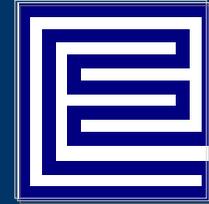


The Evaluation Partnership



Evaluation of the Commission's Impact Assessment System

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www.evaluationpartnership.com

- 1. Introduction**
2. Evaluation Overview
3. Selected Findings
4. Overall Conclusions

INTRODUCTION

Definition

- Sustainable Development – “Meeting the needs of present generations without jeopardizing the needs of future generations” (Göteborg strategy of 2001).

European Commission’s Impact Assessment system

- Based on two key ideas, better regulation and sustainable development.



- Holistic approach, making use of a variety of tools, methodologies and data inputs.
- Balances the analysis of likely social, environmental and economic impacts (three pillars).



The IA system's Objectives

- 1. Improve the quality of Commission proposals**, in particular by
 - ◆ Facilitating a more systematic, coherent, analytical, open, and evidence-based approach to policy design;
 - ◆ Providing a thorough, balanced and comprehensive analysis of likely social, economic and environmental impacts.
- 2. Provide an effective aid to decision-making**, in particular by
 - ◆ Providing policy makers with relevant and comprehensive information on the rationale behind proposed interventions, and their likely impacts;
 - ◆ Enabling policy makers to assess trade-offs and compare different scenarios when deciding on a specific course of action.
- 3. Serve as a valuable communication tool**, in particular by
 - ◆ Fostering internal communication and ensuring early and effective co-ordination within the Commission;
 - ◆ Enhancing external communication by making the policy development process more open and transparent to external stakeholders.

Ultimately, the achievement of these key objectives should contribute to a better, simpler and more consistent regulatory environment that helps the EU to meet the objectives of the Lisbon and Sustainable Development Strategies.

The IA system and Sustainable Development



- IA Guidelines:
 - ...ensure that the objectives are consistent with the Lisbon and Sustainable Development Strategies...
 - ...considered impacts in the context of promoting sustainable development...
 - ...in assessing impacts make use of indicators developed to monitor the EU sustainable development strategy...
- IA quality control and coordination:
 - Lead DG's operational units and IA support functions, with input from relevant units in other DGs via the ISSGs and the ISC.
 - Secretariat-General (SG): 'guardian' of the IA Guidelines.
 - IA Board: provides guidance and plays a final quality control role.

