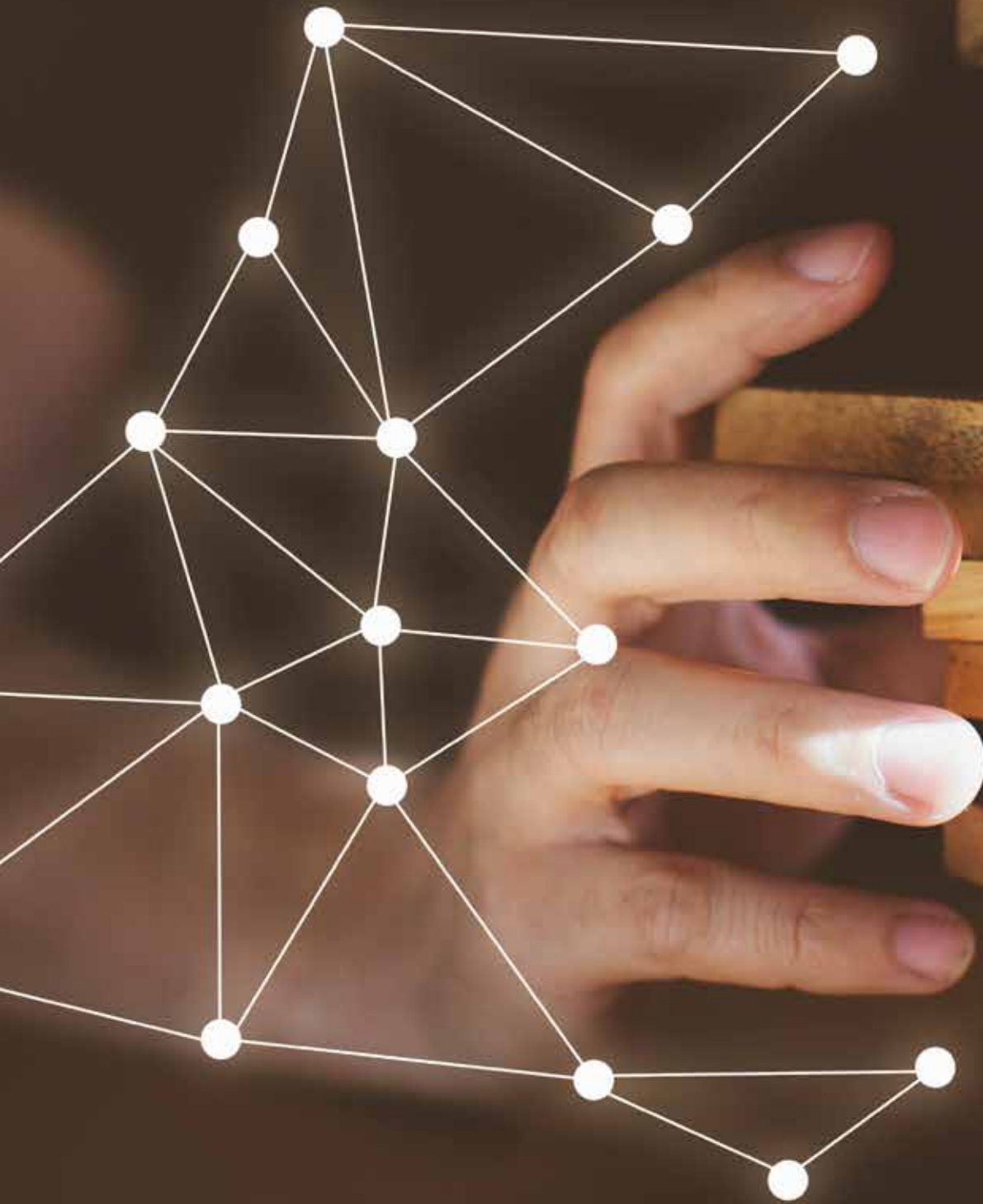


A ROADMAP FOR  
EUROPE'S FIRST  
GLOBAL  
COLLABORATION  
ON RISK

Improving our shared understanding  
and management of risk

CAPUR



"WE CAN DO BETTER IN THE 21ST CENTURY AT MAKING SENSE OF CHANCE, RISK, LUCK, UNCERTAINTY AND PROBABILITY.

