

ELECTION BRIEFING No.20 THE NORWEGIAN GENERAL ELECTION OF 12 SEPTEMBER 2005

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Key Points

- Despite a strong economy, the centre-right minority coalition government led by Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik of the Christian People's Party lost the September 2005 elections. The coalition, which also included the Conservatives and the Liberals, had served the full four-year parliamentary term.
- Labour emerged as the main winner of the election, which it fought on a platform for a common 'Red-Green' majority government in coalition with the Socialist Left and Centre Party. The Centre Party performed well, but the Socialist Left lost votes compared to 2001. Norway got its first majority government since 1985.
- The second main winner was the Progress Party, on the right flank. It had played a supporting role for the Bondevik government, but announced that it would not support a new government under his premiership.
- Although the Conservatives sought to focus the campaign on the strong economy, public spending was the dominant issue. Red-Green promises of more spending on kindergartens, schools and elderly care took centre stage, and the Progress Party also advocated more public spending.
- The EU issue was completely absent from the campaign, except for the Red-Green agreement that the three parties would not seek to alter Norway's current form of association with the EU. The Bondevik coalition was based on a similar kind of agreement, based on the so-called 'suicide clause'.

Introduction

On the second Monday of the ninth month every fourth year, Norwegian voters go to the polls. The 2005 election race was particularly close, but on September 12th the voters' verdict was unambiguous. As in 2001 and 1997, the government was thrown out of office. Despite economic prosperity and top international rankings on standards of living and economic competitiveness, the combined vote of the three governing parties dropped more than ten percentage points, to 26.8 percent. The Conservative party lost a third of its support compared to 2001, and the Christian People's Party

nearly half; this was hardly compensated by the Liberal's two-point improvement. In contrast to the last two elections, 2005 was no longer a three-way race with an ambiguous outcome. The opposition cobbled together the 'Red-Green' alternative, with a view to a majority coalition government. Negotiations between Labour, the Socialist Left and the Centre Party began on Monday September 26th. Bondevik was tendered his resignation after presenting the budget on October 14th, three days after the official opening of parliament, and the new government was in place the following Monday. This was a novel scenario in several respects: it was Norway's first majority coalition for two decades; it was the first time Labour governed in coalition with other parties (in peacetime); the first time the Socialist Left saw the inside of government offices; and the first time the Progress Party was by far the biggest opposition party. The European question, as always, hung like Damocles' sword over the coalition.

Background

Three factors that are somewhat unique to Norway make up the backdrop for the 2005 election. First, the European question reinforces Norway's cross-cutting political cleavages. Although voters rejected EEC/EU membership in referendums in 1972 and 1994, the European question remains pertinent and Norway cooperates closely with the EU under the European Economic Area Agreement. Second, for the last four decades, minority government has been the rule rather than the exception. Third, the wealth Norway has accumulated in the oil fund means that even economic prosperity in no guarantee that the incumbent will be re-elected; quite the contrary.

First, political parties in Norway compete along three broad dimensions: left-right, centre-periphery, and on the flanks. The dominant left-right dimension (based on economic policy and redistribution) is cross-cut by cleavages that pit the centre against the periphery, urban interest against rural, and religious against secular. Labour and the Conservatives compete along the first dimension; the Liberals (V), the Christian People's Party (KrF) and the agrarian Centre Party (Sp) compete on the second. The three grew out of the nineteenth century 'Left', and are usually considered 'centre' parties in left-right terms.

When participation in European integration first became an issue in 1961 the Conservatives (H) welcomed EEC membership and Labour (DNA) embraced it more cautiously. The three centre parties all came out in opposition to membership before the 1972 referendum, although the Liberals split (nearly fatally, as it turned out) over the issue. All maintained their positions in the 1994 referendum, and only the Liberals have since moved towards neutrality.

Two parties compete on the flanks: the Socialist Left and the Progress Party (FrP). The Socialist Left (SV) was formed in 1975, as the Socialist People's Party expanded to defend the 'no' victory in the 1972 EEC referendum. Euroscepticism is its very *raison d'être*. Like the Centre Party, it is hard Eurosceptic, and opposes most of Norway's agreements with the EU. The Progress Party was formed in 1973, principally as a right-wing populist anti-tax party, and included both opponents and proponents of European integration. It advocated a 'yes' in the 1994 referendum, but has since returned to neutrality.