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EVALUATION OVERVIEW

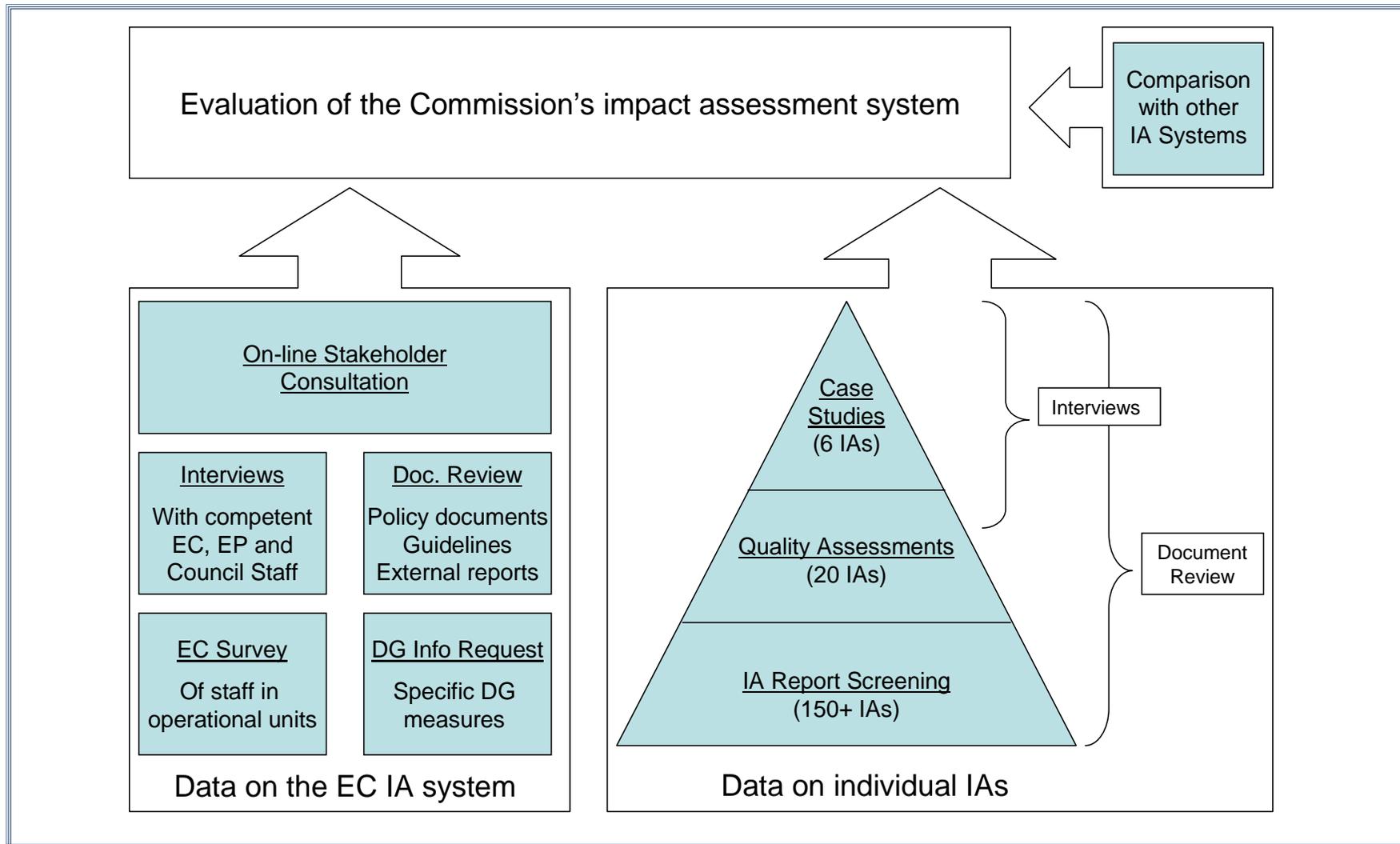
Evaluation Scope

- Assess the IA system with an emphasis on 2005 onwards.
- Examine all IAs, including legislative and non-legislative proposals, covering all policy fields.
- Provide conclusions to 31 evaluation questions:
 - Review the set-up,
 - *General Approach (applied appropriately, timing, etc.)*
 - *Support Structures (SG, training, etc.)*
 - *Central overview of the System Implementation (co-ordination, etc.)*
 - Its outputs (completed IAs),
 - *11 questions (compliance, duration, quality, etc.)*
 - And the impact of IAs on the policy process.
 - *5 questions (IA and legislative work, etc.)*



EVALUATION OVERVIEW

Methodology Overview



EVALUATION OVERVIEW

IA Quality Assessments

- 20 IAs selected by type of proposal, lead DG, and year adopted.
- In depth analysis of IA reports, roadmaps, proposals and 20 interviews with EC officials.

IA Case Studies

- 6 Case studies selected.

