report examined features of contemporary armed conflicts and new forms of violence that can have implications for the protection of particularly vulnerable groups. In doing so it sought to present the complex interaction between human rights violations and conflict and to identify some of the obstacles that impede the protection of these vulnerable groups through the provisions of relevant legal frameworks. It surveyed patterns, perpetrators and trends of serious human rights violations committed against selected vulnerable groups (children, women, refugees and internally displaced people and indigenous peoples) on the basis of the information provided in existing databases and human rights reports. The survey of human rights violations related to current conflicts and new forms of violence offered a complex picture of contemporary human rights violations of vulnerable groups in conflicts.

The study of the ways EU action in conflict settings can have a positive impact on human rights also required to gain a thorough understanding of the legal framework applicable to conflicts, as it pertains to human rights. FRAME thus sought to examine the relationship between the protection of human rights, international humanitarian law and the law of humanitarian assistance, with a focus on vulnerable groups (e.g., children, internally displaced persons and refugees), but also the relationship between the protection of human rights and promoting democracy and international criminal law and the extent to which the application of international criminal law contributes to the promotion of democracy in post-conflict situations.

In a report entitled '[Applicable regulatory frameworks regarding human rights violations in conflicts](#)', FRAME studied the relationship between the following regulatory frameworks applicable in conflict situations: international human rights law (IHRL), humanitarian law (IHL) and the legal regime for humanitarian assistance, as well as international refugee law (IRL) and international criminal law (ICL). The report recognised that, in many contemporary conflict settings key issues arose regarding the relationship between those legal frameworks. They mainly concern: a) the convergence and complementarity between IHRL and IHL; b) the interpretation of key rules for the protection of civilians like the civilian-combatant distinction or civilian and military objectives; and c) the concept of protection from a IHL, IHRL and humanitarian assistance perspective. This report also considered the cooperation with, and support for, the International Criminal Court (ICC) by the EU as part of a broader analysis of the relationship between the protection of human rights and promoting democracy and ICL and the extent to which the application of ICL contributes to the promotion of democracy in post-conflict scenarios. The role of truth, justice and reparation as integral components of any process of transition were also addressed.

Moving on to a more normative analysis of the EU's action, FRAME sought to assess the integration of human rights, humanitarian law and democracy/rule of law principles and tools into the EU's CSDP, in particular CSDP missions, as well as the complementarity of EU action in the area of CSDP with the relevant security/defence actions of other multilateral actors on various policy levels (UN, regional). A report entitled '[Case study: Common Security and Defence Policy \(CSDP\)](#)' provided an analysis of the integration of human rights, humanitarian law and democracy/rule of law principles and tools into the European Union (EU) Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), with a focus on the protection of vulnerable groups. This report largely drew from interviews with experts in Brussels and in the field to assess all stages of CSDP missions and operations, and concluded that great progress had been made in the field of mainstreaming human rights and gender in the CSDP domain, as demonstrated by the numerous policy documents on key human rights priorities now applicable to the area of CSDP. Yet, the report also identified the risk of turning human rights, gender and IHL into expert issues rather than cross-cutting issues having a direct impact on the effectiveness of missions and operations in delivering their mandates. The report therefore recommended to continue to make progress in human rights, gender and IHL mainstreaming.

These findings were discussed by field and Brussels officials, experts and FRAME researchers on the occasion of the workshop on 'A global force for human rights? Assessing the EU's comprehensive approach to human rights in crisis management and conflict' held in Seville on 11 March 2016. A summary

and the programme are available at <http://bit.ly/2v5Q13c>. The report comprised a keynote lecture by Prof. Jan Wouters on 'A global force for human rights? Preliminary findings from the FRAME project' (video available on event page).

Finally, FRAME sought to formulate policy recommendations on how to foster the coherence and efficiency of the EU external policy related to all phases of crisis and conflicts to prevent and overcome violence through the integration of human rights, humanitarian law and democracy/rule of law principles, and did so through a report entitled '[Coherence and efficiency of the EU external policy related to conflict and crisis](#)'. This report provided recommendations on the EU's comprehensive approach to conflict and crises and how crisis management can be improved to strengthen support human rights. Additionally, the report addressed several aspects related to EU interventions in conflict and crisis situations: applicable law, responsibility and accountability. The report furthermore drew implications from previous reports' findings that the inter-operability between IHL and IHRL has implications for EU crisis management interventions, in terms of the applicable legal framework and regarding responsibility for human rights violations. Finally, the report focused on the protection of vulnerable groups in EU crisis management interventions, providing recommendations for the improvement of the implementation of current policies and for the adoption of new frameworks for a wider set of groups, as gender mainstreaming, the protection of children in armed conflict and the protection of civilians have been priorities of the EU. However, the report flagged that other groups such as refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and minorities, whose rights are directly affected by EU security policies, have not received the same degree of attention.

These findings have been further valorised in academic publications (see list annexed).

J. Freedom, Security and Justice (Led by Abo Akademi University, Turku)

As per Art. 3 2. TEU, the EU 'shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers, in which the free movement of persons is ensured in conjunction with appropriate measures with respect to external border controls, asylum, immigration and the prevention and combating of crime.' This high ambition implies to address a wealth of issues with an obvious impact on the fundamental rights or citizens, but also non-citizens like migrants and refugees. In order to understand these impacts and what the EU does to manage them, it is important to map the institutional framework and instruments available to integrate human rights into the external and internal dimensions of EU area of freedom, security and justice (AFSJ) policies.

A report entitled '[Fundamental rights in the institutions and instruments of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice](#)' gave an overview of institutional decision-making in the AFSJ, and focused on how, and through which instruments, EU institutions and agencies active in the AFSJ engage with fundamental rights and through which instruments. A difference was made between institutions/actors involved in lawmaking, implementation, and monitoring. The report considered the role played by the main EU institutions and by several sub-institutional and external actors such as Frontex and Europol. It then examined instruments through which policies are enacted in the different policy areas of the AFSJ, and

highlighted their impact on fundamental rights. The overview of actors and instruments suggested some issues of particular concern for the realisation of fundamental rights in the AFSJ, namely competence issues, Member State discretion and differentiation of obligations, lack of mainstreaming of fundamental rights concerns, flaws in accountability mechanisms, technocratisation of AFSJ policies, securitisation of fundamental rights issues, and disregard for external fundamental rights implications.

