



THE WAY THROUGH THE WOODS...

Brown, Cameron and What Britain Needs

June 2007 and British politicians across the spectrum watch and wait for Gordon Brown to terrify the electorate back into the arms of the Conservative Party. Yet just a couple of months on, and everything has changed.

The new Prime Minister was quick to realise that he was no Tony Blair; and herein lay his trump card. The British public, weary of spin and tired of disingenuous words, had an overwhelming desire for change. Brown's strategy has been to personify that change, and so far it has proved very successful.

What the Conservatives hoped would be seen as dourness has become a welcome seriousness. Brown looks like a man of purpose, of devotion to public service. A series of crises have helped him to project that image, but Brown's triumph has been turning these events to his political advantage. The media has greeted his leadership enthusiastically, and Labour has been rewarded with the largest lead in the polls since before the Iraq war.

It may not last. After succeeding Margaret Thatcher; John Major briefly became the most popular prime minister since Churchill.

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HANGING IN THE BALANCE

Across Europe change is on the map. Whether it is through new political governance – as in France, Germany, and the UK – or in a questioning of the direction of the European Union, debate over leadership is building to a climax.

In Britain, the Conservative leader David Cameron recently informed voters that in the next election they will, "have a clear choice. A choice between two different visions of society. And a choice between the new and the old politics. Us against Gordon Brown." But how true is this? With the Conservatives announcing that they will match Labour's spending on public services, one has to

wonder if the race to the political middle has actually led to a continuum of policies that differ so little as to be indecipherable from each other.

As Tom Clougherty outlines in this issue, it is time for political parties to take decisive action on key electoral issues. That the NHS is not fit for purpose is the world's worst kept secret, and after years of poor service delivery, spending scandals and missed targets, Labour is no longer seen as the party to be trusted with the health service. Further, a decrease in social mobility and increase in corporate tax breaks under Labour have left voters wondering if they have woken up in a parallel political universe.

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 THE WAY THROUGH THE WOODS... CONTINUED

Like Brown he looked and sounded very different from his predecessor; and for the electorate a change was as good as a rest. But once the honeymoon period was over; his popularity swiftly declined.

David Cameron can take heart from that cautionary tale, but he would be foolish to think he can simply wait for the tide to turn. Despite a series of crushing general election defeats, many Conservatives still believe that they are the natural party of government. They will make little progress, however; until they discard the notion that the electorate will one day come to its senses and vote them back into power.

Cameron on Brown:
 “You’ve taxed too much, borrowed too much and are a roadblock to reform”

For the voter, changing governments is a risky business – especially when times are relatively good. The challenge for any opposition party is to prove that they are worth gambling on. People overvalue what they already have, which means that the benefits change will bring must far outweigh the potential costs. Put simply, the Conservatives must work tirelessly to win the next election. Hoping Labour will lose it is not enough.

The principles that have inspired Cameron’s leadership are sound – in many ways politics today really is less overtly about economics and more about society. Often though, the approach of the Conservative leadership has been too rooted in the preoccupations of a metropolitan elite. Climate change may be an important issue, but it does not figure highly in the minds of ordinary voters. The same goes for international development – that Cameron was vilified for visiting Rwanda while his constituency was flooded should serve as a wake-up call.

In policy terms, the problem is not a lack of detail (which will come with time), but rather the absence of a clear unifying theme. ‘Social responsibility’ is far too abstract a concept to be a political platform. Cameron would do better to make ‘Britain’s broken society’ central to his agenda. This is a powerful premise which can support everything from social breakdown, welfare dependency and crime, to poor public services and widespread distrust in government and the political process. If the Conservatives can challenge Brown on these issues, then the next election battle could be too close to call.

Ultimately though, whoever wins the next election will face the same challenges. And while crime, immigration and security are likely to be key electoral issues, the greatest test facing any leader in 21st Century Britain remains at heart an economic one. The continued growth and



prosperity of the country (on which everything else rests) depends on how well we can adapt to, and take advantage of, the competitive forces of globalisation.

So far the UK has benefited enormously from globalisation, but it is vital that we are not complacent. There are a number of areas where there is significant room for improvement, where the country must make some tough decisions or risk falling behind.

