

May 2017

Preventive restructuring, second chance and efficient restructuring, insolvency and discharge procedures

Impact Assessment (SWD(2016) 357, SWD(2016) 358 (summary)) of a Commission proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on preventive restructuring frameworks, second chance and measures to increase the efficiency of restructuring, insolvency and discharge procedures and amending Directive 2012/30/EU (COM(2016) 723)

Background

This note seeks to provide an initial analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the European Commission's [Impact Assessment](#) (IA) accompanying its [proposal](#) for a directive on preventive restructuring frameworks, second chance and measures to increase the efficiency of restructuring, insolvency and discharge procedures. This proposal was published on 22 November 2016 and was referred to Parliament's Committee on Legal Affairs on 16 January 2017.

The Commission proposal contains a set of European rules related to business insolvency. In 2011, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on insolvency proceedings ([P7_TA\(2011\)0484](#)), containing recommendations for harmonisation of certain elements of insolvency laws. The Commission, as part of a broader plan, adopted a recommendation on a new approach to business failure and insolvency in 2014 ([2014/135/EU](#)). The recommendation invited Member States to establish 'effective pre-insolvency procedures' (IA, p. 6) to avoid insolvency of viable debtors and to provide 'second chance provisions for entrepreneurs enabling them to have a discharge in no more than three years after insolvency' (IA, p. 6). The IA indicates that after two implementation assessments, carried out in 2015 and 2016, it was apparent that progress was insufficient in most Member States, due to the partial implementation of the recommendation (IA, pp. 6-7, and Annex 8). This IA explores additional measures to bring about the changes desired. Additional information compiled by the European Parliamentary Research Service is available in the relevant section of Parliament's '[legislative train](#)' tool for tracking progress on the EU's priority legislative proposals.

Problem definition

The IA provides a good overview of the problems and their causes (IA, pp. 13-41), beginning with a helpful chart summarising them (IA, p. 13). The causes concern regulatory failures relating to insolvency frameworks (i.e. sub-optimal rules in some Member States associated with the lack of harmonisation at EU level), as well as procedural inefficiencies. The IA indicates that stakeholders identified these drivers during various consultation rounds (IA, p. 13). Stakeholders also played a key role in dividing between 'fundamental' and 'additional' causes. For each of the fundamental drivers, the IA provides a good overview of the different rules in place in the Member States, backed up by a broad range of information, and presents a choice of options. Regulatory failures relate to: (i) preventive restructuring; (ii) stays of enforcement actions (moratoria); (iii) debtor-in-possession; (iv) restructuring plans; (v) new financing in restructuring; and (vi) debt restructuring for natural persons.

Inefficiencies relate to the courts' and insolvency administrators' involvement in restructuring, insolvency and discharge procedures. The IA prefers to highlight the divergences within the EU, where they exist, and prudently refrains from further prioritising these fundamental causes in terms of importance.

The causal links between the drivers and the problems are clear overall. The IA argues that the shortcomings in insolvency frameworks' rules and procedures generate lost opportunities and costs for both businesses and natural persons, and ultimately hamper cross-border investment and businesses. The IA states that the divergences and inefficiencies in national rules cause three main problems, described in depth in terms of costs (IA, pp. 28-41), in line with the Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines.

1. 'Lost opportunities and excessive costs generated by barriers to cross-border investment' (IA, p. 28). Cross-border investment is hampered by the 'difficulty to assess cross-border investment risks' (IA, *ibid.*) and by the 'significant differences in recovery rates cross-border' (IA, p. 29).
2. 'Foregone benefits and additional costs for creditors and debtors related to liquidation of viable companies' (IA, p. 31). Inefficiencies in restructuring frameworks generate relocation costs, coordination costs and lost benefits for companies that have to be liquidated, instead of being rescued.
3. 'Lost opportunities and additional costs for natural persons related to inefficiencies in insolvency frameworks as regards a fresh start' (IA, p. 39). Natural persons (entrepreneurs or consumers) stigmatised by insolvency and denied a fresh start (e.g. new credit), suffer a reduction in their economic activity and miss opportunities. They might have to bear additional costs, such as costs to relocate to debtor-friendly jurisdictions, or experience difficulties in finding a new job.