After the mapping was done, FRAME could start analysing how respect for fundamental rights is integrated in the external and internal aspects of EU AFSJ policies and critically assess their coherence and address gaps.

A second report, entitled '[Critically assessing human rights integration in AFSJ policies](#)' examines in this regard the integration of human rights into certain EU justice and home affairs policies, namely the EU's action in relation to border checks, asylum and immigration, and in connection with organised and serious crime, terrorism, or human trafficking. This report identified gaps and incoherence in how human rights were integrated into, and protected in, the said policies. The main issues identified were: (a) a strong security focus or 'securisation'; (b) lack of coherence; and (c) lack of solidarity. As regards securitisation, a trend towards accepting increasingly punitive and coercive measures to counteract serious crime and irregular migration was identified. In relation to coherence, particular concern was expressed concerning the lack of coherence between the EU's human rights rhetoric and the actual integration and monitoring of human rights standards. The lack of solidarity was identified as a factor that negatively affects the possibilities of the EU to overcome the human rights problems identified in the report.

Based on these findings, the report most importantly recommended that Member State discretion and mutual trust should not override protection of human rights, and that political will and solidarity among the Member States are necessary if more profound changes in the justice and home affairs cooperation are to be achieved.

These results were addressed during a Workshop entitled 'When the going gets tough: Human rights in times of economic hardship' organised in Turku/Åbo' on 19-20 November 2015 (summary and programme available at <http://bit.ly/1I12IsS>). Noting both the particularities and the commonalities in the challenges faced by the EU Member States, the presentations at the workshop highlighted the many difficulties in balancing economic necessities with guaranteeing the protection of human rights.

As indicated, putting in place the AFSJ requires ensuring the protection of the fundamental rights of all who are present in the area, which raises the question of the rights of those most vulnerable. The area of migration, in particular given the current situation of crisis, is particularly relevant in this respect. FRAME therefore set out to analyse how and to what extent vulnerable groups (such as children, irregular migrants, refugees) were protected both in EU external and internal policies on border checks, asylum and immigration. This issue was the key focus of a report entitled '[The protection of vulnerable individuals in the context of EU policies on border checks, asylum and immigration](#)', which studied how the protection of (unaccompanied) children, women and persons with disabilities was ensured in border control procedures, asylum proceedings and immigrant integration in the EU. The report started by noting that vulnerability was typically portrayed in collective terms: vulnerable groups are to be provided with special protection, as their human rights are at a particular risk of being violated. The report warned that such approach may be counterproductive, as labelling all individuals deemed to belong to a specific group as vulnerable may be (further) disempowering. The report consisted of case studies addressing different stages and dimensions of the asylum and migration processes within the EU, namely (i) border

management, in particular the passive and active interception measures; (ii) asylum detention in Italy; (iii) the situation of unaccompanied minors in Greece; (iv) gender violence and gender-based persecution against women as grounds for asylum claims; (v) the human rights situation of low-paid third-country migrant workers in Ireland, and especially their integration; (vi) the statelessness phenomenon in South Asia. The report identified challenges in recognising and addressing vulnerability within migration and asylum policies of the EU are identified. As asylum-seekers and irregular migrants are prone to be contextually vulnerable, the report argued in favor of the adoption of societal measures and structures that mitigate vulnerability and build resilience.

The results present in the reports were further valorised in academic publications (see list annexed).

K. Human Rights and Democratisation Policy (Led by the University of Deusto, Bilbao)

So far, the policies surveyed were policies for which human rights were not a primary objective, but rather a parameter which policy-makers had to take into account to ensure positive impacts. This line of research on the contrary addressed the policies deployed by the EU explicitly in order to protect and promote human rights in third countries, namely the human rights and democratisation policy. This policy is made up of a myriad of instruments, which therefore required mapping all of the legal and policy instruments of the EU for human rights and democracy support. This was done in a report entitled '[Mapping legal and policy instruments of the EU for human rights and democracy support](#)'. Based on a review of EU policy documents and literature, this report identified the instruments that set up the structure of human rights and democracy policy, such as the Strategic Framework on Human Rights and Democracy, which sets out the principles, objectives and priorities guiding EU action.

In order to make a reasoned assessment of EU dedicated human rights and democratisation policies, and to understand the extent to which the EU's commitment to human rights is mainstreamed in EU external policies, it was also important to identify human rights priority themes and vulnerable groups for EU multilateral, regional and bilateral cooperation and to assess whether these priority themes and vulnerable groups are effectively and consistently reflected across the range of all EU policies.

This report thus examined the EU's policies in relation to priority themes and towards particular vulnerable groups, notably considering financial instruments, and verifying whether the identified priorities were translated into actions in the Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy. The report also analyzed key instruments regarding vulnerable groups, with a focus on LGBTs, children, Roma, asylum seekers and refugees, persons with disabilities, and women, offering a historical overview of policy developments, and looking at the relevant legal frameworks and the internal and external EU policies towards these groups. This preliminary research was complemented by a follow up report, entitled '[Human rights priorities in the European Union's external and internal policies: an assessment of consistency with a special focus on vulnerable groups](#)', which assessed whether attention for human rights themes and vulnerable groups was effectively and consistently reflected across the range of EU policies with particular relevance for the protection and promotion of human rights: development cooperation, trade, the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the external dimension of the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice (AFSJ) and the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The analysis proceeded in two

steps: (i) the identification of inconsistencies in the understanding and usage of ‘vulnerable groups’ and ‘human rights themes’ by the relevant EU policy documents issued in each step of the policy cycle, from formulation to implementation and evaluation and (ii) the identification of possible gaps in the selection of priorities by the EU, i.e. groups that should deserve special protection but were not prioritised in the context of the policy documents concerned. The report concluded that the visibility of human rights priorities was much clearer in certain policies, such as CSDP, development and the AFSJ, than in others, such as the ENP and trade. In almost all the policies, the analysis also identified, in policy documents, a clear predominance of the references to certain vulnerable groups, namely women and children. In addition, the report pinpointed in some policies such as development and CSDP, a ‘phenomenon of dilution’ of the human rights components as the policy cycle moves from formulation to implementation.

