

Compliance Problems in the European Union – a Potential Role for Agencies in Securing Compliance?

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Abstract: The European Union is increasingly confronted with compliance problems. In line with the recent trend of 'agencification' in modern societies, a suggestion to address compliance problems is the use of European agencies as they are expected to improve the way rules are applied. This is no grounded expectation, however. Empirical evidence on this presumably positive impact of agencies on compliance within the member states is lacking. This article provides a conceptual evaluation of the assumption that agencies play a positive role in securing compliance. By linking the state of the art in compliance theories with an analysis of the phenomenon of agencification within the European Union, light can be shed on this potential role for agencies in improving compliance. While theoretically agencies could play a positive role in securing compliance, the 'improved-compliance' legitimation for agency-establishment is still to be empirically tested and calls for a new research agenda.