The Working Programme for the Coordination of the EU Agencies Network (March 2016 – February 2017)

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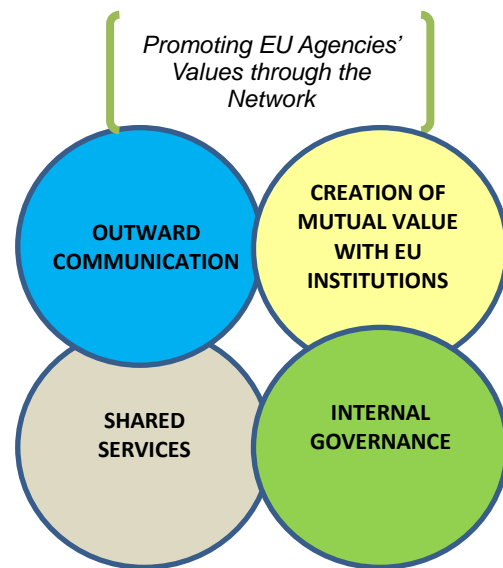**Table of contents**

Introduction

Over the last years, a debate has taken place on the need for the EU Decentralised Agencies to move from a merely reactive approach to a more proactive one, by initiating a more strategic and forward-looking outlook on issues of common concern and making the Network's work more effective and capable of enhancing the recognition of the beneficial role of the Agencies and the activities carried out by them.

With the aim of responding to this challenge, following-up to the discussions at the High Impact Event on 27 May 2015 and the subsequent debate at the Heads of Agency meeting on 23 October 2015, the Agencies adopted the Strategy Agenda for the network of EU decentralised Agencies in November 2015. The Agencies agreed on the need to look at a wider strategic orientation for the Network. In particular, it identified four medium-term strategic priorities: (i) shared services and capabilities; (ii) mutual value creation with EU Institutions; (iii) outward communication and finally, (iv) internal governance.

These four priorities are very much interlinked and none of them can be finally achieved without the other, whilst the four of them together will supplement each other with multiplier effects.

Promoting EU Agencies' Values through the Network

OUTWARD COMMUNICATION

CREATION OF MUTUAL VALUE WITH EU INSTITUTIONS

SHARED SERVICES

INTERNAL GOVERNANCE

Task Forces and Steering Committees have been set up in order to identify actions that should be taken in the long run in order to ensure that the above mentioned objectives are achieved. They are foreseen to report their proposals for discussion and final endorsement at the Heads of Agencies meeting on 18 February 2016.

Under this working programme, the Coordination will have the responsibility for implementing the actions agreed by the Network, as well as any additional actions that would be approved by the Heads of Agencies as a consequence of the work carried out by the Task Forces. In certain cases, further reflection will also be necessary on concrete actions to be put in place.

Nevertheless, as recommended in the Strategy Agenda, the further in-depth discussions that might be necessary shall in no way be an obstacle for the Coordination to carry out on-going activities or a specific programme of tangible actions.

In this perspective, and in its capacity as the forthcoming Network Chair, OHIM hereby presents its working

programme and undertakes to provide the necessary resources needed for the implementation of certain actions proposed herein, in order to enable the participation of the broadest range of Agencies. The working programme includes actions that represent a first response to the challenges and needs identified under the four pillars of the Strategy Agenda, singled out and prioritised by taking into account the one-year-term perspective of the mandate.

Those activities will not replace but rather complement and strengthen those regularly carried out by the Network.

Support from the Sub-networks and from the Working Groups (WGs) of the Network in a collective effort is crucial for achieving the objectives set out in this Programme. To that end, the activities run by the Sub-networks and WGs within their respective areas of competence or through specific mandates given by the Network shall serve that purpose.

The present programme is hereby presented to the members of the Network to encourage open discussion and involve all Agencies in the challenge of taking common actions for the benefit of each of them.

1.   Shared services and capabilities

Shared services were one of the most relevant objectives identified by the Heads of Agencies both during the High Impact event in May 2015 and the Heads of Agencies meeting in October 2015.

