Twitter Thread by Dmitry Grozoubinski



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1/ Regulations are ultimately about managing risk, whether that risk is fraud, unsafe practices or someone building an ugly building.

The more (actually or performatively) worried you are about the specific risk, the more checks, approvals, rules and guidelines you put in place.

2/ Governments on both the left and right actually have similarly low appetites for risk, they just focus primarily on different risk categories and operate from an assumption that different groups are bastards that must be watched.

3/ Left wing governments have a tendency to focus on risks arising from business activities and capital.

Their regulations tend to assume that management are bastards, and must be monitored and constrained lest they exploit people or generate negative externalities for profit.

4/ Right wing governments have a tendency to focus on benefits fraud risks.

Their regulations tend to assume folks are out to scam any benefits scheme, and must be monitored and constrained lest they take advantage of the tax-payer's generosity.

5/ Both left wing and right wing governments also use regulations to target social behaviors they deem undesirable.

The specific behaviors targeted tend to be different (criminalizing hate speech vs criminalizing drug use, for example), but it's still all regulation.

6/ Side note:

Because cutting regulations on something you don't think should be controlled is harder administratively and politically than new rules on an area you think is too lax, the democratic back and forth tends to lead to ever increasing aggregate levels of regulation.

7/ That's why when governments try to paint themselves as "red-tape cutting" what they almost always mean is:

"We want to (largely performatively) trim some regulation in the areas we aren't worried about, but we'll be adding much more in the areas we are."

8/ A more intellectually honest position would be a review that aimed not at 'slashing regulations' but at reviewing them and making them easier to navigate.

Transparency, digitization, single windows, removing arbitrary gatekeepers, and removing pointless redundancy. /end

9/ P.S Yes, I know you have a thousand examples of governments being hypocrites around all this stuff.