The scale of the problem at EU level is well described in terms of:

- Company bankruptcies – 200 000 per year on average 'in recent years' (IA, p. 9).
- Related job losses – '5.1 million over three years' (IA, p. 9). This figure is taken from a 2014 impact assessment, which however refers to an estimate of 1.7 million insolvency-related job losses in 2009¹. At first sight, it seems that more up-to-date figures should have been used.
- Non-performing loans in the banking system – €980 billion in 2015. On this subject, the IA states that 'Enterprise mortality is closely linked to the problem of non-performing loans which is the most usual cause of liquidation of companies (IA, p. 11).

As regards natural persons, data on the over-indebtedness of European citizens ('11.4 % of consumers are permanently in arrears' – IA, p. 39) exists, but not for individual entrepreneurs.

The problem description is supported by a broad range of references, coming from diverse sources, such as international institutions, business organisations, universities, and think tanks. The IA describes and analyses those affected by the initiative: businesses, consumers, financial institutions, employees, insolvency practitioners, and public administrations (IA, pp. 199-202). It reports the views of stakeholders, systematically highlighting those of the business and financial sectors in particular. Concerning the likelihood that this problem will continue to persist without EU action, the IA states that 'when Member States introduce changes [in national insolvency laws], they will only take into account the national perspective' (p. 43).

Objectives of the legislative proposal

The Commission defines general, specific and operational objectives. The **general** objectives, directly linked to the three problems identified, are to reduce:

- 'the barriers for cross-border investment which are related to restructuring and insolvency frameworks and increase investment and job opportunities in the internal market;
- the number of unnecessary liquidations of viable companies, and increase the possibilities of cross-border restructuring in the internal market;
- the costs and increase the opportunities for honest entrepreneurs to be given a fresh start' (IA, p. 47).

The IA identifies three **specific** objectives aiming to reduce:

¹ Impact Assessment accompanying the Commission Recommendation on a new approach to business failure and Insolvency, [SWD\(2014\) 61](#), pp. 2, 18 and 44.

- ‘the costs of assessing ex-ante the investment risks and improve recovery rates;
- the costs of restructuring, including for groups of companies, so that viable companies are rescued rather than liquidated and [therefore] maintain jobs;
- the number of entrepreneurs who would need to relocate to escape a debt-trap and thus reduce the costs of [providing a] second chance and increase the number of persons who would re-integrate economic life’ (IA, p. 47).

Finally, the IA lists a series of **operational** objectives, closely linked to the sub-options analysed (IA, p. 47):

- ‘enable efficient possibilities for early restructuring’;
- ‘allowing the debtor a “breathing space” by way of stay of enforcement actions’;
- ‘facilitating the continuation of a debtor’s business while restructuring’;
- ‘prevent dissenting minority creditors and shareholders from jeopardising the restructuring process’;
- ‘increase chances for the success of the restructuring plan’;
- ‘reduce costs and length of restructuring procedures’;
- ‘enabling discharge for natural persons in a reasonable time for those in good faith’.

According to the Better Regulation Guidelines, objectives should be SMART: (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (tool No 13)). These objectives are not related to a specific time period. Moreover, actually measuring all these objectives might turn out to be challenging.

Range of options considered

The IA proceeds in two steps to define its approach. It first considers four options entailing broad strategic choices to address the problems, and selects one. It then focuses on suggesting a range of sub-options to achieve the operational objectives identified.

Table 1 – Policy options

Option	Commission’s option evaluation
1. Baseline scenario: Maintaining the status quo	<u>Discarded</u> : the absence of EU action would mean delays in the conclusion of insolvency procedures, low success rates for cross-border restructurings, inhibited cross-border investment (IA, p. 50)
2. Full harmonisation: ‘Setting up a fully harmonised preventive restructuring procedure and a second chance framework’ (IA, p. 48)	<u>Discarded</u> : although it would be the most effective option in ensuring legal certainty of insolvency laws in the EU, this option is considered ‘politically unfeasible and clearly disproportionate’ (IA, p. 51)
3. Optional instrument: ‘Introducing an alternative, optional EU restructuring and second chance regime for cross-border cases’ (IA, p. 49)	<u>Discarded</u> : a European procedure in competition with national procedures could be contentious without providing the expected results (IA, p. 50)
4. Binding instrument: ‘Setting up a minimum harmonised legal framework in the area of restructuring and second chance for entrepreneurs’ (IA, p. 49)	<u>Preferred option</u> : option 4 would bring convergence of national frameworks as regards companies and natural persons in financial difficulties and facilitate cross-border investment (IA, p. 51)

Source: European Commission.

