



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



Overview of the cooperation between the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and the Council of Europe

July 2012 – June 2013

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Part I. Objectives, methods and review of cooperation

1. Introduction

The cooperation between the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) and the Council of Europe (CoE) is based on the FRA Founding Regulation¹ and on the Agreement between the European Community and the Council of Europe on cooperation between the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and the Council of Europe, which was adopted in 2008.² This Agreement established a general cooperation framework with the aim of avoiding duplication and ensuring complementarity and added value to the work of the Agency and the CoE.

The cooperation between the Agency and the CoE has been evolving continuously in recent years towards an improved coordination of activities and synergies between both organisations. This document presents key objectives and methods of this cooperation and provides concrete examples of cooperation activities in relevant fields.

2. Key objectives – What do we want to achieve together and in which areas?

The key objectives and strategic priorities of the cooperation relate to the promotion and protection of human rights, as identified through a thorough exchange of views between the Agency and the CoE. The cooperation between the two mainly focuses on:

- Developing joint projects in areas of mutual concern
- Engaging in dialogue with stakeholders in order to improve the situation of fundamental rights in Europe
- Coordinating communication activities to increase awareness regarding fundamental rights
- Informing each other on the results of activities of each organisation
- Exchanging data and consulting each other at operational level

Inevitably, a large number of thematic areas are also covered, based on the Agency's Multi-Annual Framework (2013-2017), which has been agreed upon by the Council of the European Union and adopted on 11 March 2013³:

- a) Access to justice;
- b) Victims of crime, including compensation to victims of crime;
- c) Information society and, in particular, respect for private life and protection of personal data;
- d) Roma integration
- e) Judicial cooperation, except in criminal matters
- f) Rights of the child;
- g) Discrimination based on sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation;
- h) Immigration and integration of migrants, visa and border control and asylum;
- i) Racism, xenophobia and related intolerance.

¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 168/2007 of 15 February 2007 establishing a European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, OJ L 53, 22.2.2007, p. 1.

² Agreement between the European Community and the Council of Europe on cooperation between the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and the Council of Europe, OJ L 186, 15.7.2008, p. 7.

³ Council decision No 252/2013/EU of 11 March 2013 establishing a Multiannual Framework for 2013-2017 for the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, OJ L 79, 21.03.2013, p.1

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3. Methods and review of cooperation

3.1. Permanent mechanisms of cooperation

Different mechanisms laid down in the Agency's Founding Regulation and in the FRA-CoE Agreement ensure complementarity in the relationship between the Agency and the CoE.

For instance, an independent member to the Management and Executive Boards of the FRA has been selected by the CoE, while representatives of the CoE Secretariat are present as observers at Management Board meetings. Moreover, once a year, a senior representative of the CoE is invited to address the FRA Management Board. This gives the opportunity for exchange of views between the CoE and the FRA and keeps the Board fully informed regarding key activities planned by the CoE. Annual exchange of views between the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on External Relations (GR-EXT), the independent person appointed by the CoE, the Chair of the FRA Management Board and the FRA Director contribute further towards an efficient cooperation between the two organisations.

Moreover, the CoE is also associated with the FRA's work with civil society organisations, mainly through the FRA's Fundamental Rights Platform. In 2013, Mr Luis Jimena Quesada, Chair of the Council of Europe European Committee of Social Rights gave a keynote address at the annual Fundamental Rights Platform meeting on 24-25 April in Vienna.

The Founding Regulation prescribes consultations between the Agency and the Council of Europe during the preparation of the Agency's Annual Work Programmes and the Agency's Annual Report on fundamental rights issues (Article 9 of the FRA Founding Regulation). This ensures that CoE priorities, activities and findings are properly taken into account in key FRA documents, in general and in the FRA Annual Report, in particular.

