Editorial

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This short editorial is to inform our readers that – as of this issue – Marc Hooghe, who has been editor of *Acta Politica* since 2003, stands down and is replaced by Kees Aarts.

We take the opportunity to thank Marc for his unremitting efforts to watch over, develop and improve the quality and international character of the journal. Marc has played an invaluable role in the further internationalization of *Acta Politica*. He has been an enthusiastic participant in the world of international scholarly conferences at which he not only presented his own work, but also was able – with his keen eye for new developments and high-quality papers – to attract the interest of many a colleague and turn them into prospective contributors to the journal. His wide network and his broad orientation and knowledge of various subfields of the discipline have positively helped to raise the standard of *Acta Politica* and widen the coverage of topics and approaches.

Our journal has long promoted the submission of high-quality articles from all parts of the world, from all subdisciplines and from a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches. Marc's work as editor, building on the efforts of his predecessors, has ensured that we have been getting ever closer to this ambitious goal. Although the first rule of social science ('everything took longer') applies to him too, Marc is a pleasure to work with. His style of editing can best be described as tough, demanding and insistent, but at the same time always rigorous and above all constructive and supportive. He has been very creative in initiating and developing numerous initiatives for articles and special issues. The organization and editing of the previous issue of *Acta Politica* (Volume 45, numbers 1/2: a special issue entitled *Civil Society on the Rise?*) was entirely Marc's job and was one heck of a farewell.

The journal welcomes Kees Aarts as Marc's successor. Kees (University of Twente) shares a past with *Acta Politica*, having served as book review editor and member of the editorial team in the 1990s, when the transition to an English-language journal was made. He specializes in democracy, elections and electoral behavior, and survey research. At Twente, he is also scientific director of the Institute for Innovation and Governance Studies.

These changes in the composition of the editorial team will not distract us from our primary goals. In the coming years our aim will be, as ever, to publish a journal that conforms to the highest professional standards. We strive to maintain a balance between *Acta Politica's* status as a general journal of the

discipline, which is open to submissions from all subfields and which has a basically unrestricted empirical domain, and its traditional position as a prime resource for political science in the Netherlands and Flanders. At the same time we will continue our efforts to attract and publish articles of the highest scientific quality and relevance, and to further internationalize both our community of contributors and our readership. Finally, we are happy to note here that these efforts are paying off. *Acta Politica*'s impact factor (by Thomson Reuters) rose this year from 0.667 to 0.921, which places it 35th among 112 Political Science journals (2009: 44th among 99 journals).

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