Considerable effort has gone into providing alternatives. For the retained binding instrument, the IA considers two or three possibilities linked to each operational objective. The 24 sub-options thus identified are presented in a useful table on pp. 56-57. For each operational objective, sub-options are mainly construed incrementally, each building up and incorporating elements of another option. However, some options are worded as general objectives, such as ‘enhancing the quality of insolvency practitioners’ (IA, p. 90). While this caters for the

different standards existing in the EU, it seems also subject to interpretation and would need to be operationalised further at a later stage.

Scope of the impact assessment

The Commission's preferred course of action is summarised on pp. 89-90 of the IA. The extensive assessment of the sub-options is mainly based on the views of stakeholders, which are systematically reported, particularly for Member States, the financial and the business sectors. The IA uses scores ranging from '- -' to '+++' to compare the impact of the different sub-options. By means of a qualitative evaluation, the IA systematically analyses the impacts in terms of cost reduction, effectiveness of the approach, repercussions on the legal systems, and respect of fundamental rights, and – sometimes – additional impacts. The preferred sub-options generally present the best scores in terms of cost reduction and effectiveness. However, this is mitigated by a corresponding higher negative impact on domestic legal systems.

The economic impacts, and especially the possible cost reduction, are analysed in depth, using a typology that encompasses, for instance, the costs of assessing risks for investors, restructuring costs for cross-border groups, and relocation costs for natural persons. Additional economic impacts, such as on competition and competitiveness, are also analysed, for the package of retained options (IA, pp. 93-102 and pp. 154-186).

Social impacts appear in the analysis of the sub-options (but without scores) and are addressed more generally in Annex 3 (IA, pp. 164-169). During the stakeholder consultation, trade unions 'reminded [the Commission] of abusive practices by which insolvency proceedings, and in particular restructuring, are deliberately used to evade responsibilities under labour law' (IA, p. 60). As regards early restructuring, the IA indicates that 'the social impacts of procedures should be positive, as one of the main objectives of early restructuring procedures is to save jobs by saving the companies which employ them' (IA, p. 59). The IA mentions three times that the current proposal on early restructuring does not alter workers' rights concerning information and consultation of employees, which are guaranteed by the relevant EU labour law Directives (IA, pp. 166, 168 and 169).

The IA expects that a significant proportion of the 1.7 million jobs which are lost to 'insolvency every year will be saved. Benefits will be seen in particular in [Bulgaria, Denmark, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland and Romania]' (IA, p. 98).² As shown earlier, the 1.7 million figure is an estimate relating to 2009. Finally, the IA mentions the possible creation of 3 million new jobs as a result of the second chance measures. Alternative estimates, ranging from 600 000 to 1.2 million new jobs are also quoted (IA, p. 99 and footnote 201). The main source for the 3 million figure contains the following assumptions, rounding the figures up slightly to clarify the reasoning. If 50 % of the approximately 200 000 SMEs that go bankrupt each year had relaunched and created between 2 and 4 new jobs each, the total additional employment would have been between 200 000 and 400 000 each year. In the 6 years between 2009 and 2014, this would have amounted to between 1.2 million and 2.4 million new jobs.³ Therefore, 3 million new jobs would appear to be a best case scenario over the course of more than 7 years. Hence, the IA would seem to imply a partial, yet significant, re-absorption of estimated jobs lost each year.

As far as territorial impacts are concerned, the IA concludes that the retained options 'will introduce a new culture of rescuing viable businesses in ... mostly central, eastern and southern EU Member States) ...' (IA, p. 93). The IA usefully provides detailed impacts of the measures on different Member States (see for instance, pp. 94-102).

Subsidiarity and proportionality

The IA states that the legal basis of the proposal is Article 114 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which allows the EU to take measures to eliminate obstacles and address barriers to the smooth functioning of the internal market. It further notes that, based on this Article, the EU has the right to act to improve the conditions of economic operators in the context of restructuring viable businesses in financial

² The countries are here listed in the same order as in the impact assessment.

