

**UACES 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

**Edinburgh, 1-3 September 2008**

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*Paper prepared for UACES Exchanging ideas on Europe 2008 – Rethinking the European Union, Edinburgh 1-3 September 2008*

## **Institutional Unity and Diversity: exploring the role of the European Community Agencies in the governance of the European Union**

*Work in progress – do not cite without author's approval.*

### **Abstract**

Governance in the European Union (EU) is constantly evolving. The establishment of agencies, in particular agencies with regulatory powers, plays a significant role in this process, and may indicate that the EU is on its way to becoming a regulatory state where important decisions are taken by technocrats rather than elected politicians. This raises a number of issues concerning accountability and legitimacy. Agencies can also have a significant impact on governance through the institutionalisation of norms and values.

This paper explores the role of the Community Agencies in EU governance. It maps the agencies' functions, financial arrangements, staff resources and procedures for management recruitment. It acknowledges the similarities between them and points to the diversity of competences. The paper also highlights issues related to agencification in general, such as the risk of bureaucratic drift and agency capture by stakeholders, and discusses them in relation to the Community Agencies.

## **Introduction: Why study Community Agencies?**

Governance in the European Union (EU) is constantly evolving, and the establishment of Community Agencies plays a significant part in this. Similar development with delegation of policy-making and information-gathering to agencies has been observed in a number of different political settings from the 1980s and onwards. Rational choice institutionalist literature has presented the need for increased efficiency, credible commitment and scientific expertise as plausible rationales behind delegation to agencies. This development, sometimes referred to as the rise of the regulatory state, raises issues of bureaucratic control, accountability and legitimacy. The establishment of agencies can be seen as a move towards an increasingly technocratic society where the influence of unelected technocrats expands on behalf of the influence of elected politicians. This influence may be direct as in the case of agencies with regulatory powers, or it could be indirect in the sense that the agencies themselves may not have regulatory powers but decision-makers still follow agency opinion. It is reasonable to assume that unelected technocrats, who are more anonymous to the general public than elected politicians, are less open to public scrutiny, which would make them easier targets for corruption. The risk of corruption could also be assumed to be higher the more influence these technocrats receive. Whilst stakeholder influence often is a positive, there is also the risk of agencies at arm's length distance from central decision-making bodies being captured by stakeholders, i.e. that agencies are controlled by the interests they were set up to control. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that agency personnel are employed on the basis of merit as having non-experts providing scientific advice to decision-makers would defeat the purpose of the agency. There is also a risk of bureaucratic drift, i.e. that the agencies begin to follow their own preferences rather than do what their creators intended them to do. In short, if accurate control mechanisms are not in place to counter potential deviant behaviour we run the risk of having a political system where key decision-makers cannot be held sufficiently accountable for their actions. This is a challenge to democratic principles.

Another reason to study agencies, emphasised by sociological institutionalist literature, is that agencies have the potential to institutionalise norms and values, which could have long lasting effects on governance. The EU is very much a political system under development, arguably it already lacks in public legitimacy and

democratic accountability, and at present there is no pan-EU consensus on how the EU should develop. With this in mind it is surprising that the creation of another supranational bureaucratic layer further away from traditional measures of control has not been debated more. A starting point for increased legitimacy would be to ensure a more widespread understanding of the institutional development of the EU and of the consequences the creation of agencies may have.

The aim of this paper is to map the Community Agencies established up to 2006 with regards to functions, financial arrangements, staff resources, governance and management recruitment.

## **Mapping the Community Agencies**

There are a number of features that unite Community Agencies. Each agency is

a body governed by European public law; it is distinct from the Community Institutions (Council, Parliament, Commission, etc.) and has its own legal personality. It is set up by an act of secondary legislation in order to accomplish a very specific technical, scientific or managerial task, in the framework of the European Union's "first pillar".  
([http://europa.eu/agencies/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/agencies/index_en.htm))

They all have legal personality and enjoy the most extensive legal status given to legal persons under Member State laws, which means that they may take legal action in member states with all that entails. The protocol on the privileges and immunities of the European Communities apply to all Community Agencies.

The next sections will show that the agencies established between 1975 and 2006 are diverse bodies in many other respects. As the most striking differences are to be seen in their functions and responsibilities, this aspect is emphasised. A presentation of the functions is followed by sections on financial and staff resources, governance structures and procedures for management recruitment.