While most Agencies have been monitoring their organisations in order to improve efficiency, the continuous increase of workload and the constrained financial and human resources context creates the need not only to establish, but to generalise common methodologies beyond individual Agencies.

The ability of the Agencies to share services, notably in processes of a horizontal nature and strengthening their capacities, is of the foremost importance for creating synergies and efficiency gains.

With no prejudice to the actions that will be put in place as a follow up to the proposals made by the Task Force and the Steering Committee on shared services that will report to the Heads of Agencies on 18 February 2016, in order to contribute to this priority, the following actions will be taken:

   1.1. Update the shared service catalogue;

   1.2. Improve the Extranet to an enhanced EU Agencies common platform;

   1.3. Reflect on additional means to improve cooperation among Agencies.

1.1.   Update the shared service catalogue

Standard service catalogues are generally used to identify the availability of shared services under a common vocabulary and, in the case of EU Agencies, they can avoid any misunderstanding of their offered services.

Building on the existing cooperation agreements between the EU Agencies, and continuing the work of FRA, OHIM will conduct a survey in order to identify further services that could be shared by the EU Agencies. The results of the survey will be submitted to the IALN to identify any legal constraints linked to the services that may prohibit their sharing.

After this analysis, those services which are deemed appropriate to be shared will be presented in the shared service catalogue. To allow Agencies and their Sub-networks the flexibility to use the catalogue and their services in such a manner which is more relevant to their needs, they will be able to decide to share services with varying levels of collaborative commitment. While tier one is limited to the exchange of information, tier three establishes a more formal level of collaboration. This initiative will be aligned with and complementary to the possible outcomes of the ongoing work of the Task Forces.

	Area	Description	Proposed action
Tier 1	Shared via Extranet	• Catalogue shared via extranet platform: methodologies, practices, templates, etc.	Catalogue to be updated regularly to identify services already available and any new proposals. Contact details & additional information to be included for each service. Links to templates, processes, SLAs, etc. to be incorporated into the body of the catalogue.
Tier 2	Exchange of information & best practices	1) Sharing of documentation (templates, handbooks, checklists, etc.) 2) Sharing of processes 3) Sharing of information & experiences, coaching	Analysis of existing services with a view to optimisation; Documentation to be made available on extranet; Bilateral or multilateral exchanges via tele/video-conference, webinars, etc.
Tier 3	Expertise Exchange	1) Agencies to host/visit other Agencies and participate in structured meetings/workshops 2) Support provided for maintenance and follow-up after implementation of actions 3) Direct provision of services to other Agencies 4) Common service provider (centralisation)	Specific issues/areas to be identified which justify the gathering of experts from different Agencies; Specific areas to be identified where one Agency can provide services to another (e.g. internal audit, ISO Auditors, accounting officer, etc.) Identification of specific areas where one Agency can be service provider to all.

1.2. Improve the Extranet to an enhanced EU Agencies common platform

The existing Extranet was created to ease the storage of documents relevant to the Network and the communication among Agencies. While the Extranet has represented an important improvement in ensuring accessibility to the documents repository, the need for further development has become manifest. At the Heads of Agencies meeting in October 2015, it was decided that the Extranet will be enhanced into an EU Agencies Common Platform.

The transfer of the Extranet from FRA, which created and hosted it until now, to OHIM will be finalised by the end of February 2016.

After the completion of the transfer, OHIM will undertake a certain number of developments in order to take advantage to the full extent of all the functionalities of a Common Platform.

The following developments will progressively be implemented:

- to create a user-friendly search engine that enables users to quickly and easily identify stored documents;

- to review the online survey tool to easily define questions and possible responses;

- to store and list the documents by area of interests and competence;

- to improve the calendar functions to enable the users to visualise important past and future events, possibly by differentiating them by area of interests (Heads of Agencies, Heads of Administration; Sub-networks; Working Groups etc.);

- to improve the use of the fora by enabling functions such as the inter-exchange of information among users;

- to gather into one single tool the various and dispersed Extranets set up over the time by the different Sub-networks;

- to include access to shared services as well as to common tools, such as on public procurement and job market.

