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Reputational Conduct and Strategic Communications

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REPUTATIONAL CONDUCT AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

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Public Administration, International and European governance

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Abstract

This research ventures in examining the effects of reputational conduct agencies' practice on the frequency and substance of the communications they issue while interacting with their diverse audiences. In light of existing reputation literature, this study offers a scale based on the frequency of communications by agencies to quantify the effects of their reputational conduct. The purpose of this study is to examine how the various facets of government agencies' reputational behavior, as reflected in the threats they face and the reputational uniqueness they seek to achieve in the eyes of their audiences through their function and mission, affect the rate at which government agencies communicate and the content of their communications. While this study has uncovered that the image that agencies present in their mission has the greatest effect on the rate and substance of communications, various suggestions are made for further study in this sector.

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1. Introduction

Strategic communication, as a lens by which to view organizational communications, reflects on the deliberate communication techniques used by organizational executives and partners to further the organization's agenda (Hallahan et al., 2007). Those organizations make strategic decisions on the amount and type of resources they can contribute to such efforts in this manner. Communication is shown to be a critical component of demonstrating the advantages and effectiveness and workings of organizations (Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2020; Maor, 2020; Maor et al., 2013; Rimkutė, 2020a, 2020b; Rimkutė & De Vos, 2020). We discover that organizations communicate strategically as a tangible asset to establish their reputation, based on Zerfass et al. (2018). This reputation is defined as a set of perceptions about an organization's skills, intents, history, and purpose that are ingrained in a network of diverse audiences (Carpenter 2010). The management of the reputation of agencies is mainly needed to face the immediate problems of governance. Those problems being; maintaining widespread respect for the organization's mission, fending off adversaries and threats, and maintaining continuity and flexibility.

EU Agencies as public organizations are no different from other organizations in their utilization of different communication technics to achieve their goals. They are often found communicating using specific strategies to fend off threats (Maor et al., 2013) and to assert their reputation in the minds of their audiences (Rimkutė & de Vos, 2020). Those agencies will tailor their communications to the expectations and wishes of their most prominent audiences in order to retain a positive reputation (Rimkutė, 2020b). Such reputations are influenced by the interaction between an agency's strategic shaping of external perceptions and the assessments of its operations by its varied audiences (Rimkutė, 2020a). Those diverging strategies utilized by public government organizations all form the reputational conduct that agencies carry out. The multiplicity of agencies functioning in different policy terrains leading them to employ differentiated strategies to chisel their reputation led us to question the impact the reputational conduct has on the rate at which organizations exploit communications and on the content of the communications they issue to mold their reputation as the communications are the main mean of reputation shaping those agencies have in their arsenal. This research, therefore, answers the question:

“How do reputational conduct account for the rate and content of government agencies’ communications?”

According to Carpenter and scholars who have appropriated his prism, reputation is “a set of opinions regarding a public organization’s capabilities, functions, and responsibilities rooted in a network of various viewers” (Carpenter, 2010). This research draws on a bureaucratic reputation account (Carpenter, 2010) to explain public institutions’ political actions and their efforts to communicate their outputs and procedures in light of reputational conduct. The reputation-based theories begin with the premise that organizations deliberately follow various reputation management tactics in order to affect the judgments of audiences who monitor and evaluate their actions (Carpenter, 2002, 2010; Carpenter & Krause, 2011). Organizations exercise caution in determining which audiences to please and which signals to submit in order to shape consumers’ views of their endeavors. Moreover, preserving a positive reputation for a particular feature or characteristic in front of core audiences is a necessary condition for any public organization’s growth and longevity. Following Carpenter (2010), we focus this research on the reputational conduct of agencies. This conduct depends on the audiences and the challenges they encounter. By using this approach, we examine the impact of threats and unique reputational traits on the rate and content of communications; the former shapes the reputation to deal with adversity and to prevent criticism, while the latter depends on the function and the missions of the agency,

Recent analysis has increased our understanding of the reputational aspects that agencies prioritize in their structured communications, such as annual reports, multiannual programming papers, and corporate governance documents (Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2020; Rimkutė, 2020a). Additionally, researchers have used advanced text analytics to collect strategic organization communications and to record the technical, performative, procedural, and/or moral implications of the communication, whether through Twitter or press releases (Anastasopoulos & Whitford, 2019; Rimkutė & De Vos, 2020). In their research, Rimkutė and de Vos (2020) address the “What” and the “How” questions regarding the dimensions that organizations emphasize in their strategic communications, the reputational factors they favor, and the reasons for doing so. This study builds further on the efforts set forth by Rimkutė and de Vos (2020), with their research regarding how public organizations engage in strategic communications and Maor (2020) establishing a strategic communication strategy for regulatory agencies by adding the frequency dimension to the fray and advance our understanding of the relationship between strategic communications and the reputation organizations express to the public. This research fills the gap left open by previous scholars analyzing the communications with a binary optic of either speak or silence (Gilad et al., 2015;

Rimkutė, 2020); therefore, we have elected to map the communications to form a scale of the number of communications with which the effects of reputational conduct on the communications can be observed. The rate of communications and the rationale behind it is of importance on the societal level as it adds new lenses by which society can study the efforts organizations make to close the gap with increasingly fragmented audiences (Izaguirre, 2018). Those gaps in EU agencies framework exist largely due to accountability problems (Bignami 2005; Cengiz 2016; Papadopoulos 2007; Smismans 2008) caused by a selective makeup and favoring some interests over others (Eberlein and Grande 2005: 106; Papadopoulos 2007; Smismans 2008), thus shielding them from public scrutiny (Mastenbroek & Martinsen, 2018).

This study fixates on the reputational conduct of EU agencies as they have competing audiences, intricate institutional structures, and significant legitimacy and authority issues demarcating them. EU agencies have various and diverse roles, duties, and missions that are case-specific (Chiti, 2013), and they operate in a complex institutional environment since they have to adhere to multiple authorities, for example, the European Commission (EC) and the European Parliament (EP). Additionally, EU agencies enjoy more informal network access than their national counterparts; this indicates that supranational authorities must utilize a variety of reputation management approaches to chisel their reputation.

The quantitative statistical analyses employed in this study consist of a correlation analysis to test the relationship between the level of threats and the rate of communications, a comparison of the means test to analyze the dependency of the communications on the function of the agency on the one hand and on the reputational image the agency portrays in its mission on the other hand, and finally a correlation test to analyze whether the content of the communications corresponds with the reputation the agency render in its mission. We found out that the level of threats and the agency's function show little to no effect on the rate of communications. In contrast, the reputational image as per the agency's mission was shown to affect the communications both when accounting for the rate of and for the content of the communications.

This thesis is structured as follows. The next chapter discusses the theoretical framework specifying how reputational conduct affects agency communication rate and content. Next, research design choices are introduced. Chapter four discusses the research's empirical findings. Chapter five coincides with a discussion of the findings reflecting on the theories at hand as well as the questions posed by this study. The final chapter summarizes the analysis and concludes this research.

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter delves deeper into the theories supporting this research, presenting the essential concepts to answer the research question and then finishing up with the hypotheses and expectations.

The concepts that are factoring and affecting this research are strategic communications, organizational reputation, and reputational uniqueness. Building upon earlier research, specifically Carpenter (2010), Maor (2015, 2020), and Rimkutė and de Vos (2020) regarding strategic communications, reputational threats, reputational uniqueness, and regulatory silence, we explain those concepts and rationalize how they operate in the scheme of this research.

The theoretical shortcomings by the use of binary assumptions made by earlier scholars regarding the frequency with which agencies communicate open the gate wide for an array of expectations extending earlier research. By taking into account earlier research regarding regulatory silence and regulatory talk, we extrapolate an idea of a scale on which we place agencies while accounting for their reputational considerations.

2.1 Strategic communications

In his book *Corporate Diplomacy: Building Reputations and Relationships with External Stakeholders*, Witold Henisz discusses the importance of **Strategic Communication** in building one's reputation, especially in the eyes of external stakeholders. In chapter five, regarding openness, he stresses the importance of strategic communications to resolve stakeholder concerns and demonstrate loyalty as well as transparency through distributing facts through press releases, pamphlets, and open-door policy. However, more than factsheets are needed to effectively disseminate knowledge and influence stakeholder views (Henisz, 2014).

Strategic Communication as a paradigm for understanding organizational communications focuses on the deliberate communication strategies undertaken by organizational leaders and stakeholders in support of the organization's agenda (Hallahan et al., 2007). Organizations compete for the attention, respect, affinity, alignment, and allegiance of constituents of all kinds in today's increasingly dynamic world—customers, staff, investors, and supporters, elected officials, notable interest group leaders, and the general public. Organizations make strategic decisions on the amount and type of resources they can contribute to such efforts in this manner. It is important to emphasize that strategic communication is used by not only businesses but also activist groups, social and citizen movements (Hallahan et al., 2007). By extending concepts and topics from different conventional communication disciplines, strategic

communication explores organizational communication from an integrated, multidisciplinary perspective (Hallahan et al., 2007). These disciplines operate in a postmodern context that emphasizes more holistic approaches to investigating organizational phenomena while dealing with increasingly fragmented audiences and distribution channels.

Communication is a standard strategy used by organizations and individuals of all types to accomplish their objectives. On the concrete level, organizations communicate in three ways: as a communicative one-way or two-way stream to transmit knowledge to the community while still engaging in a dialogue, as a means of communicative tools such as products with a large audience or networks with proven presence, or as intangible assets such as reputation, trust, and social capital (Zerfass et al., 2018).

2.2 Reputational conduct

Following Zerfass et al.'s (2018) concrete distinction of the three manners agencies communicate, agencies communicate strategically as a tangible asset to assert their reputation. The organizational reputation of agencies is described as a collection of beliefs about an organization's capabilities, intentions, background, and purpose that are embedded in a network of multiple audiences (Carpenter 2010). Public administrators face three immediate problems of governance:

- How to retain broad-based respect for an organization and its operations.
- How to navigate a vessel between dangerous shoals (adversaries and threats)
- How to project a careful balance of continuity and flexibility.

The ability of public officials to deal with these institutional problems is reliant mainly on organizational reputation (Carpenter & Krause, 2011). As agencies are examined and evaluated by a diverse and conflicting audience, they must act in various reputation–promotion strategies: “They [agencies] have a repository of ideas, values, and strategies that they may combine in various ways, deploy politically, and redeploy between different audiences, thereby redefining relations with these audiences” (Maor, 2015). Multiple reputational accounts imply that an agency's reputational conduct is governed not just by its unique reputation but also by the plurality of opposing audiences perceiving and critiquing and threatening its outputs and/or processes (Carpenter, 2010; Gilad, 2008, 2012; Gilad et al., 2013; Maor et al., 2012). Carpenter (2010) proposed that “when trying to account for a regulator's behavior, look at the audience look at the threats” (p. 832). As a consequence, agencies should carefully nurture their optimal reactions in the face of reputational threats. Therefore, agencies, as strategic actors, are required to exert maximum effort to generate a variety of blame-avoidant responses (Maor &

Sulitzeanu-Kenan, 2013; Weimer, 2006). Agencies strive to acquire a unique reputation with their multitude of constituents which refers to an agency's obligation to provide outputs and outcomes that cannot be provided by another organization (Carpenter, 2001, 2010; Maor & Sulitzeanu-Kenan, 2015). The divergence in reputation-management strategies across agencies can be explained by unique agency roles, competencies, and mandates. This is because the preservation and improvement of an agency's unique reputation are contingent upon its responsibilities and activities being widely recognized on the basis of the unique style ascribed to the agency at its inception (Carpenter, 2010; Carpenter & Krause, 2012). Further on, we will discuss those two concepts, threats and reputational uniqueness, and how they relate to this research.

2.2.1 Threats

Firstly, we expect communication frequency to vary depending on the levels of **threat** agencies face as they try to ensue trust, strengthen their reputation, and assure their existence against the **threats**. In reputation politics, audiences make allegations against an authority by threatening or improving their identity. Suppose these allegations are legitimate in the sense that the agency's image is both an asset and partly malleable to the agency. In that case, the authority will respond to these statements by changing its actions after the fact or in preparation (Carpenter, 2010). When internal day-to-day practices and decision-making procedures become critically important to external stakeholders (i.e., when the light of media interest and political pressure is intense), reputational risks increase. Increased audience perception of an agency results in increased competing requests, placing organizations in a challenging position as they attempt to balance incompatible expectations (Carpenter & Krause, 2012). This results in the unachievable challenge of cultivating a positive reputation in the eyes of disparate viewers (Carpenter and Krause, 2012 and Rimkutè, 2020a). In his study, Carpenter (2010) argues that Agencies are often more concerned with preserving their turf and discretion than with losing revenue. When authorities seem to have behaved poorly in a given environment, they can face increased opposition and threats to their turf and services. It is conceivable that systemic issues in the regulator's setting are unchangeable; it is also possible that the regulators in question do not want to affect structural transformation in the sphere they control.

Following Carpenter's (2010b) rhetoric that Communication strategies adapt to significant **threats**, such as political threats from legislatures, can be viewed to shape and form the reputation of agencies and to be matters that need addressing through a strategic level of communication by the agencies themselves to avoid blame, to ensure longevity, and to secure

political support (Carpenter 2010). Interrelationships between agencies and audiences are critical to those presumptions, as the prototypical situation involves an organization that faces a reputational challenge and then responds to defend its reputation (Maor, 2016).

Adapting to those threats come in the form of reputation management conduct through strategic communications. The strategic communication activities utilized by regulatory agencies range from **Strategic silence to Regulatory talk** (Maor, 2020). Maor, Gilad, and Ben-Nun Bloom (2013) and Rimkutė (2020b) suggest that **regulatory silence** is the norm in domains where an organization has a good reputation, where most threats do not pose a danger to the agency's existing reputation. Similarly, an organization can afford to be quiet when confronted with problems in areas that are secondary to its overall reputation. Threats will almost certainly be faced by efforts to match audiences' views of the agency with their internal view of responsibilities and efficiency; this endeavor leads to the strategic use of communications (Maor et al., 2013) as agency officials will carefully calibrate their communicative acts in order to shape how their audiences evaluate their performance or failure. They may, for example, craft their discourse to maximize the regulator's reputation and shield it from audience-based pressures (Carpenter, 2010). These results suggest that agencies' attention to external views is influenced by their perception of their distinct and multifaceted reputations (Gilad et al., 2015), which means that a government agency's evaluation of the relative danger to its reputation leads to strategic communication technics (Maor, 2020). This all leads to the claim that in domains where an agency's reputation is poor, facing external threats to its autonomy, and where its reputation is still emerging, challenges of relative salience made by audiences of comparable clout are less likely to be ignored. In situations where there are more significant reputational threats, agencies must (re)establish faith, show that they care for those impacted by legislation, and devote considerable time and effort to (re)gaining credibility by stressing organizational transparency, responsiveness, and inclusiveness (Rimkutė, 2020a). This is because agencies seek to strike a balance between maintaining a positive organizational reputation and being sensitive to pertinent public demands (Gilad, 2015; Gilad & Alon-Barkat, 2018; Maor & Sulitzeanu-Kenan, 2013). Public institutions strive for survival and the legitimacy of their positions and operations, making them more receptive to current public concerns (Carpenter, 2010).

Previous scholars, however, were constrained in their emphasis on regulatory contact as a binary option between silence and speaking, disregarding a more elaborated study of regulatory response material, which led this research shedding light on the frequency in which

agencies communicate with and whether that is determined by the agencies' strategic communications technics derived from legislative threats. By studying the frequency of the communications issued by EU agencies and placing that on a scale instead of the binary view of regulatory silence and regulatory talk, we can view this scale through the scope of the legislative threats facing those EU agencies to determine whether those threats influence the frequency of communications. As agencies strive to strengthen their reputation in the face of adversity and threats, we expect organizations facing a more significant number of threats to communicate more frequently as they are actively fending off threats to their autonomy, securing political and public support, and ensuring their longevity. Those expectations lead to the first hypothesis:

H₁: Agencies are more likely to communicate frequently when faced with threats.

2.2.2 Reputational uniqueness

As threats only represent one-half of the reputational conduct, we now turn our focus to the other half represented by the **reputational uniqueness**. To maintain an organization's reputation and fend off the three immediate problems of governance mentioned above, agencies tend to communicate as an intangible asset to create a **reputational uniqueness** (Zerfass et al., 2018). When an agency is formed, it is given a distinct reputation. The ability of an agency to provide results that any other institution in the entity cannot deliver forms the **reputational uniqueness** of an agency; that is, the agency has a right to participate in activities that are uniquely theirs (Rimkutė, 2020b). Towards this extent, agencies must foster **reputation uniqueness** by developing reputation-balancing and security strategies (Maor, 2011; Maor et al., 2013). Furthermore, agencies can modify their messages to meet the needs and desires of their most important audiences to maintain a favorable image (Rimkutė, 2020b). Such **unique reputations** are shaped by the relationship between an agency's strategic shaping of external views and the evaluations of its activities by its diverse audiences (Rimkutė, 2020a). This results in reputation-protection policies that address an agency's response to complaints and/or events that reflect poorly on its ability to carry out its core mission. The **uniqueness** of agencies' reputation is designed and worked on vigorously early in the formation of the agencies in the form of their mission goals and mandate they abide by, strive, and diligently try to communicate about, which accumulates into reputation conduct (Carpenter 2001, 5).