Second, since Labour lost the absolute majority of seats (it never polled a majority of votes) that it held between 1945 and 1961, minority governments have been common. It is no coincidence that this was the time the European question was first raised; Labour lost its majority when dissidents opposed to NATO formed a the Socialist People' Party and won two seats. Since then majority cabinets have been rare. Moreover, governments often fail to survive the full four-year parliamentary term, but because elections are held to a fixed four-yearly schedule (early elections cannot be called) they tend to be relieved by other minority governments.

Table 1: Norwegian governments since 1961

<i>Election</i>	<i>Government, coalition parties and status. Majority governments in bold</i>
1961	Minority Labour, interrupted by four-week centre-right cabinet in 1963.
1965	Majority centre-right (H, KrF, V, Sp)
1969	Majority centre-right continued, fell over EEC issue 1971. Minority Labour; then minority centre (KrF, V, Sp) after 1972 referendum.
1973	Minority Labour
1977	Minority Labour
1981	Minority Consv.; expanded 1983 to majority centre-right (H, Sp, KrF)
1985	Minority centre-right; replaced by Labour minority 1986
1989	Minority centre-right, fell over EU; replaced by Labour minority 1990
1993	Minority Labour
1997	Minority centre (KrF, V, Sp); replaced by Labour minority 2000
2001	Minority centre-right (H, KrF, V)
2005	Majority centre-left: Labour with SV and Sp

Table 1 reveals two other points that are pertinent to the 2005 election: the Socialist Left and the Progress Party have never taken part in a governing coalition; and all coalition governments have included one or more Eurosceptic parties.

Until the 2005 election, Labour had preferred one-party minority government, negotiating support from other parties on either side. Likewise, the centre-right parties shied away from cooperating with the Progress Party at the national level, although cooperation in local politics is not uncommon.

Only Labour governments have been able to apply for EEC/EU membership; the centre-right coalition governments fell over the European question before both referendums. All centre-right coalitions have been predicated on a truce on 'Europe': the 1965 coalition was able to survive partly because France vetoed EEC enlargement; in the 1980s the coalition could thrive because the European question was firmly off the agenda; and in the 2001-2005 period the centre-right parties agreed a 'suicide clause' whereby the coalition would terminate if the EU issue were raised.

Norway has used proportional representation electoral systems since 1924, and successive post-war reforms have made the system more proportional. In 1953 the D'Hondt formula was replaced by the more proportional Modified Sainte-Laguë system; the number of seats were increased incrementally before the 1973 and 1985 elections; and for 1989 a two-tier system was introduced, with eight top-up seats for which parties that poll more than four percent qualify (joint lists were prohibited). The new 2003 law increased the number of top-up seats to 19, one for each of the counties that serve as multi-member districts (the number of seats allocated to each district is

to be revised every eight years, taking into account population and area). This takes the number of seats in the Storting to 169.

Third, Norway has hardly suffered economically from the decision not to join the EU. In 1994 the European Economic Area was already in operation, and this effectively provides membership of the Single European Market. It also obliges Norway to adopt relevant new EU laws (in theory the government may 'veto' new EU legislation, but this has not been tested). Over the last decade the mainland economy has grown steadily, the interest rate decreased, and unemployment is low compared to European standards.

However, Norway's main source of wealth is also its governments' curse. In the mid-1990s Norway began to accumulate a surplus in the designated 'Oil Fund', which is now in the neighbourhood of £100bn.¹ In March 2001, after a sharp rise in oil prices, the then minority Labour government established the rule that it would not use more than four percent of the oil fund to finance the budget. Although this rule has since been honoured mostly in the breach (the Bondevik government broke the limit every year), this self-imposed limit has proven controversial. The Progress Party has long taken the lead in advocating that more 'oil money' be used to cut taxes and improve public services, and other opposition parties have joined this chorus. Only Labour and the Conservatives adamantly defend the 'four percent rule' in its current form. Every government therefore faces the danger that the opposition will out-bid its spending plans and invoke 'wise' expenditure of more 'oil money'. The 2005 campaign was no exception.