As a time consuming and burdensome activity, procurement is an area where a common platform centralising information, guidelines and lessons learned from Agencies having already used a procurement procedure could significantly contribute to efficiency gains.

It could further help to identify cases where a common procedure of procurement could be launched jointly with another Agency or a cluster (geographic or thematic) of Agencies having the same needs at the same time.

Concerning recruitment, the possibility of creating a platform in order to give publicity to vacancies open in the Agencies will be assessed especially in light of the new policy on Inter-Agencies mobility for "temporary agents 2f". The aim would not be to proceed with the selection procedures themselves but rather to centralise via a unique focal point all the offers, thus sharing the publication service and potentially the reserve lists.

As a further improvement, OHIM will make the Extranet more accessible by creating a "landing page" while restricting access to confidential documents to authorised users.

This evolution into a real collaborative platform will increase efficiency and allow a better sharing of information.

It will also allow info on procurements or joint procurements, vacancies or joint vacancies to be accessible. To enable this, a public area of the Extranet, rendering it accessible to

the public without authentication process, will be developed along with the traditional area restricted to the Agencies only.

This will also be very helpful in the context of the preparation of the EU Agencies´ Forum (see action 3.2 below), as the landing page will include the programme of the event and will be used by the participants for registration.

In order to achieve these results, work began in November 2015 and the new Extranet with the first enhanced functionalities will go live in May 2016.

The maintenance and future of the Extranet will be defined as part of the reflection on the Governance of the Network (see section 4 below).

1.3. Reflect on additional means to improve cooperation among Agencies

While the Agencies have made significant efforts to realise efficiency gains and are constantly strengthening their cooperation, there is room for further improvement. In this context, a study will be launched internally in order to identify further synergies and future areas of cooperation among Agencies.

Starting from any existing work in this area, the following actions could be undertaken:

- identify innovative tools aimed at improving information and knowledge sharing;

- assess the benefits, efficiency gains and risks of organising the cooperation among the Agencies on voluntary horizontal or thematic clusters.

Based on the recommendations presented by the Task Force and Steering Committee on shared services and capabilities, the relevant Sub-network(s) will be associated with these actions in order to avoid overlaps and to benefit from their expertise. A report with all findings and, if applicable, with recommendations, will be presented to the Heads of Agencies during the October 2016 meeting.

2. Creation of mutual value with EU Institutions

Networking and maintaining meaningful connections with EU institutions and other stakeholders is key to demonstrating the concrete contribution and added value of the Network towards the implementation of the agenda of President Juncker for Jobs, Growth, Fairness and Democratic Change ('the Juncker Agenda').

Contacting the stakeholders and/or bringing them together is the easy part. The hardest part is making sure they see the value of the EU Agencies and of their Network, as well as the resources and efforts that its members devote when working for the benefit of their stakeholders.

Furthermore, the Agencies' activities in the different sectors of the European Union have been vital for the proper implementation of the European policies and for the building of EU resilience. However, the benefits of the Agencies' activities have not always been evident, in particular, when considering that there are beneficiaries spread all over Europe with heterogeneous interests and profiles.

This is why it is important that the Network is used by its Agencies to gather information regarding the deliverables achieved by them and to report them jointly.

To this end, the following actions will be implemented in order to complement the proposals provided by the Task Force on Mutual Value Creation:

> **2.1. Elaborate studies on the EU Agencies;**
>
> **2.2. Interact with the Interinstitutional Working Group 2 (IIWG2);**
>
> **2.3. Increase representation in Interinstitutional Bodies.**

2.1. Elaborate studies on the EU Agencies

EU policy strategy until 2020 is set out in the Juncker Agenda. To achieve these objectives, the European Commission has elaborated a Working Programme containing 23 new priority initiatives, which include notably: Reinventing and strengthening the single market, Creating a connected digital single market, a New policy on migration, a Resilient energy union with forward-looking climate change policy, a Deeper and fairer economic and monetary union.