### ***Functions and Responsibilities***

#### **European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop)**

Established in 1975 EEC No 337/75, Cedefop is the oldest Community Agency.<sup>1</sup>

Article 2 states the aim of the Cedefop to be "to assist the Commission in

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<sup>1</sup> Cedefop = "Centre Européen pour le Développement de la Formation Professionnelle".

encouraging, at Community level, the promotion and development of vocational training and of in-service training”. The main tasks of the agency are to compile and disseminate information related to vocational training, to contribute to research in the field, to act as a forum for those concerned and to encourage joint approaches such as the approximation of standards and mutual recognition of qualifications. In practical terms, this means that the agency publishes reports, organises workshops and engages in a number of networks (Cedefop 2005 Annual Report). The agency is an advisory agency.

### **European Foundation of the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND)**

EUROFOUND was also established in 1975. According to article 2 EEC No 1365/75 (founding legislation), the aim of EUROFOUND “shall be to contribute to the planning and establishment of better living and working conditions through action designed to increase and disseminate knowledge likely to assist this development”. Examples of activities designed to spread and increase knowledge are the setting up of working groups, organisation of workshops, participation in relevant studies and general facilitation of contacts between organisations with an interest in living and working conditions. The focus of the agency is proclaimed to be on medium- and long-term improvement (EEC 1365/75). Currently, the agency’s work is centred on employment and restructuring, work-life balance and working conditions, industrial relations and partnerships as well as social cohesion and quality of life (Programme of Work 2007). This agency can be classified as an advisory agency.

### **European Environment Agency (EEA)**

This agency was established in 1990 by EEC No 1210/90 but this regulation has been amended since by EEC No 933/1999 and EC No 1641/2003. According to article 1 of the founding legislation, the objective of EEA is to provide member states and the Community with scientific support and “objective, reliable and comparable information at European level”. From looking at the tasks of EEA it is clear that information is the concern of this agency. An important role of the agency is to collect, analyse and disseminate data on environmental issues to actors at member state and EU levels so that they can take appropriate measures to protect the

environment. An aspect of this work is to ensure that the data is comparable. Another task of the agency is to stimulate the development techniques to measure environmental damage and its costs (future and present). The agency is involved in numerous networks and is obliged to cooperate with a long list of other organisations, including the Council of Europe, specialised UN organs and the International Atomic Energy Authority (EEC 1210/90; <http://www.eea.europa.eu/networks>). In sum, EEA is an advisory agency.

### **European Training Foundation (ETF)**

ETF was established in 1990 by EEC No 1360/90. An interesting aspect of this agency is that its work has a focus on countries outside the EU. ETF's objective "to contribute to the development of the vocational training systems" in a former Soviet Union republics and Mediterranean non-member states, which have been deemed eligible for support (ETF Work Programme 2007). In particular, ETF is to coordinate the assistance provided by the EU and to promote cooperation between the EU and the partner countries (EEC 1360/90). ETF is to spread information on current initiatives and best practice (EEC 1360/90). It is also to help in defining training needs and priorities, investigate the potential for joint initiatives, and if a joint initiative is deemed suitable, ETF is to fund its preparation (EEC 1360/90 and EC 2063/94). As regards implementation of projects, ETF can either implement vocational training programmes itself, or it can arrange for other competent bodies to take responsibility for the implementation (EEC 1360/90 and EC 1572/98). However, the projects must be agreed on by the Commission and one or more of the eligible countries (EC 1572/1998). Finally, ETF is responsible for the funding (or co-funding) and monitoring of projects (EEC 1360/90). ETF can be classified as an advisory or coordination agency.

### **European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)**

EMCDDA was established in 1993 by EEC 302/93 with the objective to provide the Community and Member States with "objective, reliable and comparable information at European level concerning drugs and drug addiction and their consequences". Each actor is free to make use of this information when taking action within their area of

competence. Article 1 states that “[t]he Centre may not take any measure which in any way goes beyond the sphere of information and the processing thereof”. It is also clear that the Centre is not allowed to handle data in such a way that it is possible to identify individual cases. Within the sphere of activity delegated to EMCDDA four groups of tasks are listed. They are: collection and analysis of existing data, improvement of data-comparison methods, dissemination of data and cooperation with European and international bodies and organizations and with non Community countries. EMCDDA is particularly to cooperate with Europol. The agency focuses on information related to the state of the drugs problem and applied solutions, risks associated with new psychoactive substances, the maintenance of a rapid information system and tools to monitor and evaluate policies related to drugs (<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.Content&nnodeid=305&sLanguageiso=EN>). EMCDDA is an advisory agency.

### **European Medicines Agency (EMA)**

In 1993, a European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products was established by EEC No 2309/93, which also lay down authorisation and supervision procedures for medicinal products for human and veterinary use. Nine years later, these procedures were amended by EC 726/2004 and the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products became the European Medicines Agency. As the latter legislation guides the activities of EMA as it stands today, this is where I will focus.