MATHEMATICS ALONE WILL NEVER TELL SOCIETY OR INDIVIDUALS WHAT TO DO. BUT BY HELPING ALL CITIZENS TO UNDERSTAND THE NUMBERS, UNDERSTAND HOW WE CAN RIGHT-SIZE OUR PERCEPTIONS AND FRAME EACH RISK IN A LIFE-TIME CONTEXT, WE COULD MAKE FOR A BETTER SOCIETY. WE THINK THAT NEW SCIENCE COUPLED WITH MORE AWARENESS OF HUMAN ASPIRATIONS CAN HELP US ALL TO LOOK CRITICALLY AT NEW AND OLD RISK STORIES WITH GREATER INSIGHT."

**Prof. David Ball,**  
*Professor of Risk Management, Faculty of Science and Technology, Middlesex University.*

# CAPUR

## IN BRIEF

CAPUR is driven by leading international risk experts from a variety of backgrounds (statistics, psychology, natural and social science, humanities) to investigate by means of concrete case studies how decision-making under uncertainty can be improved, seeking to identify the underlying factors which determine success or failure, and which should hence be either emulated or avoided. CAPUR's focus is on hazards and risks related to human behaviour and error.

CAPUR is a project with a fixed time-span, whose outputs seek to inform and guide policymakers creating a new narrative on how to deal with risk in open societies. Whilst CAPUR itself is not an advocacy initiative its planned scientific output can be used by anybody, including stakeholders in their discussions with the new generation of EU decisionmakers following the Institutional change-over from May 2019 onwards. Furthermore, as CAPUR's scope is based on global conversations, its outputs can inform conversations in other world regions as well.





From left to right: Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Jean-Claude Juncker and Michelangelo Baracchi Bonvicini.

**Atomium-European Institute for Science, Media and Democracy (EISMD)**, convenes leading European universities, media, businesses, governments and policymakers to increase the exchange of information and interdisciplinary collaboration, to develop innovative collaborative initiatives and to encourage frontier thinking about science, media and democracy.

**Atomium-EISMD** was launched publicly by the former President of France Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Michelangelo Baracchi Bonvicini and by the leaders of the institutions engaged during the first conference on the 27 November 2009 at the European Parliament in Brussels.

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# M I S S I O N

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The new collaboration will encourage ways risk can be intelligently understood and managed, and the harms with which it is associated can be reduced. It seeks to foster greater public risk literacy, from its stronger forms of developing better statistical understanding to more basic abilities to recognize characteristics of both bad and good risk communication and research.

Whilst there are new initiatives aiming to develop research, we are not aware of a broader forum to consider these together, and in a practical and open fashion. We aim to gather experts from different spheres and initiatives to pool knowledge and indicate future directions.





# GOALS

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- Pool knowledge about new research and initiatives, particularly those proving successful in creating better risk literacy and understanding and reducing harms.
- Create new tools and techniques for improved and accessible risk management.
- Develop fresh and practically usable guidance for policymakers, regulators and opinion- leaders on the presentation of facts and how to communicate their assessment of risk and their risk management decisions.
- Create a safe space. Risk discussion has become politicised and associated only with different interests and experiences, making it difficult to discuss in a dispassionate and mutually trustful way. So, an ancillary goal of the project is to create a safe space in which issues and ideas can be discussed in their own terms, in a trustworthy manner to pursue the goal of a better risk world for all.



GLOBAL

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LEADERSHIP



While the hosts of the collaboration are Europe-based, we aspire to create a global conversation, with authoritative contributions from other continents.