3.2. Cooperation at operational level

The operational cooperation between the FRA and the CoE is an on-going, day-to-day process. This cooperation takes various forms such as consultations on specific projects and activities; regular exchange of data and information; participation in inception meetings of projects; joint projects and activities; participation in respective civil society structures; granting of observer status in several CoE human rights monitoring and intergovernmental committees; and complementarily through a mutual reference to each other's work. The contact persons appointed by the CoE and the Agency are informed about these activities on a regular basis so that they can facilitate the whole process and ensure its continuity and the consistency.

The FRA relies in its work on the standards set by the CoE and takes due account of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights and the decisions and conclusions of the European Committee of Social Rights, reports and activities of other CoE human rights monitoring and intergovernmental committees and reports of the CoE's Commissioner for Human Rights. For instance, throughout the FRA Annual Report, standards and findings of the CoE are consistently and extensively referred to (see especially Chapter 10: EU Member States and International Obligations, http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/annual-report-2012-chapter-10_en.pdf).

In turn, the work of the CoE is facilitated by the data and findings of the FRA. For example, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)'s fourth monitoring report on Sweden and Ireland refer and use data and information of FRA research as evidence⁴, and the Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Roma Issues (CAHROM) makes reference to FRA reports and surveys (e.g. EU-MIDIS) in its thematic reports.⁵

⁴ http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Sweden/Sweden_CBC_en.asp; <http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Ireland/IRL-CbC-IV-2013-001-ENG.pdf>

⁵ <http://hub.coe.int/web/coe-portal/cahrom1>.

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Such cross -references contribute to disseminate on a reciprocal basis the results of the respective activities of the Council of Europe and the FRA. Reciprocal consultation and feedback, as well as participation at meetings and events, have become integral parts of the working methods of both Organisations.

3.3. Review of cooperation

Cooperation reviews are regularly undertaken. The Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on External Relations (GR-EXT) and the FRA Management Board regularly review and assess progress in the cooperation during exchanges of views among the independent person appointed by the CoE, the Chair of the FRA Management Board and the FRA Director. In addition, the services of both organisations carry out regular reviews at different stages of activities and projects, while regular exchange of information and between the respective contact persons, as well as inter-institutional meetings contribute further towards an enhanced collaboration.

In this respect, the Agency cooperates at an operational level with a number of relevant bodies and services of the CoE, including the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, the European Commission against Racism, the European Committee of Social Rights, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the Conference of INGOs, as well as other human rights monitoring committees, the Directorate-General for Human Rights and Rule of Law and the Directorate-General for Democracy.

a. Relevant findings of the external evaluation of the FRA

As prescribed by the FRA Founding Regulation (Article 30), the work and the development of the Agency for the period 2007-2012 was evaluated by an external evaluator. The findings were presented to the FRA and various stakeholders. A section of the evaluation report covers the cooperation between the FRA and the CoE.⁶ The evaluator collected information through two online surveys, interviews with stakeholders and a series of case studies.

In the case of the CoE, the evaluators interviewed the independent person appointed by the CoE at the time, Mr Guy de Vel, who stated that the initial "tensions" and "weariness" following the establishment of the FRA, "gradually subsided, giving way initially to the establishment of contact, then to cooperation and genuine cross-pollination, and ultimately to joint projects".⁷

Moreover, the evaluators put special weight to the active role of representatives of the CoE Secretariat as observers in the meetings of the FRA Management Board, as well as an established practice on the side of the FRA, to include, once per year, an agenda item regarding the cooperation with the CoE, in order for the Management Board to review regularly the objective, priorities and methods of cooperation between the two organisations.