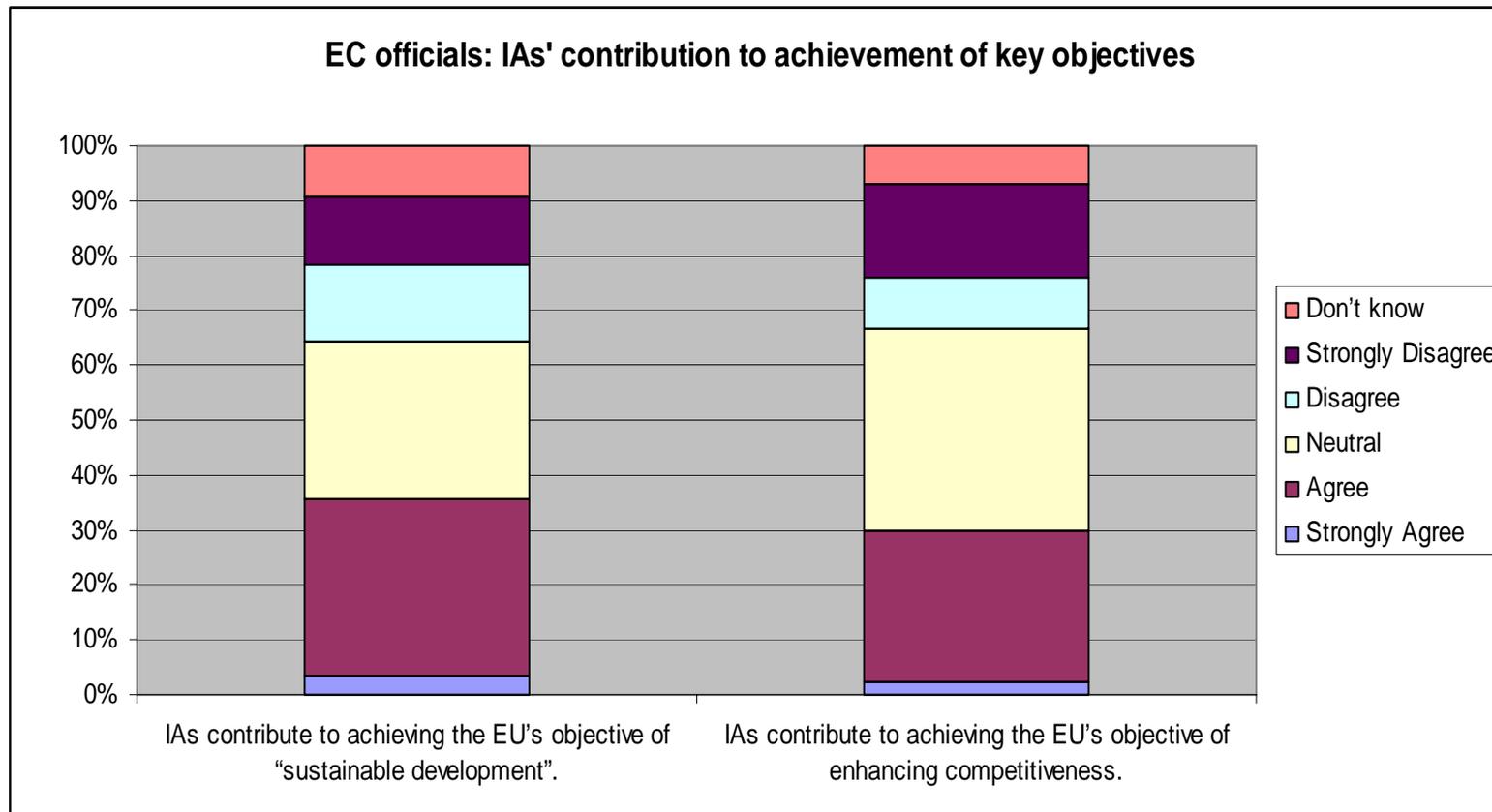
DG	IA	Year
AGRI	Review of the Sugar regime	2003
DEV	Communication on interconnecting Africa	2006
EAC	Decision establishing the programme "Citizens for Europe"	2005
EMPL	Review of the European Employment Strategy	2003
ENTR	Directive laying down rules on nominal quantities for pre-packed products	2004
	Regulation on motor vehicles emissions	2005
ENV	Directive establishing an infrastructure for spatial information in the Community (INSPIRE)	2004
	Environment & Health Action Plan	2004
	Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution	2005
FISH	Council Regulation establishing financial measures for the implementation of the CFP and in the area of the Law of the Sea	2005
INFSO	Communication on "i2010 - a European Information Society for growth and employment"	2005
JLS	Framework Decision on procedural rights in criminal proceedings	2004
	Regulation on the applicable law and jurisdiction in divorce matters	2006
	General Programme Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows	2005
MARKT	Directive on Postal Services	2006
	Action plan for the implementation of the legal framework for electronic public procurement	2004
SANCO	Regulation on plant protection products	2006
TAXUD	Communication on the Community programmes Customs 2013 and Fiscalis 2013	2005
TREN	Common rules and standards for ship inspection and survey organisations	2005
	Electricity from renewable sources	2005