While the scope of the initiative will cover a broad range of risks, its initial focus will be on those related to behaviour. This discussion will include, among other topics, how risks are defined, thresholds for socially or individually 'acceptable' or 'tolerable' risk; individual, social and cultural factors that shape risk perception; and how such knowledge can become trustworthy.

The discussion will encourage improved personalized risk understanding and management, both for individuals and societies.

A COLLABORATIVE

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EFFORT

We want to create a safe space where all interested parties feel that they can contribute their thoughts and trust that the outcome has integrity and will add value for society.

The desired governance will therefore be at arm's length from potential funders or interested parties. This is assured by maintaining an established and independent convener, Atomium – European Institute for Science, Media and Democracy (Atomium).

Atomium convenes leading universities, media, businesses, governments and policymakers to increase the exchange of knowledge and collaboration between disciplines and between stakeholders.

The Institute aims to develop innovative collaborative initiatives and to encourage frontier thinking about science, media and democracy.

Atomium envisages this project having ideally a three-year cycle, an optimal time-span to both maintain momentum and yet create real change in available knowledge and policy.





# BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Research on how risk shapes our experience of the world and the decisions we make has come a long way since it began in earnest some half a century ago, becoming more sophisticated and contextual to consider media, culture, social influences and even emotion. An impressive body of work has also now begun to offer practical tools and perspectives. Risk perception is widely acknowledged as an essential policy input. Behavioral insights have been translated into harm-reducing experiments. Some media now use ‘natural frequencies’ to explain what the raising of risk factors actually means for the individual and there is progress in better mapping and communicating risk visually, for example.

Risk is an idea about what might happen in the future – good or bad – yet – particularly in policy and initiatives around contentious issues – risk all too often figures simply as a ‘bad’ to be eliminated, often through startling – but partial – messages. There is confusion and obfuscation between directing people towards changing particular behaviors, and tools that equip people to make better decisions for themselves. Other problems persist such as the continued confusion between risk and hazard in policy-making, failure to take account of both the absolute and relative dimensions of risk and to set risks against benefits, trade-offs and unintended consequences.



# CHALLENGES

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## 4 FUNDAMENTAL WORKING HYPOTHESES FOR DISCUSSION

1. Risk literacy can be increased (natural frequencies, risk ladders);
2. Contextual noise can be reduced (culture, social norms at variance with societal goals);
3. Choice architecture can be improved (peer-to-peer prompts, accessibility of positive choices);
4. Risk is a high-stakes issue for more than “just” risk – trust deserts, risk illiteracy and unreflected risk avoidance drive avoidable harms, but also make for a society bereft of resilience, self-efficacy and innovative drive.

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## 3 STARTER QUESTIONS

1. What other hypotheses should we be factoring in?
2. For each of these areas, what is being done and is it working?
3. To take knowledge forward in each of these fields, what disciplines and insights should we add to the ‘usual suspects’?

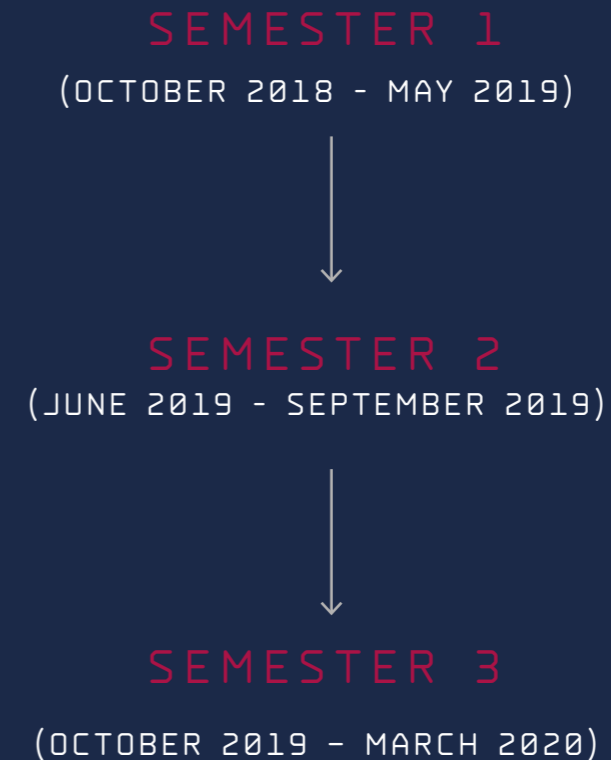
The collaboration will be convened in the form of a series of roundtables, beginning with a pilot on lifestyles risks.

