

Editorial

In the wake of its ambitious promise to be 'big on big things and small on small things', the European Commission recently unveiled a strategy for streamlining the policymaking process. By promising to change 'what the Union does and how it does it', the Commission's *Better Regulation Package* aims to improve the efficiency and accountability of the legislative process by means of greater openness, inclusiveness and substantiated expertise. The main changes include an online consultation platform to track new initiatives and evaluate existing policies, a strengthened Regulatory Fitness and Performance Programme to better assess the most serious sources of legislative inefficiency, a beefed up Impact Assessment Board – renamed Regulatory Scrutiny Board – to monitor impact assessments, as well as a proposal for a new interinstitutional agreement on Better Regulation.

It is against this backdrop that the EJRR took the initiative to host a special issue focusing on the impact of the Better Regulation Package on EU policymaking. To this purpose, together with the help of *Lorenzo Allio*, we collected a colourful roster of insightful perspectives and position papers authored by academics, think-tanks, interest groups and advocates, commenting upon and offering a reasoned view on the various approaches and perspectives to better regulation. The result of this topical reflection will hopefully nurture the ongoing debate about what better regulation could and should mean for EU policymaking, notably in the framework of the on-going negotiations for a new interinstitutional agreement.

In addition to this collection, this issue contains a symposium that deals with one of the most risk-significant cases brought before the WTO Dispute Settlement System: the *EC-Seal Products* dispute. It concerned an EU-wide ban on seal and seal-containing products motivated by animal welfare concerns. Under the skilful guidance and editorship of *Alexia Herwig* (Antwerpen University) and with the participation of a set of distinguished authors, this symposium analyses how and to what extent the notion of risk can be accommodated and reconciled with the protection of public morals.

As usual, our correspondents keep us abreast of the latest developments in different risk regulation policies by covering issues such as consumer behaviour towards food waste, the German health claims case law on baby food, and the regulation of hazardous substances within the EU Water Framework Directive.

Finally, several annotations on important EU and national risk-relevant judgments – inter alia the Dutch *Urgenda* ruling, which held that the Netherlands have a legal obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions – as well as a trio of book reviews close the issue.

We wish you a pleasant and informative reading!

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