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SELECTED FINDINGS

Achievement of key objectives

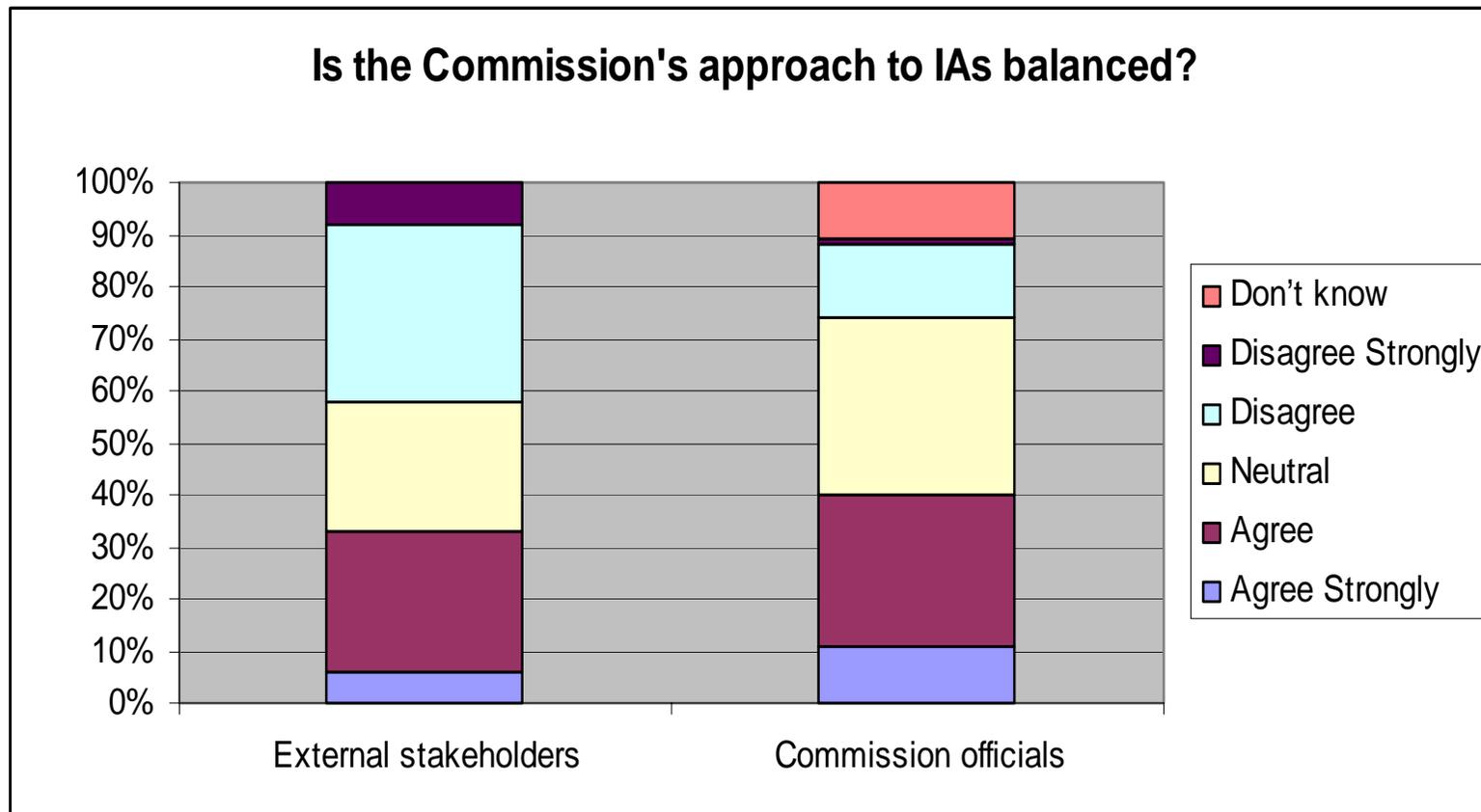
- Extent to which the IA system contributes to achieving the objectives of sustainable development and enhanced competitiveness.



