

# Introducing TransCrisis

**Arjen Boin** and **Martin Lodge** introduce the new international research programme on transboundary crisis management capacity in the European Union

## Why study transboundary crisis management capacity?

The global financial crisis put the European Union through one of the deepest crises in its existence. The EU-response drew sharp criticism in many member states. It undermined support for the euro, eroded solidarity within the Union, and, perhaps most importantly, cast a negative spell on further integration efforts. It provided the basis for broad Euro-sceptic mobilization in the 2014 European Parliament election. While the need for co-operation, if not further integration in the face of future threats, is higher than ever, the response to the financial crisis has made clear just how big that challenge is.

The financial crisis and its aftermath exposed acute and salient shortcomings in the EU's joint capacities to address transboundary threats. National and transnational regulatory regimes failed to respond to warning signals, political institutions appeared ill-prepared to act within the constraints of multi-level and volatile environments, and political leaders in EU institutions and member states found it hard to communicate effectively with the public at large. Co-ordinating national responses proved difficult; developing a coherent EU-level response all but impossible.

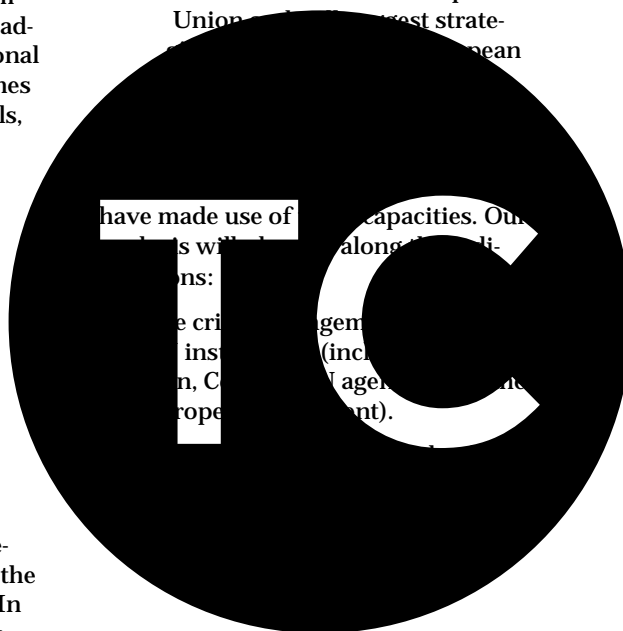
The underwhelming response to the financial crisis fuelled disagreement among member states about the degree and type of 'more' Europe. In response to its perceived underperformance, the EU has initiated many changes. The emerging post-crisis institutions (rule-based approaches to public finances, such as budgetary surveillance, or approaches to the banking union) reveal a growth of executive power (especially the European Council and the European Central Bank (ECB)). Yet, these reforms have not helped the EU to re-gain citizens' trust in its practices, institutions and leaders. The

irony is that the EU's declining legitimacy is at least partially related to the perceived failures to administer growing powers (often granted in the wake

and deep uncertainty. A transboundary crisis plays out across political and administrative levels of a system, threatening the functioning of geographically dispersed critical systems.

## The context of EU transboundary crisis management

The TransCrisis project offers a unique framework for assessing crisis management capacities and the various multi-level constellations in which they can be configured. It will offer a way to assess crisis leadership in the Union and to test the most strategic and effective ways to manage European



3. The interaction across levels: between the EU level and efforts at the national level.

More specifically, the TransCrisis

