

Editorial

The EJRR hosts in its first issue of 2015 a timely symposium devoted to one of the most relevant – yet one of the least studied – fixtures of European policymaking: policy evaluation. The EU's turn towards evidence-based policymaking has been accompanied by an attempt to instill an “evaluation culture” into both its institutional machinery and public civil servants. Yet, as highlighted by this Special Issue, the study of this emerging phenomenon has remained largely concealed by the gap existing between the *ex ante* evaluation literature and the *ex post* evaluation scholarship in the EU.

To bridge this gap, Professor *Stijn Smismans*, our guest editor, took the initiative to host at Cardiff University's School of Law and Politics a transdisciplinary workshop gathering leading public policy, legal and regulatory experts. The result is a well-timed and insightful reflection that is set to nurture the ongoing debate about what “Better Regulation” could and should mean for EU policymaking. Policy evaluation might indeed be key to transform into reality Commissioner Timmermans' promise of a “European Union that does better while doing less”. We expect by the publication of the next issue of the EJRR to know how he intends to address the regulatory challenges facing the EU legislative and regulatory state.

In addition to this collection of essays, this issue contains two original articles that deal with some of the most controversial risk regulatory challenges facing the EU risk world: the invocation of the precautionary principle in sectoral legislation, such as REACH, and the impact of Internet regulation on freedom of expression in the light of rapid technological development.

Christoph Klika, from Maastricht University, explores the role of the precautionary principle within the REACH regulation by focusing in particular on the decision-making process followed to compile the Candidate list of Substances of Very High Concern (SVHCs). He demonstrates how – contrary to conventional wisdom – precaution plays a limited role in this respect.

Nicola Lucchi, from Jönköping Business School, discusses the inherent risks associated to Internet regulation and the growing demand for controlling digital communication. By holding the view that any regulatory and policy measures affecting the Internet can possibly present human rights risks, the author examines the role of the Web's content governance in enabling individual's rights and freedoms.

Thanks to our correspondents EJRR readers are kept updated on the latest developments in different risk regulation sectors by covering various issues, such as *inter alia* Ukraine's newly adopted food safety legislation in the context of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, or the interplay between the global trends in agriculture and the role of risk communication in addressing public risk perceptions pertaining to hybrid seeds and genetically engineered crops.

Several risk regulation annotations of European judgments and Advocates General's opinions and a series of three book reviews complete the issue.

Last but not least, we are welcoming Professor *Cass Sunstein* from Harvard Law School to the Advisory Board of our journal. Professor Sunstein, who contributed to one of the first issues of our journal with an article titled "Humanizing Cost-Benefit Analysis", is not only one of the founding fathers of risk regulation as a discipline but is also its most inspiring figure.

With every good wish for a lively and fulfilling 2015,

Alberto Alemanno
Editor-in-Chief of the European Journal of Risk Regulation