



Background:

With the creation of the single market, the body of European law expanded considerably over the past two decades. The expansion of EU legislation resulted in some areas of overlap and duplication and regulatory instruments which were not always proportionate.

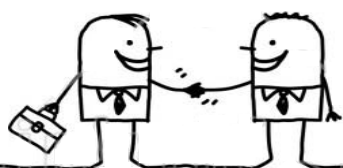
The EU was therefore looking for a means to simplify existing regulation and better design new policies, laws and regulations. To do so, the European Commission established an impact Assessment (IA) system in 2003.

Impact Assessments:

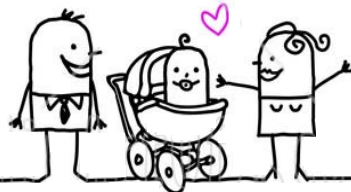
Impact Assessments are a process by which policymakers use tools and methods to assess potential economic, social and environmental impacts of proposed policy. The stated objective is to provide decision-makers with evidence-based policy options upon which policy decisions can be made. The process of developing an IA is at the heart of public policy, as it is the interface between the technical architecture and the political flavouring of public policy.



Better Regulation



Economic Impacts



Social Impacts

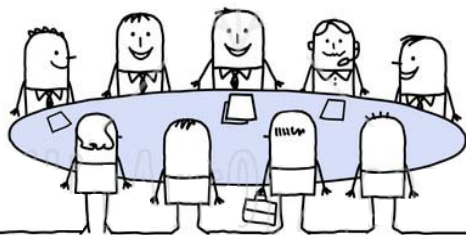
Environmental Impacts



Increased Rationality?

Research Project:

This research project examines the extent to which Impact Assessments provide decision makers with evidence-based policy options (i.e. increased rationality in the policymaking process), or whether they are actually a tool for ensuring policy officials follow the political objectives set by their masters (i.e. a solution to the principle-agent problem), or a process for improved coordination of key policy actors both inside and outside the European Commission.



Increased Coordination?



Increased Control?

Research Methodology:

Tracing the policy-making process (i.e. inception, development, and inter-institutional negotiations stage) of six Impact Assessment (IA) case studies. Each case study is based on up to 15 interviews with Commission officials who worked on the IA, external actors who contributed to it, and actors inside the European Council and Parliament who used it during the final stages of Inter-Institutional negotiations.

Potential Research Outputs:

Improved i) organisational management, ii) regulation and iii) influencing strategies.

Tracing the policy process