Taking a more normative perspective, FRAME then sought to explore the extent to which EU human rights and democratisation policies responded to today’s key challenges for human rights protection, as identified earlier in the project, notably through an assessment of the implementation and impact of EU instruments used for the promotion of human rights and democracy, in particular with regard to the protection of vulnerable groups.

This was done in a report entitled [‘Challenges to the Effectiveness of EU Human Rights and Democratisation Policies’](#), which explored the effectiveness of EU policies in the field of human rights and democracy promotion against the background of a number of selected case studies. This was assessed in light of the recent creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS), as this report reviewed the expectations that were as a result created, recognising that a strong EEAS was a precondition for an effective EU human rights and democratisation policy. The premises for this analysis drawn from prior research were that the capacity of the EU to have a significant impact on the democratisation processes taking place in different regions of the world is in doubt, and that a gap exists between the rhetoric proclamations in Brussels and the impact on the ground of its policies and programmes.

The case-studies addressed the EU’s contribution to human rights and democratisation in a number of regions of the world, namely Ukraine, Serbia and Albania from Europe, Peru and Bolivia from Latin America, Egypt and Tunisia from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA region), and China from Asia. The goal was to compare the policies of the EU across the countries and regions to identify best practices and challenges for the EU. The report concluded that the capacity of the EU to have a significant impact globally is conditioned by the ever-changing international context, characterised by a progressive decline of Western power, with an increasing economic and political relevance of emerging countries such as Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (the so-called BRICS), the Gulf States or Turkey. In this new scenario, the EU’s leverage in the promotion of a value-based international system diminishes. Another challenge to the human rights and democracy promotion strategy of the EU identified by the report is its underlying economic agenda. Most of the time the human rights and democracy support package is accompanied by the promotion of a liberal market economy, i.e. precisely the model that is under strong criticism, viewed as promoting inequality and exclusion, for instance in the Arab Spring context. The report therefore concluded that the EU could not pretend simply to export its model of human rights and democracy, since it generates strong reactions and contestations, but it needs to be more modest in its approach, paying attention to the local context. National and local ownership were identified as key components of any meaningful strategy of promoting human rights and democracy.

These findings were confirmed by a second report entitled '[EU Promotion of Deep Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean: A Missed Opportunity?](#)' which took a closer look at the EU policies in its southern neighbourhood, with a focus on the EU's professed objective of achieving 'deep democracy' in the region, with a focus on Tunisia, Egypt and Morocco. The objective of this report was to explore the extent to which EU policies towards these countries have been influenced by the supposedly new EU paradigm of 'deep democracy' and by the creation of new programmes and institutions such as the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), the Civil Society Facility (CSF), or the reviewed European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). This report demonstrated that most changes in EU policies towards the Southern Mediterranean, particularly the reviewed ENP, were essentially rhetoric and did not substantially modify the traditionally top-down and business-oriented approach that has dominated these relations. The report showed that the renewed emphasis of the ENP on the 3 Ms (money, market, and mobility) has not served to reorient the main drivers of the ENP, namely liberalisation, the progressive integration of the economies of the Southern Mediterranean into the European market, and the externalisation of borders and control of migration and refugee flows. Human rights and democracy have played a relatively small role in the supposedly new approach to bilateral relations between the EU and the Southern Mediterranean, in spite of the ambitious rhetoric enshrined in the official documents coming from Brussels in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. The report therefore urged the EU to make a strategic and sincere reflection on the role it wants to play in a changing region such as the Southern Mediterranean, as the Arab Spring has been a missed opportunity in this regard.

These findings were discussed during the workshop organised in Bilbao on 11-12 April 2016 on 'Challenges to the effectiveness of EU human rights and democratisation policies' (programme available at <http://bit.ly/2eTnyaR>). The proceedings of this workshop will be published by renowned publisher Routledge in 2017 in a book entitled 'EU Human Rights and Democratisation Policies: Achievements and Challenges', edited by FRAME partners Felipe Gomez Isa, Cristina Churruca and Jan Wouters. The other results of the reports were also valorised in other academic publications (see list annexed).

L. Human Rights Indicators (Led by the European Training and Research Training Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Graz)

After having examined contextual, conceptual, institutional and normative factors which hinder and enable the protection and promotion of human rights by the EU, after having assessed the engagement of the EU with a range of actors on human rights, after having surveyed key EU policies for their impact on human rights, and having formulated pointed recommendations on the various issues covered, FRAME sought to address the implementation of the EU commitment as a whole, and to make recommendations aimed at making it more effective, coherent and credible. The first set of recommendations had to do with the issue of knowledge, and in particular the measurement of human rights, as it is necessary to measure impacts and progress before being able to make an assessment of the effectiveness of policies aimed at implementing the EU's commitment to human rights.

One innovative type of instrument to this effect are human rights indicators, which provide information about the level of enjoyment of one or several human rights in a given context. In order to explore the potential of indicators to measure and improve the effectiveness of EU policies regarding human rights, FRAME first sought to map and critically assess existing human rights indicators and attempts to develop human rights indicators in relation to EU actions and policies in a report entitled '[Human Rights Indicators](#)

[in the Context of the European Union](#)’, which offered an analysis of the current application of human rights indicators in the European Union’s internal and external action, their legal and political framework, as well as their rationale. It further assessed, through qualitative fieldwork research, the needs of key European stakeholders towards a human rights indicator system. The report observed that several EU institutions had taken initiatives to measure human rights or have at least underlined the necessity to do so. However, a comparison of the EU’s attempts to develop human rights indicators revealed considerable discrepancies in the approaches taken: no systematic approach is currently followed by the EU bodies to measure the state of, or progress made in, respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights. The report then produced an extensive mapping of 130 mechanisms by a variety of actors, based on different rationales, data sources and with different areas of application. Drawing conclusions on the suitability of particular indicators in the EU context, the report determined that the structure-process-outcome model developed by the OHCHR should be followed. This model is designed to measure the extent to which human rights dimensions respect, protect, fulfil and promote human rights standards in any given environment.