The Campaign

Bondevik's centre-right coalition went into the 2005 election campaign with a strong economic record and a social and economic system that had been subject to considerable (well-published) international acclaim. The interest rate was 2.0 percent. Unemployment rose marginally during the government's first two years, but fluctuated around the four-percent mark and was falling. Mainland (non-oil) economic growth had been steady, and increased in the last two years preceding the election. The United Nations ranked Norway the best place in the world to live five years running, and the country rose to the top ten in the World Economic Forum rankings on global competitiveness.² In short, if economic success were anything to go by, the government might have expected to be re-elected. But, to turn James Carville's phrase on its head: "it's NOT the economy, stupid!"

The principal question as far as economic policy was concerned was what to do with the 'oil money', and more specifically whether (and how) to spend more of the income from the Petroleum Fund. The government went to the polls pointing to economic management and tax cuts, but the opposition's focus on kindergartens, schools and care for the elderly won through. Even Labour joined the chorus criticising the government for taking competition in public service provision too far.

¹ As of 30 June 2005, the market value of the Petroleum Fund was NOK 1,184bn. For this, and all other economic data cited in this report, see the English-language web-pages of the Norwegian Central Bank (including its Inflation Reports): <http://www.norges-bank.no/english/>

² UNDP Human Development Report 2005 (<http://hdr.undp.org/>); the World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness reports (<http://www.weforum.org/>).

These themes ran through what became practically a year-long campaign (i.e. long before the ‘official’ one-month campaign). As the three centre-left parties elaborated their Red-Green alternative during the winter and spring a second theme was added: which coalition was more credible and united? The most dramatic play came on June 20th, shortly after the Storting closed for the summer recess, when Progress Party leader Carl I. Hagen announced that his party would no longer support a government led by Bondevik. For four years his party had provided vital, if somewhat erratic, support for the Bondevik government. The three governing parties maintained that Bondevik was their only candidate for prime minister, and that Hagen was bluffing or merely posturing. Despite their policy differences, the three centre-left parties now appeared more united (not to mention credible) than the main centre-right alternative.

The Conservatives (or *Høyre*, literally *the Right*) focused on the economy, improved public services and free choice. School reforms, choice in public services and tax cuts topped their list of successes, and the party’s literature also stressed competitive tendering in the public sector and even mentioned the need for close cooperation with the EU. The party did not put forward its own candidate for prime minister, but united around Bondevik. However the party leader, Erna Solberg, aggressively attacked the alliance she labelled ‘the Socialists’ and warned of the ‘red menace’. In a fairly consensual political system, this probably backfired.

The Christian People’s Party had suffered badly in the mid-term local elections. Despite providing the prime minister it had lost considerable support from some of its core voters, probably because it was associated too closely with Conservative policy. The party therefore took a somewhat defensive line in the campaign. It emphasised fighting poverty at home and abroad (but admitted much was yet to be done), boasting of increased foreign aid, and drew attention to its record on ‘value questions’ such as religious education, biotechnology laws and one of its core issues – the cash benefits paid to mothers (of young children) who stay at home rather than work. The government’s economic record came lower down the list. The party is soft Eurosceptic, inasmuch as it supports the EEA arrangement but not EU membership.

The third governing party, the Liberals (or *Venstre*, literally *the Left*), faced the biggest challenge of the three. The key question was whether it would pass the four-percent threshold required to receive a share of the top-up seats. The prospects for a continued centre-right majority (i.e. including the Progress Party) hinged on this. So did the Liberal’s message: vote Liberal or the government will fall. Its buzzwords were ‘environment’, ‘education’ and research and economic policy geared toward small and medium size enterprise; its chosen label is ‘social liberal’. The party has more or less played down its (soft) Euroscepticism; its conference decided to oppose EU membership by a mere 86 votes to 81.

The Progress Party has long been criticised by all other parties for its populism and unpredictability. It supported the centre-right government, but on occasion joined the opposition to inflict policy defeats. For Carl I. Hagen joining the cabinet was an important prize; but one the centre-right coalition was not prepared to grant him. Neither the Liberals nor the Christian party would even consider this, although some Conservatives were less adamant. Hagen’s declaration that he would not support another government led by Bondevik because of the latter’s opposition to cooperation

with his party was generally seen as a personal attack on the prime minister, but it certainly worked in terms of generating publicity. Using the 'oil money' to reduce taxes and improve infrastructure and services remains central to the party's campaigns. Even the deputy leader of the Socialist Left, not a party known for fiscal conservatism, accused the Progress Party of spending money like a 'drunken sailor'; Øystein Djupedal subsequently retracted the comment after angry phone calls from maritime workers. Low taxes and more competition and choice in public services went together with more money and choice in care services for the elderly, and a law & order policy that draws attention to foreign organised crime and terror. The party is neutral on the EU, and carefully avoids the issue.