All these are areas where the EU Agencies, through their mandate, contribute to the implementation of the Commission's strategic actions.

It would be important to put together a comprehensive study about Agencies' values, concentrating on horizontal value creation, and taking into consideration the benefits of Agencies to European institutions, citizens and economies, as well as the fundamental contribution of the Agencies to the attainment of the European policies, and in particular of the Juncker Agenda.

During its chairmanship OHIM intends to provide a study which will aim at forecasting the benefits generated by the Agencies in the implementation of the Juncker Agenda according to their functional relevance to the key policy areas of the Europe 2020 Agenda. This study will also assess the role of the technical expertise and daily operations of the Agencies towards the achievement of the objectives set in the Europe 2020 Strategy and highlight concrete examples of their contribution.

Since the European Parliament Research Service (EPRS) has carried out a study on Decentralised Agencies in 2009 and has presented the third edition of the study on 'Mapping the Costs of non-Europe' in 2015, it might be the ideal partner for such studies. Similar initiatives could be interesting via the Joint Research Centre.

This action is complementary to those actions taken under the pillar concerning outward communication, especially if time allows for the studies to be prepared for presentation at the EU Agencies' Forum (see point 3.2 below).

2.2. Interact with the Interinstitutional Working Group 2 (IIWG2)

Any decision taken by the IIWG2 will have a major and direct impact on the human and financial resources of the EU Agencies. This is the reason why such decisions have been and will be followed up very closely and anticipated through appropriate actions and contacts with the Institutions.

The IIWG2 held its first meeting on 15 September 2015, and the next meeting is foreseen to take place in spring 2016. The Network has already had a chance to fuel discussions with the members of the IIWG2 and participate at its first meeting, when Fiches 1 and 2 were discussed.

At its next meeting, the IIWG2 will discuss Fiches 3 (Efficiency gains) and 4 (Partially and fully self-financed Agencies).

As the last developments have shown, the trend in terms of measuring efficiency evolves towards performance indicators, along with performance based management. At the Heads of Agencies meeting on 22 October 2015, the European Commission invited the Network to elaborate on the Agencies' contribution to the definition of these tools. It stressed that it is important to rapidly prepare this contribution as the mid-term review of the Multi-annual Financial Framework is approaching.

In view of the timing and based on the groundwork performed by the PDN during 2015, the Coordination will table a proposal for a performance based management framework to be endorsed by the Agencies to feed the discussions with the Institutions. Discussions on this topic are already envisaged for the Heads of Agencies and Heads of Administration meetings in February 2016 in Brussels.

2.3. Increase representation in Interinstitutional Bodies

The College of Heads of Administration is an Interinstitutional Working Group where the Heads of Administration of the EU institutions, Agencies and Bodies regularly discuss administrative issues of a horizontal nature. At present, the Agencies are jointly represented by only one member, with no account taken of their real weight in terms of staff employed.

Given that the decentralised Agencies are the second largest employer after the Commission, it is important to engage in an open and fair dialogue with the other Institutions to discuss and hopefully agree on a reinforced representation.

In order to achieve this objective, the Coordination will organise a meeting with the President of the College of Heads of Administration. This meeting would be the occasion to have a first exchange and explore possible ways to reinforce the voice of the

Agencies within the College of Heads of Administration, such as having an extra member or allowing the Troika to represent the Agencies.

As a follow up of this meeting, it could be envisaged to invite the President of the College of Administration to a Heads of Agency's meeting and even reserve a slot for a short intervention.

The initiative to increase the representation of the Agencies could also encompass other interinstitutional bodies where such issues are relevant, such as the Staff Regulations Committee and the 'Comité préparatoire des questions statutaries' (CPQS), where it may be equally important to increase the representation of the Agencies. To ensure the effectiveness of such actions, the choice of concrete approaches to be implemented, and of the actors to be targeted, should take into account the importance of the respective bodies for promoting the collective interest of the Agencies, as well as the different nature of the composition of such bodies and of their respective decision making mechanisms.

