European Civil Society & Human Rights Advocacy

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Introduction

- EU as timely case-study:
  - WW2 & 'normative power Europe' (Manners 2002)
  - external promoter+ civil society organizations (CSOs, 2001)
  - legal-political guidelines (now binding: Charter of 'Fundamental Rights' ; Art 11 Lisbon Treaty: 'participatory democracy'; 2007/8: Fundamental Rights Agency: http://fra.europa.eu/en)

  > Dynamic but challenging public policy field

Sociological institutionalist framework: The book..

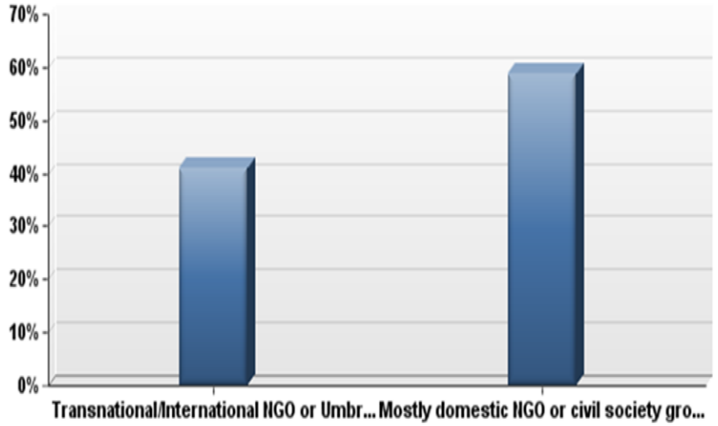
- evaluates the degree to which **input-legitimacy** (*Scharpf 1999*), i.e. the meaningful insertion of CSOs through participatory governance mechanisms, exists in Agency

- proposes that institutional embeddedness of the CSO Platform & agency determines quality of transnat'l human rights advocacy (**throughput legitimacy**: accountability, transparency, inclusiveness, *Schmidt 2013*)

- asks if the overall role of CSOs in the Platform's work leads to more accountable human rights policy development within EU (≠ more human rights; **output legitimacy**)

The FRP's unique position

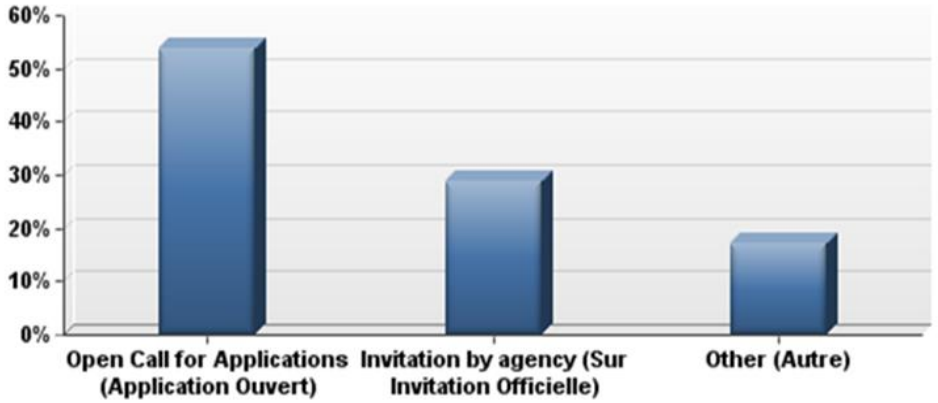
- FRA operates as research-based information, observation & support center for/subordinate to Eur Commission + 'rights-pedagogical function' for public+civil society: FR CSO Platform
- Transnational aspect of Platform: EU-level and national-level CSOs (power differentials!)
- Interviews w/CSOs & EU officials (n=24), CSO-Survey (n=66, 30% response rate) & Participant Observation at Annual Mtg