Brown on Cameron:
 “The wheels are falling off the Tory bicycle, and it is just as well that he has got a car following him when he goes out on his rounds”

The UK’s tax system, once an attraction, is becoming a liability. While global corporation taxes were following a downward trend, the UK’s were edging upwards and becoming needlessly complex, damaging our competitiveness. Gordon Brown made some welcome changes in his final budget (like cutting the main rate of corporation tax to 28%) but it is necessary to go much further:

The first step should be to simplify the way the tax is calculated, doing away with the complex reliefs and allowances, and simply taxing the profits that a company makes. Then the government should set about lowering the tax rates, as a matter of urgency. The immediate loss of revenue would soon be offset by the economic growth such a move would surely deliver.

Regulation is another vital issue. Instead of burdening businesses with endless red tape, and the inevitable inspections and compliance

costs this creates, more could be left to the market. Consumers are better protected by healthy competition than by regulatory diktat. The existing regulatory agencies should eventually be merged into a single Fair Trading Authority, which would intervene only to ensure free and competitive markets.

The welfare state must also be drastically reformed. If this is done correctly it could reduce government spending and boost the economy by getting more people into productive work. We should follow the example set by the US Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, passed in 1996, limiting the amount of benefits any one person can claim and giving providers a financial incentive to help people back into work and keep them there.

Brown on Brown
 “I’m a father; that’s what matters most. Nothing matters more.”

Finally, the UK must revolutionise its education system or face a serious skills shortage. Injecting choice and competition into the system, while encouraging the private and voluntary sectors to establish more schools, is the surest way to drive up standards and give the nation’s children the skills they need to succeed in an increasingly competitive world.

Only success in these four key areas – tax, regulation, welfare and education – will ensure that Britain does well in the decades ahead. The Adam Smith Institute is focusing on them, and whoever wins the next election should do the same.

Tom Clougherty is Director of Policy at the Adam Smith Institute in London

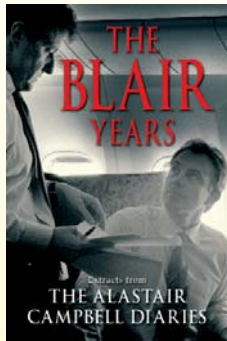
Book Review: The Blair Years

By Alastair Campbell

Never before has a press secretary had a public reputation as prominent as Alastair Campbell. Feared and admired in equal measure he has become the symbol of a new political approach, which places style above substance. Many modern prime ministers have appeared comfortable in the company of their press secretary; Margaret Thatcher had Bernard Ingram, John Major had Gus O'Donnell and so Tony Blair had Alastair Campbell. However the notoriety of Blair's press secretary led to a public image of his own, one that would be synonymous with the label 'spin-doctor'.

This book details how Campbell attempted to lead a New Labour crusade to reengage the British public with their politicians, after becoming disillusioned by years of sleaze and turmoil. Campbell's media revolution promised transparency and accountability, through an attempt to make British politics, as well British politicians, look engaging and approachable.

The most striking observation in this book is the tone each section takes, as the years pass in the diaries the mood makes obvious shifts from optimism to confidence, until finally leading to pressure and strain. Campbell is careful not to let the book be dominated by the Iraq war in the same way that the Blair legacy has, but his account of it, as well as other challenging



moments like the Northern Ireland talks and the death of Dr David Kelly, is both intriguing and perceptive.

Campbell's account of Blair's premiership is undoubtedly the most insightful, particularly in comparison to similar

books detailing the period like those by David Blunkett or Christopher Meyer. However, you can't help but feel that Campbell has developed an inclination to hold back the full story and that the extracts have been carefully selected to protect the images of certain public figures.

As you read the book you become sharply aware of Campbell's promise not to publish any material that may damage the Labour Party's chances at the next election, with Campbell's most scathing remarks directed at figures with whom Blair long ago disassociated himself. Consequently, the book is not as provoking as Alan Clark's diaries, nor is it as witty.

In truth, Campbell's diaries will become the reference book for the New Labour period, but that will surely only last until Tony Blair himself publishes his memoirs, this book may fade into the background.

Paul Healy is Events Co-ordinator at the Stockholm Network

➡ HANGING IN THE BALANCE CONTINUED

Ironically, the conundrum facing both the Conservative candidate and the Labour Prime Minister is that what each is seen as lacking, the other seems to have in excess – Brown's got the substance, Cameron's got the charisma. Appearances aside, some firm policy making will have to be undertaken this autumn in order to differentiate between the candidates on key economic issues and, on our other focus this quarter, the EU treaty.