The management of day-to-day activities in front of various audiences is what reputation management is all about (Busuioac & Lodge, 2016). Posing to ever be effective in a successful manner creates a positive reputation. A solid track record of integrity is a "valuable

electoral asset” (Carpenter 2002, 491). It is the center of bureaucratic power, enabling agencies to promote sovereignty, form alliances, gain political support, and, eventually, ensure their longevity (Carpenter 2002, 2010; Maor 2015).

According to Carpenter (2010), bureaucratic reputation encompasses the subject dimensions of performance, morality, procedure, and technical competence, which collectively comprise a public organization’s overall reputation:

- The term “**performative reputation**” refers to how audiences assess an organization’s “decision-making quality,” “capacity for effectively accomplishing its goals,” or “announced objectives” (Carpenter, 2010). Carpenter argues that the most fundamental feature of bureaucratic prestige is its material area. Additionally, performance reputation may refer to an audience’s view of an agency’s “vigor and aggression” in achieving objectives. The performative reputation of an entity works by “inviting enforcement, triggering decisions that make the agency’s job simpler or less contentious or thwarting threats to the organization’s authority” (Carpenter, 2010). Busuioc and Lodge (2016) note that achieving typical policy outputs and outcomes enhances success reputation.
- The **moral reputation** of an organization is concerned with its ideals and principles, as seen by core audiences. Scholars also proposed that, from a procedural or legislative perspective, public government has particular moral responsibilities (Hart, 1984; Rohr, 1988). Morality and ethics are essential moral aspects of how elected authorities can behave themselves, including the ethical practice of fairness, adherence to rule, and treating people and communities equally based on an interpretation of regime principles (Hart, 1984; Willbern, 1984). Furthermore, Rohr (1988) contends that the primary moral duty of a public administrator is to safeguard the founding principles of democracy. Thus, moral standing represents an organization’s ethical nature, including its fairness, dignity, and adherence to the law and societal norms (Lee & van Ryzin, 2019).
- **Procedural reputation** means the organization’s “justice of the processes” and its deliberation, procedural, or decision-making standards (Carpenter, 2010). In a dynamic society where various desires clash, viewers frequently judge an organization on the basis of the justice of decision-making, even if the results are not satisfactory for all (van Ryzin, 2011; Willbern, 1984). According to Busuioc and Lodge (2016), procedural reputation is about upholding the “correct” guidelines in a given situation. Thus, procedural reputation is concerned with whether the procedures used by government departments are equitable and accurate. Though procedural and moral reputation

obviously intersect, Carpenter (2010) argues that they vary in the sense that an organization “may have defensible goals and ethically acceptable methods for achieving them but may not have adopted generally accepted rules of deliberation, practice, or decision making.” Thus, a government entity may have moral ends but procedurally flawed means; similarly, a government agency may have only meant (fair procedures) but morally dubious ends.

- **Technical reputation** concerns the scientific authority of an organization, methodological development, and analytical ability (Carpenter, 2010). As the tremendous experience of Carpenter (2010) in the United States, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) shows, the FDA relied mainly on the Scientific and Technical Authority’s scientific and technical expertise in drug testing and the establishment of evidence-based safety and effectiveness standards. Additionally, bureaucrats value specialization and scientific competence as fundamental professional principles (Friedrich, 1940; Perry, 1997). Moreover, Busuioac and Lodge (2016) notice that professional reputation is closely related to an agency’s subject experience. For example, the FDA’s expertise in substance testing stresses a specific body of knowledge, skills, and experience as public institutions deal with technological problems for which they are responsible (Lee & van Ryzin, 2019).

2.2.2.1 Function

According to organizational-reputation studies, effective efforts to promote positive organizational reputations help government agencies in multiple ways (Carpenter, 2010; Carpenter & Krause, 2012; Gilad, 2008, 2009; Maor & Sulitzeanu-Kenan, 2013). Appropriate reputational management conduct may strengthen an agency’s independence from political authorities and/or act as a barrier against external threats (Carpenter, 2010; Carpenter & Krause, 2012; Maor et al., 2012). Furthermore, reputational conduct results in expanded regulatory power that exceeds agencies’ legal mandates (Rimkutė, 2020a). For example, a regulator may begin pursuing a “self-consistent action that neither politicians nor organized interests prefer but that they either cannot or will not overturn or constrain in the future” (Carpenter, 2001, p. 17). Active efforts to improve one’s reputation can garner widespread public support and even lead to the legitimization of **regulatory** forces, as “legitimacy is...a result of successful reputation management by selective response to various reputational threats” (Rimkutė, 2018, p. 72). **Regulatory** agencies’ effectiveness is contingent upon their ability to establish legitimacy in the minds of the audience and stakeholders. Without that

legitimacy, they would sacrifice their autonomy and capacity to effectively carry out their primary responsibilities (Samarajiva, 2000). **Regulatory** agencies encompass all agencies that adhere to Majone's suggested logic of "regulation by information" (i.e., those responsible for data collection, technical guidance, standardization, or [quasi-]decision- or rule-making tasks), while **non-regulatory** agencies encompass those accountable for executive and management functions (Rimkutė, 2020a). EU regulatory agencies are tasked with and responsible for the purpose of enhancing the integrity of a policy commitment (Majone, 1999). Despite their extensive **regulatory** obligations (in comparison to their **non-regulatory** counterparts), EU **regulatory** agencies face significant legal constraints, and they frequently lack command-and-control-based coercive powers (Chiti, 2013). This difference led to a perception showing regulatory agencies being more strategic in how they cultivate their reputation in comparison to **non-regulatory** agencies (Rimkutė, 2020a). This same research found claims supporting the argument that EU agencies are legitimated by the distribution of sound outputs that are embedded in experience and are intended to contribute to the efficacy of EU policy outcomes as well as that **regulatory** agencies attend more to the reciprocity of their reputational aspects by stressing their technical, procedural, and moral conducts more than their non-regulatory counterparts (Rimkutė, 2020a).

Following Carpenter (2010) and Rimkutė (2020a) arguments regarding regulatory agencies utilization of reputation management to acquire legitimacy and how reputation is managed through strategic communications, Henisz's statement regarding the need for more ways to communicate, Majone's standard for regulatory agencies "regulation by information" focusing on the information gathering and distributing tasks of regulatory agencies, and Rimkutė's conclusions regarding the focus that regulatory agencies place on more dimensions of reputation while communicating and their output focused approach, we reach our second expectation regarding the difference in frequency of communication between regulatory and non-regulatory agencies:

H₂: A unified regulator is likely to communicate more frequently than its non-regulatory counterpart.

This hypothesis rests on the claims that regulatory agencies are more involved in garnering their reputation through strategic reputation management methods and the pressure those regulatory agencies face to assert their legitimization in contrast with their non-regulatory counterparts.

2.2.2.2 Missions and mandates

As the reputational uniqueness of agencies is worked on vigorously since its moment of conception, it is fiercely crafted and cultivated early in the agency's establishment in the form of the mission objectives and mandates they adhere to, aim to fulfill, and rigorously communicate about, which aggregates into reputation conduct (Carpenter 2001, 5) one can only assume that the mission those agencies are set out to achieve is of significant influence to the whole reputational conduct of the agencies. This claim is supported by research on reputation management conduct that focuses on an agency's strategic communication, which has indicated that an agency's original standing influences how it communicates its actions (Maor et al., 2011; Gilad et al., 2012; Rimkutė, 2020b).

As the organizational reputation of agencies can be encompassed in the four dimensions explained by Carpenter, so can we categorize the reputational uniqueness of agencies in those four dimensions accounting for their missions and mandates, and communications. When analyzing the dimensions agencies communicate most in, Rimkutė and de Vos's (2020) found that agencies tend to communicate more frequently within the performative dimension, followed by the technical dimension, legal-procedural dimensions, and more not than often within the moral dimension. This has led us to the idea of studying whether a similar assumption can be made regarding the organizational reputation of agencies emphasized in their missions and mandates and the overall number of communications they publish.

We expect agencies with missions emphasizing the performative dimension to communicate more often than agencies with technical, legal-procedural, and moral-focused missions due to the importance of output-based communications of EU agencies. Agencies tend to communicate more often to share their performance and show their efficiency and overall achievements as EU agencies are legitimated for their ability to provide high-quality results that are perceived to be based on competence and intended to contribute to the efficacy of the EU's policy outcomes (Rimkutė & de Vos, 2020). The presumption that agencies with a performative-based mission communicate more often than their counterparts is a follow-up to Rimkutė and de Vos's (2020) argument proving agencies communicating more frequently within the performative dimension.

H₃: Agencies with missions emphasizing the performative dimension are likely to communicate more frequently than agencies emphasizing the technical, legal-procedural, or moral reputational dimensions in their missions.

2.3 Reputational uniqueness and content of communications

Furthermore, agencies are expected to function in search of strong external support and a sphere of sovereignty in relation to their diverse audiences (Carpenter 2001, 2010a; Carpenter and Krause 2012; Gilad 2008, 2009; Maor 2007, 2010, 2011; Maor and Sulitzeanu-Kenan 2012). They do this by cultivating a balance between their policies and a closely developed reputation for unique features that are attuned to the preferences of their diverse audiences and distinct from those of other government agencies (Carpenter 2001; Wilson 1989). Such reputations are multidimensional structures dependent on presumed performance, moral principles, and/or technological knowledge of agencies (Carpenter 2010). Once created, an agency's unique reputation shapes its communication management and security techniques (Gilad and Yogev 2012; Maor 2010, 2011; Maor and Sulitzeanu-Kenan 2012). If successfully built and run, an agency's reputation allows it to stake a claim for its one-of-a-kind approach to the public good, as well as carve out a position of relative autonomy (Carpenter 2001, 2010a) and power (Nicholson-Crotty and Miller 2012).

According to Carpenter (2001, 5), "reputation uniqueness" addresses issues demonstrating that they can build strategies (e.g., competence, efficiency) and offer resources (e.g., moral protection) that are not available anywhere in the polity. This claim aligns with another claim made by Carpenter (2010) that maintaining a good reputation for a specific function or trait in front of core audiences is a critical prerequisite for the development and survival of any public entity to form the base of our following hypothesis. The aforementioned base, combined with the fact that agencies are inclined to acquire legitimization through their communications strategies and the importance of the uniqueness of an agency while facing threats and to ensure autonomy and longevity, have led us to our following assumption. We assume that in order to strengthen their reputational uniqueness, agencies are inclined to communicate more often within the dimensions corresponding with their initial unique trait as set in their mission and mandate. This assumption rests on the content of the communications as this content is strategically utilized by EU agencies to boost their reputational uniqueness, thus gaining more legitimization and autonomy.

H4: EU agencies are more likely to communicate more frequently within the reputational dimension emphasized in their mission.

This hypothesis takes the contents of the communications items into account in order to find a relation with the reputational uniqueness agencies seek to prevail according to their mission statement.

3 Methodology

This study draws on all press releases and news items published by the selected EU agencies to test the hypotheses. Their communications not only elucidate the dimensions of organizational reputation EU agencies emphasized while presenting themselves to relevant audiences, but it also shows how frequently they published communications in an attempt to reach those audiences and to convey their achievements, day-to-day activities, and future strategies.

In this chapter, we rationalize the choices made to conduct this study and test the hypotheses. We start by clarifying the case selection of the EU agencies. After that, we continue to expound on the operationalization of the variables explaining the frequency of the communications embodied by the reputational consideration and behavior of agencies. The reputational consideration and behavior encompass the reputational threats by legislators and the reputational uniqueness of the agencies represented by their function and their missions and mandates. We finish this chapter by explaining the selection of statistical analyses needed to test each hypothesis.

When plotting to analyze the communication's frequency and its relationship to the reputational considerations of EU agencies, we must develop an appropriate analysis strategy. As a result, this study is divided into two phases that draw on one another.

First, the study traces the communications of all EU agencies and maps them in accordance. This map provides us with a summary of all organizations and the number of press releases they issued in 2019. Furthermore, we map the agencies according to the number of threats they face, their regulatory function, and their reputation as portrayed in their mission and mandates.

The second phase of the research is more focused on the content of the communications. Following the analysis of the reputation the agencies portray in their mission in the first phase, we analyze the reputational dimensions emphasized in the agencies' communications in 2019 to study whether the reputation depicted in the agencies' missions and mandates correlates with the reputation those agencies convey in their daily communications.

To test all four hypotheses, we needed to create a dataset accounting for all variables. First, the number of press releases and news articles published by EU agencies in 2019 in order to map the communications. Second, mapping the threats, the agencies faced in 2019. Third, mapping the mandates of the agencies in accordance with the four reputational dimensions as developed by Carpenter (2010) and Carpenter and Krause (2012). Finally, an analysis of the

communications categorizing them within the four reputational dimensions constraints. Figure 1 shows how this research is designed.

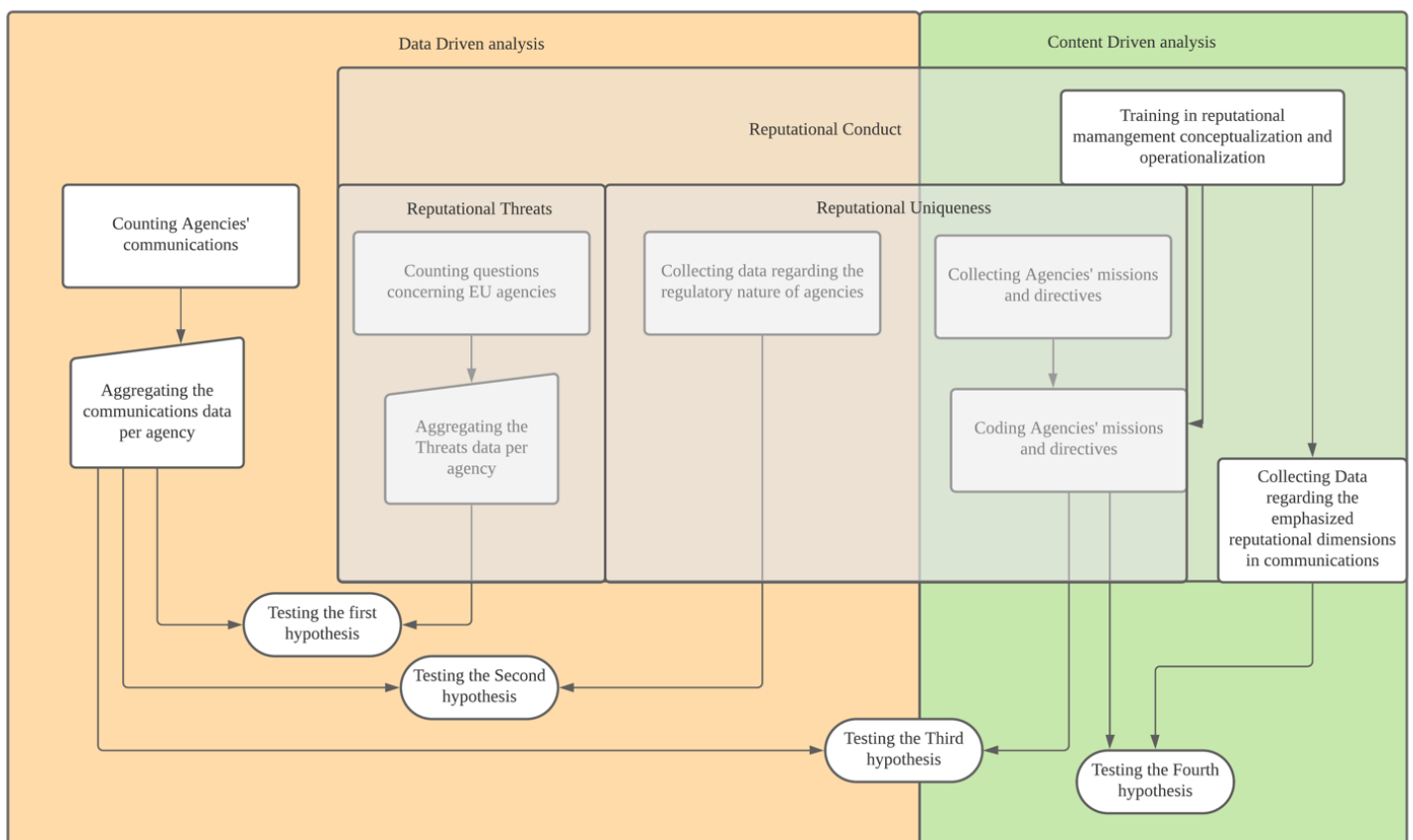


Figure 1: Flowchart of the research design

3.2 Case Selection

In recent decades, many IOs have significantly enhanced their core capacities for public contact in response to expanded public recognition and contestation. NATO’s Information Service (NATIS), for example, grew from a small office in the early 1950s to a full-fledged public diplomacy division staffed by public relations professionals who address a diverse community of journalists, NGOs, specialist groups, and concerned people (Ecker-Ehrhardt, 2018). Similarly, the IMF’s and ASEAN’s information offices have evolved into far more aggressive outreach divisions tasked with reaching out to a broader spectrum of societal players considered vital to the organization as a whole. In the EU, we have been witnessing the emergence in strategic narratives such as the case of “Sustainable Energy Europe” by using social media as a tool during the EU Sustainable Energy Week 2013 (Bain & Chaban, 2017), strategic use of Twitter by members of the European Parliament during elections (Umit, 2017). However, the most prominent advancement in strategic communications within EU agencies

came with the advent of the European Union External Action (EEAS) and its strategic communications division (Bátora, 2013).