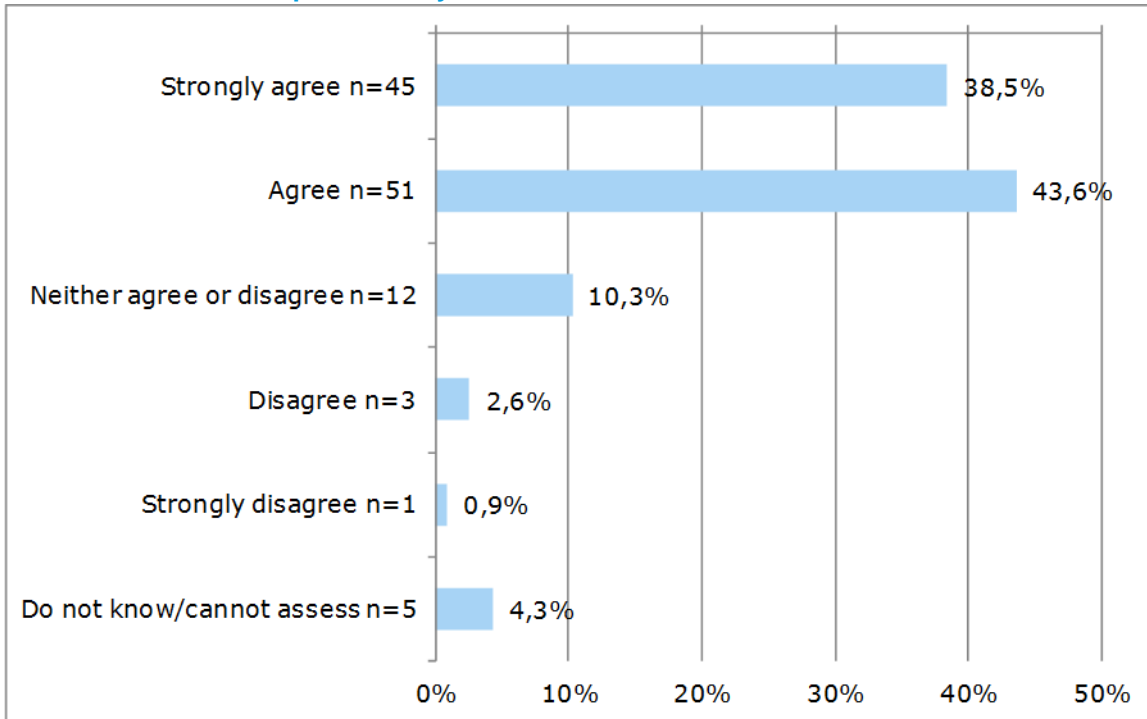
Furthermore, as shown in Figure 1, it is of great significance that among the FRA staff participating in the survey 82.1% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that FRA is cooperating closely with the CoE to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity.

⁶ Ramboll, Evaluation of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights; Final Report, November 2012, available at: http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-external_evaluation-final-report.pdf, see section 3.5.2., pp. 85 ff.

⁷ Ramboll, Evaluation of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights p. 86.

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Figure1: The FRA is acting in close cooperation with the Council of Europe to avoid duplication and in order to ensure complementarity? N=117



Source: *Ramboll, Evaluation of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights p. 87.*

At the same time, out of a total of 12 respondents representing the CoE, nine assessed the value of this collaboration as high or very high.⁸

“You can hardly find two organisations working more closely than we are: FRA is good at delivering evidence-based advice. We [CoE] monitor on compliance on existing regulation. The evidence provided by FRA helps us to identify crucial questions. [...] We both intervene in most of each other’s activities. We have joint projects, joint financing, i.e. case reports, asylum etc.”

⁸ Ramboll, *Evaluation of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights p. 87.*

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Part II. Projects and activities undertaken (July 2012-June 2013)

1. Examples of inter-institutional and regulatory cooperation

On 22 November 2012, the Chairperson of the FRA Management Board, and FRA Director met with the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe.

The Rapporteur Group on External Relations of the Committee of Ministers (GR-EXT) held an exchange of views with the Chairperson of the FRA Management Board and FRA Director (22 November 2012) and with the independent person appointed by the CoE (28 May 2013).

The independent person appointed by the CoE participated in the FRA Executive Board meetings (13 December 2012, 21-22 February 2013, 22 May 2013) and the FRA Management Board meetings (13-14 December 2012, 22-24 May 2013). The alternate CoE member of the Management Board participated in the Executive Board meeting on the 27 September 2012 and the Management Board meeting on the 26-28 September 2013. The Council of Europe Secretariat representatives participated in all FRA Management Board meetings as observers and the Director General of Human Rights and Rule of Law had an exchange of views with the FRA Management Board on 13 December 2012.