The EU treaty has become a major electoral issue. According to the polls, as many as one in four Labour supporters could refuse to vote for Gordon Brown if he denied them a referendum on the EU treaty, and 13 per cent of Labour voters would cross over to the Conservatives if one of David Cameron's pledges was to hold

a referendum on the treaty. After 'no' votes in France and Holland highlighted the dangers for incumbent governments in holding referendums, in Britain Brown maintains that the new treaty is not a constitution and therefore does not require a referendum. Cameron has not promised one, but his Shadow Foreign Minister William Hague speaks often and vociferously on the subject, insisting: "the referendum question goes to the heart of the issue of trust in politics. trust the people and let them decide."

But would the people of Britain use the vote as an opportunity to voice displeasure with the EU, rather than the treaty? As Elmar Brok, a centre right MEP close to Angela Merkel argued, "The UK got its various opt-outs so what's the problem? ... How would it seem to other EU member states if Britain were now to hold a referendum?" But, as Tomasz Teluk and Paul

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Do you have questions and comments on the Eye on Europe? Please email susie@stockholm-network.org with your suggestions

Stephenson point out in this issue', it is not just British voters who feel uncomfortable with power being transferred to Brussels.

The debate over the treaty is really more about the future of the European Union, not the minutiae of the articles themselves. It is a microcosm of the challenge facing European leaders as they scratch their heads and wonder: how can we ensure economic strength and harmonisation? How can the Union enjoy benefits such as deregulated markets and the promise of the free movement of labour; and yet still maintain national sovereignty, regional integrity and political independence? The balance between an open Europe and a united Europe needs to be struck, and struck soon.

Susie Squire is the Network Development Manager at the Stockholm Network

EU TREATY: BRITAIN'S BEAST OF BURDEN?

Clearly the European Union needs reform: its budget has not been signed off for 12 years and is riddled with under the table deal-making and backslapping, it maintains unfairly high trade barriers against developing countries, and according to Gordon Brown the Common Agricultural Policy – which still consumes half of all the EU's funding – is a “scandal.”

Unfortunately, the new version of the constitutional treaty does not even attempt to tackle these issues. Rather than seeking to address the EU's very real problems, it would validate its failures by giving it even more power. As such it represents a very large step in the wrong direction.

It would lock Britain in tighter to the EU's failed policies of the past. The EU Common Fisheries Policy forces fishermen to dump millions of dead fish back into the sea each year – up to 90% of their total catch. EU Fisheries Commissioner Joe Borg has admitted that the policy is “immoral” and yet under the treaty the EU would be given “exclusive competence” to legislate in this area.

“We are standing at a crossroads in the EU debate”

A recent poll found that 54% of UK Chief Executives now believe that the burden of EU regulation outweighs the benefits created by the single market. EU Industry Commissioner Gunter Verheugen has estimated that the annual cost of EU regulation is more than €600 billion – equivalent to the EU losing the entire output of a medium-sized country like Holland every year. But this situation would only be made worse if the EU treaty comes into force. It would lower the threshold needed to pass new laws making it more difficult for member states to stop EU laws they do not agree with. British business is rightly worried that a reduction in the UK's ‘blocking power’ of 30% would mean that there will be even more EU over-regulation in the future.

There is also widespread concern that despite the British Government's insistence in 2001 that the Charter of Fundamental Rights would be no more legally binding than “the Beano” the new treaty would give it “the same legal value as the Treaties” for the first time.

As Judge Tizzano of the European Court of



Justice has warned: “The problem for the UK is that the social rights of the Charter could make it obligatory for the UK to accept some rights that they don't accept in the same way as other European countries... I understand that the companies' owners are worried because you could have the exportation of the continental model on them.”

But it is not just economic liberals who are worried by the Charter. Trade unionists point to clauses such as the “freedom to conduct a business” – which they fear the Court may use to apply internal market rules to public services – and the “right to property” which they fear could hamper plans to renationalise railways.

While there are obviously arguments to be made on both sides, it is unclear why such important and essentially political decisions should be made by unelected judges rather than the politicians we choose to represent us.