We have decided to focus the research on EU agencies explicitly due to each EU agency's differentiated image and responsibilities. EU agencies are Decentralized agencies committed to the execution of EU policies while promoting collaboration between the EU and national governments by aggregating technological and professional skills from both EU agencies and national authorities (Bignami, 2005; Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2020a, 2020b; Mastenbroek & Martinsen, 2018; Rimkutė, 2020a; Rimkutė & De Vos, 2020). This population of agencies contains a mix of regulatory and non-regulatory agencies and covers a wide range of varied policy fields; Aviation, banking, protection, gender equity, wellness, fundamental rights, resources, climate, finance, fishing, marine, pharmaceuticals, research, and technology, intellectual property, information technology infrastructure, justice, police, safety, and security are examples of the policy fields covered by EU agencies (Rimkutė & De Vos, 2020). Those agencies are demarcated by a plethora of competing audiences, complicated institutional frameworks, and serious legitimacy and authority difficulties. Those supranational agencies, in particular, have many and diversified responsibilities, functions, and mandates that are defined on a case-by-case basis (Chiti, 2013). They function amid a high level of institutional complexity due to the fact that they have several official superiors; for example, they must rely on the European Commission (EC) and the European Parliament (EP) to develop regulations, as well as on national authorities' willingness to collaborate in enacting and enforcing the implementation of supranational laws (Busuioc & Rimkutė, 2019a). Furthermore, EU agencies enjoy privy to broader informal networks than their national equivalents; this implies that the day-to-day operations of supranational authorities are monitored by various, oftentimes irreconcilable, audiences necessitating EU agencies to use a diversified range of reputation-management techniques to cope with contradictory demands (Rimkutė, 2020a).

We research public content that EU agencies want to have about their critical operations for a wide variety of audiences on their websites. As we have encountered many difficulties accessing the EU Agency for large-scale IT systems for Home Affairs (EU-LISA) and the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) press data and The European agency for safety and health (EU-OSHA) having neither press releases nor news items to be found on their website before 2020. We decided to exclude them from the analysis. This has caused our dataset to be incomplete and not wholly representative of the information we were set out to attain, so we

decided not to include those agencies in the research lowering the number of agencies included to 34. A list of the agencies and their acronyms can be found in Appendix A.

For this analysis, we have elected to collect data on news items and press releases published in 2019. We have selected to focus on the communications in one snapshot year to disregard effects on the frequency of communications due to time and age. Busuioc & Rimkutė (2020) found that agencies tend to adopt different reputation management strategies in different phases in their lifecycles. So to account for the maturity of the agencies and to prevent any irregularities in the content of communications caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the lifecycle of the agency. We chose to focus our research on the last year before the pandemic while also giving the youngest of the agencies (SRB established in 2015) several years to mature into its role. The communications portion of the dataset created then accounts for the name of the agency, the number of press releases, and news articles published on their website. This dataset amounted to 3363 items divided between the 34 agencies included in this research (Appendix B).

3.3 Operationalization

In order to test the hypotheses and conduct the research, we need to operationalize all four variables included in the hypotheses. We start with the operationalization of the independent variable comprised of the frequency of communications; the first phase of the research makes use of the raw frequency of news items and press releases issued by the agencies in 2019, while the second phase accounts for the content of the communications as well and utilizes the coded communications in accordance with the four reputational dimensions are prescribed by Carpenter (2010). We then turn to operationalize the three-pronged independent variable, the reputational conduct comprised of; the level of threats (the independent variable of the first hypothesis) and the reputational uniqueness, which in its turn encompasses the regulatory function (independent variable of the second hypothesis), and the reputation as per the agency's mission (independent variable of the third and fourth hypotheses).

3.3.1 Dependent variables

To empirically observe the frequency of communications covered by the number of news items and press releases issued in 2019, we decided to collect the information from the agencies' websites directly. Almost all agencies included in this research have kept a record of the press releases and news articles published over the years publicly on their own websites, either under a news and press releases rubric or within their publication's rubric. We then filtered the publication by year and type of publication and counted them three times by hand

to avoid making any counting mistakes. By concentrating on agency news items and press releases, we can observe how agencies consciously shape their bureaucratic reputation and which actions they take regarding specific aspects of their core responsibilities in order to shape external audiences' impressions of them. News items and press releases are perfect forms of agency communications for documenting how organizations actively and diligently shape their organizational reputation (Rimkutė & De Vos, 2020). Unlike other communications produced by agencies, such as periodic reports, scientific risk reviews, or different regulatory outputs, press releases are voluntary, and agencies can select when and how often to report on their operations, as well as which facets of their varied activities to highlight. While all media organizations are required to follow strictly established rules in terms of which material about their operations should be used, agencies have complete freedom to tell their own story about themselves in their news reports and press releases, their day-to-day practices, and their contribution to the political environment in which they are embedded (Rimkutė & De Vos, 2020). This allows us to document how agencies vigorously develop their brand and reinforce their reputational uniqueness by deliberately crafting short pieces on specific facets of their key roles and structured mandates. By focusing on the information that agencies carefully choose to make public, we can not only identify general organizational reputation trends that public organizations wish to emphasize to external audiences but also empirically demonstrate how public organizations endeavored to bridge the gap between their current organizational image and the image they desire by emphasizing certain aspects of their operations. (Rimkutė & De Vos, 2020).

For the organizational reputation portion of the research, the research employs the Rumkutė and de Vos (2020) conceptualization tools to objectively observe the four dimensions of organizational reputation. The authors deductively generated and practically evaluated the keywords defining each dimension based on Carpenter's (2010) definitions (technical, performative, procedural, moral). The authors used supervised Machine Learning to characterize the communications of government entities in terms of their technological, performative, legal-procedural, and moral behavior. They improved their conceptualization of the four reputational dimensions and incorporated precise definitions and methods for classifying communications related to reputation by clarifying their conceptual characteristics and adding operational insights. As a result, they developed an accurate prediction algorithm capable of classifying large datasets of agency communications into four reputational dimensions. This thorough method included hand-coding, teaching the algorithm the code,

testing subsets to adjust for machine performance, and lastly, confirming the predictions to analyze large-scale datasets (Rimkutė & De Vos, 2020). We underwent multiple training sessions to obtain a better knowledge of the reputational dimensions; the details of those training sessions are expanded upon below (in chapter 3.4.1).

3.3.2 Independent variables

As the reputational conduct of an agency is determined by both the reputational uniqueness of the agency and the threats they face, we need to operationalize both factors determining the reputational conduct. First, we start by operationalizing the threats, and then we operationalize the reputational uniqueness comprised of the agencies' function and reputational image as per their missions and mandates.

To identify the level of threats EU agencies face, we counted the number of EP questions that explicitly reference the name of an EU agency to determine which agencies have faced high or low reputational threats following the methodology applied in Rimkutė's (2020a) research. To account for EU agencies' activities in 2019, we examined legislative concerns posed in that year. Font and Pérez Durán (2016) discovered that published EP questions were focused on agencies that receive a lot of media attention. As a result, we considered the number of parliamentary questions explicitly targeting a single EU agency as a metric for the agency's exposure to various overlapping audiences, which impose contradictory perceptions on the agency and, as a result, higher reputational threats. We counted every mention of the EU agencies on the "questions and union acts" section of the European parliament website for the year 2019. We elected to count the mentions of the 34 agencies included in this research by their acronyms across the board to avoid any discrepancies (Appendix C).

Secondly, this thesis builds on Majone's (1997) concept and justification about the European regulatory state and EU agencies to operationalize the regulatory structure and role of agencies. In this research, regulatory agencies represent all agencies that adhere to Majone's suggested logic of "regulation by information" (i.e., agencies in charge of information collection, technical advice, standard-setting, or [quasi-]decision- or rule-making tasks), while non-regulatory agencies include those with executive and coordination responsibilities. For this categorization, we make use of Rimkutė and De Vos's (2020) classification of EU agencies, each agency in accordance with its regulatory function (Appendix C).

Thirdly, we delve deeper into the agencies' reputational image as emphasized in their missions and mandates. Here we analyzed the mission statements as issued by the agencies and coded their goals in accordance with the four reputational dimensions set by Carpenter (2010).

The mission dictating the goal the agencies thrive to reach or are mandated with gives us insight into their desired reputation and the formation of their reputational uniqueness. The empirical emphasis was on the mission that agencies chose to include in their website's "about us" section; we coded the missions by following the methods of Rimkutė and de Vos (2020) (the texts used for this coding are attached in Appendix E).

3.4 Phase one

The first phase of the analysis is driven by the data obtained from the agencies' websites and the website of the EU parliament. The main focus of this phase lies on the number of releases and whether that can be justified by the number of questions (threats), the regulatory function of the agency (function), and their mission (reputational image as per the mission). The data regarding the reputational image obtained through content analysis, in its turn, feeds into the second phase of the analysis, more concerned with the content of the communications and whether it corresponds to the agencies' reputational image as per their mission.

3.4.1 Communications

To commence the first phase, we start with mapping the frequency of the communications. We examined the number of press releases and news issued by EU agencies in 2019. The website of the EU Agencies Network serves as a hub of information regarding all different agencies; from there, we were redirected to the individual agencies' websites where more information could be found. Each agency has its own style of conveying information and publications, which adds more to the uniqueness and autonomy of the agencies. However, this came to form an obstacle in the data collection portion of the research as not all agencies shared a uniformity in how the publications that are of importance to this research are published and/or labeled. For example, not all agencies label their press publication as being press releases or news items, which makes it harder to create a distinction between the two types if needed; those agencies label either all publications as news publications or press releases, examples of those are ACER, BEREC, EASO. Other agencies did use different labels, but all documents were placed on the same page with no way to filter between the two types of publications forcing us to count the documents one by one several times to avoid making any counting mistakes, for example, EBA, ENISA, and EUIPO. All of the communication data were then inserted in a working document and in SPSS for future analyses.

3.4.2 Threats

We start this analysis by collecting data ascribing the first half of agencies' reputational conduct, threats. The data obtained from the EU parliament website regarding their mentions

in EU questions show a disparity between the agencies (Appendix C). The data obtained from the EU parliament websites' "questions and union acts" section were added to the working document and the SPSS analysis file. We rank the agencies by the number of threats they are facing to see if there is a connection between the number of threats and the number of communications issued in that same period of time. We finish this part of the analysis by testing the hypothesis with Pearson's correlation analysis to establish whether there is a correlation between the threats facing EU agencies (independent variable) and the frequency of communications (dependent variable). We have chosen this type of statistical analysis to test the first hypothesis due to the nature of the dependent and independent variables, as they are both scaled variables. The Pearson's correlations test serves as a normalized measurement of the covariance between variables if a linear relation is to be expected, such as with scale variables (Healey, 2016).

3.4.3 Reputational Uniqueness

After studying the effect of threats on the frequency of communications, we turn our focus on the second half of agencies' reputational account, Reputational Uniqueness, which is in its turn divided into the function of the agency and the reputational image as per the agency's mission.

3.4.3.1 Function

The function of the agency in the second hypothesis accounts for the independent variable as we are analyzing the effect of this function on the dependent variable in this phase of the research being the frequency of communications. We differentiate the groups into regulatory and non-regulatory and calculate the means of the press releases and news articles issued on the agencies' websites in order to create a uniform view of the totals to test our second hypothesis. This categorization was also added to the working document and the SPSS analysis file. To test the hypothesis, we conducted a test to compare the means of the communications issued of the two categories and analyze the statistical significance of the difference. We compare the averages of issued communication items and their regulatory function using a t-test to observe if the regulatory agencies communicate more frequently on average than their non-regulatory counterparts and whether the differences have any statistical significance (Healey, 2016).

3.4.3.2 Missions and mandates

By plotting the reputational image as coded in the mission against the number of communications, we can find out the most frequent communicative agencies classified by their reputational dimension based on their mission. To test the hypothesis studying the relationship

between the reputational dimension as observed in the missions (independent variables) and the frequency of communications (dependent variable), we use the Analysis of Variance test (F-test) for the statistical analysis to annotate the relationship between the two variables since it examines the association between a scale variable (number of communications) and a nominal variable (reputational image as per the mission) in the absence of a linear relationship. This research method focuses on the variables' means and examines the influence of the independent nominal variable on the dependent scale variable by calculating the proportion of variance (partial Eta squared or Partial η^2) (Healey, 2016).

3.3 Phase two

The fourth and final analysis forms the content-based phase of the research, it combines the dataset used to map the reputational image as per the mission of the agencies with the content of communication items in 2019 to view whether the reputational dimensions most communicated in corresponds with the reputational dimension those agencies propagate in their mission statement. In order to test the fourth hypothesis regarding the agencies' relentless will to better their reputation, we need a closer view of the content of their communications. Rimkutė and de Vos (2020).

3.3.3 Training

Prior to the start of this research, we underwent a number of training sessions following Rimkutė and de Vos's training to gain clear insight into the coding mechanisms and to gain a better understanding of the conceptualization and operationalization of the four reputational dimensions utilized in theirs and our research. We started the training process with a session explaining the concepts and how they are operationalized in the hand-coded database created by Rimkutė and de Vos (2020). We then started the training in hand-coding 20 documents. This was followed by a meeting with Dr. Dovile Rimkutė to discuss the coding and the discrepancies in coding. This step was followed by another step of hand-coding 20 documents, again followed by a discussion of the coding and any discrepancies. We concluded the process by hand-coding a training dataset comprised of 100 documents; this was done to assess the inter-coder reliability. The Krippendorff's alpha of 100 texts was .6. This score is lower than the advised score of .7 advised for inter-coder reliability, however, it is a good score when accounting for how intricate and time-consuming processes the conceptualization and operationalization of those concepts are. The severity of the score is to be accredited to the complexity of the concept and the interrelations between the different reputational dimensions, however this last step of the process was adjourned with two meetings discussing the

differences in coding and explaining and consulting the reasonings behind any discrepancies which leads us to believe that a higher interceding reliability can be expected if it was tested again. This whole process granted us with great insight and understanding into the nuances of the four reputational dimensions, how to code them in future projects and how to utilize the coding correctly in this research.

3.3.4 Coded Data

To test the fourth hypothesis, we make use of the training dataset Rimkutè and de Vos (2020) created to teach the code to the algorithm. The training data comprises press reports and news items from all 45 departments and organizations made public in 2019 included in their study. The training data were manually selected and downloaded; this methodology enabled them to gain a precise analysis and interpretation of available documentation (e.g., volume, structure) as well as non-content-based variance through agencies in talking about their operations. In general, 1281 documents ranging in length from 100 to 1500 words were diligently hand-coded to ensure that documents are not too short (to avoid depending on 'empty' texts) nor too long (to prevent tagging several dimensions under a single label) in order to capture reputational communication (Rimkutè & De Vos, 2020). Their entire training dataset (1281 documents) was coded several times, aiming to hand-code the training details, explain operational attributes of the reputational dimensions, and include specific coding guidance for potential scholars. The second round of coding was performed to ensure that the coding in all 1281 documents adhered to the coding standards established in the first round (Rimkutè & De Vos, 2020). The annotations of another specialist were then cross-checked against a random subset of 100 texts using Cohen's Kappa. This measure was taken to ensure that the coding was of excellent caliber. The testing dataset was coded again in the third round of coding to finalize the coding guidance in accordance with the corrections made in the coding guidelines after consultation between the two coders (Rimkutè & De Vos, 2020). Since agencies issued numerous news items and press releases during the chosen year, they elected to code 50 news items from each regulatory agency and 20 from each non-regulatory agency. Documents within one agency were chosen to be spaced out throughout the year in order to reduce time-related variance (if an agency published more than 50/20 news articles in 2019) (Rimkutè & De Vos, 2020). We make use of this database with the coded documents of the agencies included in this research which amounts to a total of 1116 documents (Appendix D).

We make use of their analysis's results regarding the emphasis on the four reputational dimensions in communications. We then compare the dimension communicated in most per

agency with the reputational dimension obtained from their mandate and mission statement to test the fourth hypothesis. In this case, the reputational uniqueness, as stated in the mission statement of agencies, is the independent variable, and our test is to lay a connection between it and communication per different dimension separately, focusing on the dimension corresponding with their reputational dimension emphasized in the mission. By comparing the reputational uniqueness as obtained from the last part of the research with the most emphasized reputational dimensions in agencies' communications, we can test our fourth hypothesis. For this test, we need to utilize a chi square-based measure of association as both variables are on a categorical, ordinal level. We compute Cramer's V test to indicate the measure of the strength of the association and whether it is of statistical significance as both variables are of an ordinal level accounting for more than two categories. (Healey, 2016).