3.   Outward communication

The Network began working more than 15 years ago and has drastically evolved from sharing views on the Commission's policies to being dedicated to the shaping of those policies. The adoption of the Network's rules, such as setting up a Permanent Secretariat and creating several Sub-networks, WGs and Task forces are just some examples of this tangible evolutionary process.

Therefore, the Network is no longer merely a platform where best administrative practices are discussed, but an environment of shared interests where Agencies, in full respect of their own independence and specificities, can coordinate, consult one another on a wide range of activities and eventually promote their activities and values.

However, the Agencies' efforts in this regard are not always evident to citizens, the European Institutions and Member States. Therefore, increasing the visibility of the Agencies' actions could definitely help bridge this gap.

The fact that Agencies are decentralised is certainly an asset and is part of the more general political intention to bring Europe closer to EU citizens. However, that has a negative consequence for them: they are known in Brussels by a limited number of players connected to their field of expertise.

Within this frame, Agencies should develop a detailed approach to building coherent and sustained stakeholder relations.

The Commission and the European Parliament are well targeted strategic partners for the Agencies. However the knowledge of the Agencies is divided. The Agencies' excellence is recognised by their partner DGs, the EP Committees as well as Council specialised Committees and other stakeholders that are competent for the field of their operations, while horizontal challenges are only seen in the Secretariat-General, DG BUDG and DG HR and in the EP BUDG and CONT Committees.

The connections with the Council, Member State institutions, active citizen groups, trade associations, as well as the interactions among them, are not sufficiently exploited by the Agencies.

For these reasons, the following actions will be implemented in order to complement the proposals provided by the Task Force on Outward Communications:

> ***3.1. Organise the EU Agencies' day in all Member States;***

> ***3.2. Organise the Network's Conference with Stakeholders (Agencies' Forum);***

3.1   Organise the EU Agencies' Day in all Member States

Member States' representatives sit in the Management Boards of the EU Agencies. They are fully acquainted with the specific situation of the Agency in whose Management Board they sit and where they adopt the working programme of that Agency. However, they do not participate in the process of adoption of the budget of the European Union, from which the vast majority of the Agencies are subsidised. They are also not aware of the specific situation and working programme of other EU Agencies.

From another perspective, Member States' representatives sit in the Council that, together with the European Parliament, adopts the annual budget of the EU, where the financial and human resources of each of the Agencies, necessary to run the working programme adopted by their Management Boards, are set.[1] However, with some exceptions, the representatives of the Member States in the Council responsible for the adoption of the EU budget have little or no knowledge about Agencies. In most of the cases, they have neither direct contact with the Agencies nor with the Member States' representatives on the Agencies' Management Boards.

It is therefore apparent that there is an important shortcoming in communication between the Council and the Agencies, as well as Member States' representatives in the Agencies' Management Boards, which is highly detrimental.

With the aim of filling this gap and enhancing Agencies' visibility, an *EU Agencies' Day* could be organised in 2017 on a voluntary basis in each of the Member States where one or several EU decentralised Agencies are located, in order to promote networking opportunities in their favour. A small workshop would be organised, followed by a reception.

The invitation should target the Management Board members – from all Agencies in Europe – living in that country, MEPs from that country, private stakeholders and institutional players, such as the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Foreign/European Affairs, the Permanent Representative of that country and COSAC members, as well as media. Stakeholders could also be invited to support their Agencies, but the decision to involve any stakeholders is to be assessed by each Agency.

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[1] Fully self-financed decentralised Agencies are not subsidised through the EU budget.

Ideally, in order to increase the impact of the event, the EU Agencies' Day should take place on the same day all over Europe, in February. It would particularly offer an opportunity to raise the importance of the discharge and budget discussions which come in April. The EU Agencies' Day would definitely have a positive effect on stakeholder groups, in particular if organised on a yearly basis, as this would create a common practice among the Agencies which would provide sustainable visibility for the future and increase their effectiveness.

