



EUROPEAN RISK FORUM – POLICY NOTE 03

EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE COMMISSION'S IMPACT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM - ISSUES

2007

EUROPEAN RISK FORUM

The European Risk Forum (ERF) is an expert-led and not-for-profit think tank with the aim of promoting high quality risk assessment and risk management decisions by the EU institutions, and raising the awareness of the risk management issues at EU-level.

In order to achieve this, the Forum applies the expertise of a well-established network of experts to 'horizontal', cross-sectoral issues. In particular, it addresses regulatory decision-making structures, tools and processes, as well as the risks and benefits of new and emerging technologies, of climate change, and of lifestyle choices.

The Forum believes that:

- High quality risk management decisions should take place within a structured framework that emphasises a rigorous and comprehensive understanding of the need for public policy action (risk assessment), and a transparent assessment of the workability, effectiveness, cost, benefits, and legitimacy of different policy options (risk management).
- Risk management decision-making processes should ensure that outcomes are capable of meeting agreed social objectives in a proportionate manner;
- Risk management decisions should minimise negative, unintended consequences (such as new, unintended risks, economic losses, reduced personal freedoms, or restrictions on consumer choice);
- The way in which risk management decisions are made should be structured, consistent, non-discriminatory, predictable, open, transparent, evidence-based, legitimate, accountable, and, over time, subject to review.

Achieving these goals is, the Forum believes, likely to require extensive use of evidence (especially science); rigorous definition of policy objectives; clear and comprehensive description and assessment of problems and their underlying causes; realistic understanding of the costs and benefits of policy options; and, extensive consultation.

The Forum works with all of the EU's institutions to promote ideas and debate. Original research is produced and is made widely available to opinion-formers and policy-makers at EU-level. As an expert group, the Forum brings together multiple sources of evidence (such as the experience of practitioners and policy-makers; non-EU good practices; and academic research) to assess issues and to identify new ideas. Indeed, direct engagement with opinion-formers and policy-makers, using an extensive programme of conferences, lunches, and roundtables, is a feature of the Forum's work.

The ERF is supported principally by the private sector. The ERF does not seek to promote any specific set of values, ideologies, or interests. Instead it considers high quality risk assessment and risk management decisions as being in the public interest. An advisory group of leading academics supports the ERF's work.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During 2007, the Commission commissioned an external evaluation of its integrated Impact Assessment (IA) approach, in order to take stock of the progress made and identify areas for further improvement. The scope of the evaluation covers the quality of support for IA (*inputs*); the organisation of the Impact Assessment (IA) work (*process*); the quality of IAs (*results*); and the use of IAs for the proposals and after the adoption of the latter (*impacts*).

A number of major problems were identified by the evaluators. The scope of the process is, they argued, inappropriate. Many important areas, such as comitology and other implementing decisions, are excluded. Moreover, the IA process is still not sufficiently built into the early stages of policy-design (when problems are framed, objectives set, and options considered). Alongside this, quality control mechanisms are inadequate, contributing to an insufficiently rigorous assessment of policy options, “problem identification” (or rationale for government action), and public policy objectives on too many occasions. These problems are compounded, the evaluators suggest, by insufficient resources in some parts of the Commission and a lack of quantified data of economic, social, and economic impacts.

At the same time, the evaluators also highlighted a number of strengths of the system. It has, in a number of instances, helped to inform and influence the design of legislative proposals, they argue.

In overall terms, the evaluation provides an extensive and robust analysis. Based on these findings, it is possible to identify a series of reforms that, if implemented together, could contribute significantly to improvements in the quality, utility, and effectiveness of impact assessment at EU-level. Possible reforms include:

- Revise the scope of the IA system, ensuring that important implementing decisions (such as agency guidelines and comitology) are included;
- Restructure the sequence of analysis and drafting of impact assessments, ensuring that reviews begin earlier in the process of development of new rules;
- Strengthen central oversight mechanisms;
- Develop and implement a clear and effective methodologies to identify synergies and trade-offs between the various policy objectives and options;
- Increase the investment in development of expertise in all DGs;
- Invest in the collection of high quality economic, social, and environmental data;
- Develop and implement a comprehensive system of ex post evaluation of regulatory and legislative outcomes;

1. BACKGROUND

As announced in 2005, the Commission commissioned an external evaluation of its integrated IA approach in order to take stock of the progress made and identify areas for further improvement. The Evaluation Partnership, an independent consultancy firm, was appointed to carry out the review. Their report was finalised in April 2007 and presented to the public in June 2007.¹

This note summarises and comments on the external review performed by “The Evaluation Partnership” (TEP).²

2. EVALUATION - METHODOLOGY

The scope of the evaluation covers the quality support for IA (*inputs*); the organisation of the Impact Assessment (IA) work (*process*); the quality of IAs (*results*); and the use of IAs for the proposals and after the adoption of the latter (*impacts*).