4 Results

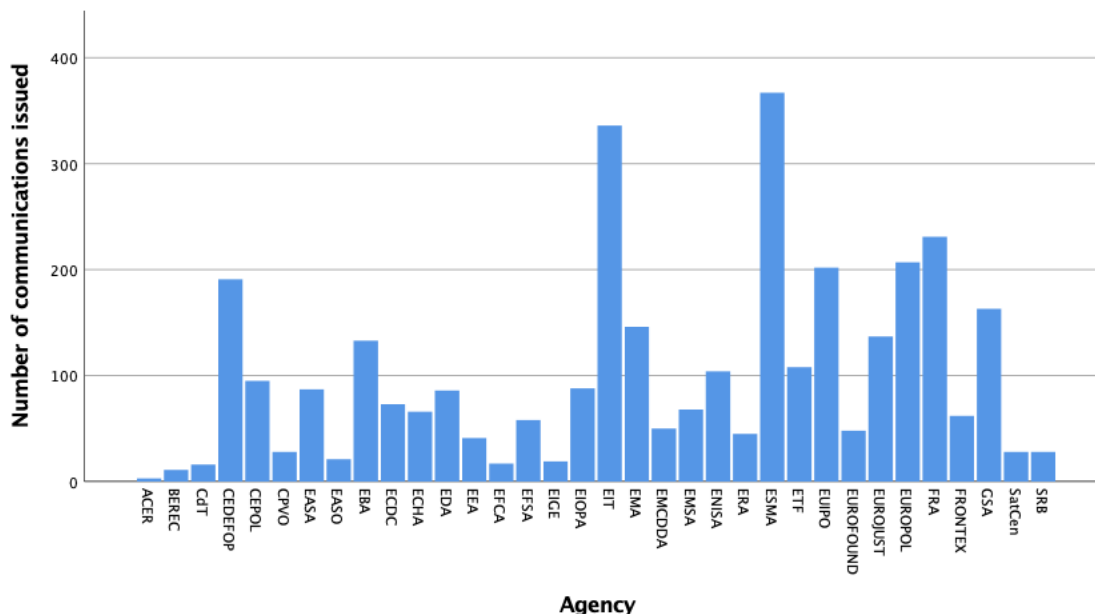


Figure 2: Communications per agency

4.1 Rate of communications and threats

The data acquired from the agencies’ websites regarding the number of communications issued in 2019 show a significant difference in communication frequency between agencies. Figure 2 shows the agencies and the number of communications issued in 2019. ESMA and EIT can be seen leading the pack with 367 and 336 communications issued and BEREC and ACER at the rear with 11 and 3, respectively. This shows an immense difference in how frequently some agencies communicate compared to others. A sizeable difference was also observed when mapping the number of questions EU agencies faced in the same period of time. Figure 3 shows the agencies and the number of the number of parliamentary questions targeting in 2019. At the top, we see the EEA and FRONTEX with 57 and 33 respectively, and both EFSA and EUROPOL with 31 questions apiece. While at the bottom, we see ACER, CdT, EDA, and SatCen with no mentions at all and BEREC, CEDEFOP, CEPOL, CPVO, EIOPA, EIT, ETF, and GSA with one question apiece,

The Pearson’s correlations test results showed a low level of correlation between the independent variable (threats counted by mentions in parliamentary questions) and the dependent variable (number of communications); however, this correlation showed no statistical significance $r(32) = -.030, p = .828$.

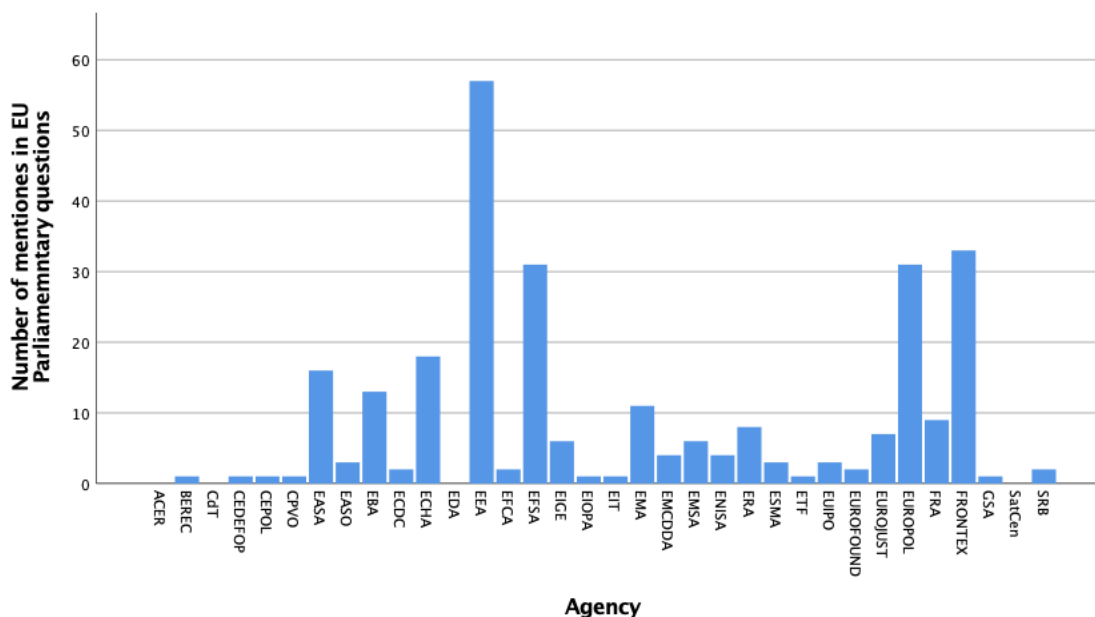


Figure 3: Threats per agency

Following the low level of correlation observed in the statistical analysis, we analyze the data in Appendix A. Only two out of the top ten most communicative agencies (EUROPOL with 207 communication items and 31 mentions) can be found in the top ten most mentioned agencies in parliamentary questions and no agencies out of the top five most communicative pool. However, the most shocking observation came when analyzing EIT’s numbers being the second most communicative agency with 336 items and the second least mentioned in parliamentary questions with only one mention.

The independence level shown in the statistical analysis combined with the differences observed between the agencies in the numbers of communications issued when most threatened by mentions in EU parliamentary questions shows no support to our first hypothesis regarding the relationship between the number of threats and number of communications issued by agencies. This analysis suggests that the number of threats facing EU agencies is of no influence on the number of communications issued in the same period of time.

4.2 Rate of communications and function

For the next part of the analysis, we take the regulatory function of the agencies into account in an attempt to explain the variance in the frequency of communications. Figure (4) shows the difference in the number of communications issued between regulatory and non-regulatory agencies. When calculating the averages of the publications for regulatory agencies and non-regulatory agencies, we see similar averages of communications per agency for both

groups. Table 1 shows the averages and the counted totals, while figure 4 shows a visualization of the comparison of the means.

Table 1: Communications per function (regulatory/ non-regulatory)

<i>Agency type</i>	Number of agencies	Total number of publications	Average communications per agency
<i>Regulatory</i>	23	2136	92.87
<i>Non-regulatory</i>	11	1227	111.55

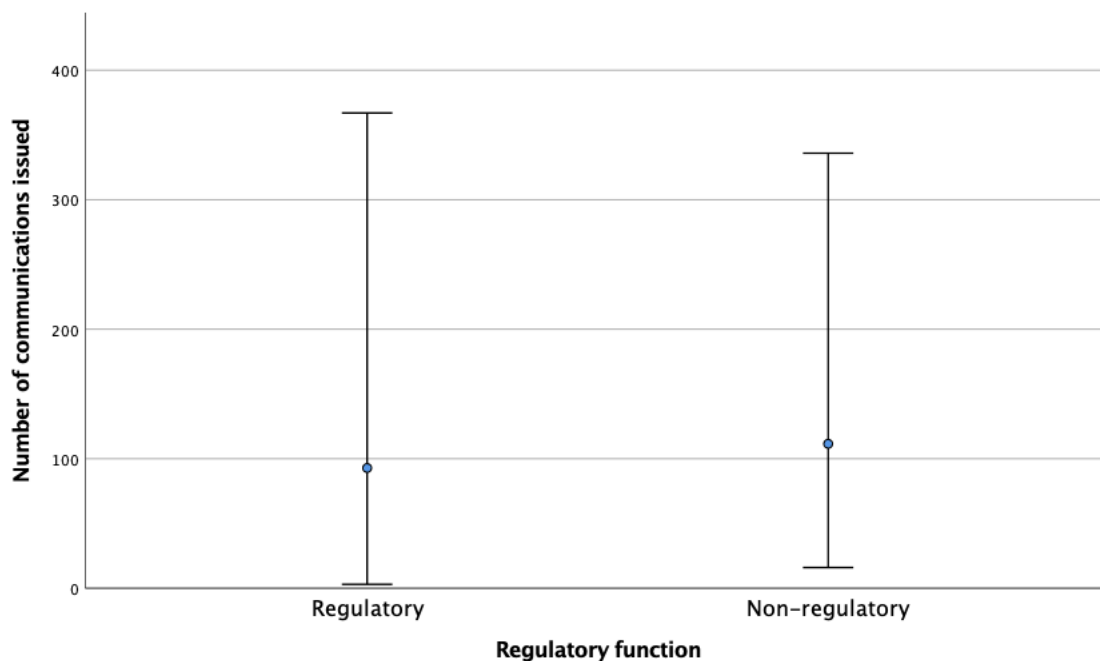


Figure 4: Disparity of communications and mean per function

In absolute terms, table 1 shows that regulatory agencies have issued more publications. However, they also account for more agencies (23 regulatory agencies compared to 11 non-regulatory agencies). We conducted a *t-test* to determine if mean differences were statistically significant (number of publications per regulatory functioned agency). The results suggested no significance in the difference between agencies with regulatory functions ($M = 92.87, SD = 82.93$) and non-regulatory functions ($M = 111.55, SD = 103.42$), $t(34) = -.57, p = .23$. Thus showing that the variables are independent of each other. Although this analysis shows a higher absolute number of communications issues by regulatory agencies when looking at the totals and when viewing the most frequent communicators, the statistical analysis and the difference in means show no statistical significance and a difference in means that favors the non-

regulatory agencies. This does not support the second hypothesis that regulatory agencies communicate more frequently than non-regulatory agencies. While we expected regulatory agencies to be more communicative than their non-regulatory counterparts, this analysis shows that non-regulatory agencies average more communications than their regulatory counterparts.

When analyzing the communications issued by the top five highest communicators, the number of press releases and news items issued by the highest communicating regulatory agencies eclipses the total number of publications issued by the most communicative non-regulatory agencies (1,072 in comparison to 1,003). This illustrates a similarity in the communication patterns at the topmost communicating agencies from the regulatory agencies (ESMA, FRA, CEDEFOP, EMA, EUROJUST) and the non-regulatory agencies (EIT, EUROPOL, EUIPO, GSA, CEPOL). However, when analyzing the five lowest frequent communicating regulatory agencies (CPVO, EIGE, EFCA, BEREC, ACER) numbers, we are faced with the other side of the coin. Those agencies were found to have issued 78 communication items which is a lower count than the communications issued by the non-regulatory lowest five communicative agencies (138 items by ERA, SatCen, SRB, EASO, CdT).

The disparity in the number of communications between the top communicators and bottom communicators by both types of agencies combined with the statistical analysis showing statistical independence between the number of communications and the regulatory function of agencies, and the results of the means comparisons showing that non-regulatory agencies communicate more frequently than regulatory agencies. Those three testing results go against our expectation made in the second hypothesis that regulatory agencies communicate more often than non-regulatory agencies.

4.3 Rate of communications and mission

After analyzing the functions of the agencies and whether this function is of any impact on the rate at which agencies communicate, we take into account another building stone of the agencies' reputational uniqueness, the mission statement. Here we find that the Performative dimension (second dimension) is the most prominent dimension agencies portray when communicating their mission (18 agencies). Followed by the technical dimension (first dimension with eight agencies), moral dimension (fourth dimension with seven agencies), and finally, the legal-procedural dimension (third dimension with only one agency). Figure 5 shows the results of the coding

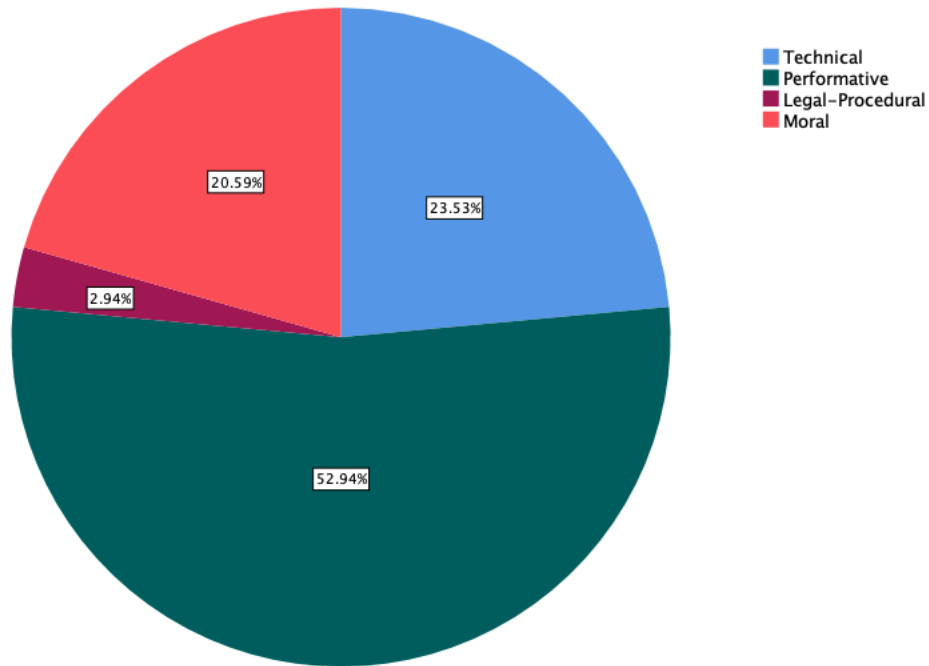


Figure 5: Percentages of agencies per reputational dimension emphasized in the mission

We then conducted a *t-test* to determine if mean differences in the total number of publications per category according to the mission statement were statistically significant. The results suggested that agencies with a performative-based mission are more communicative than their counterparts with technical, legal-procedural, and moral-based missions. On average agencies with performative based mission communicated more frequently ($M = 119.06, SD = 112.33$) than agencies with technical based mission ($M = 83.88, SD = 46.91$), $t(24) = .870, p = .018$ And more frequently than agencies with moral based mission ($M = 75.57, SD = 46.08$), $t(24) = .982, p = .023$ both tests were statistically significant. The statistical analysis supports the claims made in the third hypothesis that agencies with missions and mandates emphasizing the performative dimension communicate more frequently than agencies with missions emphasizing the technical, legal-procedural, and mortal dimensions.

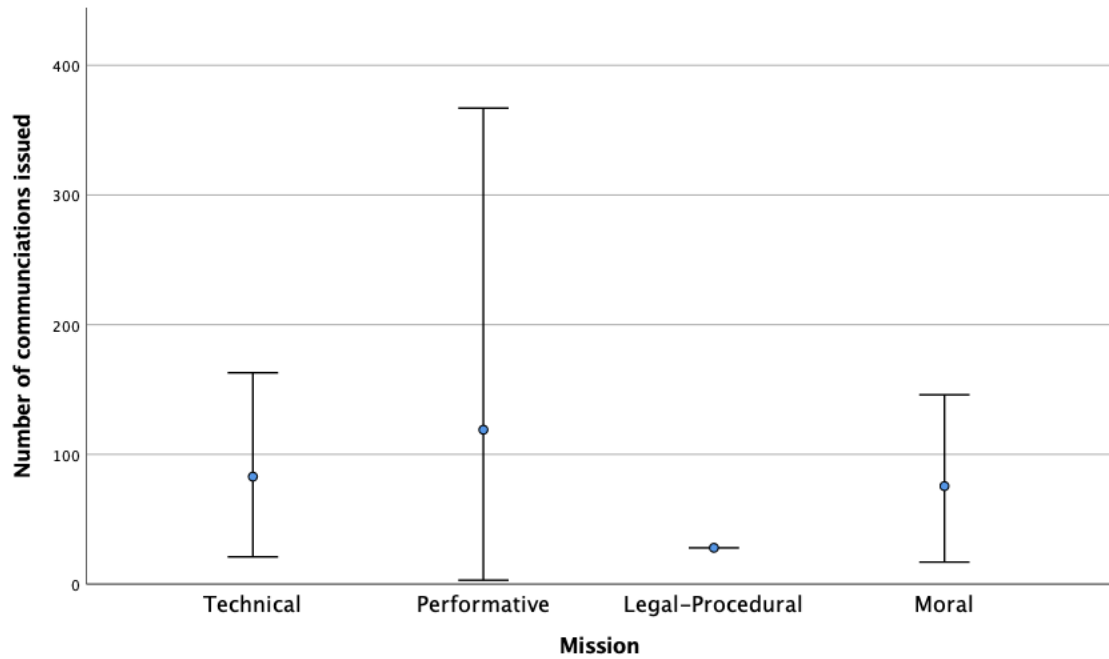


Figure 6: Disparity of communications and mean per mission

Although the statistical analysis supports the theoretical claims, we still observe disparities between the most communicative and least communicative agencies when accounting for the reputational dimensions emphasized in their missions and mandates. Of the top five most frequent communicating agencies in 2019, all five had set their mission within the framework of the performative dimension (ESMA, EIT, FRA, EUROPOL, EUIPO). However, this does not display the complete frame of reference as those agencies with performative missions also represent half of the agencies.