The Centre Party withdrew from the then centre-right coalition in 1990 over the Conservatives' decision to seek EU membership, and threw their support behind a Labour minority government. They subsequently remained on the left, and have since been considered left of Labour on some economic issues. Its best election ever was the 1993 'EU election', a year before the 1994 referendum, when it attracted a large number of Eurosceptic voters. Its historic decision to join the Red-Green alternative was taken at the party conference this spring, but the party remains closer to the Christian People's Party on several issues. Its core commitments include more support for primary industry, money for local government, infrastructure, culture, regional redistribution and active industrial policy. Like the Socialist Left, the party opposes both EU and EEA membership; the two parties demand a 'suicide clause' similar to the one that the Bondevik coalition operated under.

The Socialist Left was the government's most vociferous critic. Its campaign centred on schools, social justice and the environment; including higher public expenditure. Having doubled its share of the vote to more than twelve percent in 2001, the party had much to lose. Cabinet participation was beginning to seem like a tempting prize. However, its decision to work with Labour and the Centre got party leader Krisitn Halvorsen caught out over compromises that appeared incompatible with the party programme, and on a few high-profile promises such as free school lunch three was some confusion over costs. The campaign centred on welfare and public services; full provision of kindergartens (with a price cap) took a central place in the campaign.

The decision to campaign on a joint Red-Green platform was even more monumental for Labour than the other two parties. In government for seventeen months before the 2001 election, the party began to implement a modernisation programme that had some of the same flavour as Tony Blair's 'third way' policy with regard to public services. This did not pay off in the 2001 election, when Labour achieved its worst result since the fissures of the early 1920s. Party leader Jens Stoltenberg thus faced a choice between continuing along the same path, and possibly losing votes and even trade union resources to the Socialist Left, or to play down the 'third way' and modernisation programme in favour of cooperation with the left. Although he kept the invitation to the Christian People's Party open, the party began to work more closely with the Centre and Socialist Left in the Autumn of 2004. It therefore fought the election primarily on the prospect of a strong government that would rest on majority support in parliament. It criticised the centre-right for taking competition in public services too far, and emphasised employment (by way of research and active industrial policy), education, and elderly care and pensions reform. The party favours EU membership, but did not care to emphasise this.

In short, the campaign centred on governability, public expenditure and particularly on kindergartens, schools and pensioners. The governing parties sought to defend their economic record, but campaigned on very different issues. The Red-Green opposition concentrated on criticising the government's public service reforms and tax cuts (they even promised to raise taxes!), and on the prospect of a stable majority government. The Progress Party focused on its traditional issues of tax cuts and better services, but captured the headlines by shifting the focus on Bondevik's leadership. The EU issue was hardly mentioned in the campaign, even when the centre-right sought to emphasise their opponents' disunity.

The Results

Labour and the Progress Party were the two great winners of the 2005 election, and the Conservatives were the unambiguous losers. Stoltenberg became prime minister, heading a Red-Green coalition government where his party took ten of the nineteen cabinet posts. For the remaining four parties the election results were mixed. The Centre Party improved slightly on its poor performance in the last election and poor opinion polls,³ and entered government with four ministers. The Socialist Left could be pleased with the Red-Green victory and five cabinet seats, but scored well below its 2001 result, let alone opinion polls. On the government side, the Liberal party did particularly well, and achieved its best result since the 1960s. The Christian People's Party recorded its worst result ever as a national party, but at least stemmed the decline that had hit it so hard in the 2003 local elections.

Because the race was so tight (on election night the results vacillated back and forth for several hours before the pattern of centre-left strength became clear), a high turnout was expected. Admittedly, the 76.1% turnout was up 1.6 points from 2001, but it is still the third lowest since the Second World War (and below any average of the last two, three, four, etc. elections that one might care to calculate).