TEP based its findings and conclusions on evidence from: 119 interviews with EU officials; 227 responses by stakeholders to surveys; an analysis of 158 IAs produced between June 2003 and September 2006 (20 were analysed in details); and, a sample of six IA case studies was selected for in-depth analysis, including specific interviews.

3. EVALUATION - MAIN FINDINGS

3.1. PERFORMANCE AGAINST OBJECTIVES

At the EU level, IA serves a number of objectives. The perceived quality and influence of an IA depends to a great extent on how much emphasis one places on each of these objectives. For each of the objectives, TEP has assessed the effectiveness of the current system on the basis of the 20 IAs scrutinised.

3.1.1. IA Objective 1: Improving the quality of Commission proposal (*by better structuring policy-design, and providing a thorough analysis of all the impacts*)

TEP’s main findings:

- **Impact:** 13 IAs showed “some degree of influence” on the respective proposal, but the extent of this influence varied considerably.³
- **Policy options:** These were identified, analysed and compared in 10 IAs. The other half of IAs analysed only the preferred option. IAs on legislative initiatives tended to present a more thorough analysis.

¹ The Report and its annexes can be downloaded at http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/key_en.htm. It was

² See http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/key_en.htm.

³ On the “Interaction between IA work and proposal drafting” and the “Reflection of IA work in Commission proposals”, see TEP Report, p.99-101 and 101-103, respectively.

- **Three pillars:** IAs are “balanced”, but “the analysis of the economic impacts is often more developed and concrete”. 42 % (60 % NGOs and Member States, 40 % industry) of the external stakeholders interviewed disagreed that the system places an adequate amount of importance on the three categories of impacts.
- **Guidelines:** Overall, Commission officials agreed with the usefulness in principle and good presentation of the IA Guidelines. However, interviews revealed the following main weaknesses:
 - Guidelines are basic, long and abstract in content and are often seen as just a good introduction to the IA process;
 - they lack direct applicability to specific DGs-related methodologies;
 - they do not sufficiently include check lists which provide a simple, consolidated and straightforward guide on the various steps required; and
 - they do not seem to be widely used as a daily instrument (instead, officials tend to contact colleagues or rely on the training sessions).

3.1.2. IA Objective 2: Supporting decision-making *(by better informing decision-makers about the rationale of the initiative, trade-offs and potential impacts)*

TEP’s main findings:

- **Usefulness:** Of the six IAs case studies considered, three played no role at all in the decision-making process.
- **Quality:** Members of Commission Cabinets, the European Parliament and Council believed that both the thoroughness of the analytical steps (in particular problem identification and quantitative analysis⁴) and the way information is presented were problematic.
- **Objectivity:** There was a widespread lack of trust in the objectivity of IAs. IAs were too often founded to be not objective (i.e. written to justify a policy option already chosen) by MEPs and members of the Council.
- **Role:** among the MEPs and members of the Council there was a lack of understanding on the purpose and role of IAs in EU decision-making.⁵
- **Time:** MEPs and members of the Council do not have time and expertise to read and understand IAs.
- **Analytical coverage:** This might also be due to the fact that Commission IAs generally refer to EU-wide impacts, whereas MEPs and Council representatives are more interested in the impacts on their constituencies or Member States.

3.1.3. IA Objective 3: Serving as a communication tool *(by fostering internal coordination and enhancing external transparency and accountability)*

⁴ “Of the 155 IAs screened during the evaluation only 14% quantified impacts in more than one of the three pillars.” (p.140)

⁵ On the “Consideration of IAs in the other EU institutions”, see TEP Report, p.103-105.
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TEP's main findings:

- **External consultation:** The requirement to consult stakeholders in accordance with the Commission's minimum standards was being complied with in almost all cases. However, the extent to which stakeholders were satisfied with the way their views were taken into account varied considerably.
- **Internal communication:** Inter-Service Steering Groups (ISSGs) and Inter-Service Consultation (ISC) are successful tools to ensure early internal coordination and communication, although improvements are necessary in their operational management and timing. Care should be given to the composition of the ISSGs, in which DGs representing the social pillar were often under-represented.