Table 2: Communications per the mission

<i>Dimension</i>	Number of agencies	Number of communications	Average of communications
<i>Technical</i>	8	663	82.88
<i>Performative</i>	18	2143	119.06
<i>Legal-procedural</i>	1	28	28
<i>Moral</i>	7	529	75.57

When viewing the absolute numbers of communications issued by the most frequent and least frequent communicators out of agencies with performative, technical, and moral missions, we can see that the top three agencies with performative based missions (ESMA, EIT, FRA) communicate more frequently than the counterparts (934 with an average of 311.33 items per agency). Furthermore, the top three agencies with technical-based missions (GSA,

EUROJUST, CEPOL) communicate more frequently than agencies with moral missions (EMA, ENISA, EIOPA) (395 with an average of 131.67 compared to 338 with an average of 112.67 items per agency). On the least frequent side of communications, we can see that agencies with a technical based mission (EASO, EMCDDA, EFSA) communicate more frequently (129 with an average of 13 items per agency) followed by moral missioned agencies (EMSA, EFCA, EIGE) (104 with an average of 34.67 items per agency) and finally, agencies with performative missions (CdT, ACER, BEREC) (30 with an average of 10 items per agency). This change in ranking, combined with the fact that the least frequently communicating agencies have emphasized the performative dimension in their mission and mandates, shows an unevenness in the communications between the top and the bottom.

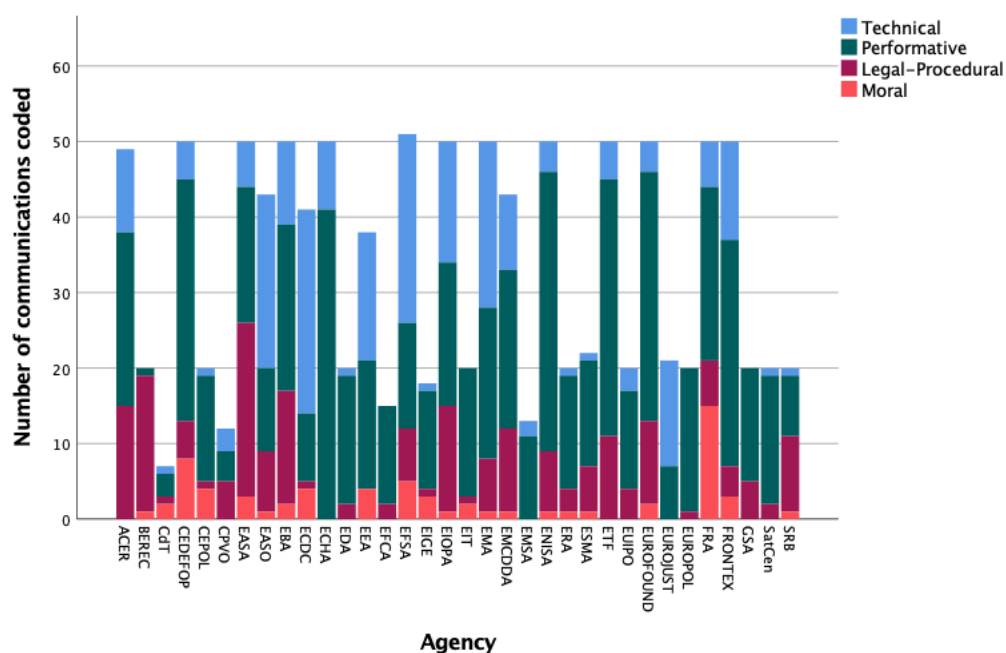


Figure 7: Distribution of reputational dimensions in communications per agency

4.4 Content of communications and mission

The second phase of the analysis turns its back on the overall communications frequency to focus on the content of the communications and how often they were utilized in agencies’ communications in 2019. For this phase, we made use of the hand-coded documents by Rimkutė and de Vos (2020) to find out the most emphasized reputational dimensions in the communications in 2019. figure 7 shows which reputational dimensions were emphasized the most by the EU agencies. The performative dimension reigns supreme when analyzing the most emphasized reputational dimensions in communications with 54% (613 items), followed by the technical dimension 21% (244 items), legal-procedural 19% (220 items), and finally, the moral dimension with 6% (66 items). Although the emphasis on the legal-procedural

dimension was nowhere to be seen in the missions, this dimension was being emphasized in a fifth of all communications issued in 2019. Figure 8 visualizes this data.

We applied a Cramer’s V correlation test to compute the relationship between the reputational uniqueness as per the mission statement of agencies and the most emphasized reputational dimension; the results of the test showed a significant, strong level of correlation, $\chi^2(6, N = 34) = 17.34, p < 0,05, V = 0,51$ which supports the fourth hypothesis that EU agencies are more likely to communicate more frequently within the reputational dimension corresponding with reputational dimension emphasized in their mission.

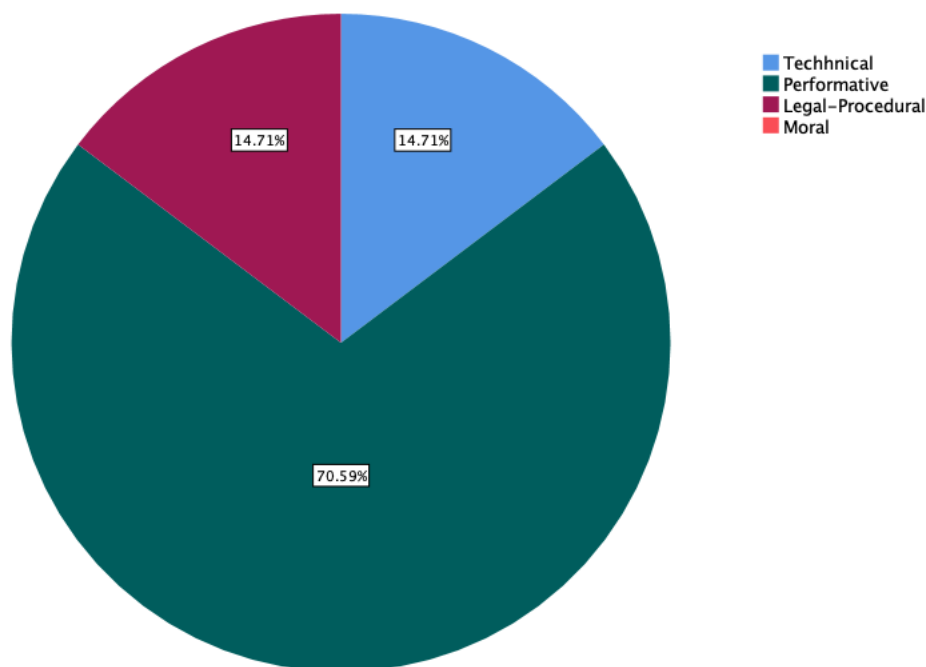


Figure 8: Percentages of most emphasized reputational dimension in communications

Analyzing the most emphasized reputational dimensions in agencies’ communications and comparing them to the reputation portrayed in the mission statement, we can witness a trend that most agencies do emphasize the same reputational dimension as is stated in their mission statement, with 59% of the agencies emphasizing it in their communications (Appendix C shows the most emphasized dimension in communications, Figure 9 shows in how many communication items each dimension was emphasized per reputational uniqueness categorization). Agencies with a technical reputational mission were split in half as 50% emphasized the technical dimension while the other half emphasized the performative dimension more often. Agencies with a performative mission were more uniform than their counterparts having 83% of the agencies emphasizing the performative dimension. The remainder, 17% of the agencies, tended to emphasize the legal-procedural dimension more. The technical dimension was not emphasized as the most utilized primary dimension by any

of the agencies with performative mission statements. The only agency with a legal-procedural mission statement (CPVO) was found to have emphasized the legal-procedural dimension more often. Finally, agencies with moral-based mission statements were found to emphasize the performative dimension with 63%, followed by both the technical dimension and the legal-procedural dimension with one agency per dimension out of the eight totals.

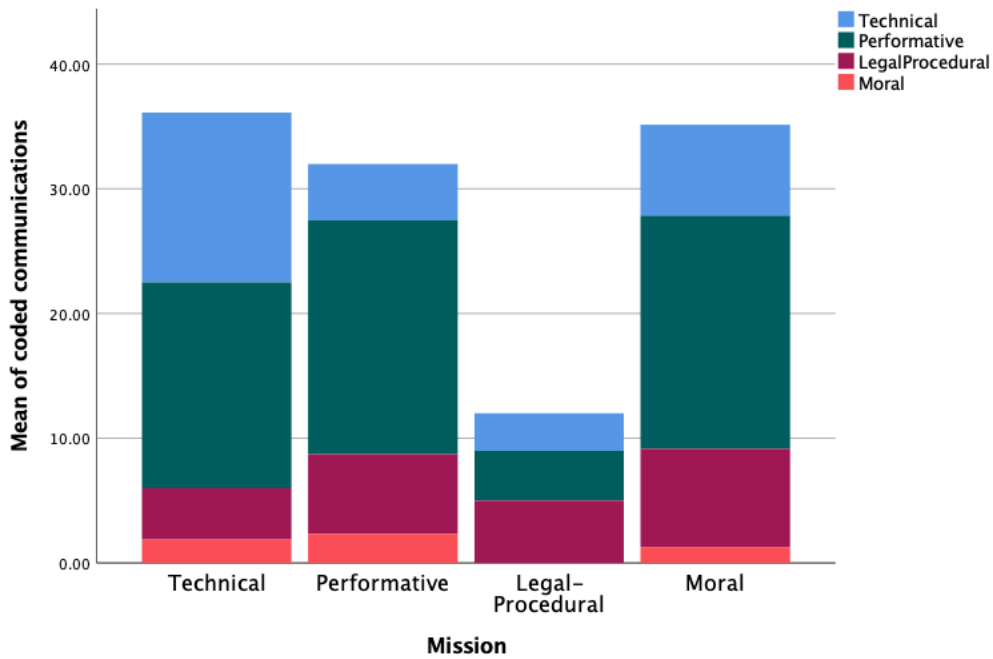


Figure 9: Distribution of reputational dimensions in communications per mission

5 Discussion

In the following chapter, we will discuss the findings of the empirical analysis to comprehend how those findings relate to the theoretical study and hypotheses made in the theoretical framework chapter of this research, how and why the results deviate from the expectations and clarifying suggestions that have arisen during the research that can serve future scholars in their ventures within the strategic communications and reputational conduct realms of research.

The results suggest a negligible correlation level between the number of questions targeting EU agencies in the EU parliament (Threats) and the rate at which agencies communicate. These results contradict the expectation made earlier. We anticipated agencies to be more active in shaping and re-shaping their external reputational image as the relevant number of legislative threats arises. The negative direction of the correlation, however small and statistically insignificant, suggests the opposite. The direction of the correlation suggests that the number of communications declines whenever the number of EU parliamentary questions rises. This contradiction might be explained by two factors; the level of reputation the agencies enjoy and the agency's age. Maor et al. (2013) claim that regulatory agencies tend to keep silent, in our case communicate less frequently, on topics for which they have a strong reputation and on those that fall beyond their specific authority, while reacting to ideas concerning vital functional areas for which they have a lower reputation and areas where their reputation is still developing. Furthermore, Busuioc & Rimkutė (2020) argued that agencies tend to adopt different reputational management tactics in different phases of their lifecycles. Those two factors bid new dimensions in which this research lacks the fortitude to analyze, those aspects being the strength of the reputation and the age and maturity of the agency. A future study accounting for the perceived strength of the reputation of EU agencies, the threats they face, and the rate of communications might show more substantial results explaining the frequency of communications issued.

Rimkutė's (2020a) analysis shows that regulatory agencies are more adept at managing their public image than their non-regulatory counterparts. Regulatory agencies use a broader range of reputational measures and, on average, place a higher emphasis on technical, procedural, and moral dimensions than nonregulatory counterparts. This conclusion implies that agencies functioning as guardians of policy and so strengthening their reputation are more strategic than agencies operating on an efficiency-based delegation basis (Rimkutė, 2020a). However, our empirical analysis suggests that the utilization of more reputational garnering technics does not translate to a higher rate of communications when compared to the non-regulatory agencies.

Non-regulatory agencies were found to communicate more frequently on average when compared to their regulatory counterparts, which contradicts the claims made in the second hypothesis. However, the results show that the highest communicating regulatory agencies do, in fact, communicate more frequently than the same category on the non-regulatory agencies side. However, the considerable disparity when comparing those numbers to the least communicating agencies makes such a claim hard to generalize within the framework of this analysis. Another factor that might have played a role in the statistical insignificance of the results how the uneven allocation of agencies within the regulatory function frame; the regulatory agencies accounted for more than twofold of the number of non-regulatory agencies, which might have accentuated the disparity in the rate of communication within the regulatory agencies even more. We suggest that a deeper analysis of the functioning of the agencies and the policy fields they operate in would show more significant results accounting for the rate of communications. This suggestion would entail categorizing the agencies farther to their core tasks and policies, farther than the binary approach of regulatory and non-regulatory utilized in this research.

Our empirical findings support the claim that agencies with missions emphasizing the performative dimension communicate more frequently than agencies emphasizing the technical, legal-procedural, and/or moral dimension in their missions and mandates. This support is in line with the claims made in the third hypothesis. It is also in line with the claims made by Rimkutė and de Vos (2020) that EU agencies are more output-focused, directing the essence and mission of their reputational uniqueness towards efficiency, effectivity, and goal-reaching. However, as with the previous portion of the analysis, one reputational dimension eclipsed the other three dimensions in the number of agencies emphasizing it in their mission. Agencies emphasizing the performative dimension in their mission form more than half of the total number of agencies in the research pool. Another constraint found due to the uneven distribution of the agencies was that only one agency was found to have emphasized the legal-procedural dimension, which makes the results harder to generalize. However, this does show in its turn that EU agencies are more output-driven as the input-driven and day-to-day focused dimension was only emphasized once in the agencies' missions.

The empirical analysis suggests that agencies tend to communicate more frequently with an emphasis on the reputational dimension emphasized in their missions and mandates. This result shows support to the fourth hypothesis and to the claim made by Carpenter (2010) that agencies employ strategic communications and reputation management conduct to strengthen their

reputation and to ensure their longevity. However, it was notable that the performative dimension was emphasized most by agencies across the board, lending more support to the mainstream claim that EU agencies tend to apply strong emphasis on results and evidence-based reasoning when communicating. Another noteworthy finding was the substantial number of agencies emphasizing the moral dimension in their missions and mandates. Such emphasis was nowhere to be seen when analyzing the communications issued by the agencies, as no agency was found to have utilized the moral dimension as the most emphasized dimension in communications. This discovery has led us to believe that there is a gap to be exploited between the reputation the agencies aim to attain in their missions and mandates and the reputation they pursue in their communications.

As has been seen with all the findings discussed above, the unequal allocation of the agencies within the framework of reputational uniqueness, including both regulatory function and reputational image as per the mission aspects, makes the results hard to generalize for different populations. This unequal allocation was not expected during the case selection procedure as the diversity of agencies with their multitude of audiences and tasks was expected to translate to diversity in allocation in accordance with their function and the reputational image they wish to attain in their mission statement. Furthermore, the statistical analysis conducted accounted only for a small number of cases. On the positive side, it made it more approachable to conduct the analysis and create research to account for all different variables without exhausting too many resources. However, small sample analyses are also known to generate false-positive results over-estimating the magnitude and the (in)significance of the statistical analysis, which forms a major shortcoming of this research. For future research, we would advise scholars to include a larger sample in their analysis with more equally distributed organizations over the different orders they aim to study the effect of on the rate of communications. We would also suggest an approach accounting for the age of agencies as that has been found to affect the reputational conduct of organizations.

6. Conclusion

Organizational reputation literature disputes that public government agencies partake in differentiated reputation management conduct and strategies to sculpt their reputational image, defend themselves from threats and ensure their prosperity and longevity (Carpenter, 2010). However, previous research was found to be lacking in its explanation when accounting for the rate public government agencies strategically issue communications. Where previous research left a gap with its binary approach to studying communications, this research ventured in to fill the gap and offer more explanation by creating a map to account for the rate of communications of public government agencies. By analyzing the communications rate and content of 34 EU agencies, this research was set out to answer the question, “How does reputational conduct account for the frequency and content of government agencies’ communications?”. In this research, the reputational conduct of public government agencies accounted for the level of threats the agencies faced represented by the number of questions explicitly mentioning the EU agencies in European parliamentary sittings. Reputational conduct also accounted for the reputational uniqueness of the agencies comprised of its function represented by it being regulatory or not and by its reputational image as stated in the agencies’ missions and mandates.

This research was divided into two phases to study the effect of the reputational conduct on the rate of communications. The first phase of this quantitative study created a map of the number of communications issued by EU agencies in 2019 and the level of threats the agencies faced in that year while also mapping and accounting for the multiple reputational dimensions emphasized by EU agencies in their missions while the second phase shifted the focus towards the content of the communications and how that is related to the missions and mandates.

The analysis of this research yielded conflicting results. On the one hand, there was no relation to be found between the level of threats posed on the EU agencies and the rate of communications issued by them as well as a lack of correlation between the regulatory function of agencies and the rate of communications. Both those findings were very noteworthy as they did not support the expectations based on the claims that agencies need to reinstate themselves better in the eyes of their audiences following threats and shocks and the claim that regulatory agencies utilize more reputational management strategies to communicate with their constituents. On the other hand, this research illustrated that agencies with missions emphasizing the performative dimension tend to communicate more frequently than their counterparts, emphasizing their technical, procedural, and/or moral traits. These findings came in support of the expectation that public government agencies are output-orientated and are

focused on efficiency and effectiveness. Lastly, the results of the analysis elucidated that agencies, in general, emphasize specific reputational traits in their communications; those traits were found to be corresponding with the reputational dimensions emphasized in the agencies' missions and mandates. Those final results showed support to our final expectation demonstrating that agencies partake in reputational conduct in manners that strengthen their reputation in the eyes of their audiences to secure its autonomy and ensure its longevity.

