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## WORKING PAPER

# Steering of Ministers and Departments: Coping Strategies of Agencies in Flanders

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper aims at contributing to the study of autonomous agencies by focusing on how they cope with steering from ministers and departments. Drawing from the trust literature, we look at how agencies co-operate with ministers and departments, in order to increase autonomy. A model is built to cluster several trust-building mechanisms and to link these to autonomy. We then apply this to a limited set of Flemish agencies. We conclude that agencies develop strategies to increase trust with the trustor. These strategies may be targeted either on the minister as trustor or on the department as a competing trustee.