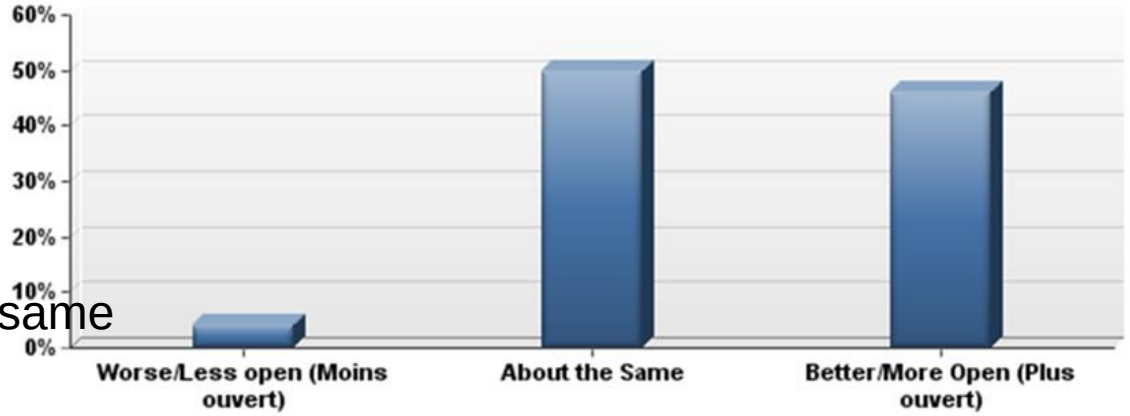
Survey results: Input legitimacy:

