



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Impact Assessment Board

Brussels,
D(2011)

Opinion

Title **DG ELARG - Impact Assessment on the Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA II)**

(draft version of 5 August 2011)

(A) Context

Following up on the over-arching proposal for the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) for EU spending adopted on 29 June 2011, the Commission is currently preparing a series of follow-up proposals providing a legal basis for sectoral spending programmes and establishing their specific budgetary arrangements. In the area of external action, these include proposals for various financial instruments which should be supported by impact assessments including the so-called "Instrument for Pre-Accession" (IPA II). According to the Commission June MFF Communication, this should "ensure that candidate countries and potential candidates are fully prepared for eventual accession". The total proposed allocation for the 2014-2020 period is €12.5 bn (2011 prices).

The IAB has focussed on the policy choices not yet fixed in the MFF June package.

(B) Overall assessment

The report requires some further work in various respects. It should clarify the policy objectives to be achieved by the Instrument and should better present the content of the options. The report should improve the analysis of the impacts, including the analysis of administrative burden, and should present impacts in greater detail, including an analysis against effectiveness, efficiency and coherence. Conditionality provisions should be further assessed for all options. The report should further substantiate the comparison of the options and describe the advantages of the preferred option in more detail.

(C) Main recommendations for improvements

(1) Clarify the policy objectives. The report should clarify the content of the policy objectives and should design them in a 'SMARTer' way. To clarify the intervention logic, the Instrument-related options should be described in a way that explains how they contribute to achieving these objectives. In terms of presentation the report should move the objectives identified/discussed in the monitoring chapter to the objectives chapter.

(2) Indicate the baseline scenario and clarify the content of the options. The report should clearly indicate which of the options will serve as the baseline scenario. Furthermore, the report should better explain the content of the options, particularly with respect to the sub-options of option 2. The report should delete the "zero-option" as the decision by the Commission to pursue the policy has already been taken. An additional sub-option within option 2 should be analysed, combining sub-options 2.2 and 2.3. Option 3 merits a better presentation and analysis and a justification about why it cannot be pursued. Stakeholder views should be consequently presented throughout the report.

(3) Improve the analysis of impacts and comparison of options. The report should distinguish clearly between the presentation of the options and their analysis. The report currently assesses impacts at a rather general level. Therefore, it should provide a more detailed analysis, particularly of the various (sub-) options. In this context, the report should make a stronger distinction between economic, social and environmental impacts. Furthermore, options should be explicitly assessed according to the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency and coherence. The report should include an analysis of administrative burden (including quantification whenever costs are significant). Conditionality provisions should be further assessed for all options. The report should better demonstrate why the preferred option scores as best when compared to the other options, especially to option 2.2 (more focus on investments) which seems to be favoured by beneficiaries or to the new combination of options 2.2 and 2.3 that may be capable of strongest results. Finally, the report should better present and assess the differences between the options in comparison to the baseline scenario.

(D) Procedure and presentation

Some of the discussion is currently misplaced in the report and it should be moved to the respective places (e.g. subsidiarity, objectives). The report should include summaries of the extensive studies in an annex and it should also include a glossary.

(E) IAB scrutiny process

Reference number	2011/DEVCO+/004
External expertise used	No
Date of IAB meeting	2011