SELECTED FINDINGS

Overall balance of pillars

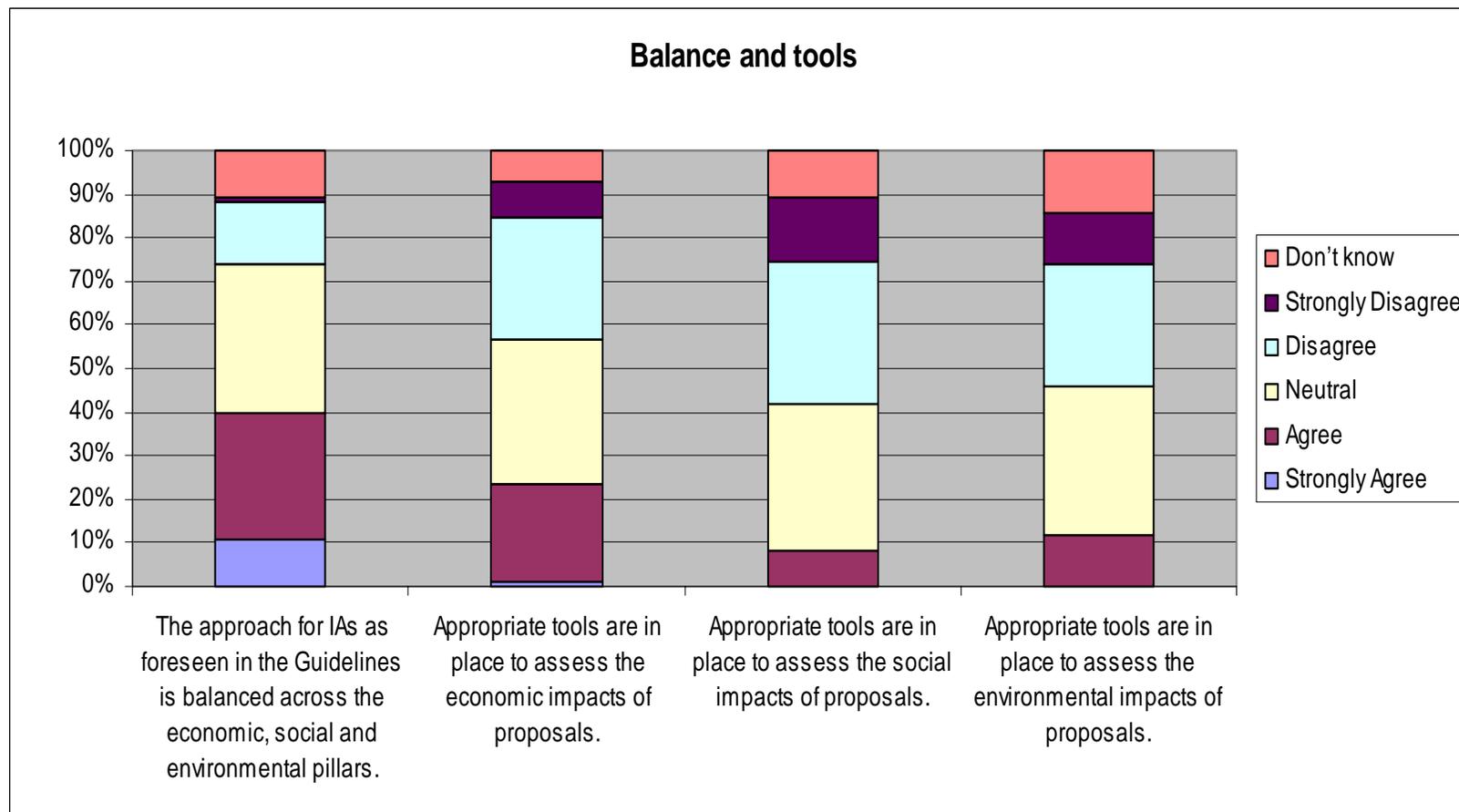
- Extent to which the IA system provides a thorough, balanced and comprehensive analysis of likely social, economic and environmental impacts.