In 2003 Gordon Brown said that he disagreed with those who argue “that an enlarged Europe will work well only if it is a more centralised Europe”. Instead he called for “greater devolution in economic decision-making from the European Union to the regions and nations of our country.” Brown argued that the government works best if decisions are made at the lowest possible level, by politicians accountable to local voters. But this treaty would do the complete opposite, leading to even greater centralisation of power in Brussels. In particular its category of ‘shared competences’ – described initially by the British Government as a “worst of all worlds” result – would only allow member states to

legislate “to the extent that the Union has not exercised its competence” allowing the EU to increase the scope of its powers over time.

“Only by rejecting the Constitution will we be able to push politicians into pursuing the kind of radical reform that the EU so desperately needs”

As the recent row over the UK Government's decision not to expel the Italian-born convicted murderer of a schoolteacher – in part due to the EU Free Movement Directive – showed, voters become frustrated when they think EU legislation is preventing elected politicians from taking action they deem to be necessary. This resentment will only grow as the EU expands its influence over ever more areas of government policy.

Britain stands at a crossroads in the EU debate. As Bill Clinton memorably argued in 1992, we have a choice between change and more of the same. That is why a referendum on the EU treaty – which is a constitution in everything but name – is so essential. Only by rejecting this veiled constitution will British voters be able to push politicians into pursuing the kind of radical reform that the EU so desperately needs.

Paul Stephenson is Head of Research at Open Europe in London

AGAINST STAGNATION

In the debate on the future of the European Union, Poland would not welcome a superstate. Such a body would have the potential to change this dynamically developing country into a traditional European bureaucracy with a stagnant economy.

Reading the European press, the Polish position on the European Constitution is often misunderstood. Yes, Poles are not happy to be members of yet another superstate: for many citizens the EU looks like a market-oriented Soviet Union. No, Poles are not against Europe: everyone sees profits from the Common Market and liberalisation in many areas, which bring consumers such benefits as better services and cheaper prices.

Integration presents key political challenges, the biggest of these being the loss of autonomy. If a political agenda is pushed over economic growth, it is easier to regulate the market to achieve political goals. That is why the voting system adopted by the EU is so important for politicians from all the EU countries and Poland is no exception. The EU voting system, introducing a double-majority principle based on the countries' population, is designed to favour the biggest players. Europe has had historical experience with such leadership.

Sovereignty is closely connected with legislative power. If European law is placed above national law, a power struggle could emerge due to

shared sovereignty. In 2006 the Globalization Institute asked the Polish Committee of European Integration what proportion of Polish law is inspired by Brussels: the answer was a shocking 98.5 per cent.

Harmonisation of domestic and EU law is not a bad thing if it encourages competition, but it certainly is if it transfers power from local to central government. The main danger of a European superstate is the potential to regulate the economies of all member states. Poland has already suffered from EU market regulations.

Under the EU Emissions Trading Scheme, Brussels limits Polish industry by imposing caps on production and energy consumption. Bureaucrats dictate how much Polish fishermen can fish and tell local shipyards how many ships they can build in years to come. That is why many citizens fear that the next step will be suggesting the taxes we are obliged to pay or how entrepreneurs should reward their workers.

Centrally planned economies are not the way to create wealth. These practices may simply change dynamic, developed countries into the

typical European state facing economic stagnation. Many of the European regulations are designed to limit the competitiveness of the new EU members, using such slogans as "social dumping" or "unfair competition". There are, however, benefits too. Certain goods are now cheaper because of beneficial tariffs and competition has improved in some areas.

Average economic growth in Europe has dropped from 4.9 per cent during the 1960s to 0.9 now. If the EU wants to develop dynamically we need even more internal competition and less regulation. These policies could be thwarted by the European Treaty, which has already been rejected by Dutch and French voters.

"If we have to abandon democracy to introduce the treaty, is it really the right thing for Europe?"

Now the EU constitution is returning with little more than a name change in the form of the treaty *Reforming the EU*. The European treaty has social goals and furthermore has features which clearly demonstrate superstate leanings with its centralisation of internal policy, law and incoming currency monopoly. The biggest problem with the treaty is that this document does not meet society's expectation. Citizens' wants are often exactly the opposite of politicians'.