3.2. MAJOR UNDERLYING PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY TEP

3.2.1. Scope of Application

The IA system applies to all items in the CLWP. These are very disparate in nature and relevance. TEP concluded that:

- Many initiatives (in particular non-legislative ones) are not suited to an IA in its present form. This causes a misallocation of scarce resources; IAs with little added-value; and the perception among officials that IA is a bureaucratic burden.
- Important initiatives may not be included in the CLWP (e.g. comitology) and hence not undergo an IA.

3.2.2. Proportionate Analysis

The principle allows flexibility. However, it is not sufficiently clear how it should be applied in practice, and no consistent and formal criteria are available. This leads to uncertainty. TEP concluded that:

“The fact that no clear guidance exists regarding which elements are required of different IAs not only leads (...) [to] artificial exercises with little added value (such as the identification of clearly insignificant impacts for the sake of balance and completeness, or the identification of options that are clearly inappropriate to reach the objectives). It also leads to unrealistic expectations by those outside the Commission, who tend to expect all IAs to provide similar information and analysis, when this is often not possible (or desirable) given their different subjects and circumstances.”

3.2.3. Timing ⁶

⁶ The time needed to carry out an IA does not seem to create major problems: “The timing of IAs as foreseen in the current rules is generally appropriate and realistic; in most cases, DGs have approximately one year from the moment the Roadmap needs to be drawn up for inclusion in the CLWP until the adoption of the proposal. This is normally sufficient to produce a high-quality IA report.” (p.38) – On the duration, see also p.71-73 of the TEP Report.

Although the situation has considerably improved since the early years, the IA process is still not sufficiently built into the early stages of policy-design (when problems are framed, objectives set, and options considered). Roadmaps are drawn up shortly before the Commission Legislative and Work Programme (CLWP) deadline. As a result, TEP concluded that:

- Late IAs become an artificial exercise with pre-determined results.
- Consultation and supervision processes are less useful.

3.2.4. Balance of the approach

Tools and methods for assessing *economic* impacts are satisfactory. Quantitative analysis is often hampered by lack of solid, reliable data (esp. sectoral data). There is much less clarity and methodological soundness in the analysis of *social* and *environmental* impacts (especially benefits). TEP concluded that:

“Evidence from the interviews indicates that problems regarding the IA balance have little to do with the overall approach as such (although some criticised the recent focus on competitiveness, including the “excessive” effort required to analyse administrative burden). Rather, problems were more related with the available data, tools and methods, and/or with the effort and time necessary to collect and properly apply them. In a significant number of IAs, these constraints do not allow for an equally detailed and quantitative examination of different types of impacts.”

3.2.5. Training and support system

To date, “an estimated 530 officials have been trained by the various DGs over the past three years.” Their feedback suggests that there is demand for more practical guidance and greater differentiation of training for sector specific expertise and different responsibility (hierarchical) levels.

In addition, each DG has a different structure, staffing levels and emphasises on IA.

Taking this into account, TEP concluded that:

“Considering the large variance in resource allocation and work-load across the Commission services, it must be questioned whether the current system is sufficiently co-ordinated, both inside the DGs and between the DGs and the Secretariat General, and evenly resourced enough to ensure uniform support for and quality of all IAs. (...) Under the current conditions, it is up to the Secretariat General to make up for weaknesses created by this variance, which it is currently not mandated nor sufficiently resourced to do”.

3.2.6. Quality control mechanisms

The Commission system for quality control relies on the IA units in the DGs, the Secretariat General (SG), and the IAB. At present, it suffers, TEP argues, from a number of flaws:

- The role and responsibilities between the different actors in the system is not well communicated and poorly understood internally and externally.
- Not all DGs are equipped with dedicated IA support functions to ensure regular quality control of their IAs and during the ISC phase. Also those DGs that have developed own guidelines have not introduced specific quality assessment criteria.
- The SG does not have the resources to go beyond its function as “Guardian of the Guidelines” (i.e. procedural check). In particular, it cannot provide control on policy-specific content and methodologies.
- There is no systematic and consistent policy regulating how the opinions issued by the various DGs during the ISC are to be taken into account.
- Informal mechanisms (ISSGs, external inputs) have only in part mitigated the lack of systematic control.