Another conclusion of the report, confirmed by the discussions of a closed workshop held in Graz on 27 April 2015 with international experts (see details at <http://bit.ly/2h7MMDh>), was that there was no need to develop new indicators as the necessary information was already available. Rather, the issue was the proliferation of indicators and their availability. On the one hand accessing indicators requires expertise on human rights and skills for assessment. On the other hand, information resources are scattered and often, while relevant to human rights, not genuinely collected and offered as human rights information. It was therefore decided to concentrate the remainder of the work on the development of an Access Guide to Human Rights Information to ensure data availability and data reliability, but also to ensure that indicators used by the EU are developed and applied in a transparent and consistent manner.

In a report entitled ‘[Access Guide to Human Rights Information](#)’, FRAME provided EU officials with easy-to-access information on existing human rights indicators, human rights related data, as well as human rights compliance information provided by international and regional human rights bodies. For this purpose, the guide briefly discussed the pros and cons of these sources, showing exemplarily how to understand existing information and how to relate it to the normative content of the respective human rights provisions. The Access Guide to Human Rights Information provided the available human rights specific information based on the example of the prohibition of torture, the freedom of expression, the rights of the child, as well as on social indicators. Information sources were structured along a typology derived from the purpose they were processed for. Accordingly, a differentiation was made between the application of the OHCHR-model, compliance information provided by human rights bodies, as well as indicator-based human rights-related information. The Access Guide thus provides step-by-step guidance on the most effective retrieval and utilisation of existing human rights information based on exemplary research requests. Additionally, the access guide to human rights information is being turned into an online searchable tool which will soon be available as a separate section of the FRAME website.

The results present in the report were further valorised in academic publications (see list annexed).

M. Policy Toolbox (Led by the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratisation)

After elucidating the problem of knowledge and measurement, FRAME sought to make sense of the EU's policy toolbox when it comes to human rights, that is, identify and rationalise the wide variety of policy tools which the EU disposes of and uses in order to implement its commitment to human rights. In order to do so, it was first necessary to develop a theoretical framework which systematically assessed EU policy tools for the integration of human rights considerations in internal and external policies, which was done by a report entitled '[Analysing the findings of the research of the other work packages on policy tools](#)'. This report mapped the EU internal fundamental and external human rights toolbox on the basis of the findings of other FRAME reports and found that the EU has at its disposal a wide range of instruments that can be used to reach EU human rights objectives. A typology of these instruments was proposed, namely (i) internal v. external policy tools; (ii) paradigmatic instruments; (iii) soft v. hard law tools; (iv) tools displaying soft and hard power; (v) tools that serve conceptualisation, operationalisation, and evaluation of policies. One of the first findings of the report was that the first distinction (internal v. external) was so radical in EU policies that it conditioned all the other categories. Additionally, FRAME adopted a sorting key based on the functions of specific categories of tools. The report also found that the freedom of the EU to adopt specific measures and to use specific tools was limited by the exigencies of the EU and international legal systems on the one hand and political will on the other.

The next question addressed by FRAME was thus how to ensure coherence among all the tools in the whole policy field, but also whether there was potential for adaptation or for new policy tools in order to increase the effectiveness and/or consistency of policies. The question of the effectiveness of human rights tools was addressed in a report entitled '[Assessing the strategic use of the EU fundamental and human rights toolbox](#)', through case-studies conducted across the project, and in three new case-studies assessing the use of particular tools in recent fundamental rights crises, namely the rule of law backsliding in some EU Member States, the migration crisis, and the crisis in Ukraine. The report started each analysis with determining the set of 'strategic documents' relevant to the crisis. For all case studies the report then asked whether the long-term tools had been implemented and what the impact of the crisis had on the use of tools. The report concluded that the existence of strategy mattered, notably for coherence. However, echoing other conclusions of the project, the report also found a gap between the strategies concerning human rights and their implementation by the EU, and those of the Member States, perhaps owing to the lack of a clear, visible and accountable leadership at the top of EU policies. The report thus suggested that, irrespective of the existence of long-term strategies, the tools tend to be used on an *ad hoc* basis.

These analyses benefited from the discussions which took place at the Workshop organised by EIUC on 5-6 May 2016 in Venice, entitled 'The Strategic Use of the EU Fundamental and Human Rights Toolbox', to which a wide range of experts, EU officials and FRAME researchers are invited. See more information at <http://bit.ly/2ulwvHW>.

Finally, FRAME sought to develop, based on the results of FRAME's research, a policy toolbox to be used by EU policy-makers and integrating existing, adapted and new policy tools in order to enhance human rights protection within the EU and in third countries. This was done in a report entitled '[The FRAME](#)

[Toolbox for the EU Fundamental and Human Rights Policies](#)'. On a general level, the report concluded that the traditional internal-external tools division is no longer adequate. Additionally, the report concluded that the EU policy toolbox was overflowing and required simplification. More attention and effort should additionally be placed on the implementation of EU policies, and more effective monitoring and evaluation is needed. In order to do so, the report emphasised the importance of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which should act as a reference point in achieving the EU's commitment to human rights. Based on these conclusions the report made three main recommendations for the simplification of the EU human rights toolbox, and pointed to two guiding principles, resilience and sustainability, as key to the use of the human rights toolbox within and beyond the EU.

This report closed with eight 'factsheets' describing as many categories of EU human rights policy tools. Each factsheet contains a brief description of the tools and concrete examples identified by FRAME research. The factsheets also formulated recommendations, first of all to the EU institutions, i.e. the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the Council of the EU, as well as to the decision makers of the Member States.