50% receive EU funding, of those 52% express certain dependency

Form of Association with FRP/FRA:
54% applied,30% invited by FRA

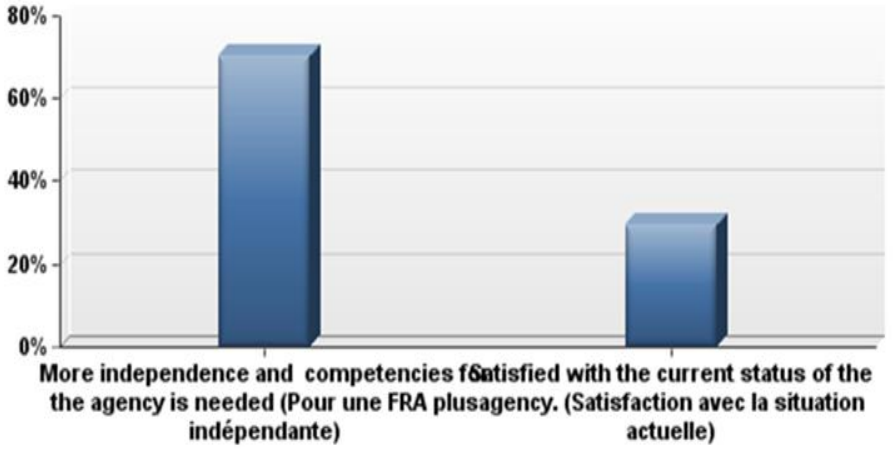


Openness of FRA compared to Commission: 49% better, 50% same

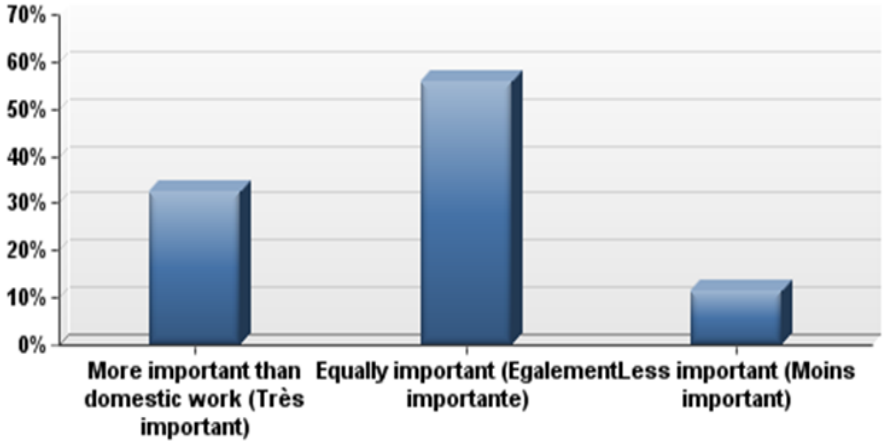


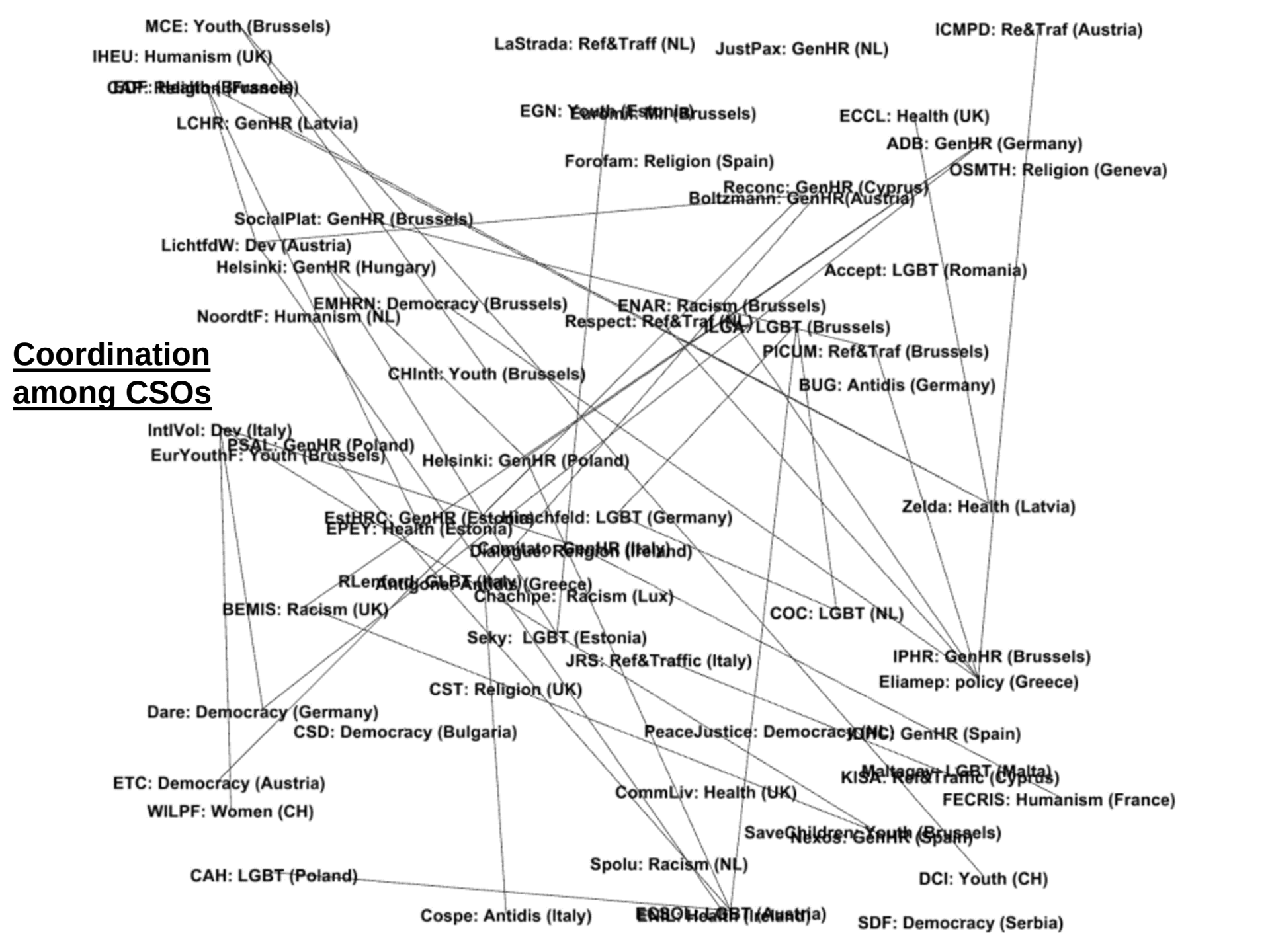
Throughput legitimacy: Platform efficient in eliciting civil society input? 62% of survey participants agreed, while 38% did not

