



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

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Antitrust: Commission consults on the functioning and future of the Insurance Block Exemption Regulation

The European Commission has issued a questionnaire to seek the views of stakeholders on the functioning and the future of the [Insurance Block Exemption Regulation](#) (IBER), which exempts certain agreements between companies in the insurance sector from EU antitrust rules. Submissions can be made until 4 November 2014. The purpose of the questionnaire is to consult stakeholders on the application and future of the IBER, which is due to expire in March 2017. Based on the contributions received the Commission will submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council by the end of March 2016.

The Commission is consulting on how the IBER is being used and on stakeholders' experience in applying it. The Commission is also interested to hear about market developments and views on whether the regulation should be renewed, partially renewed or not renewed at all. The opinions and market information gathered during the public consultation will help the Commission to carry out an impact assessment of the policy options available and to decide whether a block exemption in the insurance sector is still necessary.

The consultation document can be found here:

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/consultations/2014_iber_review/index_en.html

The Insurance Block Exemption Regulation (IBER)

A block exemption regulation exempts certain practices from the general prohibition on anti-competitive practices enshrined in the Treaty, provided they comply with the conditions set out in the regulation.

The IBER allows insurers and reinsurers to benefit from an exemption to the prohibition of anti-competitive arrangements laid down in Article 101(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The exemption covers two types of agreements between insurance or reinsurance companies:

- a) agreements with respect to joint compilations, joint tables and studies; and
- b) common coverage of certain types of risks (co-insurance or co-reinsurance pools).

A block exemption regulation is an exceptional legal instrument. The Commission has to determine whether the insurance sector differs sufficiently from other sectors which do not benefit from a block exemption regulation so that such a sector-specific antitrust regime is justified. The IBER therefore needs to be reviewed at regular intervals. The IBER was last renewed in 2010 (see [IP/10/359](#)) and it expires in March 2017.

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