2. Other contacts and coordination activities at inter-institutional level:

The President of the European Court of Human Rights met the Chairperson of the FRA Management Board and FRA Director on 22 November 2012. The independent person appointed by the CoE participated in the meeting.

On 21 November 2012, the Commissioner for Human Rights met the Chairperson of the FRA Management Board and FRA Director. The independent person appointed by the CoE participated in the meeting.

On 23 April 2013, the Head of Department Equality and Citizens' Rights addressed the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

3. Examples of joint projects and operational cooperation in different areas

3.1. FRA-CoE Joint Projects

Launch of the Swedish translation of the non-discrimination handbook and its update

On 10 December 2012, FRA staff participated in the national launch of the Swedish version of the Handbook on European non-discrimination law, which has been published jointly by the FRA and the European Court of Human Rights. The launch event was organised by the Swedish Equality Ombudsman.

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2011/handbook-european-non-discrimination-law>

The handbook was also translated and disseminated by the CoE in Armenia, Moldova and in the Russian Federation under the EU/CoE Joint Programme "Strengthening the lawyers' capacity in the domestic application of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Revised European Social Charter". Translations in Azerbaijani, Georgian and Ukrainian are also underway.

Preparation of a handbook on European data protection law

The FRA, in partnership with the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights is preparing a handbook on European data protection law. The handbook is expected to be published in January 2014.

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On 15-17 October 2012, with the participation of a representative of the Council of Europe Secretariat, the evaluation committee met in Vienna to select the contractor/ team of experts which would carry out the project.

On 19 April 2013, the partners had a meeting with the contractor. European Commission staff, staff from the European Data Protection Supervisor's office and a member of the FRA Scientific Committee joined the meeting. The aim of the meeting was to provide feedback on the draft Handbook, and to address various technical and methodology issues with the expert's team. Regular and numerous contacts occurred between FRA and Council of Europe on this project, and the successive drafts submitted by the contractor are being assessed in collaboration with both teams.

Launch of the Handbook on European law relating to asylum, borders and immigration, in collaboration with the ECtHR

The European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and the FRA published a joint Handbook on European law relating to asylum, borders and immigration on 11 June 2013. The handbook is the first comprehensive guide to European law on asylum, borders and immigration. It takes into account the case law of the ECtHR and that of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). It also refers to applicable EU regulations and directives, as well as the European Social Charter (ESC) and other Council of Europe instruments. The handbook is aimed at lawyers, judges, prosecutors, border guards, immigration officials and others working with national authorities, as well as non-governmental organisations and other bodies that may be confronted with legal questions in the areas covered by the handbook. The handbook is available in English, French, German and Italian. Spanish, Greek, Bulgarian, Romanian, Croatian, Hungarian and Polish versions will follow later this year. This second practical handbook builds on the experience of the first joint project between the two institutions which led to the publication of the Handbook on European non-discrimination law in 2011. A second edition of the handbook is already in preparation.

For more information:

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2013/handbook-european-law-relating-asylum-borders-and-immigration> & <http://www.echr.coe.int/Pages/home.aspx?p=echrpublications/other&c=#n13709341192801970078259> pointer

3.2 Cooperation in different areas

Racism, xenophobia and related intolerance

On 21-22 February 2013, the FRA was invited to attend the CoE Conference on 'Poverty and Inequality in Societies of Human Rights: the paradox of democracies - Proposals for an inclusive society' in Strasbourg. During the Workshop "How should Human Rights be implemented to protect people from poverty?" FRA staff presented FRA's survey findings with regards to poverty, experiences of discrimination and rights-awareness issues, as well as the perspectives of the EU framework for Roma Integration strategies. FRA took part in ECRI's annual seminar of national Specialised Bodies to combat racism and racial discrimination which took place on 30-31 May, in Strasbourg. This year the focus was on challenges faced in the current institutional and budgetary environment.