However, this research lacks the means for its results to be generalized over multiple populations due to the fact that statistical analysis of small samples emphasized the magnitude of the significance and insignificance of statistical tests, which might result in false-positive results. Although the results of this research are not generalizable as of yet, this research can serve as a stepping stone for future scholars focusing on studying the different aspects forming public governments agencies' reputational conduct and their effect on the rate of communications on a larger sample of agencies and over a more extended period of time to account for temporal changes in conduct.

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Appendices

Appendix A: EU Agencies

Acronym	Agency Name
<i>ACER</i>	Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators
<i>BEREC</i>	Office of the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications
<i>CdT</i>	Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union
<i>CEDEFOP</i>	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training
<i>CEPOL</i>	European Police College
<i>CPVO</i>	Community Plant Variety Office
<i>EASA</i>	European Aviation Safety Agency
<i>EASO</i>	European Asylum Support Office
<i>EBA</i>	European Banking Authority
<i>ECDC</i>	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
<i>ECHA</i>	European Chemicals Agency
<i>EDA</i>	European Defence Agency
<i>EEA</i>	European Environment Agency
<i>EFCA</i>	European Fisheries Control Agency
<i>EFSA</i>	European Food Safety Authority
<i>EIGE</i>	European Institute for Gender Equality
<i>EIOPA</i>	European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority
<i>EIT</i>	European Institute of Innovation and Technology
<i>EMA</i>	European Medicines Agency
<i>EMCDDA</i>	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
<i>EMSA</i>	European Maritime Safety Agency
<i>ENISA</i>	European Union Agency for Network and Information Security
<i>ERA</i>	European Railway Agency
<i>ESMA</i>	European Securities and Markets Authority
<i>ETF</i>	European Training Foundation
<i>EUIPO</i>	European Union Intellectual Property Office
<i>EUROFOUND</i>	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
<i>EUROJUST</i>	EU's Judicial Cooperation Unit
<i>EUROPOL</i>	European Police Office
<i>FRA</i>	EU Agency for Fundamental Rights
<i>FRONTEX</i>	EU Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders
<i>GSA</i>	European GNSS Agency
<i>SatCen</i>	EU Satellite Centre
<i>SRB</i>	Single Resolution Board

Appendix B: Total number of communications per agency (2019)

<i>Agency</i>	NEWS ITEMS	PRESS RELEASES	TOTAL
<i>ESMA</i>	292	75	367
<i>EIT</i>	318	18	336
<i>FRA</i>	222	9	231
<i>EUROPOL</i>	47	160	207
<i>EUIPO</i>	189	13	202
<i>CEDEFOP</i>	174	17	191
<i>GSA</i>	149	14	163
<i>EMA</i>	93	53	146
<i>EUROJUST</i>	49	88	137
<i>EBA</i>	44	89	133
<i>ETF</i>	108		108
<i>ENISA</i>	78	26	104
<i>CEPOL</i>	95		95
<i>EIOPA</i>	88		88
<i>EASA</i>	75	12	87
<i>EDA</i>	80	6	86
<i>ECDC</i>	69	4	73
<i>EMSA</i>	56	12	68
<i>ECHA</i>	49	17	66
<i>FRONTEX</i>		62	62
<i>EFSA</i>	58		58
<i>EMCDDA</i>	50		50
<i>EUROFOUND</i>	41	7	48
<i>ERA</i>	31	14	45
<i>EEA</i>	41		41
<i>SatCen</i>	28		28
<i>SRB</i>	10	18	28
<i>CPVO</i>	28		28
<i>EASO</i>		21	21
<i>EIGE</i>	19		19
<i>EFCA</i>	17		17
<i>CdT</i>	16		16
<i>BEREC</i>		11	11
<i>ACER</i>		3	3

Appendix C: Communications, Threats, Function, content of communications and mission

	Total number of communications	Threats*	Function (1=Regulatory, 2=Non-regulatory)**	Most emphasized dimension in communications***	Mission***
<i>ACER</i>	3	0	1	2	2
<i>BEREC</i>	11	1	1	3	2
<i>CdT</i>	16	0	2	2	2
<i>CEDEFOP</i>	191	1	1	2	2
<i>CEPOL</i>	95	1	2	2	1
<i>CPVO</i>	28	1	1	3	3
<i>EASA</i>	87	16	1	3	4
<i>EASO</i>	21	3	2	1	1
<i>EBA</i>	133	13	1	2	2
<i>ECDC</i>	73	2	1	1	1
<i>ECHA</i>	66	18	1	2	1
<i>EDA</i>	86	0	2	2	2
<i>EEA</i>	41	57	1	2	2
<i>EFCA</i>	17	2	1	2	4
<i>EFSA</i>	58	31	1	1	1
<i>EIGE</i>	19	6	1	2	4
<i>EIOPA</i>	88	1	1	2	4
<i>EIT</i>	336	1	2	2	2
<i>EMA</i>	146	11	1	1	4
<i>EMCDDA</i>	50	4	1	2	1
<i>EMSA</i>	68	6	1	2	4
<i>ENISA</i>	104	4	1	2	4
<i>ERA</i>	45	8	2	2	2
<i>ESMA</i>	367	3	1	2	2
<i>ETF</i>	108	1	1	2	2
<i>EUIPO</i>	202	3	2	2	2
<i>EUROFOUND</i>	48	2	1	3	2
<i>EUROJUST</i>	137	7	1	1	1
<i>EUROPOL</i>	207	31	2	2	2
<i>FRA</i>	231	9	1	2	2
<i>FRONTEX</i>	62	33	1	2	2
<i>GSA</i>	163	1	2	2	1
<i>SatCen</i>	28	0	2	2	2
<i>SRB</i>	28	2	2	3	2

* (Rimkutė & De Vos, 2020)

** (1: Technical, 2: Performative, 3: Legal-Procedural, 4: Moral)

Appendix D: Communications emphasizing specific reputational dimensions*

Agency	Technical	Performative	Legal- Procedural	Moral
<i>ACER</i>	11	23	15	0
<i>BEREC</i>	0	1	18	1
<i>CdT</i>	1	3	1	2
<i>CEDEFOP</i>	5	32	5	8
<i>CEPOL</i>	1	14	1	4
<i>CPVO</i>	3	4	5	0
<i>EASA</i>	6	18	23	3
<i>EASO</i>	23	11	8	1
<i>EBA</i>	11	22	15	2
<i>ECDC</i>	27	9	1	4
<i>ECHA</i>	9	41	0	0
<i>EDA</i>	1	17	2	0
<i>EEA</i>	17	17	0	4
<i>EFCA</i>	0	13	2	0
<i>EFSA</i>	25	14	7	5
<i>EIGE</i>	1	13	1	3
<i>EIOPA</i>	16	19	14	1
<i>EIT</i>	0	17	1	2
<i>EMA</i>	22	20	7	1
<i>EMCDDA</i>	10	21	11	1
<i>EMSA</i>	2	11	0	0
<i>ENISA</i>	4	37	8	1
<i>ERA</i>	1	14	6	1
<i>ESMA</i>	5	34	11	0
<i>ETF</i>	3	13	4	0
<i>EUIPO</i>	4	33	11	2
<i>EUROFOUND</i>	14	7	0	0
<i>EUROJUST</i>	1	15	3	1
<i>EUROPOL</i>	0	19	1	0
<i>FRA</i>	6	23	6	15
<i>FRONTEX</i>	13	30	4	3
<i>GSA</i>	0	15	5	0
<i>SatCen</i>	1	17	2	0
<i>SRB</i>	1	8	10	1
<i>Total</i>	244	605	208	66
<i>Percentages</i>	22%	54%	19%	6%

* (Rimkutė & De Vos, 2020)

Appendix E: Agencies' mission statement

ACER

Our perspective is European. Our overall purpose is to achieve a transition of the European energy system in line with political objectives set, reaping benefits of increased energy market integration across Europe, and securing low-carbon supply at least possible cost for European businesses and citizens.

ACER fosters a fully integrated and well-functioning International Energy Market, where electricity and gas are traded and supplied according to the highest integrity and transparency standards, so that EU consumers can benefit from a wider choice, fair prices and greater protection.

To achieve this, we work closely with the European Institutions, National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs), national governments and market players.

Over time, the Agency received additional tasks and responsibilities to better pursue the integration of the European internal energy market. With the latest provisions adopted in the Clean Energy Package (2019), the Agency has also further strengthened its responsibilities on the coordination with NRAs and cross-border cooperation.

Our main areas of activity are:

Supporting the integration of the EU national energy markets, by developing common network and market rules, coordinating NRAs at European level, as well as by taking part in regional and cross-regional initiatives and organising working groups.

Monitoring the well-functioning and transparency of the EU internal energy market, in order to deter market manipulation and abusive behaviour. Since late 2011, the Agency has the specific mandate of overseeing wholesale energy trading.

Advising the EU Institutions on trans-European energy infrastructural issues. ACER also monitors the work of the European Networks of Transmission System Operators for gas and electricity (ENTSO-E and ENTSOG); issuing opinions on their EU-wide network development plans (TYNDP) and ensuring that these are aligned with the priorities set at European level.

To progress on these activities, the Agency can issue:

non-binding opinions and recommendations to NRAs, transmission system operators (TSOs), and the EU institutions

binding individual decisions in specific cases and conditions about cross-border infrastructural issues

draft framework guidelines (as in the case of network codes), on request of the European Commission

Berec

MISSION

”BEREC aims at fostering the independent, consistent and high-quality regulation of digital markets for the benefit of Europe and its citizens.” (BEREC strategy 2021-2025)

BEREC contributes to the development and better functioning of the internal market for electronic communications networks and services. It does so by aiming to ensure a consistent application of the EU regulatory framework and by aiming to promote an effective internal market in the telecoms sector, in order to bring even greater benefits to consumers and businesses alike.

Furthermore, BEREC assists the European Commission and the national regulatory authorities (NRAs) in implementing the EU regulatory framework for electronic communications. It provides advice on request and on its own initiative to the European institutions and complements, at the European level, the regulatory tasks performed by the NRAs at the national level.

The NRAs and the Commission have to take utmost account of any opinion, recommendation, guidelines, advice or regulatory best practice adopted by BEREC.

STRATEGY

The latest BEREC strategy 2021-2025 covers a period of five years, instead of three. This extended period enables better alignment with the legislative cycle of the European Commission, and with the objectives and new priorities set out by President von der Leyen for the period of 2019-2024.

BEREC will plan its multi-annual work around the four general objectives of the European Electronic Communication Code (EECC):

Promoting connectivity and access to, and take-up of, very high capacity networks;

Promoting competition and efficient investment;

Contributing to the development of the internal market;

Promoting the interests of the citizens of the Union.

In the process, BEREC will give special consideration to the three high-level strategic priorities listed below:

Promoting full connectivity

BEREC will prioritize work that improves the conditions for the expansion and take-up of secure, competitive and reliable high-capacity networks (both fixed and wireless) across Europe and ensures a smooth transition from legacy infrastructures.

Supporting sustainable and open digital markets

BEREC will prioritize work that relates to the functioning of digital markets, namely focusing on exploring conditions and addressing issues regarding digital service providers and end-users in the digital market.

Empowering end-users

BEREC will continue its work to promote choice and empowerment for end-users by prioritizing work to build trust in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and digital services and to enable and result in better-informed choices by consumers.

BEREC will revisit its strategic priorities over the course of the period to ensure the relevance and alignment of its strategy with future developments.

CdT

The Translation Centre, like any other EU institution or body, plans its activities on different levels and using different documents. The Multi-Annual Strategy sets out the vision going forward and is articulated in strategic goals, which are further defined in strategic objectives and strategic initiatives, all of which are to be achieved during the reference period. Over this period, the implementation of the Strategy is measured through strategic key performance indicators. The detailed implementation of the Strategy is set out in the Centre's multi-annual programming documents and Annual Work Programmes (AWP). A summary of the progress made with regard to the Strategy and AWP is provided in the Centre's Annual Activity Report. For the financing of the various activities outlined in the Strategy and the Annual Work Programmes, the Centre prepares an Annual Budget, which is adopted by its Management Board together with the programming documents. The Centre's budget includes information on the forecast revenue and expenditure for a specific year. Finally, every year the Centre presents its annual accounts, which outline the implementation of its budget.

The Centre's Strategy 2016-2020

The Centre's vision to become a centre of excellence for the provision of language services for the EU agencies and bodies by 2020 lies at the heart of the Strategy 2016-2020.

As the shared service provider to meet the language needs of the EU agencies and bodies, the Centre continues to actively contribute to the European Commission's priority of making the EU a union of democratic change. By fulfilling its mandate, the Centre facilitates effective multilingualism in the EU by playing its role, in partnership with its clients, in ensuring access by EU citizens to information in the various official EU languages.

The Centre also continues to fulfil its second mandate to contribute to rationalising the use of resources and harmonising procedures in EU translation through interinstitutional cooperation.

The main focus of the Strategy is to optimise the creation of value for the Centre's clients while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Centre.

CEDEFOP

Cedefop is one of the EU's decentralised agencies. Founded (1) in 1975 and based in Greece since 1995, Cedefop supports development of European vocational education and training (VET) policies and contributes to their implementation. The agency is helping the European Commission, EU Member States and the social partners to develop the right European VET policies.

Cedefop: helping develop the right policies to provide the right skills

Why is that important?

Europe's strategy for 2020 (2) is a route for smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth through knowledge and innovation, which sets an employment rate target of 75%.

The success of this strategy depends on the skills of Europe's workforce. Enterprises need people with the skills required to compete and provide high-quality goods and services.

People need the right qualifications to find jobs. People with low levels of or no qualification are nearly three times more likely to be unemployed than those with high qualifications. In the EU, around 75 million people, nearly a third of the working population, have low levels of or no qualification. Too many young people, around 15%, leave school without any qualifications.

What we do

The right VET policies depend on understanding how economies, societies and people are changing.

Cedefop works to strengthen European cooperation and provide the evidence on which to base European VET policy. Cedefop's added value is the high quality of its comparative analyses and expertise gathered through research and networking, which are used to:

- Provide technical advice and propose ideas for VET policies;
- Fill knowledge gaps and generating new insights that identify trends in and challenges for VET;
- Increase awareness of VET's image and importance;
- Bring together policy-makers, social partners, researchers and practitioners to share ideas and debate the best ways to improve VET policies;
- Support and encourage joint European approaches, principles and tools to improve VET.

Cedefop works closely with the European Commission, Member States' governments, representatives of employers and trade unions, VET researchers and practitioners. It provides them with up-to-date information on developments in VET as well as opportunities for policy debate.

Cedefop disseminates its information through its website, publications, social media, networks, conferences and seminars. Cedefop's activities are guided by its mission and Programming Document / Work Programme.

CEPOL

Mission

Making Europe a safer place through law enforcement training and learning.

Vision

To be the centre of European law enforcement training and learning, focusing on innovation and quality.

Core values

Human rights and fundamental freedoms

European Law Enforcement cooperation

Quality

Innovation

Reliability

Core competencies

CEPOL brings together law enforcement professionals to:

Offer them opportunities to grow personally and professionally through training;

Contribute by learning to solve issues related to European security;

Establish networks of training institutes and professionals.

Core promise

With CEPOL, professionals can grow both their knowledge and networks.

Motto

CEPOL - Educate, Innovate, Motivate

CPVO

Who we are

The Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) is a self-financed EU agency responsible for the management of the Community Plant Variety Rights System. Located in Angers, France, the CPVO was created by the Council Regulation 2100/94 and has been operational since April 1995.

Our Mission

CPVO mission:

"To deliver and promote an efficient Intellectual Property Rights system that supports the creation of new plant varieties for the benefit of Society".

A system for the protection of plant variety rights has been established by the European Commission legislation. The system allows intellectual property rights, valid throughout the European Union, to be granted for plant varieties.

What we do

The CPVO's task is to administer the Plant Variety Rights System in Europe. This system, which is the largest in the world, provides protection with an intellectual property right for new plant varieties. Since the creation of the CPVO in 1995 the office has received over 53,000 applications, with over 41,000 titles currently in force.

EASA

Mission

Ensure the highest common level of safety protection for EU citizens

Ensure the highest common level of environmental protection

Single regulatory and certification process among Member States

Facilitate the internal aviation single market & create a level playing field

Work with other international aviation organisations & regulators

Tasks

Draft implementing rules in all fields pertinent to the EASA mission

Certify & approve products and organisations, in fields where EASA has exclusive competence (e.g. airworthiness)

Provide oversight and support to Member States in fields where EASA has shared competence (e.g. Air Operations , Air Traffic Management)

Promote the use of European and worldwide standards

Cooperate with international actors in order to achieve the highest safety level for EU citizens globally (e.g. EU safety list, Third Country Operators authorisations)

EASO

What we do

The European Union is working towards a Common European Asylum System. EASO supports its implementation by applying a bottom-up approach. The aim is to ensure that individual asylum cases are dealt with in a coherent way by all Member States.