How CSOs (would like to) view FRA
70% want more competencies,30% Satisfied with current status

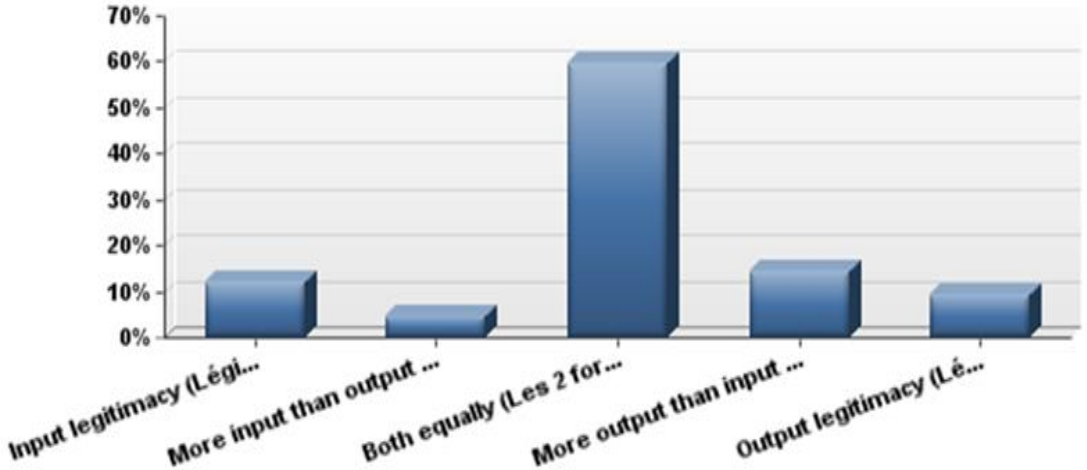


Importance of EU-level networking:
56% both equally important; 33% favor EU-level