ECRI was involved in the conception of new FRA surveys. FRA's LGBT Survey data explorer will be most helpful for ECRI as it will address LGBT issues in its recently started fifth monitoring cycle.

On 21 March 2013, ECRI, FRA and ODIHR issued a joint statement on International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, entitled "Austerity is no excuse for racism".

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For more information: http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/library/pressreleases/131-21_03_2013_anti-racism%20day%20joint%20statement%20_EN.asp?

➤ **Project: Discrimination and Hate Crime against Jews in EU Member States: Experiences and Perceptions of Antisemitism**

On 16-17 April 2013, a representative of ECRI took part in the stakeholder meeting on the project. The meeting was an opportunity to draw the Council of Europe's attention to selected results of the survey and to explore areas of cooperation in follow up to the survey results' launch.

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/survey/2012/fra-antisemitism-survey>

➤ **FRA projects related to Roma**

On 28-30 November 2012, the 4th meeting of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on Roma Issues (CAHROM) took place in Strasbourg and representatives from FRA attended the meeting.

At the 5th CAHROM meeting in Strasbourg on 13-15 May 2013, the FRA presented an update on its work within the FRA Roma Programme. Moreover, the FRA met with the Secretary General's Special Representative on Roma Issue and the Secretariat of the Alliance of Cities and Regions for Roma Inclusion to discuss cooperation in a context of implementation of project on Local engagement, action research on Roma inclusion actions (LERI) of the Roma Programme. Ways and means were identified to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity with relevant activities of the Council of Europe (ROMACT and ROMED II projects).

For more information:

<http://a.cs.coe.int/team20cahrom/5th%20CAHROM%20plenary%20meeting/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

On 10 April 2013, FRA took part in a roundtable meeting on anti-Gypsyism in Europe, organised by the Swedish government, in close cooperation with the Council of Europe. FRA contributed with a background paper with data and information from recent FRA reports on discrimination and racist crime.

The PACE Committee on Equality and non-Discrimination used the findings of the FRA Roma pilot survey as evidence about the socio-economic situation of Roma in its explanatory memorandum⁹ of its Resolution 1927 (2013) of 23 April 2013 on the "*Ending discrimination against Roma Children*".¹⁰

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/survey/2012/roma-pilot-survey> & http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/XrefATDetails_E.asp?FileID=19689

Equality and non-discrimination

➤ **Projects related to discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity**

FRA participated in the 'start up conferences' of the CoE LGBT Assistance and Cooperation project in Poland (18 July 2012) and Riga (15 November 2012) and provided evidence-based advice to national stakeholders.

The LGBT Unit of the CoE visited FRA on 10-11 December 2012 with the aim of receiving more detailed information on FRA's EU LGBT survey (development of the questionnaire, main methodological and technical issues).

⁹ <http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/XRef/X2H-DW-XSL.asp?fileid=19545&lang=en>

¹⁰ <http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/XrefViewPDF.asp?FileID=19689&Language=EN>

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The CoE's PACE Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination met in Warsaw at the Polish Parliament on 18 March 2013. A conference organised by the Committee was held on 'Freedom of Expression for LGBT persons' on 19 March. Both events were attended by the FRA. During the conference, FRA hosted a 'lunch roundtable' on the usefulness and need for comparable and reliable research into the fundamental rights of LGBT people. Participants from the Venice Commission, the UN and NGOs took part in these informal discussions. FRA also used the opportunity to announce in plenary the upcoming launch of its EU LGBT Survey to members of the Committee.

On 20 March 2013, FRA took part in the meeting of the Council of Europe's Steering Committee on Human Rights (CDDH) which reviewed application of CM recommendation 2010(5). As observer to the committee, FRA also submitted a written contribution with relevant research findings.

On 18-19 April 2013, FRA actively contributed to a multilateral seminar on Data Collection and Research, which took place in Riga, Latvia, and was organised for the partner countries of the CoE LGBT Assistance and Cooperation Project. The seminar was a joint CoE/FRA activity, dedicated to the added value of data collection and research to drafting strategies, action plans, policy papers and laws. The seminar gave an inside view on the reasons behind data collection and research and the way the data can be used as a guiding instrument and as a base for laws and official documents.