EMA is obliged to provide scientific advice and to make available information about evaluated products, including reported adverse effects. The scientific committees of EMA are very central to the work of the agency. Within their field of expertise, the committees are to perform scientific evaluations of medicinal products that belong to any of the categories of products that need authorisation before they can be sold in the EU.<sup>2</sup> The opinion formed after their evaluation form the basis for a marketing authorisation to sell the product on the EU market. The final decisions about authorisation are taken by the Commission (Regulation 726/2004, article 10). If marketing authorisation is granted for a product, this “shall be valid throughout the Community” (Regulation 726/2004, article 13).

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<sup>2</sup> The types of products that need authorisation are listed in the annex to Regulation (EC) No 726/2004.

Conversely, if authorisation is not granted, the product may not be placed on the EU market (Regulation 726/2004, article 3). Although the Commission has the final say on authorisation, EMEA clearly has significant influence over what medicinal products will become available within the EU. The agency works in a very technical and scientific area. Hence, it can be assumed that it is more likely that EMEA opinions are incorporated more directly into legislation than the opinions of an agency, such as EU-OSHA, which works in an area where there, arguably, is more room for normative reasoning. Indeed, the White Paper on European Governance states that EMEA “[has] a regulatory role” (European Commission 2001: 24). EMEA can be classified as a *de facto* regulatory agency.

### **Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market - trade marks and design (OHIM)**

OHIM was established in 1993 by EC No 40/94 on the Community trade mark. The agency has the role of industrial property office, and is responsible for the registration of Community trade marks and designs. Once obtained, a Community trade mark is automatically valid throughout the whole EU. Anyone who wishes to register, revoke or declare invalid a Community trade mark or a design needs to file an application with OHIM.<sup>3</sup> The agency scrutinises the application to make sure that it satisfies the conditions stipulated by Community law. After reaching a decision, OHIM publishes the result. The decisions of the agency can be challenged, and any person who is dissatisfied with a decision made by OHIM is entitled to appeal. As part of OHIM there are four Boards of Appeal, which are there to review the agency’s initial decisions (<http://oami.europa.eu/en/office/organig.htm>). Finally, the Court of Justice has jurisdiction to alter or annul decisions taken by the Boards of Appeal. The responsibility for dealing with infringement lies with a number of named courts at member state level, and OHIM’s tasks are limited to dealing with the application process and registration of Community trade marks. OHIM is a *de jure* regulatory agency.

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<sup>3</sup> If someone wishes to register a trademark in one or more member states but does not seek to protect it throughout the whole EU, an application to register the trademark can still be made to national authorities.

## **European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)**

EU-OSHA, established in 1994 by EC No 2062/94, declares its mission to be “**to make Europe’s workplaces safer, healthier and more productive**”

(<http://osha.europa.eu/about>). The agency’s aim is to provide member states, Community bodies, the social partners and others involved in the field with economic, scientific and technical information related to health and safety at work (EC 1112/2005). EU-OSHA collects relevant information (from within the EU and third countries) and passes this information on to relevant actors. An important part of the agency’s information work is to maintain a network of experts in the field of health and safety at work. The agency may contribute to the development of Community programmes within its field of competence, and the information provided by the agency may be used by the Commission when designing new policies. However, EU-OSHA may in no way infringe on the competences of the Commission. The agency is described as “the key player in non-legislative health and safety activities at Community level” (EC 1112/2005, recital point 4). EU-OSHA can be categorised as an advisory agency.

## **Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO)**

This agency, established by EC No 2100/94, dates from 1994. Its function is to make decisions and keep registers of applications for Community industrial property rights for new plant varieties. When an application for a Community plant variety right comes in to CPVO, the agency is to examine whether or not the new plant variety and the application fulfil the requirement laid out in relevant Community legislation. This includes thorough technical examinations of the plant at hand. Following the examinations, the agency decides to grant or decline the application. The decisions can be challenged. Anyone who is adversely affected by a decision may appeal to the agency’s Board of Appeal, and after that to the Court of Justice. Another interesting point to note is that the agency’s President<sup>4</sup> can draft amendments to EU plant variety law and place these before the Board of the agency, which can then decide to forward these with or without amendments to the Commission (EC 2100/94, articles 36; 42). CPVO is a *de jure* regulatory agency.

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<sup>4</sup> The highest civil servant of CPVO is called the President rather than the Director.

### **Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union (CdT)**

CdT was established in 1994 by EC No 2965/94. Its mission is “to meet the translation needs of the other decentralised agencies” (<http://www.cdt.europa.eu>). The agency can, on a voluntary basis, cooperate with any other EU body that has a translation service in order to ensure that any work surplus is absorbed. The agency is also a member of the Interinstitutional Translation Committee and takes part in its efforts to rationalise the EU’s translation services. The tasks of this agency do not resemble the tasks of any of the other agencies.