SELECTED FINDINGS

Tools for assessing environmental impacts

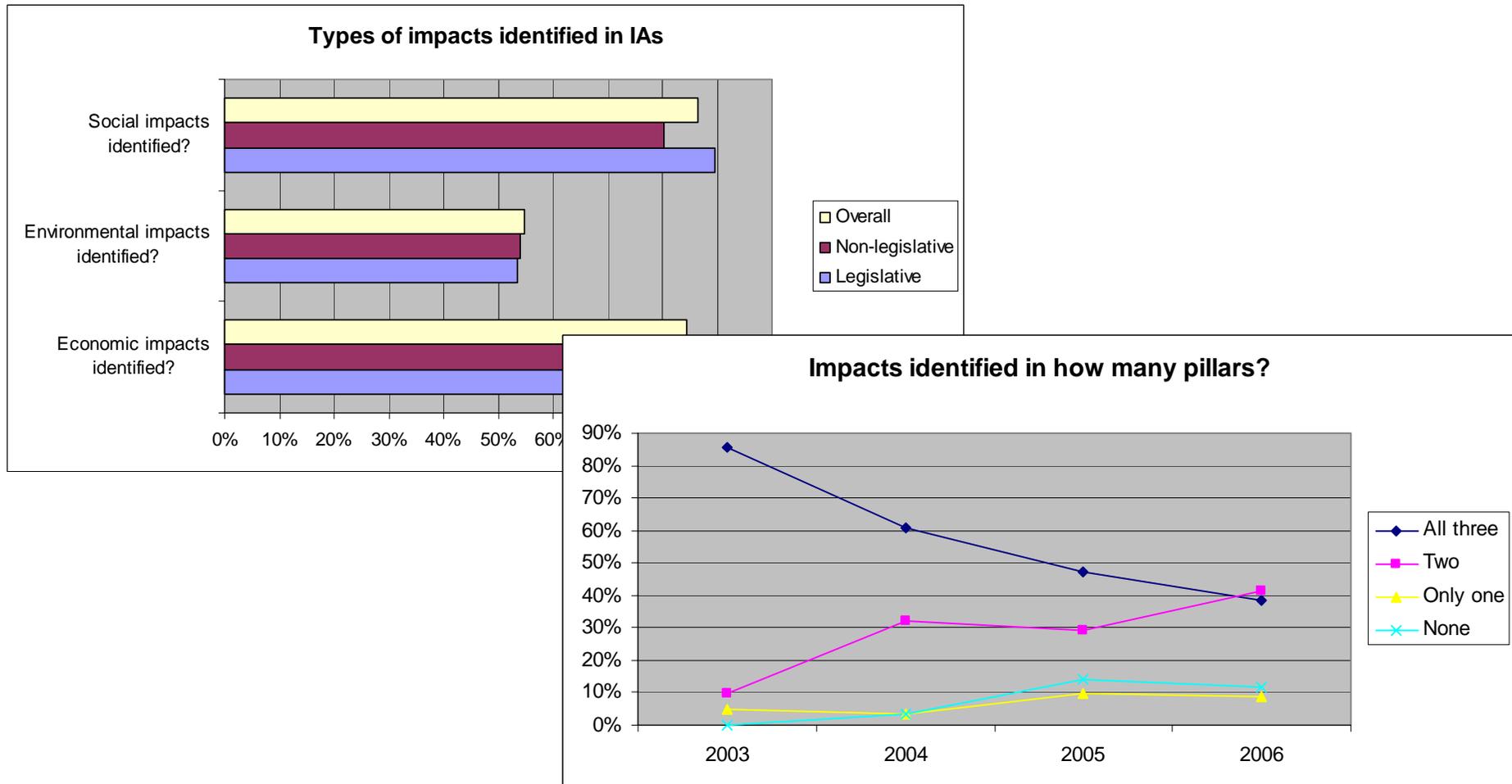
- Appropriateness of tools to assess impacts of proposals.