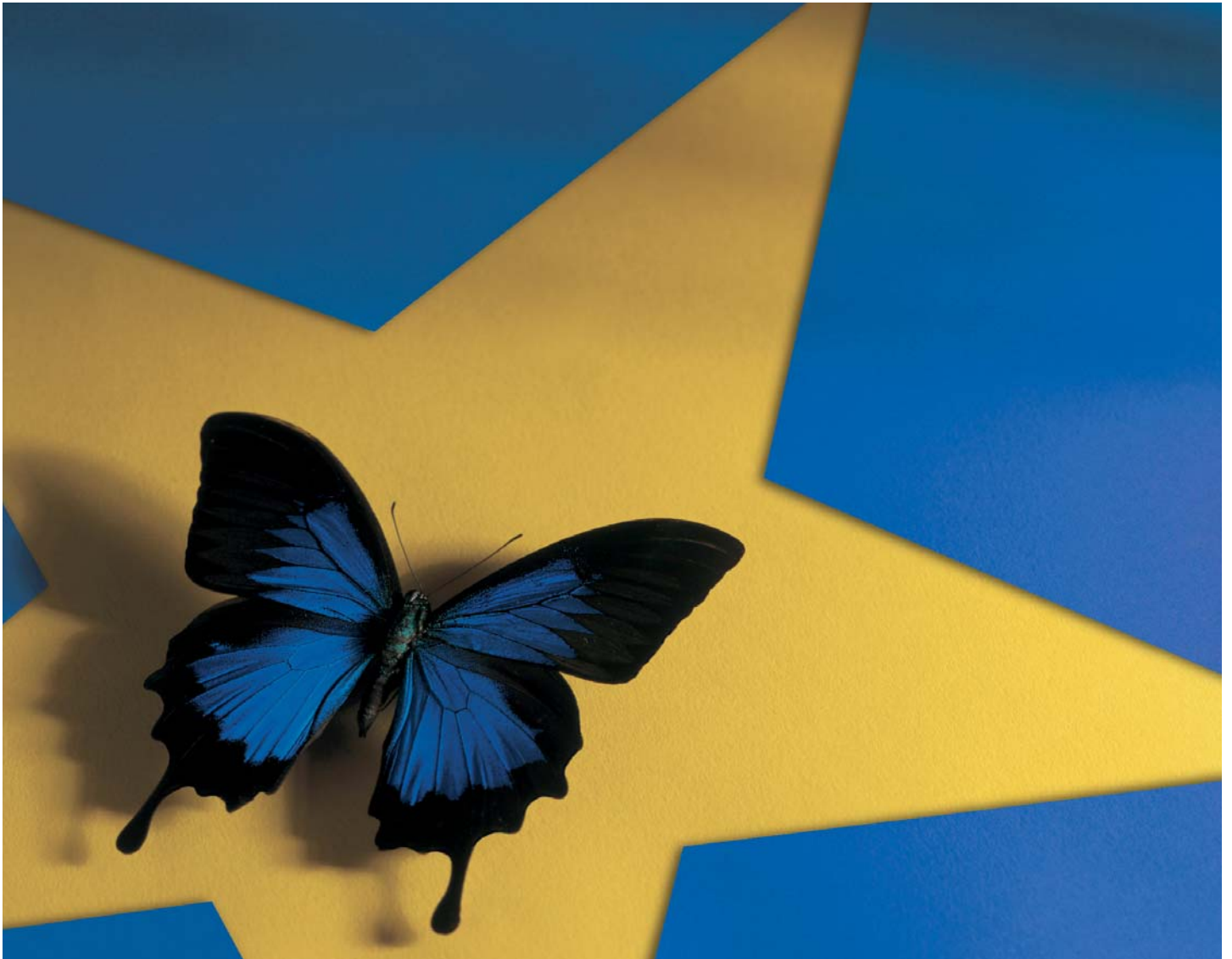
The common market as a free-trade area without political goals is the most desired and logical way forward for the EU. That is why constitutional referenda are too big a risk for politicians. If we have to abandon democracy to introduce the treaty, is it really the right thing for Europe?

Dr. Tomasz Teluk is the president of the Globalization Institute, a free market institute in Poland and a fellow at the Centre for the New Europe



Photo: Laurent Malbecq

DIRECTOR'S REPORT



This expanded issue of *Eye on Europe* introduces a new format to our quarterly journal, which is growing in size to keep pace with the huge expansion in activity around the Network.

We focus here on two themes of key importance to Europe's political future – the revival of an EU treaty and what it signals for the prospects of market-oriented reform, and the new political landscape of the UK in the run-up to a general election battle between Gordon Brown and David Cameron. It is unclear as yet what stance either party will take towards Brussels in the long-run. Gordon Brown has been historically cautious of the Euro but at least rhetorically favourable to free markets, while Cameron is anxious to change the Conservatives' negative image in Brussels,

yet sceptical of both the hard right and the softer Christian Democrat approach to Europe's problems.