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/survey/2012/eu-lgbt-survey>

➤ **FRA project: Gender-based violence against women survey**

FRA had been invited to the second meeting of the CoE Gender Equality Commission. The meeting took place in Strasbourg on 14-16 November 2012. Progress on the FRA survey on gender-based violence against women – which addresses two of the focus areas of the gender equality programme, namely protection of women against violence and access of women to justice – was presented at the meeting.

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/survey/2012/survey-gender-based-violence-against-women>

At the CoE Regional Conference on the Istanbul Convention, which took place on 17-18 January 2013, in Helsinki, the FRA informed participants about the Agency's survey on gender-based violence against women.

For more information: www.coe.int/conventionviolence-helsinki2013

➤ **FRA projects related to discrimination on grounds of disability**

The FRA took part in the 2nd meeting of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CS-RPD) in Strasbourg from 12-14 June 2013. FRA presented its past and future work in the area of disability, and discussed recent developments and collaboration.

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/theme/people-disabilities>

The final report from FRA's project on the fundamental rights of persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with mental health problems on the right to equal recognition before the law was shared for consultation with the Social Cohesion and Diversity Department (Human Rights and Antidiscrimination Directorate) as well as with the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights.

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2013/legal-capacity-persons-intellectual-disabilities-and-persons-mental-health-problems>

Rights of the Child

➤ **FRA project: Children and Justice**

The Head of the Equality and Citizens' Rights Department presented the FRA's planned research activities in regard to children and justice at the CoE Expert Meeting on Monitoring Children's Rights in Europe that took place between 3-4 July 2012.

In co-operation with the Children's Rights Division of the CoE and the Children's Rights Unit in the European Commission, the FRA has contributed to raising awareness of the CoE Guidelines on Child-friendly Justice since October 2012. Within the first phase of the Children and Justice Project in 2012, 574 professionals who work with children in ten member states were interviewed for a qualitative research project on child participation in justice proceedings.

The translated guidelines were distributed to interview partners and also to other identified key persons, who could then disseminate them further. In the second phase of the research project in 2013 the CoE Guidelines were also distributed to the professionals and organisations engaged in reaching children for consultations and interviews. As part of these awareness raising activities two meetings with the Children's Rights Division of the CoE took place on 27 September 2012 and 14 March 2013 as part of the regular steering group meetings of the European Commission's "study to collect data on children's involvement in judicial proceedings in the EU."

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2012/children-and-justice> & http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/childjustice/publicationsavailable_en.asp

Following an invitation by the Children's Rights Division of the CoE and the Children's Rights Unit in the European Commission FRA contributed to the background paper of and took active part in a workshop on "Child protection systems and child-friendly justice." The workshop was held at the 7th European Forum on Rights of the Child" between 13-14 November 2012.

On 13 December 2012, FRA was invited to give a welcome address at the 12th plenary meeting of the Council of Europe Network of National Training Institutions for Judges and Prosecutors. Representatives of the CoE and of international and national judicial training institutes expressed a strong interest in FRA's upcoming reports and in co-operating on the development of training modules for judges, prosecutors and lawyers in relation to issues of child-friendly justice. FRA could provide input, based on promising practices and recommendations as identified in the research, to the European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP).

Asylum, immigration and integration of migrants; visa and border control

On 6 November 2012, the Draft report on 'Fundamental Rights at Europe's Southern Sea Borders' had been shared for comments with the CoE/PACE, prior to its publication, which took place in March 2013.

In the context of its work on the fundamental rights of irregular migrants, the FRA undertook a mission to the Council of Europe on 21 March 2013 to explore how its findings could be further utilised. The Migration Coordinator of the Council of Europe and the FRA jointly met with representatives of the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner, the Committee on Migrations, Refugees and Displaced Persons, as well as the ECRI and GRETA Secretariats to discuss how the FRA could support the CoE's work on the effects of criminalisation of irregular migrants. It was concluded that it would be useful to reflect FRA findings, opinions and guidance in possible CoE policy recommendations, reports or events addressing the criminalisation of irregular migrants.