N. Policy Proposals (Led by the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies)

A final line of research conducted by FRAME was to take stock of the research done in the whole of the project so as to formulate policy proposals taking into account the many cross-cutting issues identified across the sub-themes above, in particular on the ways to improve EU internal and external policy-making in light of the past, present and future developments in human rights violations and protection. The stocktaking exercise was completed in a report entitled '[The outcome of the research realised in the FRAME Project](#)' which identified three cross-cutting challenges to the EU's human rights commitment, namely implementation, coherence and effectiveness, drawing from many examples gathered in the project to illustrate them and propose solutions. The report notably engaged with the issue of human rights mainstreaming both in the context of implementation and coherence.

These results were also obtained as a result of active engagement by all partners with policy makers and other stakeholders in the course of their research. Reliance notably on hundreds of interviews with policy-makers throughout the project evidences that FRAME research was rooted in widespread consultation of all the categories of stakeholders. Engagement with stakeholders was also achieved throughout the numerous events organised by the project, such as the cycle of workshops organised in the framework of each work package (see above and below), the high level lecture series (see below), the MOOC and other educational activities (see below), and many other punctual events.

Taking a closer look at one of the most innovative ways to ensure that all EU policies contribute to the implementation of the EU's commitment to human rights is the practice of 'policy benchmarking' against human rights. The potential of the EU to benchmark its policies on human rights was explored in a report entitled '[Report on the results of policy benchmarking](#)', which argued that benchmarking is based on the idea of centrally monitored 'local' performance, and the assumption that it implies a number of elements, namely (i) a central monitoring agency which pools information on performance and makes it available to others; (ii) the use of this data to periodically reformulate and progressively refine minimum performance standards, desirable targets and preferred means to achieve them, and (iii) constant monitoring and evaluation of performance, so as to constantly improve performance and generate learning benefits. The report then went on to assume that benchmarking can be a promising avenue for promoting human rights

in a number of contexts, and analyzed the conditions for success in this regard, by reviewing a number of initiatives which were taken by the EU to that effect (in particular the ‘open method of coordination’ and related instances of experimentalist governance, and past EU initiatives towards benchmarking human rights in the fields of forest management, business regulation, enlargement and trade). The report then engaged in a prospective exercise of how the EU could set up innovative benchmarking policies. This was done on the basis of seven examples of human rights promotion initiatives by local and regional authorities (LRAs), drawing on which the report positively assessed the potential for the EU to benchmark these initiatives so as to enhance the potential and effectiveness of LRAs in protecting and promoting human rights.

Going beyond these theoretical and practical approaches to policy proposals and recommendations, FRAME regularly produced so-called ‘Policy Briefs’. These policy briefs, published at decisive moments in the development of the research, kept EU and Member State policy makers, but also other stakeholders such as civil society representatives, abreast of the findings of the project, and allowed to publicise the recommendations made in relation to the various sub-themes. These policy briefs, which were published on the FRAME website and on the European Commission website, were also systematically distributed in all events organised by FRAME.

At its closing event, FRAME also published and widely disseminated a final policy brief in the form of an Outcome Document entitled ‘[How to better foster human rights among EU policies – FRAME final recommendations](#)’. This document proposed 40 concrete and policy-ready recommendations to the EU institutions, with a view to better implementing the commitment to human rights. The recommendations were organised according to the design of a house (see Figure 2), whereas (i) overarching recommendations concerned the need to ensure human rights coherence across all actors and activities of the EU; (ii) knowledge, awareness and competence are the foundation of an effective human rights policy, meaning that knowledge tools such as indicators and impact assessments must be better mastered, and that EU staff must receive better training on human rights; (iii) internal and external policies, though still divided, must undergo similar cures, namely the way they are made (‘architecture’) should be adapted in a number of ways; and their content (‘specific issues’), should also be altered at several junctures. An emblematic recommendation as to architecture is perhaps the suggestion to upgrade the EU Fundamental Rights Agency into a fully-fledged ‘National Human Rights Institution’ for the EU, with the capacity to make determinations on the compatibility of policies with human rights. An emblematic recommendation having to do with a specific issue is perhaps the need for the EU to reform its migration and asylum policies so as to ensure that the rights of all those seeking a better life in the EU be fully respected. The outcome document was the result of intense consultation with policy-makers and other stakeholders, who discussed a draft version of it with FRAME partners during a workshop organized in Brussels on 20 December 2016 (see details at <http://bit.ly/2tPki7d>).

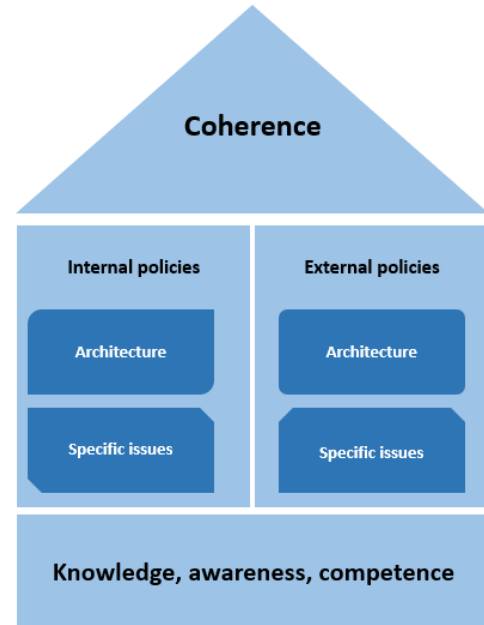


Figure 2: FRAME Recommendations

III. Potential impact and main dissemination activities and exploitation of foreground


The ambition of FRAME was to have the widest and deepest possible impact of a triple nature: policy, academic and educational. This section first reviews the dissemination policy put in place by FRAME to ensure high visibility to its result, before moving on to an evaluation of the potential impact on the three fronts above.

A. Dissemination policy

The FRAME dissemination strategy, led by a specialised communications and events manager together with the management team of the project, aimed to valorise and make FRAME's interim and final outputs, results and recommendations available to the following target groups: (a) the scientific community, including students of human rights programmes; (b) EU policy-makers and Member States' governments; (c) intergovernmental institutions and agencies responsible for developing and implementing human rights and democracy policies; (d) NGOs, NHRIs and other civil society stakeholders; (e) media; and (f) the public at large.