Perhaps not surprisingly, with all this change going on, the UK has recently seen a proliferation of new think tanks focused either on Britain's need for reform or indeed on the need for change in Europe as a whole. We profile a range of them and their upcoming work in this special UK-focused issue.

The Stockholm Network itself has also experienced a period of growth with the appointment of several new researchers and the launch of a new, expanded website, which now offers RSS feeds, an online library of our members' publications and regular news flashes.

Last but not least, on 5 December, we will be hosting our first annual think tank awards ceremony in London, to mark our 10th

anniversary and to celebrate the achievements of Europe's market-oriented think tanks and thinkers. The 'Golden Umbrellas' will be a high-profile event and a wonderful opportunity to meet other like-minded reformers, so keep an eye out for further details of the awards and nominations in the coming weeks.

Spotlight on the Stockholm Network Energy and Environment Programme: **CARBON SCENARIOS**



As part of our growing energy and environment programme we are excited to announce an innovative new project from the Stockholm Network.

The project aims to host a series of workshops to build a range of alternative scenarios that will allow policy makers to discuss the effects of carbon mitigation legislation more authoritatively. The scenarios will provide clear information on how far these policies could take us and at what cost. Most importantly, they will address both how effective carbon mitigation policies will be in meeting climate-change challenges and how global energy markets will evolve if countries were to adopt specific approaches.

WHY SCENARIOS?

Alternative policy scenarios allow policymakers to explore what the future might look like. They provide users with a basis for strategic conversation by providing a common language and concepts for thinking and talking about policy. As a method for considering the potential implications of different events they can act as the basis for making more successful decisions.

Scenarios are recognised as a means for building consensus among stakeholders from

disparate political and ideological positions. They were used to great effect in South Africa during the transition from apartheid and during the debate about Japanese economic malaise. They have, in the past, been adopted by other think tanks as an effective way to build consensus in favour of reform across the political spectrum.

Although the Stockholm Network advocates market-oriented solutions, this scenario exercise will bring together experts from the energy, business, economics and policy world from across the ideological spectrum and from different academic backgrounds to outline potential responses to climate change and assess their likelihood of success. By conducting carbon scenario building in this way, it is hoped that ownership of the scenarios will be broad and thus considered both objective and authoritative. Having built the scenarios, these experts would then validate the scenarios, giving them broad credibility.

It is impossible, and counterproductive, to pre-determine what scenarios will come out of such a project; the point of a scenario building process is to synthesize the knowledge and expertise of a broad group of people. However, we have identified three examples

of the sorts of policy options that might be addressed by these scenarios.

1. Government Fiat – Governments ban specific polluting activities and items (e.g. incandescent light bulbs), offer targeted subsidies (e.g. for hybrid and electric vehicles and windmills), and tax specific industries (e.g. aviation and petrochemicals).
2. Expanding Carbon Allowances – Carbon trading is seen as a success and is expanded to most areas of the economy through a complex system of personal carbon credits. Those who exceed their personal allowance need to buy additional credits through brokers, who buy up excess allowances.
3. Tackling the problem through prices – The EU sets up a carbon price further up the value chain, where the carbon is first either produced, if produced in the EU, or imported, if outside the EU. After a significant debate over how to do this the EU decides to scrap trading, with its high transaction costs, in favour of a carbon tax applied when the carbon first enters the EU.

LOOKING FORWARD

Once we have built the scenarios the potential for their use is vast given that good data is currently lacking in this area. They can be used as a tool to discuss responses to climate change with business, government and the media, or to form the basis for roundtable discussions, publications and op-eds. Furthermore, the scenarios will be packaged and provided to the Stockholm Network's member think tanks across Europe as a stimulus for local projects around climate change policy. The scenarios will facilitate at least one major launch event, and further events in which business, governments and NGOs are asked to discuss the implication of the scenarios for their organisations and broader society.

At present we are looking to identify potential contributors to our workshops and find ways in which we can work with other organisations to publicise the results and customise them to local contexts. For more information or to register your interest in this project please contact Paul Domjan at paul@stockholm-network.org or call (+44) 0207 354 8888.