The organisation of the EU Agencies' Day remains on a voluntary basis and Agencies which have their premises in the same Member State would have to coordinate and promote the event at the headquarters of one of the Agencies in the given Member State.

For these reasons, OHIM will be organising the EU Agencies' Day for Spain in February 2017, and will be associating all the other Agencies located in Spain, in order to encourage as much participation as possible from the above mentioned stakeholders, in particular Spanish MEPs, Spanish members sitting in the Management Boards of all the EU Agencies and other Spanish institutional players and private stakeholders.

3.2.   Organise the Network's Conference with Stakeholders (Agencies' Forum)

A Conference gathering all EU decentralised Agencies and their stakeholders (Agencies' Forum), to be held in December 2016, will offer the possibility to confront EU policymakers on current policies, to highlight the contribution which Agencies give to the implementation of EU policies for the benefit of citizens and industry (in particular in the framework of the Juncker Agenda), to share views with the Institutions, industry, NGOs and other stakeholders and to understand how they see the Agencies and the Network, as well as how they imagine them to be in 10 years' time. The Conference will consequently raise the horizontal added values in the context of EU future development.

The Conference will serve at the same time to increase the visibility of the EU Agencies and the Network as well as to share common values among them.

The Forum will be organised along certain priorities of the Junker Agenda identified above (point 2.1)

In addition, there will also be workshops/topic sessions for discussion on specific issues of interest (e.g. financial Agencies, Justice and Home Affairs Agencies, industry Agencies, Joint Undertakings, etc.) to which the Agencies will be invited to voluntarily contribute.

From a certain point of view, the best option would be to organise this Conference at the Coordination premises. This would be a tangible sign of the decentralisation of Europe and, at the same time, of the autonomy of the Agencies. On the other hand, the best place would indeed be wherever the most relevant stakeholders can potentially be gathered, and where most visibility *vis-à-vis* the Institutions could be guaranteed, i.e. Brussels. High level speakers from all stakeholders will be invited, including private or non-governmental sectors.

In light of the abovementioned pros and cons, it is suggested that the Agencies' Forum be organised in Brussels, possibly in the European Parliament premises.

While it is clear that the Agencies would participate on a voluntary basis, it goes without saying that the active contribution of all Agencies in supporting the organisation of the event and mobilising their stakeholders is key to the success of the EU Agencies' Forum. To ensure strict association of all Agencies, the agenda of the Agencies' Forum will be discussed among the Troika and circulated in advance within the Network to allow for comments and contributions from all Agencies.

4. Internal Governance

A sound and solid framework for governance is a precondition for the efficiency of any organisation or network.

The current framework for internal governance was established in the Terms of Reference adopted in 2013. The evolution of the activities carried out by the Network, the proliferation of Sub-networks and Working Groups and the constant evolution of the role of the Permanent Secretariat call for an update on the current internal governance structure.

In particular when considering the peculiar composition of the Network, there are a number of aspects that still need to be clarified, such as (i) whether the Network members are, in general, interested in participating in voluntary clusters; (ii) what voluntary policy clusters should be envisaged; (iii) for what purposes; and (iv) under which composition etc. One effective way of organising the work of the voluntary clusters could be by looking at the key priorities of the Juncker Agenda so as to redistribute tasks based on those priorities.

For this reason, a Steering Committee has been set up with the task of reflecting on the changes necessary with regard to the internal governance of the Network.

The recommendations elaborated by that Steering Committee and endorsed by the Heads of Agencies will necessarily be the basis for the actions that will be taken in this area.

In this perspective, the following actions will need to be implemented:

4.1. Follow-up the Eurofound survey on the Permanent Secretariat;

4.2. Follow-up the recommendations of the Steering Committee on Internal Governance.

4.1. Follow-up the Eurofound survey on the Permanent Secretariat

At the High Impact Event in May 2015, the Heads of Agencies discussed the possibility of modifying the Permanent Secretariat's role in order to increase its effectiveness as well as its added value, and gave a mandate to the Coordination to collect feedback from all the Agencies and report on the results.