3.2.7. Allocation of resources

The Commission services are not equipped to effectively and efficiently take part in the IA system, TEP argues.⁷

Whilst, staffing levels for IA activities varies greatly across the Commission, the absence of comprehensive figures made it impossible to clearly determine whether the current allocation of financial or human resources both at Commission and DG level is sufficient for implementing the IA system.

Nonetheless, given the current structure of the system, the resources of the SG seemed to be sufficient, whereas the problems arose from the great variance in the capacity, expertise and role of the individual DG IA units (which results in the need for greater central support and control).

TEP drew two further conclusions:

- *“This means that as DGs turn to the Secretariat General for added support, the Secretariat General is taking on the role of providing greater central support and control, despite not having the added financial and human resources to do so.”*
- *“Considering that three DGs are significantly better resourced than the Secretariat General, and that the rest have significantly less resources devoted to the Impact Assessment system, it is questionable whether the current human resource levels are sufficient to ensure the achievements of the system’s objectives. If as a result the Secretariat General is asked to take on a stronger*

⁷ “18 out of the 21 DGs contacted during the evaluation did not feel they were able to conduct or follow all relevant IA in the detail they would like.” (TEP Report, p.55)

central role, it would seem only reasonable to also provide it with additional resources or reallocate resources to fulfil this task.”

3.2.8. Stakeholder consultation

Stakeholders complained about:

- Insufficient time for responses;
- Late stage at which consultations are organized;
- Online consultations (closed questions) tend to be oversimplified.
- Balance and representativeness of consultations (more attention given to the weighting of the responses, e.g. from representative organisations vs. individuals);
- Inadequate transparency (the exact purpose and scope of the consultation and the requested data should be made more explicit); and
- Lack of feedback and acknowledgment (stakeholders often felt that they are not adequately informed about what happens with their input).
- Contribution of Roadmaps to openness and transparency is minimal. Although welcomed in principle, the Roadmaps are generally not read or noted outside the Commission.

TEP concluded that:

“The experiences of both external stakeholders and Commission officials with consultations are mixed. (...) In many cases, consultation has been carried out to the satisfaction of stakeholders, and provided relevant and useful input for the Commission officials drafting the IAs and proposals. Some others, however, have been organised in a manner and timeframe that left stakeholders frustrated, and was unlikely to have had much of an effect on the IA.”

3.2.9. Availability and lack of data

58% of the responding Commission officials agreed (almost half of them “strongly”) that in the IA work they were involved in, there was a lack of data, or data was inappropriate (e.g. was not comparable across the EU). 63% of respondents to the stakeholder survey considered that the analysis of impacts in IAs they had participated in was not based on sufficiently solid, transparent and reproducible data.

For data on environmental and social impacts the main problem is rather the absence of adequate methodologies.

Direct involvement of the affected stakeholder groups (in particular industry and Member States) have often proved to produce unsatisfactory results because of the insufficient quantity and quality of the data collected. Sometime the process of data collection and validation has been extremely time and resource intensive.

The use made of the available data has varied widely (mostly depending on the type of initiative proposed).

TEP concluded that:

“The data situation is clearly a major problem, forcing many IAs to remain entirely or mostly qualitative. The kind of data most often found lacking is reliable, comparable, comprehensive and sufficiently segmented economic data (in particular the cost and revenue structure of different industry sectors).”

3.2.10. Balance of impact

The evaluation found that no instances of a severe imbalance in favour of one or the other pillar were identified. The fact that not every IA assesses impacts in all three pillars (and if it does, does not assess them in the same level of detail) is natural, and should not be seen as indication of imbalance per se.

The greater thoroughness of the analysis of short-term economic impacts (compared to the other two pillars) was not primarily a problem of the approach, or of a deliberate decision to focus on a certain pillar, but of the available data, tools and methodologies.