³ European Commission, Annual report on European SMEs, 2015/2016, p. 55.

distress (IA, p. 43). The IA argues that an efficient internal market ‘requires a coherent restructuring and second chance framework, capable of addressing the cross-border dimension of firms’ (IA, p. 46). According to the IA, EU action will facilitate cross-border investment by preventing company insolvency and, at the same time, provide entrepreneurs with reasonable discharge periods. On the other hand, according to the Commission, the real problem of consumer over-indebtedness might have to be tackled first at national level. The stated reason provided in the IA hinges on the fact that consumers receive loans from local banks, whereas entrepreneurs rely on different sources of investment, including cross-border (IA, p. 46).

The subsidiarity deadline was 8 March 2017. By that date, both the upper and lower house of the Irish Parliament had issued [reasoned opinions](#) stating that the proposal does not comply with the principle of subsidiarity. The opinions consider that the Commission has not provided a detailed statement with sufficient indicators to allow national parliaments to evaluate all implications of the proposal. However, it is worth noting that these reasoned opinions do not explicitly mention the Commission’s impact assessment. The Irish legislature also considers that the proposal does not comply with the principle of proportionality, and exceeds the measures necessary to reach its objectives.

The IA, on the contrary, considers that the proposal respects the principle of proportionality, as the legislative instrument defines common objectives and general rules but allows Member States to decide how to achieve those objectives (IA, p. 46). Considerations related to proportionality feature throughout the report. For instance, the Commission’s preferred option focuses essentially on restructuring and second chance frameworks, and addresses insolvency only as regards the length and effectiveness of procedures (IA, p. 52). The IA argues that some elements of substantive insolvency law (e.g. harmonisation of the definition of insolvency, ranking of claims, avoidance actions), ‘would touch upon fundamental values in the Member States’ and are discarded as disproportionate (IA, p. 53). Consequently, according to the IA, under option 4, investors would still bear additional costs, but these costs would nevertheless be reduced in a proportionate manner (IA, pp. 53-54).

Budgetary or public finance implications

The IA analyses the practical implications of the initiative for public administration in reassuring terms. The overall judgement is that the proposal does not have significant national budget implications, that Member States have a large margin of discretion and that only a few would be affected (IA, pp. 201-202). According to the IA, the possible costs would concern one-off training for judges or practitioners, estimated at around €950-1 300 per judge (IA, p. 102). The setup of data collection tools in some Member States raises some questions, which are analysed below, under ‘Monitoring and evaluation’.

The explanatory memorandum accompanying the Commission proposal indicates that there is no implication for the EU budget, as ‘the costs for implementing and transposing the Directive will be fully covered by the Justice Programme’s voted budget allocation’ ([Explanatory memorandum](#), English version, p. 20).

SME test and competitiveness

The IA analyses SMEs while defining the problem, providing evidence and tailoring solutions. First, the IA identifies the current lack of specific arrangements for restructuring SMEs and the lack of resources within SMEs to undertake a financial health check, as significant drivers that result in the fact that ‘SMEs are disproportionately driven to liquidation rather than restructuring’ (IA, p. 28). Second, the IA evidence includes a comprehensive mapping of special insolvency arrangements for SMEs covering all Member States, as well as Norway and the United States (IA, pp. 172-175). Moreover, although the bankruptcy figures presented relate to all enterprises (IA, p. 175), the source of the data states that this should reflect trends in the failures of SMEs, as they account for 99 % of all companies in the EU. Finally, the IA estimates that a cross-border proceeding costs on average almost twice (98 %) than a domestic one for an SME, while the corresponding higher cost for a large company is 45 %. The calculations performed on ‘respondents’ answers’ (IA, p. 38) are based on some assumptions, which are described in the IA. However, the calculations, rounded up to the euro, are overly

precise and the presentation is not very clear overall. Third, as far as solutions are concerned, the IA suggests encouraging SMEs to address their financial difficulties at an early stage, using tools such as low-cost advice, templates for restructuring plans, hybrid procedures and out-of-court agreements with creditors (IA, p. 28). The IA expects that lowering the threshold to access early restructuring procedures will ensure a higher number of applications from viable SMEs at an early stage, but notes that a balance should be found to avoid unviable SMEs in financial difficulties entering restructuring negotiations with the aim of postponing insolvency filing (IA, p. 59).

