

This master thesis analyses factors determining success of civil society organisations lobbying for the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. The research focuses on the reform of the instrument between 2006 and 2007 which took place within the overall reform of EU's external action instruments. The EIDHR is delivered mainly through civil society and is thus an important source of funding for civil society organisations. Additionally, due to the central position of NGOs in the instrument's delivery, their input is crucial for ensuring strategic quality of the instrument. In order to exert influence, the organisations have to penetrate the complex decision-making system. This thesis scrutinises their strategies as well as analyses the institutional framework and its impact on the civil society organisations. The research builds on several complementary theoretical approaches including theory of lobbying, political opportunity structures or new institutionalism. Using the process-tracing method, this thesis analyses causal mechanisms linking interests of civil society groups and changes in the EIDHR programming documents. In order to test the hypotheses it looks into three sub-cases studies focusing on three different areas of EIDHR: democracy promotion, peacebuilding and human rights defenders.