TEP concluded that:

“no clear evidence emerged from the evaluation that the balanced approach to IAs has helped to identify possible synergies and trade-offs between different Community policies. In fact, stakeholders, especially from the industry side, have criticised the fact that each IA tends to look at its proposal in isolation, rather than trying to compare and manage risks in the most cost-effective way. For example, although the health benefits of a certain measure to reduce air pollution may outweigh its costs, could there be other, more cost-effective ways of saving the same number of lives through measures in other areas? Similarly, although individual environmental and social protection measures may not have a significant impact on the competitiveness of the European industry, taken together the effects might be much more drastic. These kinds of issues have not yet been systematically addressed through the IA system.”

3.2.11. Identification of problems and objectives

“Problem identification” was found to be not satisfactorily handled in a number of IAs.

- “Some IAs only described the very general problems in the respective policy areas, but not the concrete problems that the specific proposal is intended to tackle.
- One of the IAs described the problems merely as “needs”, without explaining why these needs exist and represent a problem, thus running counter to the IA Guidelines’ rule that problems should not be defined as ‘lack of something’.
- In one case, the problem identification section focused very much on the desirable solutions (lines of action for the proposed measure), rather than the

causes and consequences of the general problems at hand. It failed to draw a clear line between “problems” and solutions / objectives.”

As to the “objectives”, IAs often presented them in such vague and general terms that they fail to show how the proposal corresponds to the problem(s) at hand, or what its intervention logic would be. In one case, the objectives presented are formulated in a way that is so closely linked to the proposed intervention (the preferred option) that it all but rules out any alternative options.

3.2.12. Examination of policy options

IAs present and analyse options. While 9 % of the IAs scrutinised presented only one option, or no option at all (against 34 % presenting two or three, and 41 % presenting up to four options), no less than 28 % limited the analysis to only one option (or did not analyse any at all). The Report does not differentiate between IAs on legislative and non-legislative initiatives in this case. It is nonetheless inferred from the text that the poor record of options analysed is heavily due to the latter category.

TEP concluded that:

“A considerable number of IAs (especially many of those accompanying non-legislative proposals or dealing with spending programmes) have treated the identification of alternative options as a purely academic exercise, and have only identified “non-options” that are discarded immediately. In many cases, this was clearly done because the political decision on the preferred option had already been taken before the IA process.”

4. CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the review is a useful and valuable background document. It appears to be based on a robust and rather coherent thinking. The issues addressed are relevant, although – as they are exposed in the Report – they do not necessarily seem to be parts of a strategic vision of how the system should look like.

There are, however, a number of wider, important points raised by the evaluation. These include:

4.1. SCOPE OF APPLICATION OF IA

The evaluation has identified the scope of application as one of the fundamental problems affecting the present IA system.

The decision to obligatorily carry out IAs on all CWLP items was taken in the framework of the first revision of the IA Guidelines in 2004-2005, i.e. well after the integrated IA approach had been designed. The decision reflected the choice to abandon the “preliminary IAs” in favour of the “Roadmaps”. Before that moment, the following criteria applied when the Commission decided on which “major initiatives” had to undergo an “extended IA”: “whether the proposal will result in substantial economic, environmental

and/or social impacts on a specific sector or several sectors, whether the proposal will have a significant impact on major interested parties; and whether the proposal represents a major policy reform in one or several sectors.”⁸

The motivation for the subsequent decision to indistinctively cover all items of the CLWP was to ensure greater completeness. The result was the application of the IA instrument also to proposals for which it was not suited at all, or only partly.

4.2. TIMING FOR STARTING AND PRODUCING IAS

One of the main concerns when introducing the new integrated system in 2002 was the way IAs would fit into the Commission policy process. Eventually, the solution was chosen to link the IAs to the planning and programming cycle, notably by associating IAs to the CLWP. Linking the IA system to pre-existing mechanisms was an effective practical way to introduce the new procedure smoothly and without excessive administrative disruption. It was a right decision and, above all, it probably was inevitable.

However, this implied that also the timeframe for IAs, like the one of the CLWP, was based on one year. (The CLWP is conceived on an annual basis because it is related to the budgetary cycle of the Commission.) As a norm, the Commission does not report a proposal that has not been adopted by the year to the following year. The practical consequence of this is that DGs sometimes speed up the production of an IA when approaching the CLWP deadline. This may be detrimental to the quality and thoroughness of the analysis and feed the concerns about IAs being ex-post justifications of chosen options.