The dissemination strategy comprised a number of dissemination tools, an events policy, and a publication strategy.

The dissemination tools which were developed by the projects are:

- A logo, which was added to all FRAME documents and allowed for the project to have an immediately recognisable visual identity. The coordinator has registered the name of the project and the logo as a trademark to ensure that activities on the EU and human rights and FRAME outputs can keep being organised and produced under the name FRAME by the FRAME Partners.
- 
- A [website](#) which served as a portal to store and provide access to all FRAME outputs, most notably reports, but also academic publications, newsletter, magazine, etc. (see below) and to announce and advertise FRAME-related events organised by the partners. The coordinator has made arrangements for the website to be hosted on a KU Leuven server and to remain active even after the end of the project.
 - A [magazine](#), in the form of a blog hosted on the FRAME website, in which members of the FRAME consortium discuss in a less academic and more open way important developments related to FRAME themes. A new posting was generally published every 2-3 weeks.
 - A mailing policy comprising about 10.000 contacts in various mailing lists, through which the main achievements of the project (reports, publications, events, etc.) were communicated to a wide audience. More than 100 such mailings were sent over the life of the project, i.e. about one every two weeks on average.
 - A social media policy, by which relevant information about the project was published on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube (on which notably FRAME events were livestreamed).

- A cycle of [policy briefs](#), which, at different moments in time recorded the main findings of the project and turned them into policy-ready information. Policy briefs were circulated widely, and put at the disposal of participants in all FRAME events.
- A [flyer](#) which briefly presented the project and the consortium, and is distributed widely in all FRAME events.

The events policy comprised:

- A cycle of workshops organised around Europe, and allowing partners to present the results of their research to the policy, civil society and academic communities, or to obtain feedback on preliminary research. Workshops have been organised in Vienna, Utrecht, Graz, Brussels (3x), London, Turku, Poznan (2x), Budapest, Seville, Bilbao, Venice, Dublin. Summaries of these workshops are available in Section II above).
- A cycle of 'outreach events' organised in third countries, to present the results of the project relating to the impact of EU policies on human rights in these countries, and debate with local actors, in particular civil society members and students, and members of EU delegations in those countries. Such events were organised in [Lima](#), [New Delhi](#), [Pretoria](#), [Rabat](#) and [Harvard](#). Additionally, a course on 'The European Union, the United States and International Human Rights', taught by Prof. Jan Wouters, was organised at the Columbia School of International and Political Affairs (SIPA) in New York. Finally, an [event on EU and China human rights policies](#) was also organised in Leuven.
- A high level lecture series was organised in the heart of the European District in Brussels, thanks to a partnership with the Belgian Permanent Mission to the EU. This proximity with the EU institutions and the high level of the speakers enables a high participation rate from EU officials, and therefore to raise awareness of human rights themes within the EU. The high level lecture hosted Mr. [Stavros Lambrinidis](#) (September 2015), Prof. [Morten Kjaerum](#) (October 2015), Prof. [Jean-Paul Jacqu ](#) (November 2015), Mr. [Fernando Frutuoso de Melo](#) (December 2015), Ms [Emily O'Reilly](#) (January 2016), Prof. [Fran ois Cr peau](#) (February 2016), Prof. [Manfred Nowak](#) (March 2016), Prof. Michael O'Flaherty (May 2016), Prof. [Giuseppe Palmisano](#) (November 2016), Ms [Iverna McGowan](#) (December 2016), Judge [Dean Spielmann](#) (March 2017).
- A final conference was organised in April 2017, comprising a policy event on 26 April 2017 in Brussels, and a research event on 27 and 28 April in Leuven, co-hosted with the Association of Human Rights Institutes (AHRI). Both events drew large crowds. The policy event featured keynote lectures by Mr Morten Kjaerum, Prof. Herman Van Rompuy and Mr Stavros Lambrinidis, as well as a high level roundtable with Prof. Olivier De Schutter, Prof. Manfred Nowak, Prof. Karen Smith, and Prof. Jan Wouters, in addition to four thematic panels. The research event featured a keynote lecture by Mr Johan Rautenbach and two high level panels, in addition to more than 75 paper presentations selected after an international call for papers. A full summary of the final conference is available [here](#).
- *Ad hoc* events were also organised along the life of the project, to address themes of relevance to the EU and human rights, such as, lately, [vulnerability](#), [migration](#), [commercial policy](#), or business and [human rights](#). An overview of all these events is available on the [events page](#) of the project.
- Participation in large outside events was also ensured for maximal impact, as FRAME regularly submitted panel and paper proposals to high level conferences organised by prestigious research

organisations such as the [International Studies Association’s Human Rights Conference 2016](#) (New York), the [International Studies Association Annual Convention 2016](#) (Atlanta), the [European Union in International Affairs Conference 2016](#) (Brussels), the [Council of European Studies’ 2016 Conference of Europeanists](#) (Philadelphia), the Annual Conferences of the Association of Human Rights Institutes (AHRI) in [London \(2013\)](#), [Copenhagen \(2014\)](#), [Belgrade \(2015\)](#) and Utrecht ([2016](#)), the [Annual Conference of the Academic Association for Contemporary European Studies \(Bilbao, 2015\)](#). These events are typically attended by several hundred participants, which allowed for wide visibility of the project and its findings.

- Policy briefings and roundtables were regularly organised directly with representatives of the EU institutions and bodies to brief them on FRAME results, engage and debate with them on findings, or obtain information and feedback on preliminary research. Examples of such events include:
 - o A ½ day workshop in Leuven with Commission DG DEVCO Unit B1 (October 2015); Workshop with Commission DG Trade (September 2017)
 - o Participation in Council Working Group on Human Rights and on Fundamental Rights meetings (April 2016, [March 2016](#), June 2015)
 - o Participation in European Parliament [events](#)
 - o Participation in European Commission [events](#)
 - o Sponsorship of EIUC’s annual Diplomatic conferences in [2014](#), [2015](#) and [2016](#)
 - o Participation in events of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency ([2016](#), [2017](#))
 - o Organisation of policy roundtables in yearly general assemblies of the project ([2013](#), 2014, 2015, [2016](#))

Many of these events were livestreamed or recorded and posted on the project’s [YouTube channel](#).