The IA expects that the measures should have a positive impact on competitiveness, one of the stated aims of the initiative. According to the IA, this should be achieved by: lowering costs for companies with high cross-border volumes, as well as lowering costs domestically, this latter depending on their jurisdiction; by favouring innovation; and, as a result, by contributing to international competitiveness (IA, pp. 161-162).

Simplification and other regulatory implications

Both the IA (e.g. pp. 187-191) and the explanatory memorandum analyse the regulatory implications of this proposal. At the EU level, it is worth highlighting the stated complementarity with:

- the recently adopted Regulation on insolvency proceeding ([EU 2015/848](#)), which will replace the Insolvency Regulation (Council Regulation (EC) 1346/2000) from 26 June 2017; and
- the Capital Markets Union Action plan ([COM\(2015\)468](#)), according to the IA, by 'address[ing] the most important barriers to the free flow of capital (IA, p. 190).

Quality of data, research and analysis

Drafting of this IA was led by the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers (DG JUST). The Commission has collected a wealth of relevant information through different stakeholder consultations and extensive research. The IA presents useful statistics, tables and graphs, which help to convey the economic context of the problem, and refers to a broad range of external sources of information, including international institutions and think tanks. A comprehensive bibliography is provided. A genuine effort to comply as far as possible with the Commission' Better Regulation Guidelines can be observed. For instance, the IA includes all the compulsory annexes mentioned in Commission 'Better Regulation Toolbox' tool no 8. Despite these positive points, in some instances some essential information would appear to be lacking. For instance, in addition to the indexes linked to the number of business bankruptcies in Europe (Table 1, IA, pp. 9-10), the figures in absolute terms and/or the business bankruptcy percentage by country would have allowed a better comparison of Member States.

Stakeholder consultation

The Commission has consulted widely before publishing this proposal, as is made clear by the compulsory annex, duly included in the analysis (IA, pp. 117-153). The views of stakeholders are systematically featured throughout the report, notably in the section related to the problem drivers (IA, pp. 13-28) and while assessing the sub-options (IA, pp. 55-88). The consultation performed included:

- An online public consultation, which respected the mandatory twelve weeks, and elicited more than 260 contributions and replies from authorities of 18 Member States;
- Dedicated meetings with Member States (over the course of two days);
- A 'sounding board', i.e. dedicated meetings with 22 selected stakeholder organisations (over the course of three days). Figure 1 below graphically presents the balance of the group. Additionally, the Commission presents the position of 13 'main stakeholders' (IA, pp. 120-124), ten of which took part to this sounding board;
- Bilateral meetings with at least nine named stakeholders, which are not part of the 'sounding board';
- Meetings of the Commission Expert Group, whose participants and minutes are available in the [Transparency Register](#) (over the course of nine days).
- A conference on the convergence of insolvency frameworks (IA, pp. 118-119).

Figure 1 – Sounding board: stakeholders selected by the Commission



Data source: Commission IA, pp. 118-119, 2016; authors

Finally, the IA presents the suggestions of the stakeholders not taken into account by the initiative transparently, as well as the justification for this decision (IA, pp. 152-153). Some stakeholders expressed some reservations at times, or requested safeguards. For instance, as regards early restructuring, trade unions mentioned that ‘an easier access to preventive restructuring framework should be counterbalanced by safeguards against tactical insolvencies, for the protection of workers’ rights’ (IA, p. 60). Concerning the discharge of entrepreneurs, the banking sector was in favour of a short time period (three years, as suggested in the Commission’s

preferred option) but ‘only if a certain amount of the debt is repaid’ (IA, p. 81). A final example relates to the effectiveness of procedures, for which insolvency practitioners’ organisations were reluctant to introduce minimum standards, including on professional qualifications and remuneration (IA, p. 89).

Monitoring and evaluation

The IA lists the statistics to be collected and reported annually by Member States as follows:

- ‘(i) the number of preventive restructuring procedures opened by enterprises in difficulty;
- (ii) the number of liquidations and sales as a going concern;
- (iii) the average length of proceedings, including particular procedural phases (e.g. before courts, out-of-court);
- (iv) the size of debtors involved in such proceedings (medium, large or micro-enterprises); and
- (v) the outcome of the procedures opened, including the recovery rates in different types of procedures’ (IA, p. 103).