SELECTED FINDINGS

Impacts by pillars

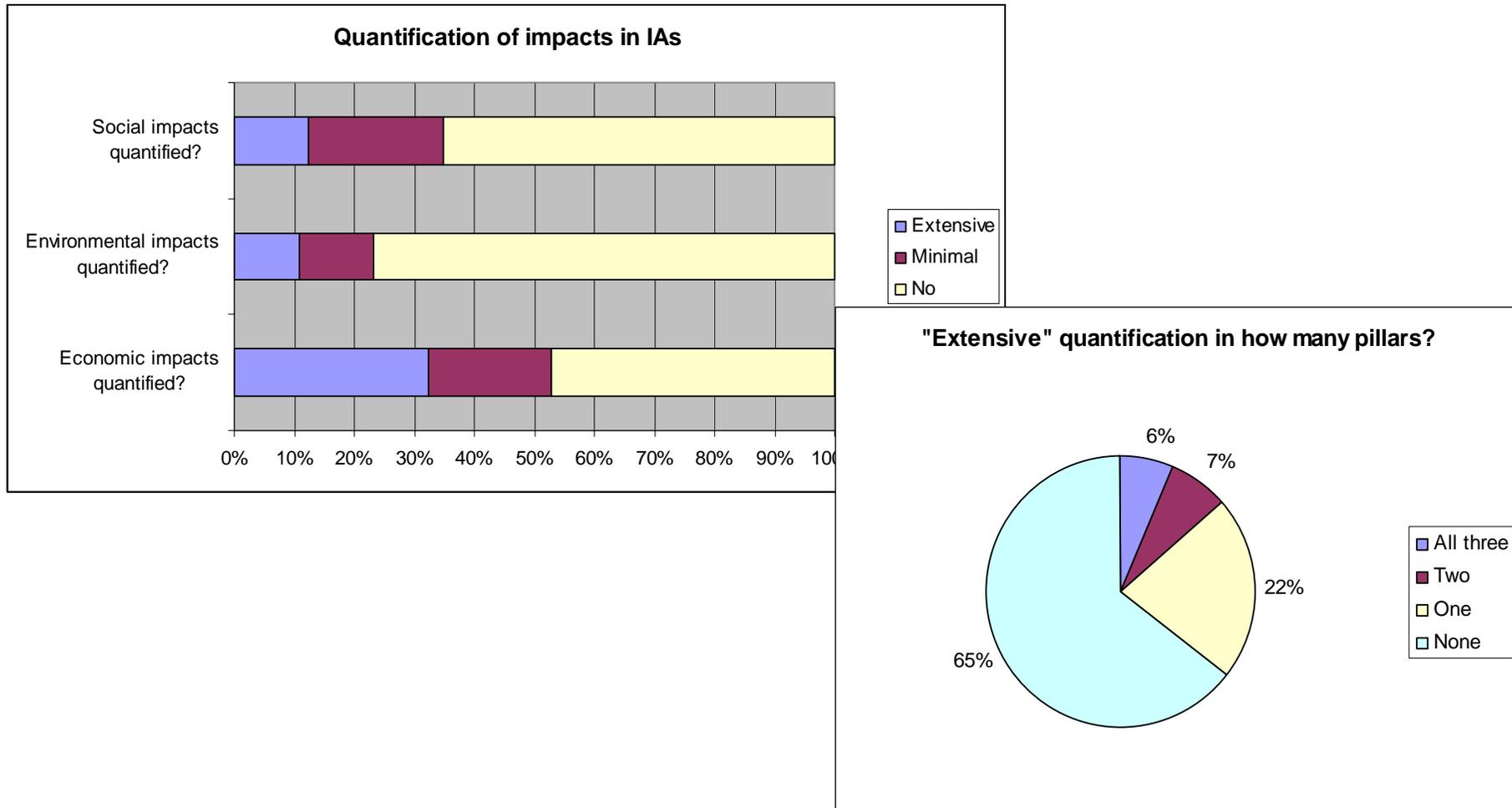
- Identification and examination of impacts by pillars.



