

Joint Statement

of the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission on decentralised agencies

As in many Member States, EU decentralised agencies have become an established part of the way the EU operates. In 2011, thirty one decentralised agencies perform a wide range of important tasks, using a significant amount of resources: they contribute to the implementation of important Union policies, thus helping all the institutions, in particular the Commission, to concentrate on core policy-making tasks. Agencies also have a role in supporting the decision-making process by pooling the technical or specialist expertise available at European and national level and thereby help enhance the cooperation between Member States and the EU in important policy areas. Moreover, the spread of agencies beyond Brussels and Luxembourg adds to the visibility of the Union in the different Member States.

The establishment of agencies was done on a case by case basis and has not been accompanied by an overall vision of their role and place in the Union. Following the Commission Communication entitled "European agencies: the way forward"¹, addressed to the European Parliament and to the Council in March 2008, the three Institutions have recognised the important role of decentralised agencies in implementing the policies of the EU as independent legal entities and the need to make them a more effective tool in this respect. With a view to assessing the existing situation, specifically the coherence, effectiveness, accountability and transparency of these agencies, and finding common ground on how to improve their work, the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission have agreed to launch an inter-institutional dialogue on decentralised agencies leading to the creation of an Inter-Institutional Working Group (IIWG) in March 2009.

The IIWG has addressed a number of key issues put forward by the participating institutions, including the role and position of the agencies in the EU's institutional landscape, the creation, structure and operation of these agencies, together with funding, budgetary, supervision and management issues.

The Common Approach in the annex is based on the conclusions reached by the IIWG on decentralised agencies. This Common Approach relates neither to agencies operating in the field of Foreign and Security Policy, nor to executive agencies.

The European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission will refer to the Common Approach set out in the annex to this document. While fully acknowledging the legally non-binding character of this Joint Statement and of the Common Approach in its annex, and without prejudice to their attributions in the legislative and annual budgetary procedures, the institutions will take this Common Approach into account in the context of all their future decisions concerning EU decentralised agencies, following a case by case analysis.

¹ See COM(2008) 135

In a political and economic context that is driven by the concern for efficiency gains, the three institutions urge decentralised agencies to pursue their efforts to streamline their activities and increase their performance by implementing those principles set out in the Common Approach which are within their remit.

Member States are also invited to create the conditions for decentralised agencies to operate as efficiently as possible by taking into account the elements of the Common Approach that relate to them.

Taking into account the specificities of each agency, the Commission should present a roadmap on the follow-up to the Common Approach with concrete timetables for the planned initiatives by the end of 2012 at the latest. The implementation of the roadmap should be done in cooperation with agencies whenever relevant. The Commission should inform the European Parliament and the Council regularly, and for the first time by the end of 2013, about progress on the implementation of the roadmap.

For the European Parliament:



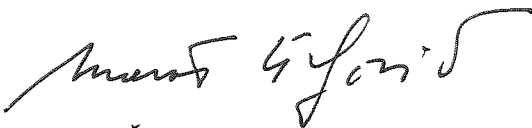
*Martin Schulz,
President of the European Parliament*

For the Council of the EU:



*Andreas D. Mavroyiannis,
Deputy Minister for European Affairs*

For the European Commission:



*Maroš Šefčovič,
Vice-President of the European Commission*

19 JUL. 2012