EASO provides different kinds of support, namely:

permanent support: supporting and stimulating the common quality of the asylum process through common training, common asylum training material, common quality and common Country of Origin Information (COI);

special support: tailor-made assistance, capacity building, relocation, specific support and special quality control tools;

emergency support: organising solidarity for Member States subject to particular pressures by providing temporary support and assistance to repair or rebuild asylum and reception systems;

information and analysis support: sharing and merging information and data, analyses and assessments at EU level, including EU-wide trend analyses and assessments;

third-country (i.e. non-member country) support: supporting the external dimension of the Common European Asylum System, supporting partnerships with third countries to reach common solutions, including by capacity building and regional protection programmes, and coordinating Member States' actions on resettlement.

EASO's activities are summarised in the Work Programmes and the Annual Activity reports, which can be consulted here.

EASO's principles to fulfil its tasks are:

organising support and assistance for the general or specific needs of the Member States' asylum systems;

coordinating and stimulating operational cooperation between Member States and enhancing quality;

acting as an independent centre of expertise on asylum;

organising EU-wide analyses and assessments of asylum data;

facilitating and stimulating joint action and ensuring consistency within the asylum field;

engaging with the full commitment of Member States;

respecting the responsibility of Member States and their asylum decisions

cooperating with the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union, as well as other EU institutions, agencies and bodies;

involving international organisations and civil society; and

performing its duties as a service-oriented, impartial and transparent organisation within the EU legal, policy and institutional framework.

EBA

Missions and tasks

The main task of the EBA is to contribute, through the adoption of binding Technical Standards (BTS) and Guidelines, to the creation of the European Single Rulebook in banking. The Single Rulebook aims at providing a single set of harmonised prudential rules for financial institutions throughout the EU, helping create a level playing field and providing high protection to depositors, investors and consumers.

The Authority also plays an important role in promoting convergence of supervisory practices to ensure a harmonised application of prudential rules. Finally, the EBA is mandated to assess risks and vulnerabilities in the EU banking sector through, in particular, regular risk assessment reports and pan-European stress tests.

Other tasks set out in the EBA's mandate include:

- investigating alleged incorrect or insufficient application of EU law by national authorities
- taking decisions directed at individual competent authorities or financial institutions in emergency situations

- mediating to resolve disagreements between competent authorities in cross-border situations
- acting as an independent advisory body to the European Parliament, the Council or the Commission.

- taking a leading role in promoting transparency, simplicity and fairness in the market for consumer financial products or services across the internal market.

To perform these tasks, the EBA can produce a number of regulatory and non regulatory documents including binding Technical Standards, Guidelines, Recommendations, Opinions and ad-hoc or regular reports.

The Binding Technical Standards are legal acts which specify particular aspects of an EU legislative text (Directive or Regulation) and aim at ensuring consistent harmonisation in specific areas. The EBA develops draft BTS which are finally endorsed and adopted by the European Commission. Contrary to other documents such as Guidelines or Recommendations, the BTS are legally binding and directly applicable in all Member States.

Working as a specialised EU agency

The EBA is one of the specialised EU agencies set up by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union to carry out specific legal, technical or scientific tasks is an important component of the EU.

These agencies work alongside the main EU institutions and Member States, feeding them evidence-based advice to help shape informed policies and laws at the EU and national level. They add value by promoting the sharing of information and expertise in areas that impact the lives of Europe's 500 million citizens.

In 2015, the EU agencies accounted for a total of 6,554 posts, amounting to 13% of all EU staff, and represented 1.5% of the total EU budget. For more information on the network of specialist EU agencies, you can download this brochure.

ECDC

About ECDC

ECDC is an EU agency aimed at strengthening Europe's defences against infectious diseases. The core functions cover a wide spectrum of activities: surveillance, epidemic intelligence, response, scientific advice, microbiology, preparedness, public health training, international relations, health communication, and the scientific journal Eurosurveillance.

ECDC disease programmes cover antimicrobial resistance and healthcare-associated infections; emerging and vector-borne diseases; food- and waterborne diseases and zoonoses; HIV, sexually transmitted infections and viral hepatitis; influenza and other respiratory viruses; tuberculosis; and vaccine-preventable diseases.

In 2019, ECDC continues to contribute to health security, giving particular attention to the following areas:

Tackle antimicrobial resistance

Improve vaccine coverage in the EU

Support the European Commission and the Member States in addressing the Sustainable Development Goals in the area of HIV, TB and hepatitis

Further support the European Commission and the Member States in strengthening the preparedness for cross-border health threats

Focus on strategic partnerships to create synergy and avoid duplication of work

Further enhance ECDC's operational performance and monitoring.

ECHA
Mission

We, together with our partners, work for the safe use of chemicals.

Vision

To be the centre of knowledge on the sustainable management of chemicals, serving a wide range of EU policies and global initiatives, for the benefit of citizens and the environment.

Transparent

We are open and transparent in our actions and decision-making. We are easy to understand and to approach.

Independent

We are independent from all external interests and impartial in our decision making. We consult members of the public openly before taking many of our decisions.

Trustworthy

Our decisions are science based, consistent and impartial. Accountability and the security of confidential information are cornerstones of all our actions.

Efficient

We are goal-oriented, committed and we always seek to use resources wisely. We apply high quality standards and respect deadlines.

Committed to well-being

We stimulate the safe and sustainable use of chemicals to improve the quality of life of all citizens in Europe and the environment.

EDA

MISSION

The European Defence Agency was established under a Joint Action of the Council of Ministers on 12 July, 2004, "to support the Member States and the Council in their effort to improve European defence capabilities in the field of crisis management and to sustain the European Security and Defence Policy as it stands now and develops in the future".

To implement the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty (Art.42 TEU), this Joint Action was first replaced by a Council Decision on 12 July 2011 which was revised by Council decision (CFSP) 2015/1835 of 12 October 2015 on the statute, seat and operational rules of the EDA.

The European Defence Agency, within the overall mission set out in the before-mentioned Council decision, has three main missions:

supporting the development of defence capabilities and military cooperation among the European Union Member States;

stimulating defence Research and Technology (R&T) and strengthening the European defence industry;

acting as a military interface to EU policies.

EDA acts as a catalyst, promotes collaborations, launches new initiatives and introduces solutions to improve defence capabilities. It is the place where Member States willing to develop capabilities in cooperation do so. It is also a key facilitator in developing the capabilities necessary to underpin the Common Security and Defence Policy of the Union.

Long Term Review

Following EDA's Long Term Review carried out in 2016-2017, Ministers agreed in May 2017 to reinforce the Agency's mission along the following paths, in accordance with established EDA rules and procedures:

EDA as the major intergovernmental prioritisation instrument at EU level in support of capability development, coordinating with the EEAS (incl. EUMS) and EUMC in their respective areas of responsibility.

EDA as the preferred cooperation forum and management support structure at EU level for participating Member States to engage in technology and capability development activities.

EDA as facilitator towards the European Commission and EU Agencies, and as the interface upon Member States' request, exploiting wider EU policies to the benefit of Defence and acting as a central operator with regard to EU funded defence-related activities.

EEA
we are

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The European Environment Agency (EEA) is an agency of the European Union. Our task is to provide sound, independent information on the environment. We are a major information source for those involved in developing, adopting, implementing and evaluating environmental policy, and also the general public.

The regulation establishing the EEA was adopted by the European Union in 1990. It came into force in late 1993 immediately after the decision was taken to locate the EEA in Copenhagen. Work started in earnest in 1994. The regulation also established the European environment information and observation network (Eionet).

The EEA's mandate is:

To help the Community and member and cooperating countries make informed decisions about improving the environment, integrating environmental considerations into economic policies and moving towards sustainability

To coordinate the European environment information and observation network (Eionet)

The EEA now has 32 member countries and six cooperating countries. The European environment information and observation network (Eionet) is a partnership network of the EEA and the countries. The EEA is responsible for developing the network and coordinating its activities. To do so, the EEA works closely together with national focal points, typically national environment agencies or environment ministries. They are responsible for coordinating national networks involving many institutions (about 350 in all).

Main clients are the European Union institutions — the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council — and our member and cooperating countries. In addition to this central group of European policy actors, we also serve other EU institutions such as the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

The business community, academia, non-governmental organisations and other parts of civil society are also important users of our information. We try to achieve two-way communication with our clients in order to correctly identify their information needs, and make sure that the information provided is understood and taken up by them.

EFCA

The European Fisheries Control Agency is a European Union agency. The agency's mission is to promote the highest common standards for control, inspection and surveillance under the CFP. The EFCA will function at the highest level of excellence and transparency with a view to developing the necessary confidence and cooperation of all parties involved and, in so doing, to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of its operations.

European Union governments agreed to establish the agency in the 2002 reform as part of the drive to instil a culture of compliance within the fisheries sector across Europe. In April 2005, they adopted the necessary legislation with Council Regulation (EC) No 768/2005. Its primary role is to organise coordination and cooperation between national control and inspection activities so that the rules of the CFP are respected and applied effectively.

The added value of the work of the agency lies in its contribution to a European-wide level playing field for the fishing industry so that European obligations are observed by everyone and everyone in the sector is treated equally, wherever they might be operating. Secondly, it contributes towards sustainable fisheries by enhancing compliance with existing conservation and management measures to the benefit of present and future generations.

The Agency, in cooperation with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and the European Maritime Safety Agency, each within its mandate, supports the national authorities carrying out coast guard functions.

EFCA has its official seat in Vigo, Spain.

EFSA

Who we are, what we do

EFSA is a European agency funded by the European Union that operates independently of the European legislative and executive institutions (Commission, Council, Parliament) and EU Member States.

It was set up in 2002 following a series of food crises in the late 1990s to be a source of scientific advice and communication on risks associated with the food chain. The agency was legally established by the EU under the General Food Law – Regulation 178/2002.

Tasks of the Evaluation Steering Committee

- Advise on whether the Management Board recommendations related to the previous external evaluation have been implemented or need further focus and implementation
- Advise on the evaluation mandate of the external evaluation
- Draft/advice on the terms of reference of the external evaluation
- Endorse the inception report prepared by the contractor (detailed description of the methodology/tasks to be applied)
- Endorse the initial analysis of the data collected (interim report)
- Endorse conclusions of the evaluator with respect to the evaluation questions and terms of reference (final report)
- Draft Management Board recommendations addressing the outcome of the external evaluation

Responsibilities of the Evaluation Steering Committee

- Ensure that the interests of stakeholders/partners are taken into consideration and that the interests of the institutions which might have to act upon the recommendations addressing the outcome of the external evaluation are taken into account
- Safeguard the technical quality of the evaluation from a methodological viewpoint
- Safeguard independence of the evaluation
- Guide the evaluation work not only on contractual matters but also in view of the scientific quality of the work
- Support the evaluation work and regularly assess the quality of the deliverables

EIGE

Our Vision and Mission

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is an autonomous body of the European Union, established to contribute to and strengthen the promotion of gender equality, including gender mainstreaming in all EU policies and the resulting national policies, and the fight against discrimination based on sex, as well as to raise EU citizens' awareness of gender equality.

Equality between women and men is a fundamental value of the European Union. Therefore 'Making equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans and beyond' is our vision.

As an autonomous body, EIGE operates within the framework of European Union policies and initiatives. The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union defined the grounds for the Institute's objectives and tasks in its Founding Regulation and assigned it the central role of addressing the challenges of and promoting equality between women and men across the European Union.

Our mission is to become the European knowledge centre on gender equality issues.

2019-2021 Key objectives and priorities

EIGE's three strategic objectives for the programming period 2019 to 2021 are as follows:

To provide high quality research and data to support better informed and evidence based decision-making by policymakers and other key stakeholders working to achieve gender equality;

To manage all knowledge produced by EIGE to enable timely and innovative communication that meets the targeted needs of key stakeholders;

To meet the highest administrative and financial standards while supporting the needs of EIGE's personnel.

EIOPA

Mission and tasks

EIOPA is at the heart of insurance and occupational pensions supervision in the EU. Our aim is to foster financial stability and confidence in the insurance and pensions markets.

EIOPA is an independent advisory body to the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. We are one of the EU agencies carrying out specific legal, technical or scientific tasks and giving evidence-based advice. In this way, we help shape informed policies and laws at EU and national levels. EIOPA is one of three European Supervisory Authorities. The other two are the European Banking Authority (EBA) and the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA).

Our mission

Our mission is to protect the public interest. We do this by helping ensure the short-, medium- and long-term stability and effectiveness of the financial system for the EU's economy, businesses and people.

We achieve our mission by promoting a sound regulatory framework for and consistent supervision of insurance and occupational pensions sectors in Europe. This protects the rights of policyholders, pension scheme members and beneficiaries. It also creates public confidence in the EU's insurance and occupational pensions sectors.

Our main goals are:

To improve consumer protection and rebuild trust in the financial system

To ensure strong, effective and consistent regulation and supervision, taking account of the interests of all member states and the different nature of financial institutions

To bring about more harmonised and consistent application of the rules for financial institutions and markets across the EU

To strengthen the oversight of cross-border groups

To promote coordinated supervisory responses from the EU

EIT

Our mission is to:

Increase Europe's competitiveness, its sustainable economic growth and job creation by promoting and strengthening cooperation among leading business, education and research organisations.

Power innovation and entrepreneurship in Europe by creating environments for creative and innovative thoughts to thrive.

Innovation through integration

To strengthen Europe's ability to innovate, action is needed to overcome the fragmented European innovation landscape. This is where the EIT comes in. We have a pioneering role in increasing European sustainable growth and creating jobs by reinforcing Europe's innovation capacity. The EIT brings together leading organisations from business, education and research, the so-called 'knowledge triangle', to form dynamic cross-border partnerships - EIT Innovation Communities.

EMA

The mission of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) is to foster scientific excellence in the evaluation and supervision of medicines, for the benefit of public and animal health in the European Union (EU).

EMCDDA

Who are we?

A decentralised EU agency

Formally established in 1993

Based in Lisbon, Portugal (operating since 1995)

A centre of excellence for drug-related information in Europe

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What do we do?

Provide the Community and EU Member States with: 'factual, objective, reliable and comparable information at European level concerning drugs and drug addiction and their consequences'

Collect, register and analyse information on 'emerging trends', particularly in polydrug use, and the combined use of licit and illicit psychoactive substances

Offer information on best practice in the EU Member States and facilitate exchange of such practice between them

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Why do we do it?

Inform decision-making on drugs

Generate a high-quality European evidence base

Understand what responses work

Provide early-warning on new threats and developments

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For whom?

Policymakers

Practitioners and professionals working in the drugs field

Scientists and researchers

EMSA Mission

EMSA's mission is to serve EU maritime interests for a safe, secure, green and competitive maritime sector and act as a reliable and respected point of reference in the maritime sector in Europe and worldwide.

EMSA capitalises on its unique know-how to position itself as an essential player in the maritime cluster in Europe and beyond.

EMSA works on maritime safety, security, climate, environment and single market issues and tasks, first as a service provider to Member States and the Commission, but also as an innovative and reliable partner and knowledge hub for the European maritime cluster and potentially beyond as a reference internationally.

Vision

EMSA's vision is to be the centre of excellence for a safe and sustainable EU maritime sector.

Values

Quality, credibility, efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, flexibility, and being smart and gender balanced.

ENISA

About ENISA - The European Union Agency for Cybersecurity

Towards a Trusted and Cyber Secure Europe

The European Union Agency for Cybersecurity, ENISA, is the Union's agency dedicated to achieving a high common level of cybersecurity across Europe. Established in 2004 and strengthened by the EU Cybersecurity Act, the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity contributes to EU cyber policy, enhances the trustworthiness of ICT products, services and processes with cybersecurity certification schemes, cooperates with Member States and EU bodies, and helps Europe prepare for the cyber challenges of tomorrow. Through knowledge sharing, capacity building and awareness raising, the Agency works together with its key stakeholders to strengthen trust in the connected economy, to boost resilience of the Union's infrastructure, and, ultimately, to keep Europe's society and citizens digitally secure.

In a world that has become hyper-connected, cybercriminals pose a significant threat to the internal security of the European Union and security of its citizens online. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for more security in the digital world. People have increased their presence online to maintain personal and professional relations, while cybercriminals have taken advantage of this situation, targeting in particular e-commerce and e-payment businesses, as well as the healthcare system. The ENISA Corporate video reflects our new

vision: working towards a trusted and cyber secure Europe in cooperation with the wider community.

What we do strategy

Empowering communities
Empowering Communities

Cybersecurity is a shared responsibility. Europe strives for a cross sectoral, all-inclusive cooperation framework. ENISA plays a key role in stimulating active cooperation between the cybersecurity stakeholders in Member States and the EU institutions and agencies. It strives to ensure complementarity of common efforts, by adding value to the stakeholders, exploring synergies and effectively using limited cybersecurity expertise and resources. Communities should be empowered to scale up the cybersecurity model, for this reason ENISA created the EU Cybersecurity Institutional Map to identify and promote its key stakeholders.

cybersecurity Policy
Cybersecurity Policy

Cybersecurity is the cornerstone of digital transformation and the need for it permeates all sectors, therefore it needs to be considered across a broad range of policy fields and initiatives. Cybersecurity must not be restricted to a specialist community of technical cyber experts. Cybersecurity must therefore be embedded across all domains of EU policy. Avoiding fragmentation and the need for a coherent approach while taking into account the specificities of each sector is essential.