Table 2: The 2005 Norwegian election – results

Party	Votes	Percent	Change	Seats	Change
Socialist Left	232,965	8.8	-3.7	15	-8
Labour	862,454	32.7	+8.4	61	+18
Centre	171,063	6.5	+0.9	11	+1
Chr. People's Pty.	178,885	6.8	-5.6	11	-11
Liberals	156,111	5.9	+2	10	+8
Conservatives	371,950	14.1	-7.1	23	-15
Progress Party	581,893	22.1	+7.5	38	+12
Others*	82,931	3.1	-2.4	0	-1

Source: Official results, as per the *Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development*, <http://odin.dep.no/krd/html/valgresultat2005/frameset.html>.⁴

* Includes 32,355 votes for the Socialist Electoral Alliance (which won a seat in 1993) and 21,948 votes for the Coastal Party (which lost its single seat).

³ For opinion polls in the run-up to the election see Bernt Aardal's web-page (in Norwegian, see 'Partibarometer'): <http://home.online.no/~b-aardal/>

⁴ *Statistics Norway* publish historical election statistics, <http://www.ssb.no/vis/emner/00/01/10/stortingsvalg/histtab/tabeller.html>

Labour's move to the left and decision to campaign for a Red-Green coalition clearly paid off. Although it did not recover fully to the level of the 1990s, it came close: the party DNA polled 34.3 percent in 1989, 36.9 in 1993 and 35.0 in 1997. This strategy had more in common with that of Göran Persson in Sweden than Tony Blair in the UK, although the Swedish Social Democrats opted for a tacit rather than formal coalition with the Left Party and the Greens. This allowed Labour to continue to campaign as a catch-all party on the centre-left, focussing on the main socio-economic dimension. Its continued role as Norway's largest party seemed secure for some time to come.

On the other hand, the Socialist Left appeared to have lost some of the votes it captured from Labour four years ago. Looking further back, the result was not so poor: the party ranged between 5.0 and 10.1 percent in the 1980s and 1990s. As it surged past the ten-percent level it faced the challenge of whether to play down its ideological stance and move from a left-populist position toward a more catch-all like strategy. This was always going to be a dilemma given the party's roots as an opponent of NATO and the EU. As it moved into the corridors of power, this dilemma seemed like it might become even more pronounced.

As for long-term trends, the combined Labour and Socialist Left vote of 41.5 percent was not far off their average for the 1980s and 1990s (43.7 percent). Their combined share of the vote reached a high of 49.9 percent in 1969, and had not fallen below the 40-percent mark apart from the low of 36.8 in 2001. While this result was therefore an improvement on 2001 for the centre-left as a whole, it was barely a return to the averages of the last two decades, let alone the 1960s.

The third Red-Green partner, the Centre Party, was quite pleased with the 2005 result. It is comfortably near the party's steady average over the last four decades, save for the extraordinary result of the 1993 'EU-election' when it scored almost seventeen percent. During the 2005 election the party confirmed its interest-based strategy, casting itself as the defender of local government, the periphery and rural interests. It polled strongly in its traditional heartland, in the northern parts of the west country and central Norway.

The second big winner was the Progress Party. It became the second biggest party, replacing the Conservatives as the leading party on the centre-right, and even out-pollled Labour to become the biggest party in three of Norway's nineteen districts (two in the south-west, and one in the northern part of the west). It scored fifteen percent or more across the country, even in the traditional Labour strongholds. It had been rising steadily from low single figures in the 1970s and 1980s, to thirteen percent in 1989 (with a brief reversal in the 1993 'EU election'), surging briefly past the Conservatives in 1997, returning to third place in 2001, but crossing the twenty-percent mark in 2005. Although its strategy remained right-populist, the party seemed more than likely to seek to develop its relationship with the Conservatives during the following four years. Meanwhile, its advocacy of spending the 'oil money' liberally might, in the future, allow it to out-perform even the Socialist Left and Centre in demanding expenditure, thereby putting the two parties in the awkward position of defending moderate expenditure and tight fiscal policy.

By contrast the Conservatives were the big losers, bearing the brunt of what Norwegian commentators have taken to calling ‘the wear and tear of government’. The 2001 result was the worst ever, reversing and negating the 2001 recovery from their disastrous 1997 election. It was less than half the level it reached in the early 1980s. The party secretary pointed out that the four ‘blue’ parties polled 22,000 votes more than the Red-Greens, but this included Progress Party votes while leaving out the Red Electoral Alliance’s 32,000 votes (the party is clearly on the left, whereas to assign the Coastal Party’s 22,000 votes to the ‘right’ would be more contentious). The party was criticised for keeping a low profile, particularly for not putting forward a candidate for prime minister. In any case, party leader Erna Solberg announced a review of party tactics and strategy, and suggested that the party would talk *about* the EU and *to* the Progress Party.

