

editorial

Quantification is the central theme of this issue of **risk®ulation**. Contemporary governance is increasingly undertaken with a calculator to hand. Debates about the extent and nature of quantification have featured prominently in the context of new public management reforms. Debates about quantification are often highly bifurcated. Some regard the drive for measurement and ‘hard’ quantitative information as critical for controlling, evaluating and achieving better performance. More critical observers point to the perversities of an over-reliance on quantification.

Such contrasting positions provide the starting point for **carr** research – quantification should, after all, not be regarded as inherently synonymous with economization, and we need more systematic comparative research as to how calls for quantification impact on the nature of public services and its oversight, as well as wider understandings about citizenship in a liberal democracy. Articles in this issue highlight some of the key debates surrounding quantification, for example, the way in which rankings and league tables are used to encourage ‘access to medicine’ (by Mehrpouya and Samiolo), differences in how practitioners actually implement new types of quantification standards (by Hall), the implications of quantification for public services (by Mennicken), challenges in assessing ‘value for money’ in regulation (by Lodge and Mennicken), and how new systems might lead to unwelcome side effects (by Hunter).

The centrality of our ‘Regulation in Crisis?’ agenda for contemporary debates has repeatedly come into view over the course of the past few months. As the recent refugee emergency has tragically illustrated, the European Union faces considerable challenges in managing transboundary crises of such a scale effectively and legitimately. These challenges are at the core of the research undertaken in the TransCrisis consortium. **carr** is leading this European Commission funded Horizon2020 project consortium. It involves eight institutions from seven EU member states. The project focuses on transboundary crisis management capacities in the European Union. As the article by Sitter and Lodge on ‘backsliding’ suggests, the EU’s capacity to normatively constrain member states might have become increasingly limited. How transboundary crises of different forms and types can be addressed in times of political pressure for (re-)nationalised responses will shape the **carr** and TransCrisis agenda over the coming years. Readers can follow the ongoing activities of the consortium on its dedicated website www.transcrisis.eu.

In the context of our ESRC ‘Regulation in Crisis?’ seminar series, our international roundtable on the regulation of standards in public life offered fascinating insights into contrasting positions between those highlighting national difference and those emphasising processes of global homogenization and similarity. Some (mostly UK-based) observers suggested that the UK regime of governing government ethics was unlikely to move towards a US system that has often been criticized as highly dysfunctional and self-defeating (as illustrated in Cal Mackenzie’s book title *Innocent until Nominated*). In contrast, others suggested that the UK system was a laggard, which soon would be catching up with the US. The article on the regulatory implications of ‘government by contract’ by **carr** visiting fellow Charles Borden and colleagues continues this conversation. Much of regulation is said to emerge in the context of scandal and crisis. This applies to the area of government ethics as much as to other sectors. As the contribution by Angeletti suggests, such scandals are associated with particular key attributes.

This is the 30th issue of **risk®ulation**. Such anniversaries, especially the 30th, are usually viewed with a sense of pending mid-life crisis. The fields of risk and regulation may have reached a certain level of maturity, but they continue to raise important questions for research and practice. **carr** is committed to contributing to and participating in these debates. We hope that you will enjoy this issue and are looking forward to your comments and suggestions.

Martin Lodge & Andrea Mennicken