# ROADMAP

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# T O 2 0 2 0

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1<sup>ST</sup> SEMESTER ACTIVITIES

## PHASE 1 "PROOF OF CONCEPT"

Atomium's aim is to advance step by step with the intermittent goal to hold a public pilot roundtable in March 2019.

At the roundtable, latest research will be presented for first discussion in a closed environment with selected stakeholders to obtain initial feedback on the concept.

## ACTIONS

- 11 October 2018: Discussion of scoping paper in science committee kick off meeting;
- Early April 2019: Initial draft paper by CAPUR's risk experts finalised;
- May 2019: Low-key pilot roundtable (by invitation only) in a suitable venue in Brussels with presentations on latest research in the field, followed by a moderated discussion.

1<sup>ST</sup> SEMESTER DELIVERABLES

Expert presentations sharing latest research on the key areas identified

- ▶ A draft paper ready for discussion with key stakeholders
- ▶ A report from the Pilot roundtable for the information of participants

2<sup>ND</sup> SEMESTER ACTIVITIES

## PHASE 2 "VALIDATION AND ISSUE DEEP DIVE"

Following the pilot roundtable and the input obtained, the Science Committee will update the paper and work with the Advisory Board to investigate with greater scrutiny specific issues and questions which merit further discussion and validation.

## ACTIONS

- Inclusion of outcomes of the pilot roundtable in a revised version of the science committee paper;
- Deep-dive into specific areas of interest; validation in closed workshops as appropriate.

2<sup>ND</sup> SEMESTER DELIVERABLES

- ▶ Final paper published
- ▶ Additional thought pieces on specific questions and problems identified

3<sup>RD</sup> SEMESTER ACTIVITIES

## PHASE 3 “INFORMING GLOBAL CONVERSATIONS, STARTING IN EUROPE”:

In time for the new EU legislative cycle, the results of the work of the science committee will be shared and discussed with stakeholders at a large event in Brussels to inform incoming policymakers. This will be the starting point for discussions on the scientific output at relevant events around the globe.

### ACTIONS

— “Summit-style” event in Brussels to present the final paper to a wider audience;

— Presentations at relevant conferences and meetings in other world regions.

3<sup>RD</sup> SEMESTER DELIVERABLES

- ▶ High-level presentation and discussion with senior decision-makers and stakeholders at EU level, including tailored communication material and media briefings
- ▶ A CAPUR contribution to relevant discussions in all global settings and all continents, as requested.

## CAPUR

## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

- **David Ball**, Middlesex University, Convenor
- **Ed Humpherson**, UK Statistics Authority
- **Michelle McDowell**, Harding Center, Berlin
- **Reuben Ng**, Lloyd's Register Foundation Institute for the Public Understanding of Risk, Singapore
- **Alfrd Uhl**, Austrian Public Health Institut, Vienna
- **Alberto Alemanno**, HEC, Paris
- **Claudio Radaelli**, UCL, London
- **Ortwin Renn**, IASS, Potsdam
- **Paul Slovic**, University of Oregon
- **David Spiegelhalter**, Winton Centre, Cambridge
- **John Watt**, Middlesex University
- **Jonathan Wiener**, Duke, North Carolina
- **David Seedhouse**, Aston University, Birmingham



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