### **European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR)**

EC No 2667/2000 is the founding legislation of EAR as we know it today. The objective of EAR is to implement the Community assistance programmes in former Yugoslavia. The agency is also to provide the Commission with information about the situation in the region and draw up draft assistance programmes. Member states and other donors can entrust the agency with the implementation of programmes so the agency is not only to be of service to the Community institutions. EAR may have the status of a Community Agency, but in contrast to other agencies it is clear that it was meant to be a temporary agency only. The agency has a mandate to 2008 to phase out its activities ([http://europa.eu/agencies/community\\_agencies/ear/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/agencies/community_agencies/ear/index_en.htm)). EAR can be labelled as an implementation agency, although it has some information-gathering tasks as well.

### **European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)**

EFSA was established in 2002 by Regulation EC No 178/2002. Its main areas of work are risk assessment and risk communication ([http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/about\\_efsa.htm](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/about_efsa.htm)). The agency gathers and analyses scientific and technical data related to food safety in a wide sense, and make sure that the information gathered reaches Community institutions, member states, the public and other interested parties. EFSA networks with other bodies working in similar fields. The information provided by EFSA will provide the scientific basis for Community legislation directly or indirectly related to food safety. Although it is clear that EFSA is to communicate its risk assessments with any interested parties, the founding regulation and information on the EFSA web site suggest that the key

recipient of EFSA information are the EU decision-makers, in particular the Commission, and that its advice will be of central importance in the legislative process. If EFSA advice is always, or nearly always, followed one could argue that EFSA is a *de facto* regulatory agency.

### **European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)**

EMSA was established in 2002 by Regulation EC No 1406/2002. However, two years later, the articles on the agency's objective and tasks were amended by EC 724/2004. Part of the objective of the agency is to help the Commission and member states to apply Community legislation by providing expertise in the areas of maritime safety, maritime security and prevention of ship pollution. The other part of the objective is to monitor implementation of legislation and to evaluate its effectiveness. In practical terms, this means that the agency is to analyse studies related to the agency's fields of activity, and the agency "shall assist the Commission, where appropriate, in the preparatory work for updating and developing Community legislation" (EC 724/2004, article 2a). The agency's tasks also include visits and inspections, for example to monitor port state control, classification societies and the training of ship crews (<http://www.emsa.europa.eu/end179d007.html>). However, if EMSA for instance finds the working methods of a classification society unsatisfactory, it is the Commission that has the power to "require corrective action and/or propose sanctions" (EMSA 2006: 3). EMSA has no formal regulatory powers (<http://www.emsa.europa.eu/end645d004.html>), but one could argue that the agency is a *de facto* regulatory agency.

### **European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA)**

EASA was established in 2002 by Regulation EC No 1592/2002. This legislation spells out common rules on civil aviation, and, according to article 12, the agency has been established for the purpose of implementing these common rules. A central task of the agency is to issue opinions and draft legislation, which is then passed on to the Commission. The opinions of EASA must be sought and cannot be ignored. Article 12:2b clearly declares that when the rules concerned are of a technical nature, and especially if they concern construction, design or operational aspects, "the Commission may not change their content without prior coordination with the

Agency”. Other tasks are to develop certification specifications, and to issue and revoke airworthiness and environmental certifications for organisations, appliances, parts and products. The certification rules are often referred to as “soft law” as they are not mandatory, but actors that do comply get issued a certificate ([http://www.easa.europa.eu/home/rulemaking\\_en.html](http://www.easa.europa.eu/home/rulemaking_en.html)). Compliance with the requirements is monitored either by EASA itself or by other entities that have been approved to carry out these inspections. Any person (natural or legal) may appeal against decisions taken by EASA. In first instance, appeals are brought before the agency’s Board of Appeal, and thereafter before the Court of Justice (EC 1592/2002, articles 35- 41). EASA is also involved in research related to aviation safety, and it has the right to develop and finance its own studies. Finally, EASA has an international role to play. It assists member states and the Community in their relations with third countries, assists member states to perform their international obligations, and it may cooperate with international and third country authorities. EASA is a *de jure* regulatory agency.

### **European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA)**

ENISA was established in 2004 by EC No 460/2004. The objectives of this agency are to develop expertise within the field of activity so that the agency can stimulate cooperation between private and public sector actors, and to provide the Commission and member states with relevant information on how to deal with various issues related to information security (EC 460/2004, article 2). To achieve these objectives ENISA collects information related to its field of competence, raises awareness of this information and provides European institutions and relevant national authorities with advice. The agency must not interfere in any way with the powers and tasks of other regulatory and standardisation bodies (on EU or national level) when it carries out its tasks (EC 460/2004, recital point 12). ENISA can thus be classified as an advisory agency.