PROFILE:
Civitas



www.civitas.org.uk

Civitas is an independent think tank that seeks to deepen public understanding of the legal, institutional and moral framework that makes possible a free and democratic society. The state in Britain has taken on more than it can manage. It should confine itself to creating the conditions in which free people can follow their conscience and advance civilisation as they believe best. We try to combine ideas and action in rebuilding civil society. To that end we offer primary education for children failed by the state school system and unable to afford the most costly private alternatives.

There are a number of reasonably priced private schools, but many are too expensive for the majority of people. We aim to provide high quality primary education for all sections of society, regardless of parental income. We achieve this aim with two programmes, the New Model School and our supplementary schools.

We have established a primary school in London, the New Model School, whose fees are kept as low as economically possible without making a loss. At present the fees are below £5,000 per year; about 40-50% lower than many London-based private schools.

Many primary schools in inner city areas fail to teach the basics. On Saturday mornings and after school hours during weekdays we provide lessons in English and maths for children who have fallen behind. We are currently providing six Saturday morning classes in English and maths for local children in Whitechapel, the Kings Cross area, Hammersmith, Birmingham, Bradford and Keighley. We also provide two after-school classes on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in the Kings Cross area. The children also benefit from a two-week summer school. At the last such school in 2006 the average reading age of the children at Kings Cross increased by 11 months.

“We aim to provide high quality primary education for all sections of society, regardless of parental income”

Children who have been excluded from school are often completely failed by the system. The London Boxing Academy Community Project (LBA) tries to reach excluded teenagers, who have often been in trouble with the police, by offering boxing and fitness training. Our role in the joint project is to teach English, maths and information and communications technology (ICT) for three hours each day. The project has helped to open up new opportunities for boys who otherwise faced a future dominated by crime and personal failure. We also run a dyslexia bursary scheme for children with special learning difficulties.

We supply schools with speakers and teaching materials in two areas: Britain's relationship with Europe and the role of the family and marriage in a free and democratic society.

As part of our continuing effort to ensure that schools are supplied with objective materials about the EU we provide a network of about 200 EU-sceptic speakers willing to talk to schools. Talks have been held in 277 schools and 28 debates have been held to date. Factsheets have been prepared for use in schools, covering topics such as the CAP and the impact on the developing world. Their preparation is overseen by independent advisers to ensure objectivity. They are free at our website (www.civitas.org.uk/eufacts) and are being downloaded at the rate of over 2,000 copies per year.

We facilitate informed public debate by providing accurate factual information on today's social issues, publishing informed comment and analysis, and bringing together leading protagonists in open discussion. Our current focus is on issues such as education, health, crime, social security and immigration. Our online reports on these and other issues are widely sought after and in 2006 329,000 documents were downloaded.

“The state in Britain has taken on more than it can manage”

Civitas has established the Centre for Social Cohesion following widespread and longstanding concern about the diminishing sense of community in Britain. Several developments have put questions about our sense of national allegiance on the map. The threat from Islamist terrorists is the most prominent, but a sudden increase in large-scale immigration has also raised questions about the number of newcomers who can be absorbed without dramatically affecting house prices and job prospects.



PROFILE: Policy Institute

Which European country was its first mass-literate society? Which had five ancient universities, producing philosophers who invented economics and first described the importance of free trade? Which ran the only competitive free banking system, hosted the richest trading city in the 19th Century and founded Hong Kong? That's right – Scotland, in many ways the font of modern political and economic liberalism.

Not that you would guess that from visiting the country now. The home of Adam Smith is sadly either ignorant or dismissive of the principles he promoted in *The Wealth of Nations*. The only political party that pays lip service to free-market ideas wins between 2% and 15% of elected seats (depending on which tier of government). The political establishment is firmly wedded to old fashioned socialism. The results are predictable – low economic growth, and a large public sector that delivers shockingly poor healthcare and education.

The picture is complicated by nationalism. Between a quarter and a third of Scots say they want full independence from the UK, and more support separate political institutions of one kind or another. In 1999 a 'devolved' parliament was established in an attempt to assuage these sentiments, with extensive powers over public services and economic matters. This presents both an opportunity and a threat for liberals in Scotland.

The threat is obvious – devolution allows the entrenched establishment to opt out of UK-wide market-style reforms in areas such as healthcare or utilities. But it also offers an opportunity to those who hope to change the climate of opinion in Scotland and rediscover its intellectual roots in the Enlightenment that flourished so richly here.

