

Giving behavioural insights a nudge

Filippo Cavassini, Martin Lodge and Faisal Naru reflect on international experience with behavioural insights in policy

To say that 'behavioural insights' are the flavour of the day in the world of regulation and policy is an unfair understatement. The *Nudge* book by Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein (2008) has enjoyed widespread currency. In the UK and elsewhere, regulators and policymakers are required to justify their decisions by referring to behavioural insights; units within and outside government are promoting behavioural insights and international conferences offer opportunities to exchange findings and to network. The underlying ideas supporting behavioural insights are far from new; they are about considering the biases of human behaviour when developing policy. It is about evidence-based policymaking – with real evidence. However, beyond the reporting of policy initiatives and the development of policy recommendations, we know less about the actual utilization and diffusion of behavioural insights in government.

What, then, is the use of behavioural insights among regulators and other government actors? Where and when are these interventions deployed? Who is leading and spearheading the use of behavioural insights? What can we learn from these applied examples? These questions were at the heart of joint work between the OECD and Carr, also including ideas42 and the Euro-10.