### **European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)**

ECDC was established in 2004 by Regulation EC No 851/2004. Its mission is “to identify, assess and communicate current and emerging threats to human health from communicable diseases” (EC 851/2004, article 3). This means that the agency is to

collect and analyse data with relevance to disease prevention, and disseminate the findings. The Commission, the EP and member states can require the agency to give scientific opinions but ECDC also has the right to issue opinions on its own initiative. The agency has the right to initiate studies, but it is to “consult the Commission with regard to the planning and priority setting of research and public health issues” (EC 851/2002, article 6). Assistance with training programmes and regular reviews of preparedness plans are part of the agency’s role to provide scientific advice. ECDC also operates surveillance, early warning and response networks. The founding regulation repeatedly stresses that agency’s role in providing scientific advice but it does not specify that the agency must be consulted as soon as legislation in the field is drafted. Indeed, “[t]his regulation does not confer any regulatory powers on the Centre” (EC 851/2004, recital point 6). ECDC can, thus, be classified as an advisory agency.

### **European Railway Agency (ERA)**

Article 1 of Regulation EC No 881/2004 (founding legislation) states that the objective of ERA is:

to contribute, on technical matters, to the implementation of the Community legislation aimed at improving the competitive position of the railway sector by enhancing the level of interoperability of railway systems and at developing a common approach to safety on the European railway system, in order to contribute to creating a European railway area without frontiers and guaranteeing a high level of safety.

This shows that the focus is on safety and interoperability. ERA’s main tasks are to develop criteria and formats for safety certificates, to examine national rules and their compatibility, and to provide technical assistance regarding interoperability. In order to do this, ERA is to order and finance studies, and has a duty to consult the social partners whenever its work directly impacts on the conditions of workers in the railway industry. Material on the ERA web site suggests that the agency’s prime concern at the present time is to develop and harmonise criteria (c.f. <http://www.era.europa.eu>). It is possible that ERA a regulatory agency in the making, but at present it is best described as an advisory agency.

## **European GNSS Supervisory Authority (GSA)**

GNSS stands for Global Navigation Satellite System, and this agency was formally established in 2004 by EC No 1321/2004. At the beginning of year 2007, GSA took over the responsibility for the European GNSS programmes from the Galileo Joint Undertaking, which was set up by the Commission and the European Space Agency (<http://ec.europa.eu/transport/gsa/about.html#background>).

The agency is set up “to manage the public interests relating to, and be the regulatory authority for the European GNSS programmes” (EC 1321/2004, article 1). The responsibility for implementation and management of the Galileo deployment and operating phases rest with a private concession holder, and GSA functions as the EU’s licensing authority vis-à-vis this concession holder. Thus, the concession holder must conclude the contract with GSA and GSA monitors his compliance. GSA has the responsibility to make sure that components of the GNSS are certified, that the system is modernised, safe and secure. The agency also has responsibility for financial management of the GNSS programmes and some responsibility for coordination of member state actions. Finally, GSA is to draft proposals regarding the GNSS programmes that will be forwarded to the Commission in preparation for a formal Commission proposal in the policy area. GSA is a *de jure* regulatory agency.

## **European Agency for the Management of Operational Coordination at the External Borders (FRONTEX)**

FRONTEX was established in 2004 by EC No 2007/2004. The control of the EU’s external borders is ultimately the responsibility of member states. FRONTEX role is to ensure that present and future management of the external borders runs as smoothly as possible by coordinating the member states’ implementation of Community law on border management. This entails the performance of risk analyses, to follow up relevant research, and to help member states with coordination of operational cooperation (including cooperation with third countries) and training of border guards. The agency is responsible for the evaluation, approval and coordination of proposals for joint operations and pilot projects proposed by member states. It also has the tasks to “assist Member States in circumstances requiring increased technical and operational assistance at external border”, and to “provide Member States with the necessary support in organising joint return operations” (EC 2007/2004, article 2). The latter task also includes a role in identifying “best practices on the acquisition of

travel documents and the removal of illegally present third-country nationals” (EC 2007/2004, article 9). FRONTEX may cooperate with Europol, international organisations and third country authorities with responsibility in relevant fields. FRONTEX is primarily an advisory agency.

