

Editorial

In a world of manufactured and natural risks, the use of scientific evidence and its communication to the public is often put to the test. This is particularly the case when authorities are under great pressure to deal with atypical situations, such as volcano eruptions, tsunamis, and earthquakes like the one that shook the medieval town of L'Aquila in central Italy's Abruzzo region. Under the skillful direction of *Kristian Lautta*, the second issue of the EJRR opens with a promising symposium devoted to the L'Aquila earthquake trial, which founded six scientists and one public official – the 'L'Aquila seven' – guilty of involuntary manslaughter, for their reassurances about safety on the eve of the tragic event. Frequently depicted as a 'trial against science', the four contributors to the special issue, offer a different yet more informed reading of the judgment and essentially hold the view that disasters are no longer exceptional phenomena whose inherent emergency nature exempt public authorities from any form of liability. Rather they prompt – similar to other ordinary events – a clear set of liabilities.

These four pieces provide not only a deeper and critical understanding of the case at a hand, but also contribute to the shaping of the emerging disciplines of disaster law and emergency risk regulation.

In addition to the symposium, the issue contains two original and thought-provoking articles. The first one, authored by *Ludivine Petetin*, offers a thorough analysis of the risk regulatory challenges posed by lab-grown meat, such as the € 300,000 stem-cell burger (infamously called 'Frankenburger'). Although cultured meat has the potential to generate life changing societal implications (such as reducing world hunger and cutting emissions), the author argues that the current EU legal frame – notably the Novel Foods Regulation – being insufficiently adapted to such groundbreaking technologies it needs to be strengthened. She also argues that any new regulation in the field should balance effective risk management with innovation.

The second piece by *Kévine Kindji* and *Michael Faure*, provides an assessment of the challenges posed to third countries, who try to transplant EU requirements into their domestic legal order. By taking the case of the Benin–EU shrimp trade relations as a case in point, the authors show that when legal transplants are adversely made, they can sometimes cause disastrous effects. It is further argued that despite the stringency of the EU requirements, their implementation might inadequately protect European consumers of shrimps.

As usual, our correspondents keep EJRR readers updated on the latest developments in different risk regulation sectors by covering various issues, such as the EU authorization process of the 'Herculex' GMO-maize, the 'regionalisation' measures in the aftermath of the African swine fever outbreak, as well as the regulatory chilling effect caused by litigations against Australia's tobacco plain packaging law.

Furthermore, the issue also hosts several annotations of topical judgments rendered by the Court of Justice of the EU – in particular the cases on the data retention directive and the biocides judgment – and the European Patent Office’s Technical Board of Appeal.

Two book reviews pertaining to recent publications in the field of applied behavioural sciences close the issue.

I wish you a pleasant summer break and happy reading.

Alberto Alemanno