In this respect, the Secretary General is already considering introducing a new procedure (called “upstream coordination”). This procedure aims at anticipating the moment in which the dossiers are discussed in the inter-service consultation. Along these lines, the Commission is studying the opportunity to revisit the structure of the Work Programme. The Work Programme for 2008 might include not only a list of the initiatives the Commission plans for the year, but also the areas in which it intends to conduct investigations and analysis of the problems / options. Those areas might then find their way as concrete initiatives the year after (i.e. 2009).

Nonetheless, the opportunity to have the budgetary cycle, the CLWP and the IA system directly linked on an annual basis deserves further reflection, which the evaluation Report does not address.

4.3. SEQUENCE OF ANALYSIS AND DRAFTING

The Report notes the fact that IAs are usually conducted in parallel with the draft of the proposal. Moreover, evidence shows that it is often the same desk officer (or the same

⁸ European Commission, Communication on Impact Assessment, COM(2002) 276 final of 5 June 2002, p.7.
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team) working on both exercises. The latter finding is to be welcomed, as it constitutes a clear pedagogic asset and help instil the right analytical culture among the regulators.

However, more attention should be given to the sequence of the analysis and drafting. While the Report acknowledges that the parallel drafting of the IA and its proposal is often driven by tight political agendas and administrative planning, it also (and rightly) questions “whether the IA or the proposal is driving the policy development.” This parallelism is hard to determine, but it is possibly one of the reasons for IAs eventually merely justifying preferred options.

4.4. EX POST EVALUATION

The Report does address Ex Post assessment and verification of impact”. It notes that the monitoring tools and provisions for ex-post assessments varied from DG to DG; and, that none of the policy initiatives that had undergone an IA had progressed to the stage where monitoring or ex-post assessment of the anticipated impacts was possible.

However, the evaluation contents itself with the impression obtained from the interviews that a majority of DGs had established evaluation mechanisms which have or will be incorporating IA information, despite the fact that anchoring IAs in the monitoring and ex post evaluation reports will be “challenging”.

Once again, the issue of “closing the policy evaluation loop” has been neglected. It is probably unrealistic to think of the introduction of a new tool for ex post evaluation in the short-term. This would be perceived as an excessive bureaucratisation of the procedure. Nonetheless, the Commission should start as soon as possible a consistent reflection on how to exploit existing evaluation mechanisms in support of the IA system.

4.5. DATA AND METHODOLOGIES

The Report acknowledges that the lack of balance between the different analytical pillars does not necessarily constitute a problem – or at least is not the result of systematic political preferences (in favour of the economic dimension). It explains it with the different development of the methodologies used to assess the various impacts. In addition, however, the IA system is found to suffer from another problem: the incapacity to objectively and consistently produce syntheses between the findings from the economic, social and environmental analyses. That is actually the main rationale behind the creation of the “integrated” approach. At present, there are no clear and effective methodologies to identify synergies and trade-offs between the various policy objectives and options. This methodological aspect is mentioned in the Report but does not receive sufficient emphasis.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation provides an extensive and robust analysis of many of the strengths and weaknesses of the Commission’s impact assessment system. Based on these findings, it is possible to identify a series of reforms that, if implemented together, could contribute

significantly to improvements in the quality, utility, and effectiveness of impact assessment at EU-level. Reforms include:

- **Revise the scope of the IA system**, ensuring that important implementing decisions (such as agency guidelines and comitology) are included;
- **Restructure the sequence of analysis and drafting of impact assessments**, ensuring that reviews begin earlier in the process of development of new rules;
- **Strengthen central oversight mechanisms** so as to improve quality control; to ensure a fuller examination of policy options; and to require a more rigorous identification of problems (the need for action) and objectives of government intervention
- **Provide a clear and rigorous definition of the concept of “proportionate analysis”** accompanied by a detailed description and guidelines setting out how to apply it on an operational basis;
- **Develop and implement a clear and effective methodologies to identify synergies and trade-offs between the various policy objectives and options;**
- **Increase the investment in development of expertise** in all DGs;
- **Invest in the collection of high quality economic, social, and environmental data**, including finding new, innovative ways to work with parties affected by legislative and regulatory proposals;
- **Develop and implement a comprehensive system of ex post evaluation of regulatory and legislative outcomes**, supported by policies, mechanisms and institutions;

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This background note was written by Lorenzo Allio, a Fellow of Kings College London, with help from members of the Forum. However, the views and opinions expressed in this paper do not necessarily state or reflect those of the European Risk Forum.