



Nudging in der Verbraucherpolitik: Ansätze verhaltensbasierter Regulierung

A book review by SEBASTIAN MÜNZ

Authors: Dr. Lucia A. Reisch and Julia Sandrini

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What is nudging? It is to „influence people into making favourable decisions without having to coerce them” (Jones, Pykett and Whitehead 2013 p. 17). For example hotels that endorse that a certain percentage of guests (75%) reuse their towels, is nudging the current guests into reusing their towels too (Reisch and Sandrini 2015 p. 108). As implied by the title, the authors provide an overview on nudging used in consumer policy making. The book starts with the general classification of nudges and provides a description of the 10 most effective nudges. Since the first chapters are heavily focused on the work of Cass Sunstein, the nudges presented there have a tendency towards political use. Following this classification, the authors explain about the frameworks developed by the Behavioral Insights Team (BIT) of the British government. The first one is the EAST-Framework (Easy, Attractive, Social, Timely) in which the authors provide examples in what to do under each of the four aspects. The second framework is the MIND-SPACE checklist. The Authors provide the explanation of the acronym along with more examples on how to use it in practice.

Returning to the basic concept of nudges afterwards, the authors provide a general differentiation in type one and type two nudges. Type one means nudges focused on automated and non-reflected behavior while type two nudges act towards conscious and reflected behavior. This classification is enhanced by adding the category of transparent or non-transparent nudges. The authors provide some examples for this, but un-

fortunately not all the examples provided correspond to the tables and figures shown in the same chapter and are confusing to the reader. For example, the authors state in table 3 that green footprints that lead to trashcans in a city are type two nudges (conscious). In figure 1 which is just on the next page, the green footprints are listed as type one nudges (unconscious). There seem to be several mix-ups concerning the data in written text and the different tables and figures.

In the next part the authors give examples of institutions using behavioral based regulation. To name a few these are the governments of USA, Canada, Australia, Singapore and the EU. International organisations working with nudges are the OECD, the World Bank and the World Economic Forum. In this chapter the authors provide a large overview on nudging programs and the use of methods like the BIT Frameworks.

In the last chapters three main fields for nudges in consumer policy making are explained and made easily understandable by providing many examples. Those are finances, explaining among others the “KiwiSaver” program in New Zealand, which is a public retirement fund system that is automatically applied when entering working life, but offers several options to the users. Market and legal aspects, laying focus on the use of default settings to make customers pick a certain presented option. Lastly coming down to energy and resources, for example the aforementioned green footsteps that lead to trash cans and therefore reduce littering in urban areas. Those last chapters offers a vast



impression on how manifold the use of nudges can be and already is. Especially when concerned with the application for nudges in new fields these already existing and evaluated programs offer a lot of data and help on planning new actions.

In total, the book offers a great overview on nudges in behavioral based regulation and is both an interesting read for the laymen and professionally concerned readers. The last chapters provide easy access to a lot of nudging programs and get into more detail about what is possible with nudging.

Information on the author:

Sebastian Münz studied nutrition sciences at the University of Applied Sciences Fulda and obtained his master degree in International Food Business and Consumer Studies at the University of Kassel and the University of Applied Sciences Fulda. He is currently working as a quality manager at the University of Kassel and teaches food quality management in an international master program.

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