### **Community Fisheries Control Agency (CFCA)**

CFCA was established in 2005 by EC No 768/2005. The responsibility for enforcement of the Common Fisheries Policy lies primarily with the member states of the EU, and the Commission monitors compliance. CFCA does not change this distribution of responsibilities (Work Programme for 2007). The agency’s tasks can be lumped together under the heading “coordination”. Through the means of coordination of operational cooperation and member state inspection the agency is to work towards a uniform application of the common fisheries regulations (Work Programme for 2007; EC 768/2005). The agency helps with inspector training and the agency shall, if requested by the Commission, assist EU and member state interaction with third countries. If the Commission grants permission to do so, the agency may cooperate with third country authorities regarding the fulfilment of Community obligations under agreements the Community may have concluded with said third country authorities (EC 768/2005). CFCA can be classified as a coordination agency.

### **European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)**

ECHA, established in 2006 by Regulation EC No 1907/2006, became fully operational in June 2008 ([http://reach.jrc.it/european\\_chemicals\\_en.htm](http://reach.jrc.it/european_chemicals_en.htm)). To understand the role that ECHA is going to play it is important to be familiar with some of the basic principles of the European chemicals policy, REACH.<sup>5</sup> REACH states that manufacturers and importers of chemicals must manage the risk associated with the chemicals they handle. If certain conditions outlined in the founding legislation are present, manufacturers and importers must demonstrate that they have fulfilled their obligations by submitting a registration dossier to ECHA, which may check compliance ([http://reach.jrc.it/about\\_reach\\_en.htm](http://reach.jrc.it/about_reach_en.htm)). Article 7 gives ECHA the right to require that registrations are submitted if, for example, the agency thinks that a chemical may pose a risk to human health. Another function of

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<sup>5</sup> REACH = Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals.

ECHA is to coordinate a network consisting of member state authorities. The functions of this network are to spread best practice and to coordinate work in the chemicals sector ([http://ec.europa.eu/echa/about/organisation/forum\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/echa/about/organisation/forum_en.html)). In the future REACH will require that chemical substances “of very high concern” are given an authorisation if they are to be sold on the European market ([http://reach.jrc.it/authorisation\\_en.htm](http://reach.jrc.it/authorisation_en.htm)).<sup>6</sup> No list of substances requiring authorisation exists as yet, however (ECHA 2007 FAQs). ECHA’s role in the future authorisation process will be to provide expert opinions, but the right to grant authorisation belongs to the Commission, which also is responsible for reviews of the REACH legislation ([http://reach.jrc.it/european\\_commission\\_en.htm](http://reach.jrc.it/european_commission_en.htm)). Member states are responsible for enforcement ([http://reach.jrc.it/member\\_states\\_en.htm](http://reach.jrc.it/member_states_en.htm)). The agency has some regulatory power as it can make decisions that require the submission of registration dossiers, but in the future authorisation process the Commission will take decisions. If these tend to be modelled directly on ECHA opinion, the agency could be classified as a *de facto* regulatory agency.

### **Financial and staff resources**

As shown in the table below, the most powerful agencies are also often the ones with the largest financial and/or staff resources.

**Table 1. Staff and Budgets**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Staff<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>Budget<sup>8</sup></b>
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<sup>6</sup> Examples are, for instance, carcinogenic substances, mutagenic substances and toxins.

<sup>7</sup> Sources: <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/index.asp?section=2&sub=3>, [www.eurofound.europa.eu/about/staff/list.htm](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/about/staff/list.htm), [www.eea.europa.eu/organisation/staff.htm](http://www.eea.europa.eu/organisation/staff.htm), [http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/List\\_of\\_staff\\_EN?opendocument](http://www.etf.europa.eu/web.nsf/pages/List_of_staff_EN?opendocument), <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/index.cfm?fuseaction=public.Content&nnodeid=251&sLanguageiso=EN>, <http://www.emea.europa.eu/htms/aboutus/emeaoverview.htm>, OHIM Human Resources Department Ref: VEXT/07/563/AD 6?QMD, <http://osha.europa.eu/about/organisation/lists/staff/>, <http://www.cpvo.europa.eu/ocvv/orgchart.php??lang=en&lang=en>, [http://www.cdt.europa.eu/cdt/ewcm.nsf/\\_/38C0688A2E6F1F27C1256E90003B4A53?opendocument](http://www.cdt.europa.eu/cdt/ewcm.nsf/_/38C0688A2E6F1F27C1256E90003B4A53?opendocument), <http://www.ear.europa.eu/jobs/main/main.htm>, [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs\\_p/KSearch.do](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs_p/KSearch.do), E-mail from Stimpson, Andrew, sent 27 August 2007, [www.easa.eu.int/home/aboutus\\_en.html](http://www.easa.eu.int/home/aboutus_en.html), [www.enisa.europa.eu/pages/faq\\_corporate.htm](http://www.enisa.europa.eu/pages/faq_corporate.htm), Statement of revenue and expenditure of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control for the financial year 2007, [www.era.europa.eu/public/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.era.europa.eu/public/Pages/default.aspx), Statement of revenue and expenditure for the European GNSS Supervisory Authority (GSA) for the financial year 2007, [www.frontex.europa.eu/faq/](http://www.frontex.europa.eu/faq/), EU Fisheries Control Agency adopts first work programme for 2007, [http://ec.europa.eu/echa/opportunities\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/echa/opportunities_en.html).