With regard to the publication strategy, FRAME partners were encouraged to publish widely on the issues researched in the framework of this project. More than 100 academic publications were realised, and at least one peer-reviewed journal article was submitted per work package (see list annexed).

FRAME partners often published jointly, notably by editing special issues of journals, such as the Fall 2015 issues of the [Cuadernos Europeos de Deusto](#), FRAME sections in the 2015, 2016 and 2017 installments of the [European Yearbook on Human Rights](#), or chapters in [edited books](#) by reputable academic publishers.

FRAME partners also secured two publishing contracts with the prestigious publisher Oxford University Press for:

- An edited volume presenting the main results of the project;
- A textbook presenting the main themes relating to the EU and human rights, destined to be used in a classroom format.

These books are now being written and are scheduled to appear in early 2018.

B. Potential policy impact

FRAME expects its policy impact to be significant.

Considerable efforts have been deployed to turn the more than 10.000 pages of knowledge contained in the above-described reports into accessible and policy-ready documents. [Policy briefs](#) were published regularly throughout the project, and an [Outcome Document](#) summarising the project’s main findings and

40 concrete and directly implementable recommendations to improve the EU's overall impact on human rights. This short and reader-friendly document (much effort was spent on language and layout) was unveiled at the FRAME final conference and was since then widely disseminated. This document gathered praise from EU officials and other participants for its informed, realistic and forward-looking character.

All recommendations were additionally linked to the reports which they draw from, so that interested policy makers can refer to them in designing and implementing policy. The FRAME website contains a repository of all FRAME reports and a search tool allows to search for keywords throughout the entire collection.

Much time and effort was also spent, as indicated above, on reaching out personally to policy makers with different purposes:

- Obtaining their views on what the most pressing issues were to orient the research;
- Test preliminary findings with them to ensure that research was relevant and useful to their practice;
- Brief them on findings and advocate policy changes.

Much effort was also spent to liaise with civil society, so as to obtain input from expert NGOs, and engage with civil society on (preliminary) findings. In all events such as workshops or policy roundtables, NGO representatives were present and participated, adding to the representative character of the debates.

Finally, FRAME sought to impact policy by addressing the general public through events such as the high level lecture series (see above) and through numerous [blog posts](#) and [op-eds](#) on the FRAME website and in the generalist media.

FRAME partners hope that their results will be picked up by policy makers, and examples show that this is the case, such as this [European Parliament Briefing on Human Rights in EU Trade Policy](#), which almost exclusively relies on FRAME research.

C. Academic impact

FRAME expects its academic impact to be significant.

As indicated above, FRAME generated a large number of publications of various formats: articles in peer-reviewed international journals, (chapters in) edited books, [books](#), working papers, etc. This is set to continue as FRAME partners continue to exploit their findings. In particular, an edited book is scheduled to be published in early 2018, in which project partners will present their findings in summary form. This volume has the ambition to become the next reference book on the EU and human rights for the decade to come.

Additionally, all FRAME reports are available online, representing a total of more than 10.000 pages of knowledge on a wide range of themes relating to the EU and human rights. This [repository](#) is made user friendly by the addition of a search tool thanks to which key words can be searched throughout the reports.

In order to increase the visibility of these outputs, a [project page](#) was created on ResearchGate, a much followed academic network, on which reports and additional publications were posted.

All peer-reviewed publications are available in the table annexed.

As indicated above, FRAME partners were also very active in presenting their findings in academic events which they organised (more than 70, i.e. one every 3 weeks) or participated in. The full list of events is available at <http://www.fp7-frame.eu/events/>.

Additionally, FRAME allowed for the direct hiring of 35 researchers, thereby significantly increasing the academic impact of the project.

D. Educational impact

An educational strategy was put in place by FRAME and sought to mainstream FRAME research into the educational programs of the FRAME partners, most notably EIUC, which runs several high-level programs destined to students who want to specialise in human rights. This strategy also included the design of educational materials drawn from FRAME research.

Partners have thus actively been using FRAME materials in their teachings, and have used FRAME materials in that context. Partner EIUC had a central role in this strategy, given its role as the organiser of one of the most important human rights masters in the EU, the [E.MA](#). EIUC has prepared a document linking the themes taught in the E.MA with FRAME reports so as to facilitate the valorisation of FRAME in the courses. EIUC also organised a scholarship programme sponsoring field research by E.MA students for master theses on themes related to FRAME and was able to sponsor 5 papers on the following themes: 'The absence of EU funding for Syrian civil society groups in exile: A missed opportunity or a sensible approach?'; 'Applying Rights Based Approach (RBA) to Development within the EU Development Cooperation - Reality or Rhetoric? A Case study of Nepal'; 'Tackling Coherence and Consistency in the EU's External Human Rights Policy'; 'Male Victims of Sexual Violence in the European Union: An Analysis of the EU's Actions Combating Sexual Violence'; 'Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their right to education'.

As indicated above, the FRAME material is now being turned into publishable educational material in the form of a textbook destined to classroom use. A publication contract has been signed with Oxford University Press and both FRAME and the publisher expect this book to become a reference in teaching materials in the EU and human rights. To date, no comparable work exists on the market.

The most innovative initiative taken by FRAME in respect of education is however the [Massive Open Online Course](#) on the EU and Human Rights it organised in October and November 2015, and re-run in July 2016. The MOOC covered virtually all themes addressed in FRAME. The research was turned into online educational materials such as video lectures, online readers, multiple choice and essay tests, forum discussions, etc. The MOOC was widely advertised through a specific flyer and promotional videos. The MOOC attracted more than 12.000 students from close to 180 countries, who enthusiastically engaged with the Staff on the forum. The MOOC was rated very well by the participants. Below are some figures illustrating the impact of the first run of the MOOC.