The IA sums up the analysis of the reporting obligations’ costs as follows: ‘many Member States already have statistical data, and only need to make this available to the Commission once a year. For the rest of the Member States, the costs of gathering such data are not expected to be significant’ (IA, p. 202).

Article 29 of the proposal takes up the above indicators and includes additional elements, such as:

- the number of procedures leading to a full discharge of debt for natural persons, beyond those relating to preventive restructuring procedures and liquidations;
- ‘the average costs of each procedure awarded by the judicial or administrative authority, in euro’ (Article 29.1 (d));
- additional details for recovery rates, such as the break-down between secured and unsecured creditors;

At first sight, these and additional elements in Article 29 appear to be substantial requirements that may entail costs not included in the Commission IA’s analysis.

The explanatory memorandum indicates that ‘the Commission will facilitate the Directive’s implementation in the Member States by providing transposition assistance, organising two transposition workshop and interim stock-taking exercises, organising bilateral meetings including on demand by Member States, and providing Member States with templates for communicating national transposition measures’ (Explanatory memorandum, p. 20). It also indicates that ‘the Directive’s operation will be first reviewed 5 years after its entry into application and every 7 years thereafter’ (Explanatory memorandum, p. 20).

Commission Regulatory Scrutiny Board

The Commission's Regulatory Scrutiny Board (RSB) issued two opinions on this IA. The first negative opinion followed the meeting with the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers on 28 September 2016. Approximately two weeks later, DG JUST resubmitted another version of the IA, which received an overall positive opinion, with reservations. In this second opinion, the Commission's internal quality assurance body expressed four recommendations to improve the IA. These related mainly to clarifying the following aspects: 1) the overall impacts of the initiative, especially as regards employment aspects; 2) stakeholders' views; 3) the immediate need to act at EU level, and the interaction between minimum harmonisation and the internal market aspects; 4) the fact that the IA recommends not addressing providing a second chance and consumer discharge. Annex I of the IA usefully lists the recommendations made by the Regulatory Scrutiny Board in its first, negative, opinion, and how the authors implemented these in the revised report. A similar table for the second opinion of the Board is not provided, however, which would have been equally useful. A genuine attempt to comply with the main suggestions can be observed, even though employment aspects still lack up-to-date data.

Coherence between the Commission's legislative proposal and IA

The Commission's legislative proposal appears to follow the recommendations expressed in the IA. However, the broader scope of monitoring arrangements (see section 'Monitoring and evaluation' above) is a substantive element that does not appear to have been addressed by the IA.

Conclusions

This Commission impact assessment is based on a wealth of information drawing from both research and consultation. Research quoted spans the last decade and encompasses international organisation, academic and think tank work. The consultation performed by the Commission has been essential to prioritising the issues to be further harmonised and in choosing the detailed sub-options.

Among the strengths of the IA, there is a genuine attempt to comply as much as possible with the Commission Better Regulation Guidelines and transparency in providing information. This is particularly evident in the broad range of options presented and in the presentation of the territorial impacts of the initiative. In this regard, for instance, the IA provides a useful legal analysis of the most important issues for most Member States. Nevertheless, economic impacts appear to be analysed more in depth than social and employment outcomes. Among the additional weaknesses, the numerous objectives identified are not time-bound and may be difficult to measure. Finally, although the IA states that Member States should not incur significant monitoring costs, the requirements in the IA appear to be shorter and less detailed than the ones in the Commission proposal.

This note, prepared by the Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit for the European Parliament's Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI), analyses whether the principal criteria laid down in the Commission's own Better Regulation Guidelines, as well as additional factors identified by the Parliament in its Impact Assessment Handbook, appear to be met by the IA. It does not attempt to deal with the substance of the proposal. It is drafted for informational and background purposes to assist the relevant parliamentary committee(s) and Members more widely in their work.

To contact the Ex-Ante Impact Assessment Unit, please e-mail: EPRS-ImpactAssessment@ep.europa.eu

Manuscript completed in May 2017. Brussels © European Union, 2017.

The opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not represent an official position of the European Parliament. Reproduction and translation of this document for non-commercial purposes are authorised, provided the source is acknowledged and the publisher is given prior notice and sent a copy.

www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank (Internet) – www.epthinktank.eu (blog) – www.eprs.sso.ep.parl.union.eu (Intranet)