



Vulnerability in Regulation

21 September 2023, 14:30-18:00

London School of Economics and Political Science, MAR 1.09

Vulnerability has become a central theme in the study and practice of regulation. This Workshop brings into conversation different research and practitioner experiences with vulnerability. We explore different fields where regulation is confronted with vulnerability. Further, we compare different theoretical conceptualizations of vulnerability and their implications for regulatory practice and policy making. We discuss what it means to develop a relational understanding of vulnerability and explore the potential tension between regulatory approaches that seek to counteract vulnerability versus approaches that embrace vulnerability as both a limitation as well as a resource. So far, most attention has been paid to regulation as an activity aimed at reducing vulnerability, whereas it could also be fruitful to view vulnerability as an essential aspect or resource that allows for agility, mindfulness, and learning.¹

14:15 Coffee and registration (MAR 1.09, Marshall Building, LSE)

14:30 – 14:45 Opening Remarks (Finia Kuhlmann, HEC Paris, Andrea Mennicken, CARR, LSE)

14:45 – 16:00 Vulnerability and Individual Decision-Making

This panel explores different understandings of, and experiences with, regulation aimed at protecting individuals presumed to be vulnerable. What are key challenges in defining and addressing vulnerable citizens particularly in the contexts of the delivery of social care and other public services? How can policies be made in co-production with vulnerable service users? What conceptualisations of vulnerability underpin regulation, services, and policies? How can we think about the relations between protection and control of ‘the vulnerable’?

Panellists: Kate Brown (Senior Lecturer in Social Policy and Criminology, University of York), Finia Kuhlmann (Assistant Professor in Accounting and Management Control, HEC Paris), Carole Murphy (Associate Professor, St. Mary’s University and Director of the Bakhita Centre), Rachel Witkin (Director of Counter-Trafficking and Publications, Helen Bamber Foundation)

16:00 – 17:15 Vulnerability, Systemic Stability, and the Administrative State

How have regulatory organizations and the broader administrative state sought to define and address questions of vulnerability? What instruments for the detection and mitigation of vulnerability have been employed, and with what consequences and experiences? What about the vulnerability of regulation and regulators themselves?

Panellists: Seb Eyre (Economic Regulation Manager, Thames Water), Jacint Jordana (Professor of Political Science and Administration, University Pompeu Fabra, UBEI), Christel Koop (Reader in Political Economy, King’s College London), Nick Sitter (Professor of Public Policy, Central European University)

17:15 – 18:00 Vulnerability and Resilience: Concluding Discussion

¹ The Symposium is organised in the context of CARR’s ReConnect project funded by the NORFACE network, which investigates how calls for more ‘responsive’ administrative state institutions have developed – both among citizens and politicians – and how the administrative state has sought to become more responsive, especially when simultaneously faced with expectations of neutrality and impartiality. For more information see <https://www.lse.ac.uk/accounting/carr/research/Reconnect>.