EC/Council of Europe agreement: cooperation between the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and the Council of Europe

2007/0173(CNS) - 28/02/2008 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude an Agreement between the Community and the Council of Europe on co-operation between the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights and the Council of Europe.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2008/578/EC relating to the conclusion of an Agreement between the European Community and the Council of Europe on cooperation between the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and the Council of Europe.

CONTENT: the Council adopted a decision approving the conclusion of an agreement between the European Community and the Council of Europe on cooperation between the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights and the Council of Europe. The Agreement establishes a cooperation framework between the Agency and the Council of Europe in order to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity and added value. Regular consultations will be held between the Agency and the Council of Europe Secretariat, with the aim of coordinating the Agency's activities, in particular in carrying out research and scientific surveys as well as drafting conclusions, opinions and reports, with those of the Council of Europe in order to ensure complementarity and the best possible use of available resources.

The Agency for Fundamental Rights (see CNS/2005/0124) was established in March 2007 in Vienna (Austria). It provides the relevant institutions and Member States with assistance and expertise relating to fundamental rights in order to support them when they take measures or formulate courses of action to fully respect fundamental rights. The agency has three key functions: to collect information and data; provide advice to the EU and its member states and promote dialogue with civil society to raise public awareness of fundamental rights.

The agreement abrogates and replaces the agreement of 10 February 1999 between the European Community and the Council of Europe establishing close cooperation between the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia and the Council of Europe (see CNS/1998/0143).