Following the presentation of the results at the Heads of Agencies meeting on 23 October 2015, the implementation of the identified follow-up actions will have to be ensured. Further reflection will be prompted by the possible changes in the internal governance model of the Network.

4.2. Follow-up the recommendations of the Steering Committee on Internal Governance

Based on the results already achieved, the Steering Committee on Internal Governance will continue working on the following adjustments in order to create more fluidity and enhance efficiency in the relation among Coordination, Troika, Sub-networks[2] and Permanent Secretariat:

- Ensure that the work programmes of both the Sub-networks and Working Groups are coherent and supportive of the priorities identified in the working programme of the Coordination of the Network;
- Ensure that the time frame for the adoption of the work programmes of Sub-networks and Working Groups is adjusted with the adoption of the working programme of the Coordination;
- Align the reporting of Permanent Secretariat with the agenda of the Network (it is proposed that the Permanent Secretariat prepares a report of activities undertaken before each meeting of the Network, which will be circulated amongst the members of the Network);
- Ensure that the Permanent Secretariat is regularly associated with the activities of the Troika and the Coordination;
- Ensure that the Permanent Secretariat continues to play a role as historical memory;
- Enhance the Permanent Secretariat's role as a contact facilitator;
- Reflect on possible ways to amend the Terms of Reference of the EU Agencies' Network;
- Reflect on the frequency of the meetings of Heads of Agencies and Heads of Administration;
- Reflect on the length of the Coordination's chairmanship;

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[2] The Sub-networks of the EU Agencies Network are: Inter-Agency Accountant's Network (IAAN), Inter-Agency Legal Network (IALN), Performance Development Network (PDN), Information and Communication Technology Interagency Network (ICTAC), EU Agencies Network on Scientific Advice (EU-ANSA), Heads of Communication and Information Network (HCIN) and Fee-receiving Agencies Network (EFRAN)

- Reflect on the possibility of mapping proposed actions on a multi-annual timeline;
- Reflect on the possibility of work programmes to follow a rolling approach in the context of the Troika;
- Take into consideration and balance the unity of the Network and the subsidiarity principle provided added value to all the Agencies.

Furthermore, the Network will reflect on the possibility of creating voluntary policy clusters, as contemplated at the High Impact Event, in view of addressing the new EU policy initiatives by thematic areas.

OHIM will prepare a proposal for the discussion of the timeframe for the work of the Steering Committee on internal governance during the Heads of Agencies meeting in October 2016.

5. Closing statement

With this Working Programme, OHIM presents a set of actions based on the priorities identified during the High Impact Event of 27 May 2015 and in the Strategy Agenda, namely Shared services and capabilities, Mutual values with the EU Institutions, Outward communication and Internal Governance.

These actions are fully consistent, on the one hand, with the ongoing activities of the Network, and on the other, with the medium-term strategic approach of the Strategy Agenda for the Network, in particular the work being carried out by the Task Forces.

The innovative measures contemplated in the present Working Programme will be implemented along with the activities regularly coordinated by the Troika, including the follow-up of the budget procedure adoption and discharge, the relations with the Parliament, the Council, the Commission, the Court of Auditors and the COSAC.

In order to implement the deliverables set out in the present Working Programme, OHIM calls upon the Agencies' collaboration with the clear intention to enhance their voices and to work together in this sense, with the aim of building together a stronger Network.

Although it is clear that for the actions envisaged under this working programme the Agencies would participate on a voluntary basis, OHIM would like to stress that the potential impact and value added of certain actions, such as the Agencies' Forum, would be much greater if all Agencies committed to participating. For this reason OHIM is prepared to provide the necessary resources associated with the Extranet, Agencies' Forum and the study on the added value of Agencies, in order to enable the participation of the broadest range of Agencies.

Finally, OHIM would like to thank all Agencies for their valuable feedback and comments on the proposed Working Programme for the Chairmanship 2016-2017.