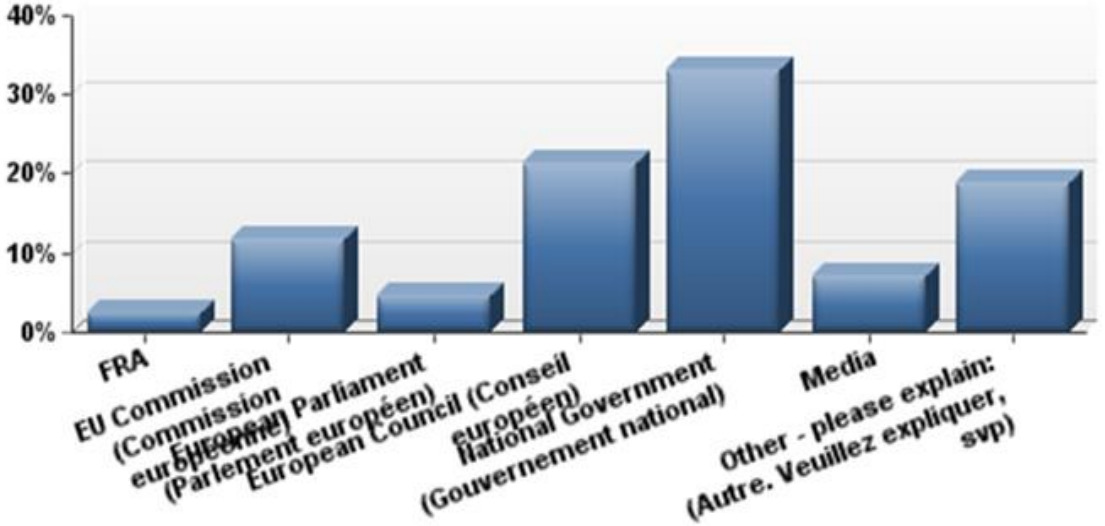



Coordination among CSOs
MCE: Youth (Brussels)
IHEU: Humanism (UK)
LaStrada: Ref&Traff (NL)
JustPax: GenHR (NL)
ICMPD: Re&Traf (Austria)
LCHR: GenHR (Latvia)
EGN: Youth (Brussels)
ECCL: Health (UK)
ADB: GenHR (Germany)
Forofam: Religion (Spain)
OSMTH: Religion (Geneva)
Reconc: GenHR (Cyprus)
Boltzmann: GenHR(Austria)
SocialPlat: GenHR (Brussels)
LichtfdW: Dev (Austria)
Helsinki: GenHR (Hungary)
Accept: LGBT (Romania)
EMHRN: Democracy (Brussels)
ENAR: Racism (Brussels)
NoordtF: Humanism (NL)
ILGA: LGBT (Brussels)
PICUM: Ref&Traf (Brussels)
CHIntl: Youth (Brussels)
BUG: Antidis (Germany)
IntlVol: Dev (Italy)
PSAL: GenHR (Poland)
EurYouthF: Youth (Brussels)
Helsinki: GenHR (Poland)
Zelda: Health (Latvia)
EstHRC: GenHR (Estonia)
EPEY: Health (Estonia)
Dialogue: Religion (Ireland)
Antigone: Antidis (Greece)
Chachipe: Racism (Lux)
BEMIS: Racism (UK)
COC: LGBT (NL)
Seky: LGBT (Estonia)
JRS: Ref&Traffic (Italy)
IPHR: GenHR (Brussels)
Eliamep: policy (Greece)
CST: Religion (UK)
Dare: Democracy (Germany)
CSD: Democracy (Bulgaria)
PeaceJustice: Democracy (NL)
ETC: Democracy (Austria)
KISA: Ref&Traffic (Cyprus)
FECRIS: Humanism (France)
WILPF: Women (CH)
CommLiv: Health (UK)
Spolu: Racism (NL)
DCI: Youth (CH)
CAH: LGBT (Poland)
Cospe: Antidis (Italy)
SDF: Democracy (Serbia)

Output legitimacy: FRA 'somewhat' successful (72%), followed by 26% that judged agency work fruitful (26%), and 2% that did not



Left: More important: input- or output-legitimacy? 60% say both needed equally



Right: Identification of difficult cooperation partners: 34% nat'l Govts, 21% EU Council

Conclusion/Discussion

- **Input-Legitimacy (quality of input):** evidence attests to broadening of sectoral horizons and expansion of opportunity structures. But can 300+ Platform groups join in agenda-setting strategies with different constitutive characteristics (domestic or transnational; membership or foundation) & ideas of human rights?

  >'diversity as legitimacy' contradicting input legitimacy?

- **Throughput legitimacy (quality of interactions):**

  Value of the Platform and agency is largely positively evaluated,

  but more agency autonomy requested, and issue of 2-level advocacy

- **Output-Legitimacy (quality of results):** measured by improvements in legislative and political output of the union > ambivalent: Reports helpful for advocacy & accountable policy development, although FRA could be stronger political advocate (+ Euro- & Refugee-crisis)

  >>>all 3 aspects are significant in this volatile policy area!

Social Justice? Difficult structural issues…

- Eurocrisis:
  - http://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/topics/aktuelle-meldungen/2017/november/nosedive-halted-recovery-on-the-labour-market-improves-social-justice-in-the-eu/
  - NGOs push against welfare cuts
- Refugee crisis:
  - EU initially neglected, then securitized refugees; NGOs, incl FRA/FRP ones, have worked towards upholding human rights (e.g. establishing ‘fundamental rights trainings/officers’ on patrol boats

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