Operational Cooperation
Operational Cooperation

The benefits of the European digital economy and society can only be fully attained under the premise of cybersecurity. Cyber-attacks know no borders. All layers of society can be impacted and the Union needs to be ready to respond to massive (large scale and cross-border) cyber-attacks and cyber crisis. Cross-border interdependencies have highlighted the need for effective cooperation between Member States and the EU institutions for faster response and proper coordination of efforts at all levels (strategic, operational, technical and communications).

Capacity Building
Capacity Building

The frequency and sophistication of cyberattacks is rising speedily, while at the same time the use of ICT infrastructures and technologies by individuals, organisations, and industries is increasing rapidly. The needs for cybersecurity knowledge and competences exceeds the supply. The EU has to invest in building competences and talents in cybersecurity at all levels, from the non-expert to the highly skilled professional. The investments should focus not only on increasing the cybersecurity skillset in the Member States but also on making sure that the

different operational communities possess the appropriate capacity to deal with the cyber threat landscape.

Trusted Solutions

Trusted Solutions

Digital products and services bring benefits as well as risks, and these risks must be identified and mitigated. In the process of evaluating security of digital solutions and ensuring their trustworthiness, it is essential to adopt a common approach, with the goal to strike a balance between societal, market, economic and cybersecurity needs. A neutral entity acting in a transparent manner will increase customer trust on digital solutions and the wider digital environment.

Foresight

Foresight

Numerous new technologies, still in their infancy or close to mainstream adoption, would benefit from the use of foresight methods. Through a structured process enabling dialogue among stakeholders, decision- and policy-makers would be able to define early mitigation strategies that improve the EU resilience to cybersecurity threats and find solutions to address emerging challenges.

Knowledge

Knowledge

The energy that fuels the mill of cybersecurity is information and knowledge. For cybersecurity professionals to be efficient at tackling our objectives, to work in a constantly moving environment – in terms of digital developments as well as with regard to actors – to face the challenges of our time, we need a continuous process of collecting, organising, summarising, analysing, communicating, and maintaining cybersecurity information and knowledge. All phases are essential to ensure that information and knowledge is shared and expanded within the EU cybersecurity ecosystem.

ERA

Mission

Make the railway system work better for society

Contribute to the effective functioning of a Single European Railway Area without frontiers.

Vision

The Agency, as a respected authority, will be the engine for change driving the Single European Railway Area.

Values

Stakeholder focus

Ethical values commitment

Legal compliance

Staff involvement and development

Everybody's commitment to quality

Continuous improvement

Business continuity

Information governance

A culture of sustainability.

Tasks

Promote a harmonised approach to railway safety

Devise the technical and legal framework in order to enable removing technical barriers, and acting as the system authority for ERTMS and telematics applications

Improve accessibility and use of railway system information

Act as the European Authority under the 4th Railway Package issuing vehicle (type) authorisations and single safety certificates, while improving the competitive position of the railway sector.

ESMA

ESMA IN BRIEF

The European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) is an independent European Union (EU) Authority that contributes to safeguarding the stability of the EU's financial system by enhancing the protection of investors and promoting stable and orderly financial markets.

MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

One mission: to enhance investor protection and promote stable and orderly financial market

ESMA achieves its objectives by:

assessing risks to investors, markets and financial stability;

completing a single rulebook for EU financial markets;

promoting supervisory convergence; and

directly supervising credit rating agencies, trade repositories and securitisation repositories.

ETF

Our mission is to help transition and developing countries harness the potential of their human capital through the reform of education, training, and labour market systems, in the context of EU external relations policies.

We support 29 countries bordering the EU to improve their vocational education and training systems, analyse skills needs, and develop their labour markets. By doing so, we help them to improve social cohesion and achieve more sustainable economic growth, which in turn benefits Member States and their citizens by improving economic relations.

We collaborate on a country-specific as well as multi-country basis, building frameworks for continuity in policy and promoting the design of evidence-based policy and implementation. We frequently operate in uncertain and, at times, unstable contexts. Yet we are one of the few agencies called on by successive governments with changing policy priorities, because of our reputation for independent, high-quality work and positive engagement.

Our activities with partner countries cover a range of related areas:

- Skills and employment needs analysis
- System governance, including stakeholder engagement
- Social dialogue and private sector participation
- Qualification systems and quality assurance
- Work-based learning
- Teacher training
- Entrepreneurial learning and core competences, and
- Career guidance.

Before commencing work in a country we carry out a detailed analysis of EU human capital policies, social values, and external priorities, and link that to partner country needs and development aspirations in as part of overall country assistance in the domain of human capital.

We cooperate with the European institutions, the business community, social partners and other civil society organisations at the EU level. We support the European Commission and the European External Action Service in their programming, so that EU assistance is accurately targeted and matches country capacities and priorities. We work closely with Eurofound and Cedefop to ensure that analysis and good practice from EU Member States are shared beyond the EU, and used to support reforms in partner countries.

We also work with a range of international stakeholders, and with relevant international organisations and donors. This is framed by the European Consensus on Development and the human capital dimension of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda, which identifies two specific goals on education and employment for all partner countries, and which drives the strategy and activities of the Inter-Agency Group on Technical and Vocational Education and Training, in which we are active participants.

The European Training Foundation was established by Council Regulation No. 1360 in 1990, recast as No. 1339 in 2008. The recast regulation specifies the ETF's role in contributing to human capital development in the context of EU external relations policies. In this context, human capital development is defined as work that supports countries to create lifelong learning systems providing opportunities and incentives for people to develop their knowledge, skills, competences and attitudes throughout their lives to help them find employment, realise their potential and contribute to prosperous, innovative and inclusive societies.

EUIPO

Whether you are in trade, manufacturing or services, registering your trade mark or design makes business sense.

The European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), which was known as OHIM until 23 March 2016, can provide you with exclusive rights for trade mark and design protection throughout the European Union (EU) with just a single application.

But we offer much more than just registration: we are a European Union agency with a global focus.

EUISS

ABOUT US

The European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) is the Union's Agency analysing foreign, security and defence policy issues. Its core mission is to assist the EU and its member states in the implementation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), including the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) as well as other external action of the Union.

The Institute was set up in January 2002 as an autonomous agency under Council Joint Action 2001/554 [now regulated by Council Decision 2014/75/CFSP] to strengthen the EU's analysis, foresight, and networking capacity in external action. The Institute also acts as an interface between the EU institutions and external experts – including security actors – to develop the EU's strategic thinking. The EUISS is now an integral part of the structures that underpin the further development of the CFSP/CSDP.

The Institute is funded by the EU member states according to a GNI-based formula. It is governed by a Management Board, chaired by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR/VP). The Political and Security Committee (PSC) exercises political supervision – without prejudice to the intellectual independence and operational autonomy of the EUISS.

The EUISS is headquartered in Paris, France. In 2012, it opened a Liaison Office (BLO) in Brussels, Belgium, situated in the Justus Lipsius building – the main seat of the Council of the EU and of the General Secretariat of the Council. The BLO serves to boost the Institute's presence and visibility in the home of the EU institutions.

Around 40 individuals work at the EUISS. To access the Staff Regulations of the EUISS, please [click here](#).

Activities

The Institute's activities focus on policy-oriented analysis through its publications or events. The EUISS flagship publication is its Chaillot Paper series. Other research products include Briefs and periodic publications such as the Yearbook of European Security.

The Institute's events serve to enhance the Union's analytical capacity and facilitate the shaping of common approaches. They bring together EU officials, national experts, academics, decision-makers, media and civil society representatives from the EU member states, as well as the rest of the world. Institute events may take the form of Conferences or smaller Seminars/expert workshops. Issues requiring more sustained attention may be covered via Task Forces or Track 1.5 events. Participation in EUISS events is by invitation only.

EUROFOUND

Mission

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) is a tripartite European Union Agency, whose role is to provide knowledge to assist in the development of better social, employment and work-related policies. Eurofound was established in 1975 by Council Regulation (EEC) No. 1365/75 to contribute to the planning and design of better living and working conditions in Europe. A new Founding Regulation was adopted on 20 December 2018 and took effect on 20 February 2019.

Regulation (EU) 2019/127 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 January 2019 establishing the European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions (Eurofound), and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 1365/75

Role

Eurofound provides information, advice and expertise on working conditions and sustainable work, industrial relations, labour market change and quality and life and public services, to support the EU Institutions and bodies, Member States and Social Partners in shaping and implementing social and employment policies, as well as promoting social dialogue on the basis of comparative information, research and analysis.

Organisation

Eurofound is managed by an executive director who reports to a Management Board (former Governing Board). The current acting executive director is Maria Jepsen, also Eurofound deputy director, pending the nomination of a new executive director. The deputy director reports to the director. The Board is made up of representatives of the governments and the social partners (employers and trade unions) in the EU Member States, representatives of the European Commission and one independent expert appointed by the European Parliament. It provides the strategic orientation for Eurofound's activities.

Eurofound also maintains a Brussels Liaison Office, with the dual role of strengthening the visibility and impact of Eurofound research at EU level, and monitoring developments in policymaking.

Some 100 staff members are drawn from a number of Member States and have a wide range of professional experience and background. Experts are occasionally seconded from national administrations.

Eurofound's offices are centred around the 17th century Loughlinstown House in Dublin, Ireland.

Target audience

Eurofound aims to support the policymaking activities of EU institutions, governments, employers, trade unions and civil society organisations.

EUROJUST

The EU's judicial cooperation unit (Eurojust) supports judicial coordination and cooperation between national authorities in combating serious organised crime affecting more than 1 EU country.

Eurojust

coordinates investigations and prosecutions involving at least 2 countries

resolves conflicts of jurisdiction

facilitates the application of European Arrest Warrants and confiscation and freezing orders

To do this, Eurojust

holds coordination meetings

funds and provides expert input to joint investigation teams (JITs)

Eurojust also hosts the Secretariats of the European Judicial Network, the Joint Investigation Teams Network and the Network for investigation and prosecution of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes (Genocide Network).

EUROPOL MANDATE

Europol supports law enforcement authorities throughout the EU on crime fighting activities in all its mandated areas.

UNIQUE SERVICES

Our position at the heart of the European security architecture allows us to offer a unique range of services and to serve as a:

- support centre for law enforcement operations;
- hub for information on criminal activities;
- centre for law enforcement expertise.

EUROPOL IN NUMBERS

More than 1000 staff

220 Europol Liaison Officers

Around 100 crime analysts

Supporting over 40 000 international investigations each year

Analysis is at the core of our activities. Our criminal analysts are among the best trained in Europe. They use state-of-the-art tools to support investigations by law enforcement in Member States on a daily basis.

To give our partners deeper insights into the crimes they are tackling, we produce regular assessments that offer comprehensive, forward-looking analyses of crime and terrorism in the EU, including the:

EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA), which updates Europe's law enforcement community and decision-makers on developments in serious and organised crime and the threats it poses;

EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT), which gives a detailed account of the state of terrorism in the EU;

Internet Organised Crime Threat Assessment (iOCTA), which reports on key findings and emerging threats and developments in cybercrime;

Europol Review, an annual publication that details the progress that we and our partners has made in fighting crime.

FRA

What we do

We help policy makers understand how they can do more for their citizens. We share our insights and raise rights awareness at the EU, national and local level.

To help safeguard the rights, values and freedoms enshrined in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights, we:

Collect and analyse law and data

Provide independent, evidence-based advice on rights

Identify trends by collecting and analysing comparable data

Help better law making and implementation

Support rights-compliant policy responses

Strengthen cooperation and ties between fundamental rights actors

FRONTEX

Our Mission

Our Vision

The European Area of Freedom, Security and Justice.

Our Mission

Together with the Member States, we ensure safe and well-functioning external borders providing security.

Our Values

We are professional

We have the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to fulfil our mission efficiently with high ethical standards and we continuously strive for excellence to improve our performance.

We are respectful

We recognise people, institutions and their roles and demonstrate respect by treating these as valuable and important.

We seek cooperation

Together with EU MSs relevant national authorities, with participation of other stakeholders we manage the EU external borders and seek cooperation with non-EU countries.

Together, we cooperate and collaborate across the organisation as well as with external stakeholders in order to accomplish common goals and objectives.

GSA

What we do

Europe's link between space technology and user needs

By telling us exactly where we are and what time it is, Galileo and EGNOS –

Europe's independent satellite navigation programmes – are revolutionising transport, farming, logistics and our daily lives.

Driving this revolution is the European GNSS Agency (GSA), the only European Union agency working in space. Our unique mission is to serve as the essential link between space technology and user needs, translating Galileo and EGNOS signals into valuable, reliable services for European citizens.

To accomplish this mission, the GSA is responsible for the operations and service provision for both programmes. This is no simple task, and one that requires us to wear multiple hats. For example, following the launch of a new Galileo satellite, the GSA manages the Early Orbit Phase (EOP), one of the most important phases of a space mission.

Our responsibilities also include overseeing the operation of such key service facilities as the Galileo Security Monitoring Centre (GSMC) in France and in Spain, the European GNSS Service Centre (GSC) in Spain, the Galileo Reference Centre (GRC) in the Netherlands, the Galileo Control Centres (GCC) in Fucino and Oberpfaffenhofen and the Galileo Integrated Logistic Support Centre (GILSC) in Belgium. Collectively, these facilities ensure Galileo's security and performance so that people can trust and rely on it in their daily lives and when they need it most.

Watch This: Linking space to user needs

Furthermore, the GSA is charged with maximising adoption of European GNSS across user market segments. By constantly working closely with a broad range of stakeholders, Galileo can now be found in applications and devices ranging from smartphones to wearables and from aircraft to personal vehicles. In fact, preliminary figures show that some 75 million Galileo-enabled smartphones were sold in 2017, and 95% of the chipsets on the market are Galileo-enabled. As of April 2018, all new models of cars sold in the EU must be equipped with Galileo as required by the eCall regulation. Galileo is also being increasingly used in drones to ensure smooth navigation and in Search and Rescue operations to save lives.

As a result of this impressive market uptake, today Galileo is providing millions of users with global positioning, navigation and timing information. You can get an up-to-date listing of all available Galileo compatible products at www.useGalileo.eu.

Since taking over the EGNOS service provision, the GSA has supported its expansion to benefit a wide range of users. For example, today hundreds of airports have EGNOS-based

approaches, the vast majority of European farmers rely on EGNOS to enhance precision farming, and EGNOS has become the standard for mapping and surveying in Europe.

Clearly, the European Union has invested heavily in the development of Galileo and EGNOS. With EGNOS growing and Galileo quickly moving towards full operational capability, now is the time to solidify the vital link between space technology and the end user – the European citizen.

[Click here to download our GSA Fast Facts brochure.](#)

SATCEN

OUR MISSION

The EU Satellite Centre supports the decision making and actions of the European Union in the field of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), in particular Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), including European Union crisis management missions and operations, by providing products and services resulting from the exploitation of relevant space assets and collateral data, including satellite imagery and aerial imagery, and related services. SatCen is a decentralised agency of the EU working under the supervision of the Political and Security Committee and the operational direction of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

OUR USERS

Main users of SatCen services are the European External Action Service, EU Member States, EU missions and operations, the European Commission, other EU Agencies, such as Frontex, Third States and international organisations such as the UN and OSCE.

OUR PARTNERS

SatCen cooperates with national and international institutions in the field of space. It works closely with the European Defence Agency, the European Commission and the European Space Agency, as well as other institutions and international organisations.

SRB

About the SRB

The Single Resolution Board's Mission

The SRB is the central resolution authority within the Banking Union. Together with the National Resolution Authorities (NRAs) of participating Member States (MS), it forms the Single Resolution Mechanism (SRM). The SRB works closely with the NRAs, the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB), the European Banking Authority (EBA) and national competent authorities (NCAs).

Its mission is to ensure an orderly resolution of failing banks with minimum impact on the real economy, the financial system, and the public finances of the participating MS and beyond.

The role of the SRB is proactive: rather than waiting for resolution cases to manage, the SRB focuses on resolution planning and enhancing resolvability, to avoid the potential negative impacts of a bank failure on the economy and financial stability.

The Single Resolution Board's Vision

Established by Regulation (EU) No 806/2014 on the Single Resolution Mechanism (SRM Regulation), the SRB has been operational as an independent EU Agency since January 2015. The SRB strives to become a trusted and respected resolution authority with a strong resolution capacity and the ability to act swiftly and in an appropriate, consistent and proportionate manner in establishing and enforcing an effective resolution regime for banks in the SRM jurisdiction, thus avoiding future bail-outs.

The role of the SRB is proactive: rather than waiting for resolution cases to handle, the SRB focuses on resolution planning and preparation with a forward-looking mindset to avoid the potential negative impact of a bank failure on the economy and on financial stability. The SRB aims to become a centre of expertise in bank resolution.

Main Tasks of the SRB

To draft resolution plans for the banks under its direct responsibility. This includes the banks under the direct supervision of the SSM and all cross-border groups;

To carry out an assessment of the banks' resolvability and to adopt resolution plans;

To address any obstacles to resolution and cooperate on resolving them;

To set the minimum requirements for own funds and eligible liabilities (MREL);

To follow up on early intervention measures;

To trigger resolution (with the ECB);

To adopt resolution decisions, to choose and decide on the use of resolution tools;

To closely cooperate with and give instructions to National Resolution Authorities (NRAs);
and

The SRB is in charge of the Single Resolution Fund (SRF). The SRF is financed by the banking sector. It has been set up to ensure that financial support is available as a last resort, after private solutions have been ruled out and after the owners and creditors have borne losses.

Banking Union Essential Terms: Technical Abbreviations & Glossary (EN/DE/FR)