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On 26 November 2013, FRA addresses the PACE at a Hearing on 'Effective and fair returns of irregular migrants and failed asylum seekers: protection of returnees' fundamental rights and dignity'.

Access to efficient and independent justice

On 27 November 2012, FRA launched two reports on victims of crime, at the Budapest Conference on 'Tackling hate speech: Living together online'. The first report entitled 'Making hate crime visible in the European Union: acknowledging victims' rights' outlines a fundamental rights approach to hate crime and offers a comparative analysis of official data collection mechanisms pertaining to hate crime in the 27 EU Member States. The second report, 'EU-MIDIS Data in Focus 6 on Minorities as Victims of Crime', presents data on respondents' experiences of victimisation. The Conference was co-organised by the CoE and the Norway Grants.

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/making-hate-crime-visible-european-union-acknowledging-victims-rights> & <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/eu-midis-data-focus-report-6-minorities-victims-crime>

On 6-7 December 2012, the Fundamental Rights Conference, organised by the FRA, took place in Brussels. The subject was 'Justice in austerity: challenges and opportunities for access to justice'. As every year, the Council of Europe was closely involved in organising the Agency's annual event and the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Mr Nils Muiznieks, as well as Ms Julia Laffranque, Judge of the European Court of Human Rights, addressed the event.

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/event/2012/fundamental-rights-conference-2012-0>

On 7 June 2013, three representatives from the CoE participated in the fourth FRA Symposium on "Promoting the rule of law in the EU": the vice President of the CEPEJ-The European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice, a member of the CoE Venice Commission and the Head of Support to Human Rights National Implementation Unit of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law.

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/event/2013/fra-symposium-promoting-rule-law-eu>

On 9 July 2012 the CoE Head of Department at Council of Europe Directorate-General for Democracy and Political Affairs, Department of Local and Regional Democracy and Good Governance visited the FRA. Discussions centred around the respective organisations work on fundamental rights at the local level, including in particular the work of the FRA with its project on joined-up governance, and how to best design the final product and make use of the result.

For more information: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/project/2011/joined-governance-connecting-fundamental-rights>

On 20-21 June 2013, FRA took part in a plenary session of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ). During the meeting, relevant FRA work and FRA-CEPEJ collaboration was discussed, including a joint handbook on access to justice.

Human Rights Education

On 14 June 2013 the FRA met with the representative of the Council of Europe at the occasion of the meeting of the Permanent international partners of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance.

Documents distributed at the request of a Representative shall be under the sole responsibility of the said Representative, without prejudice to the legal or political position of the Committee of Ministers. / Les documents distribués à la demande d'un/e Représentant/e le sont sous la seule responsabilité dudit/de ladite Représentant/e, sans préjuger de la position juridique ou politique du Comité des Ministres.

On 19 June 2013, the FRA took part in the 2013 HELP network conference, organised by the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law of the Council of Europe, in Strasbourg. Overall, the HELP conference resulted in the drawing up of a 'roadmap' for courses or modules to be developed in 2014, which will focus, among other things, on business and human rights, internet and cybercrime, international cooperation in criminal matters, asylum and trafficking in human beings. A side event on 'Cooperation in human rights training for legal professionals' was also organised with representatives of international organisations involved in human rights training.

Social Cohesion

The Head of the FRA Equality and Citizens' Rights Department participated in the 2nd Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Social Cohesion, Istanbul, Turkey, 11-12 October 2012, and gave a presentation on relevant FRA activities.

In total, there were at least 31 events where both the FRA and the CoE were present. These events were organised by the FRA, the CoE or a third party active in an area of interest common to the FRA and the CoE. As indicated below, for the period July 2012-June 2013 the majority of events that took place were in the area of Equality and Non-Discrimination and specifically, in the area of LGBT people.

Figure2: Number of seminars, conferences and meetings with the joint participation of the FRA and the CoE, per thematic area