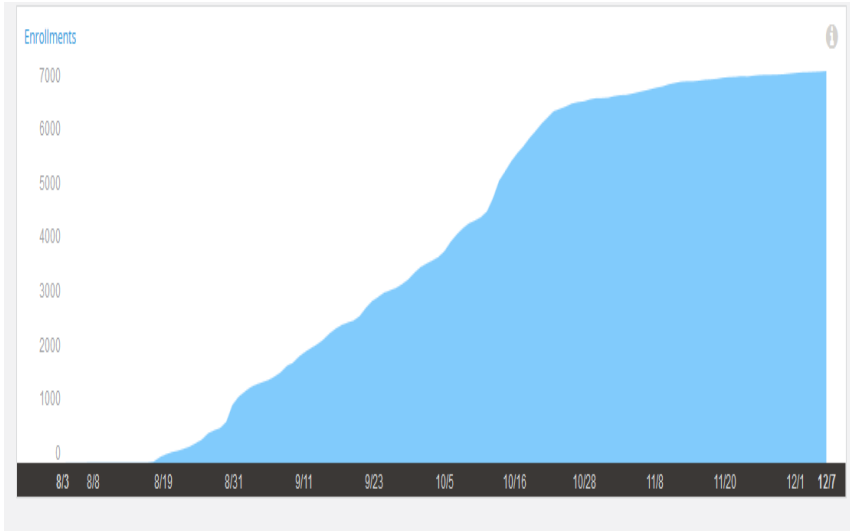


Figure 3: Enrollment in the MOOC (# of students)

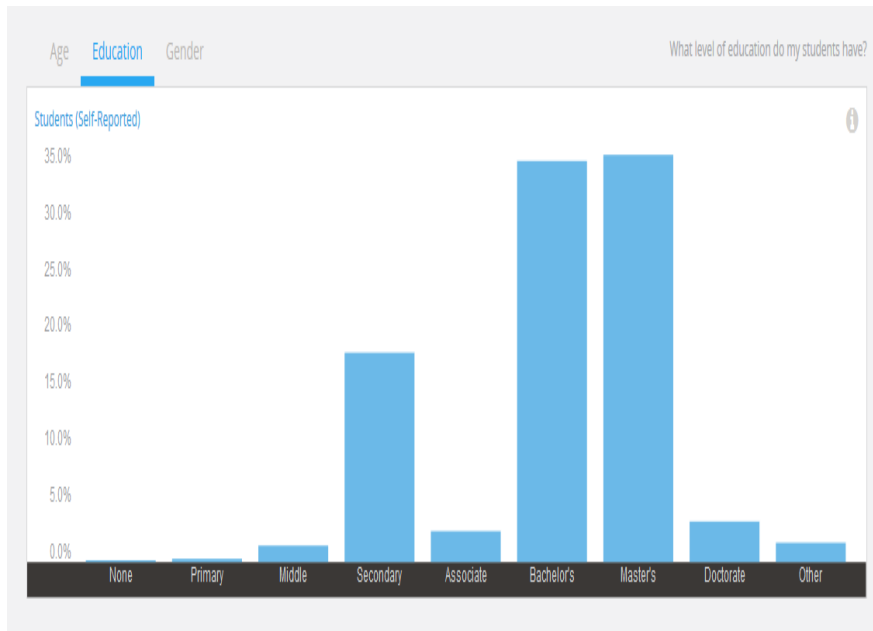


Figure 4: Level of education of MOOC Students

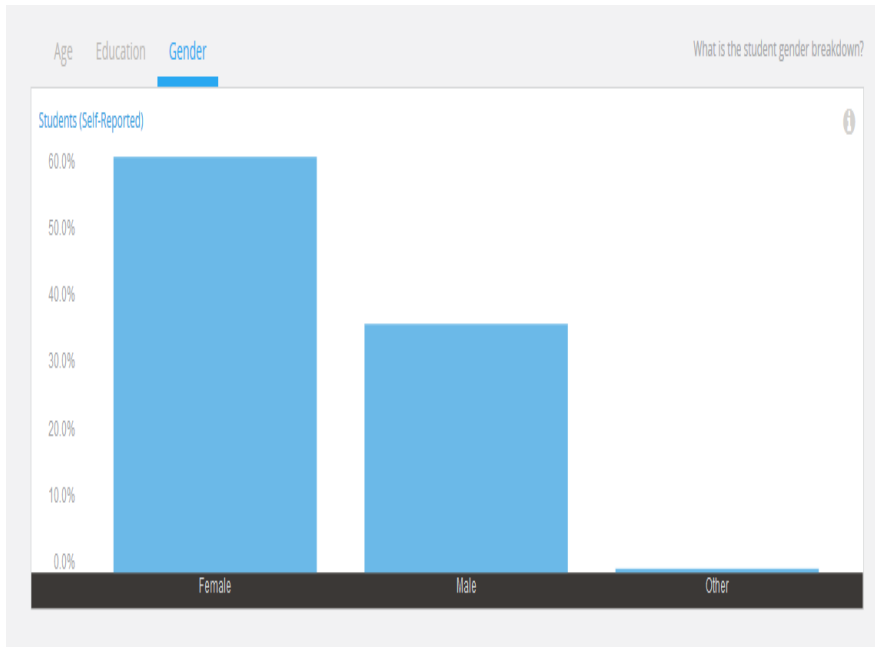


Figure 5: Gender of MOOC students

Geographic Breakdown [Download CSV](#)

Country ↕	Percent ↕	Current Enrollment ▼
Turkey	11.3%	817
United States	7.0%	511
Belgium	6.9%	498
United Kingdom	6.6%	478
Spain	3.7%	270
Germany	3.6%	264
France	3.4%	247
India	3.1%	222
Italy	2.7%	199
Netherlands	2.7%	196

Figure 6: Geographic origin of MOOC students

1 (1)	1	0.24%
2 (2)	2	0.49%
3 (3)	1	0.24%
4 (4)	3	0.73%
5 (5)	9	2.20%
6 (6)	16	3.90%
7 (7)	44	10.73%
8 (8)	67	16.34%
9 (9)	46	11.22%
10 (10)	55	13.41%
No answer	0	0.00%
Not completed or Not displayed	166	40.49%

Figure 7: Results of MOOC satisfaction survey