SELECTED FINDINGS

Quantification of impacts

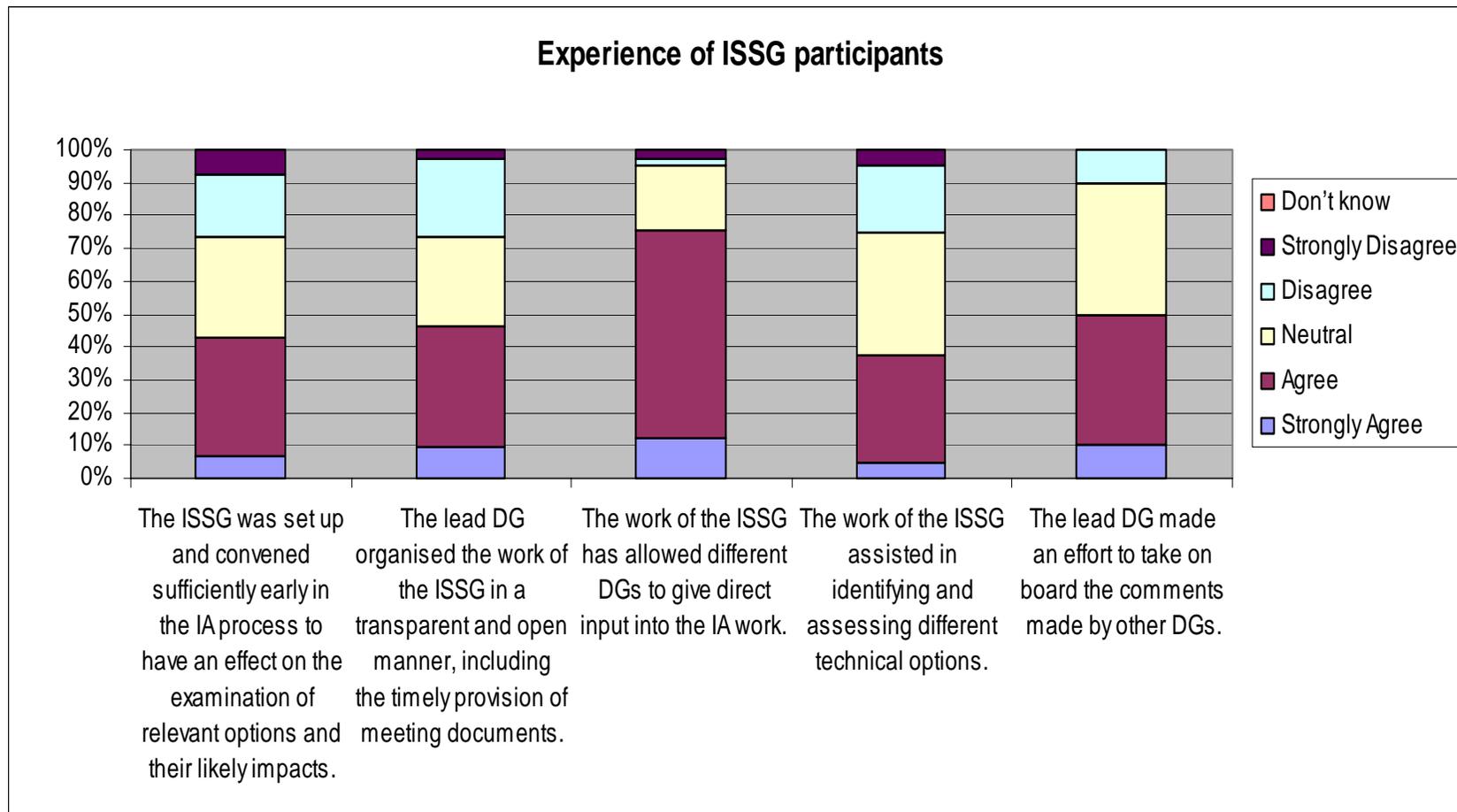
- Quantification of impacts by pillars.



SELECTED FINDINGS

Operation of ISSGs

- Usefulness of ISSGs from the perspective of participants.



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OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Achievement of Objectives

- Under ideal conditions, IAs should achieve all three objectives.
- The Commission has made great progress in institutionalising the IA system.
- But progress is not evenly distributed, the Commission's IA system has come closer to achieving some objectives than others.

Sustainable Development

- Sustainable development is a key element of the IA system.
- Putting a balanced IA approach into practice is difficult due to imbalances in the methodologies and data that are available.
- This often represents a problem in all three pillars, it is a particular difficulty in the area of social and, to a lesser extent, environmental impacts.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Difficulty I - Scope of Application and Proportionate Analysis

- Applied to a large number of diverse initiatives.
- Blanket coverage of all Legislative Work Programme (CLWP) items raises difficulties:
 - Important proposals may not be included in the CLWP.
 - Significant number of items on the CLWP are not well suited to an IA.
- The principle of 'proportionate analysis' provides an element of flexibility and pragmatism.
- Wide range of initiative are covered, but no clear guidance as to which elements are required of different IAs and how to apply proportionate analysis.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Difficulty II - Timing and Approach

- Many IAs are perceived as not fully objective, in the sense that they are focused primarily on justifying a pre-determined policy choice.
- Two main factors have limited the ability of IAs to take a disinterested approach:
 - Set mandates from Commission hierarchy and / or from the other EU Institutions.
 - Late start of IA work.
- Improve coordination/support and quality control.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Difficulty III - Quality Control Mechanisms

- IAs don't always meet the desired and required quality standards in terms of their content, presentation and procedural issues.
- While the Commission has made great strides towards developing its IA capacity, not all DGs have established dedicated IA support functions capable of providing effective initial as well as ongoing support and quality control.
 - Continue to improve IA support function.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Difficulty IV - Support and Guidance

- Lack of appropriate methodologies to assess certain types of impacts, particularly social impacts.
 - Continue to improve methodologies and coordination efforts.
- Address problems with availability of data.

QUESTIONS