The two smaller governing parties fared less badly. The Christian People’s Party almost maintained its 6.9 percent from the 2003 local elections. It appeared to have returned to its core values and constituencies, but not to the eight-to-ten percent level of the 1980s and early 1990s, let alone the high scores of 1997 and 2001. The Liberal party was the only winner on the government side. This was the best result since the party split over the European question three decades ago, and provided the party with a strong base to continue to rebuild itself. Although the result probably reflected a certain amount of tactical voting and more than a few disaffected conservative voters, the Liberals were also credited with a strong election campaign. The party seemed set to continue its apparently successful effort to establish a niche as a ‘social liberal’ party that is part of the centre-right bloc.

These results brought about three major changes to Norwegian politics, each of which carried with it its own challenges.

- First, Labour entered a coalition government for the first time ever (not counting the grand coalition during the Second World War). The big question was whether this actually signalled a shift to the left, or mainly a tactical change. The party claimed that it only changed relative to the government, rather than in actual policy terms.
- Second, the election brought the Socialist Left into executive office, but how long the coalition might last was an open question. The three partners disagree on several policy questions, but the European question was quickly identified as the one most likely to cause a coalition breakdown.
- Third, with the 2005 election the Progress Party became the main opposition party, and the strongest party on the right. This raised questions about how the new opposition dynamic would play out. The Conservatives quickly began to reassess policy and strategy.

The fourth and final issue is of course the one that casts a permanent shadow over Norwegian party politics – the European Question.

The European Issue

The European issue hangs like Damocles’ sword over most Norwegian governments. Sometimes it is tightly secured, sometimes less so. The outgoing government kept the

issue firmly off the agenda by agreeing a 'suicide clause' which meant that the coalition would break up if the Conservatives were to push for EU membership. The Red-Green parties negotiated a similar clause, but the dynamics are different for three reasons.

First, both the Socialist Left and the Centre party advocate making use of the so-called EEA-veto. The European Economic Area is a dynamic agreement, which is based on the three EFTA states accepting new relevant EU-laws. There is no veto as such, but all parties to the treaty (i.e. Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and the EU) have to accept each EEA amendment. In other words, Norway may block new laws being incorporated into the EEA. This is un-chartered waters, and would trigger an EEA-crisis. The rules provide for six months' negotiations, possibly followed by suspension of part of the EEA treaty (but not the core, which includes free movement of goods, services, labour and capital). Such a crisis would certainly reinvigorate the European debate.

Second, in this event, Labour might not find the option of forming a minority government entirely inconvenient. Unlike the Conservatives in the previous parliament, Labour won something like a median position in the Storting. Raising the EU question need not be quite as 'suicidal' for Labour that it was for the Conservatives between 2001 and 2005.

Third, the 205 election left the Conservatives with , little reason not to play the EU card. Unlike Labour, the Conservatives need hardly fear internal dissent on the question, and are not constrained to keep it off the agenda. Solberg suggested that 2007 might be the right time to raise the membership question.

In short, although the Red-Green parties reached an agreement that sought to kill off the EU issue as effectively as the centre-right parties did for the previous four years, this was subtly more difficult. Labour won the pivotal position in parliament, formed a coalition with two hard Eurosceptic parties, and the Conservatives might find incentives to raise the EU question. The Red-Green coalition that took office in October 2005 may be able to keep the European question off the agenda, but this will require somewhat more careful management than it did during the last parliament.

This is the latest in a series of election and referendum briefings produced by the European Parties Elections and Referendums Network (EPERN). Based in the Sussex European Institute, EPERN is an international network of scholars that was originally established as the Opposing Europe Research Network (OERN) in June 2000 to chart the divisions over Europe that exist within party systems. In August 2003 it was re-launched as EPERN to reflect a widening of its objectives to consider the broader impact of the European issue on the domestic politics of EU member and candidate states. The Network retains an independent stance on the issues under consideration. For more information and copies of all our publications visit our website at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/1-4-2.html>.