Editorial

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From this issue on, *Acta Politica* will have two editors, one from the Netherlands — Hans Keman of the Free University of Amsterdam (and former Editor of the EJPR) — and one from Belgium — Marc Hooghe of the University of Leuven. This is just another step in the long process of internationalizing the journal, in which our aim is to give it a truly cosmopolitan character. It is our ambition to ensure that *Acta Politica* remains relevant for the international political science community, both in its contents and its global readership. Although the origins of this journal go back to a small group of Dutch language scientists, we now try to reach the political science community worldwide. Thus far, this has been a successful development. A majority of the manuscripts we receive originates from outside the Low Countries. It goes almost without saying that each and every submission is treated in exactly the same manner, no matter what its origin might be. This journal is, and will remain in the future, firmly committed to a high-quality anonymous peer review: we believe this is the only way to guarantee that being published in *Acta Politica* is by itself already a quality label.

We expect therefore to attract even more manuscripts and readers — not only from Belgium and the Netherlands but even more so from researchers around the world. We trust that students of political science will take *Acta Politica* into consideration when sending out their manuscripts and research results. So one might read this as a call to send us your manuscripts, be it fully fledged articles or be it research notes. For we wish to encourage new researchers and their supervisors to think of *Acta Politica* as a safe place for their publications. In summary: we welcome articles from all parts of the world, from all parts of the discipline, employing all kinds of methodologies. Academic quality is — as stressed before — and will remain the only relevant qualification for publication in *Acta Politica* whatever your affiliation or nationality might be. All necessary information on the submission procedure and requirements can be found in the 'Instructions for authors' inside each issue and on our website: www.palgrave-journals.com/ap.

Our subtitle also proudly proclaims that we are a 'political science journal', and in this regard nothing at all changes. We endeavour to publish articles from all variations of political science, with a strong preference for articles that

are able to attract a wide audience within the broad field of political science. This is in fact an appreciation of the stewardship of our predecessors and many of the contributors who helped *Acta Politica* to become what it has been ever since it became an English language journal in 1997. In other words: we are a 'general' journal of political science, however with a special touch to it! First of all, it is still the official journal of the Dutch Political Science Association (NKWP). Secondly, it is now edited by a Dutch-speaking editorial team from Belgium and the Netherlands. Thirdly, it is run by an English publishing house: Palgrave. All of us have committed ourselves to increasing the international flavour of the journal and its audience. As part of the Palgrave stable of leading academic journals, we expect to reach a wider readership than ever before. In addition, we have secured the collaboration of a distinguished International Advisory Board, who will help us to develop our ties with the academic community around the world. All these ingredients will only foster our missionary statement of emphasizing our goals of being international and general with a strong commitment to academic quality.

In addition to our international ambitions, we wish to continue *Acta Politica* as a key reference for everyone who wishes to keep abreast with developments in political science in the Netherlands and Belgium. The special issue on the recent Dutch Elections (38/1) demonstrates how Dutch political scientists address general issues from a specific case. This kind of academically driven knowledge is of interest to colleagues from other countries, while providing insights on politics in the Netherlands. Another asset of *Acta Politica* concerns its book review section: it combines information on political science literature in general with specific reviews on politics and society in the Low Countries. In this section, the 'must-read' books on, or from the Low Countries, will always be reviewed by an expert on the subject under review, whether they are written in English, Dutch or any other language. So everyone who is interested in keeping up to date with politics in the Netherlands should certainly turn to our review section. In this way, we think *Acta Politica* can keep up with its traditional function as a signboard for political science in the Netherlands. In this sense, we combine the 'international' dimension with an added bonus of a 'regional' expertise. We are very pleased that Bertjan Verbeek, from the University of Nijmegen, has agreed to serve as editor for this book review section. Last year, Bertjan Verbeek stepped in as editor. He did so on very short notice, and we have to say he did an excellent job. Mostly on his own, he edited the previous issues of *Acta Politica*, while maintaining the high-quality standards of the journal.

We do realize that in political science, too, a process toward an ever-increasing specialization and fragmentation is dominant, with as a result a proliferation of highly specialized political science journals. We have decided to continue to go against this trend, by offering a broad-based political science

journal. We do not want to question the existence of these highly specialized journals, but we do believe this type of journals should be considered as viable for the political science community if they function parallel to a journal that is attractive to anyone working within our discipline. The following example may serve to highlight what we mean. Within the American Political Science Association (APSA), an intensive debate has been conducted during the previous years, criticizing the fact that a number of journals in our discipline tend to excel in publishing articles with very sophisticated models and methods, but without any intellectual or social relevance. The final result of course is that people continue to publish in these journals, for 'professional' reasons only, but that hardly any one else bothers to read them anymore. Following this controversy, APSA last year launched its new journal 'Perspectives on Politics', that is meant to stimulate the scientific debate not just within political science, but also between our discipline and the rest of the academic community and society in general. For once, Europe is not following American trends in this respect. *Acta Politica*'s editors have always been firmly committed to the point of view that it is not just possible to write this kind of broad appeal articles, but it is also imperative that professional political scientists can address an audience in this way. The current editorial team will simply continue this line. Our goal remains to publish 'all the political science that is fit to print' with only one firm proviso: its academic quality.

We trust therefore that with ample submissions, publication time and acceptance rates will remain acceptable for every one and that we will be able to publish all good articles that pass muster with our reviewers. Thus, encourage your colleagues to submit to and to review if asked by us, it will serve the political science community and reach a large and growing international audience.

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