Editorial

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This is the first issue of the *European Journal of Political Research* (*EJPR*) with Blackwells, our new publisher. A number of physical changes will follow from the move from Kluwer. The new design certainly gives the journal a fresh look. Blackwells will take a more active role in the mechanical side of the editorial process, relieving the burden on current and future editors. We also expect the high editorial values of the journal to be raised even further under the stewardship of Blackwells.

But how much of substance will change and how much will remain the same? Our short answer to this question is that much will remain the same. Our approach to this change is not underpinned by timidity or even caution, but an appreciation of the outstanding reputation of the journal as a home for innovative research built up over the past 25 years by our editorial predecessors and the hundreds of contributors who have published here.

In defining the profile of the journal (see inside cover) we have extracted what we believe to be the underlying philosophy that has served it well over the years. What defines European political research and the spirit of both the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) and its journal is its cosmopolitan character. We do not just publish articles about Europe or those written by Europeans. Neither of these factors has ever served as a precondition for articles being accepted in this journal. We publish articles by authors from any part of the world, about any part of the world, that address issues and debates that cross national boundaries and appeal to a European audience and beyond. In aiming at a cosmopolitan European audience we believe we also attract a much wider global audience. This audience is already growing: the journal is read more outside Europe than ever before and the rate of non-European submissions has increased to roughly one-third of its annual total over the past five years.

Blackwells and the ECPR have committed themselves to increasing this audience still further. As part of the Blackwells stable of journals, *EJPR* will be marketed together with many other leading social science journals including *Political Studies*. Thus we expect the journal to reach a wider readership. To help reach this audience we have secured the collaboration of a distin-

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guished International Advisory Panel, who will assist us in developing our clientele outside the European heartland. This body will begin its life now whereas the existing Editorial Board – representing the European political science community – will, of course, continue its monitoring and reviewing functions. The ECPR has also committed itself to extending the journal's reach by starting to restructure the administrative and financial arrangements for the *EJPR*.

As editors we are committed to enlarging still further both the audience and the pool of submissions to the journal by, among other things, developing a presence at national and international political science conventions in Europe and the rest of the world. We also seek to encourage new researchers and their supervisors to think of the journal as home for the first or second publication of those entering the profession. To this end we welcome shorter research notes which allow interesting research findings to be put before a large audience rapidly and succinctly.

We welcome articles from *all* parts of the discipline reflecting *all* types of methodologies. Quality and breadth of appeal, established by open peer review, remain the only relevant qualifications for publication in the *EJPR*. The journal has always been a blend of quantitative and non-quantitative articles on, among other things, public policy, political economy, social and political theory, institutional analysis, and government as well as parties and public opinion. We do not claim that the coverage has always been equal across all parts of the discipline, but the range of articles published generally reflects the range of articles submitted. We hope and expect that the disciplinary and methodological range of articles submitted to, and published in, the *EJPR* will continue to expand.

The annual *Political Data Yearboo*k will remain an important part of *EJPR*. This has grown out of a development that occurred during the 1990s and is now a regular feature of the journal. Every year a double issue is published (currently edited and organized by Ruud Koole and Dick Katz) with all the main political data of virtually all the European democracies. In the *Yearbook*, specialists for each country supply not only factual information and statistics on elections and government composition but also additional information on the main political issues and events over the twelve months covered. This source of political data is highly valued by our audience – it is widely used and cited in political science research worldwide and at least as widely used in teaching. In future, the *Political Data Yearbook* will be published within the annual volume not as a 'double' issue, but as an issue in its own right and format.

Insofar as the Blackwells move helps us to develop our constituency of both readers and potential authors, we expect and encourage more high-

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quality submissions from authors and institutions that have not published in the *EJPR* before. We also trust that even with more submissions, publication times and acceptance rates will remain broadly within the range established by the substantial year by year fluctuations of the past decade and that we will able to publish all good articles that pass muster with our reviewers. Please encourage your colleagues as well as those you supervise to think of the *EJPR* as an outlet for their research – it will reach a large and growing international audience.

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