<sup>8</sup> Sources: Statement of revenue and expenses 2007 for Cedefop, EUROFOUND, ETF, EMCDDA, EU-OSHA, CPVO, EAR, EMSA, ENISA, ECDC and GSA, European Environment Agency 2007 Annual Management Plan, EMEA Budget for 2007, Budget of the Office for Harmonization in the

Cedefop	~125	16 510 338
EUROFOUND	107	20 180 000
EEA	170	33 715 000
ETF	126	19 116 900
EMCDDA	94	14 211 706
EMEA	140	154 538 000
OHIM	600+	275 574 922
EU-OSHA	62	14 710 483
CPVO	42	12 899 400
CdT	180	34 747 000
EAR	~260	24 559 000
EFSA	285	61 131 000
EMSA	135	46 117 560
EASA	~300	71 545 000
ENISA	44	6 936 000
ECDC	~90	27 045 900
ERA	~90	14 744 100
GSA	46	412 270 933
FRONTEX	164	41 980 000
CFCA	38	5 000 000
ECHA	recruiting	15 000 000

Level of agency independence is important for the agency's role in governance, and financial arrangements play a significant role in determining agency independence. The agencies that are the most independent in financial terms are OHIM and CPVO, which are entirely self-financed and derive most of their income from fees. All other agencies receive subsidies from the Community, and a number of agencies also have revenue from third country contributions. As regards EASA and EMEA, however, the largest individual sources of revenue are fees, which suggest that these agencies have

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internal market (trade marks and designs) for 2007, CdT Budget for 2007, [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs\\_p/KSearch.do](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/cs_p/KSearch.do), [http://www.easa.europa.eu/doc/mngboard/bdgt/Amending%20%20Budget%202007\\_Decided%20MB130607.pdf](http://www.easa.europa.eu/doc/mngboard/bdgt/Amending%20%20Budget%202007_Decided%20MB130607.pdf), ERA Budget 2007, FRONTEX Budget 2007, Meeting of the Administrative Board in Vigo 14 March 2007 and MEMO/07/218.

financial independence to a degree. ECHA is to have similar arrangements. CdT appears to be mainly fees financed, but the fees are paid by other EU bodies that use the agency's services, which suggests that the agency has little independence. Cedefop and EUROFOUND rely heavily on EC subsidies but their budgets from 2007 indicate minor incomes from other sources. The rest of the agencies rely entirely on subsidies for their finances.

The responsibility for the implementation of the agencies' budget rests with the Director of each agency, and the budgetary discharge procedures for the agencies are outlined in their governing legislations. With the exception of the fee-financed agencies OHIM and CPVO, all agencies follow the same procedure for budgetary discharge. First, each agency's accounting officer forwards the provisional accounts and reports on budgetary and financial management to the Commission's accounting officer. S/he then consolidates them and forwards them to the Court of Auditors, the Council and the EP. After having received comments from the Court of Auditors, the Director of each agency draws up the final accounts, on which each agency's Board is to deliver an opinion. This opinion together with the final accounts is forwarded by the Directors to the EP, the Council, the Commission and the Court of Auditors. The Directors are also obliged to comment on the Auditors' report and send this to the Boards. The final accounts are published, and discharge is given by the EP on recommendation from the Council.

OHIM and CPVO are obliged to forward information on their accounts to the Court of Auditors and the Commission. Their accounts are also forwarded to the Board (CPVO), the Budgetary Committee and the EP (OHIM). Discharge for OHIM's budget is granted by the Budgetary Committee, and discharge for CPVO's budget is granted by its Board.

### ***Governance and management recruitment<sup>9</sup>***

There are similarities and differences as regards the governance of the agencies. They all have an executive director and a management or administrative board. The directors are responsible for the day-to-day running of the agency, and act as legal representatives. The size and composition of the boards vary, but Member State

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<sup>9</sup> Sources: governing legislation of agencies.

representatives and Commission representatives are always included. The compositions and terms of office for the agencies' boards are summarised below.

**Table 2. Board Composition**

Agency	All MS not required	EP appointments	Social partners	Third country reps. provided	Stakeholders	Terms of office (years)
Cedefop			X			3
EUROFOUND			X			3
EEA		X		X		3?
ETF						3
EMCDDA		X				?
EMEA		X			X	3
OHIM						5
EU-OSHA			X			3
CPVO						3
CdT					X	3
EAR					X	2.5
EFSA	X				X	4
EMSA					X	5
EASA						5
ENISA					X	?
ECDC		X				4
ERA					X	5
GSA				X		5
FRONTEX	Exceptions: UK & Ireland			X		4
CFCA	X					5
ECHA		X			X	4

Most agencies are required to have representatives of all member states. The exceptions are CFCA, where each member state may appoint a Board member but can choose not to, and EFSA, the Board of which is limited to fourteen people. Five

agencies have Board members appointed by the EP. These ought to be experts in relevant fields but the selection procedure is not clear.

Cedefop, EUROFOUND and EU-OSHA have a tripartite governance structure, where the Board includes representatives of employers' and employees' organisations from each member states. The social partners' representatives are appointed by the Council on proposal from the social partner organisations.

EEA, GSA and FRONTEX have legal provisions for the inclusion of third country representatives on their Boards. There are other agencies with third country observers, but it is not specified in their legislation. Non-EU states are allowed to participate in the work of EEA and in board meetings, but lack voting rights. Should non-EU states wish to participate in GSA the founding legislation allows for that and states that such participation is subject to Council approval. Schengen-associated countries are represented and can vote on the FRONTEX Board. The non-Schengen EU-members Ireland and the United Kingdom are invited to attend meetings, but they are not full members.

A number of agencies are legally obliged to have stakeholders represented on their Boards. Stakeholders only have voting rights on the boards of EMEA, CdT and EFSA. EMEA stakeholders, i.e. patients, doctors and veterinary organisations, are appointed by the Council on proposal from the Commission. Organisations that use CdT's services appoint their own representatives. The EFSA Board must include four people with "background in organisations representing consumers and other interests in the food chain" (EC No 178/2002, article 25). These are appointed by the Council from a list produced by the Commission and after consultation with the EP. EAR is unique in that the legal documents specify that European Investment Bank must have a non-voting observer on the Board. The Council appoints representatives of industry, consumers and academia to the ENISA Board, whereas the Commission appoints representatives from interested parties to the other agencies.<sup>10</sup>

In most cases the Boards are responsible for the appointment of the agencies' Directors on proposal from the Commission. The exceptions are EMSA and ERA, where Commission proposals are non-mandatory, OHIM and CPVO, where the Council appoints the Directors, and Cedefop where the Director is appointed by the Commission. The Directors for OHIM and Cedefop, however, are selected from a list

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<sup>10</sup> Observers can be invited also to Board meetings of other agencies, but this is not specified in the legal documents.

prepared by their Boards, and the Board of CPVO is consulted. With the exception of the Director for EAR, who serves for 30 months, and Director of ENISA, whose term is a maximum of five years, the Directors serve for a renewable term of five years.

## **Conclusion**

Governance in the EU has been altered by the establishment of Community Agencies, and their establishment can be seen as an indication that the EU is developing into a regulatory state. If you take the view that institutions matter, agencies are also important because they can contribute to the institutionalisation of particular norms and working cultures.

Whilst they can all be described as centres of expertise in their areas, the Community Agencies are diverse bodies. Arguments can be made for different ways of categorising agencies, but as their functions directly impacts their role in governance a categorisation according to their main functions is logical. The most powerful agencies are the *de jure* regulatory agencies, i.e. agencies that can take decisions binding on individuals. These are OHIM, CPVO, EASA and GSA. The second most powerful agencies are the *de facto* regulatory agencies, i.e. agencies that do not hold formal regulatory powers but whose opinion nevertheless is likely to translate into law. These agencies are EMEA, EFSA, EMSA and ECHA. The establishment of these two categories of agencies lends support for the idea of the EU becoming a regulatory state. From an accountability point of view the *de facto* regulatory agencies are perhaps the most problematic as their mandate is less obvious. EAR and CFCA are best described as *implementation* or *coordination* agencies. CdT constitutes a special case, but it could be placed in this category. ETF could be placed either in this category or the final category *advisory* agencies, to which the rest of the agencies belong. These agencies often have information-gathering as a key function.

Most agencies receive Community subsidies and follow the same procedure for budget discharge. Self-financed OHIM and CPVO are exceptions. Some agencies have income from fees in addition to subsidies. On a superficial level, their governance structures are fairly similar, but more in depth analysis show varieties in Board composition as well as management recruitment. Together the differences concerning aspects covered in this paper impacts on the role the agencies can play in the governance of the EU.

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