With this in mind a group of economists and businessmen founded the Policy Institute in 1999, the same year as devolution. The think-tank is organised along the same lines as many pioneers in the UK, America and elsewhere.



www.policyinstitute.info

Independent of political or commercial interests, it is funded by voluntary donations, allowing its research to challenge vested interests and established certainties. The aim is to present new thinking to opinion formers and the wider public in Scotland, with a view to stimulating debate, thus allowing at least the possibility of eventual political reform.

It's a tough task. In one sense, being a Johnny-come-lately has its advantages. We know that think tanks are effective instruments in the war of ideas, and many of those ideas have already been developed – they just need transferring to Scotland. But in another sense the pitch has been queered in that certain free-market ideas are now firmly associated with particular political movements, making it harder to find a broad, open-minded audience for them.

“The home of Adam Smith is sadly either ignorant or dismissive of the principles he promoted”

The Policy Institute has a broad range of public policy interests, mostly as they relate to Scotland, and often within the remit of the devolved Holyrood Parliament. We divide them into four broad topics. Inevitably for Scotland, Governance is one of them – the constitution is by no means settled, and there is a big market for budding founding fathers. Next comes the Economy – a constant source of debate in Scotland, which is more of a Celtic pussycat than a tiger. Then there is 'Society' which includes the big public services of health and education

which are so neglected and mismanaged here. Finally there is a 'Rural' stream of research, covering environmental matters and issues relating to Scotland's beautiful and thinly populated landscape.

Most papers are 5,000 words or less, and we bring out between eight and ten publications a year: All are peer-reviewed and edited to high standards, before being published on the website (www.policyinstitute.info). One of the advantages of operating in one of Europe's smaller countries is that it is much easier for a think tank to reach its audience. Direct mailing is not a drop in the ocean, events are accessible from most regions and the media is relatively hungry for stories!

A weakness is of course the small pool of suitable authors – so we're especially keen on drawing on expertise from around Europe and the world – do please get in touch!



PROFILE: E. G. West Centre

The E.G West Centre is based in the School of Education, University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK and is the world's only university research centre dedicated to understanding the role of private for-profit education in the delivery of "Education for All". The Centre was established in 2002 to honour and build upon the work of the late E.G. West, whose research programme helped to shed light upon the growth of education before state intervention in the UK and US and the unintended consequences and hidden costs it brings.

The Centre is currently focusing its activities on researching and publicising the remarkable growth of private schools serving low income families in developing countries – and how this is helping to achieve "Education for All". To this end the Centre researches and analyses the development of private schooling and its potential role in achieving "Education for All"; provides policy advice to governments and international agencies on the development of private education and conducive regulatory and investment environments and acts as an international clearing house for ideas on the development of private education. In 2006, Sugata Mitra (Research Director at NIIT, India) joined the Centre as Professor of Educational



www.ncl.ac.uk/egwest/

Technology and his world famous 'Hole in the Wall' project will now be integrated into the Centre's research programme. Professor Mitra's work on Minimally Invasive Education involves a set of experiments that set out to investigate the processes by which children self-instruct each other in skill areas. The experiments involve constructing outdoor Internet kiosks in rural and semi-urban areas, particularly where economically disadvantaged children live. The children are exposed to the technology with no instruction whatsoever. It is observed that they reach close to the levels of city children with no difficulty. Additional effects such as management skills, social skills, behaviour changes and acquisition of the English language have been observed as well. This research is both exciting and controversial as it challenges the idea that teachers and schools are required for education to flourish. Mitra's findings suggest that the opposite may be true.

"The Centre researches and analyses the development of private schooling and its potential role in achieving 'Education for All'"

In 2006, Professor James Tooley's essay "Educating Amarech" won first prize in the *Financial Times* and International Finance Corporation's competition on "Business and Development", and as a result a new education fund has since been established with \$100 million dollars to invest in this exciting and fast moving business sector. The Centre continues to publish its findings in academic journals, think tank publications, magazines and newspapers and its staff regularly speak at conferences around the world. Academic articles have

appeared in the *Review of Austrian Economics*, *International Journal of Educational Research*, *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*. Previous publications also include *Private Education is Good for the Poor: A Study of Private Schools Serving the Poor in Low Income Countries*, James Tooley and Pauline Dixon, Cato Institute, 2005.

The Centre aims to further strengthen and reinforce its position as the world's leading authority on the growth and development of private schools serving low income families in developing countries. Education and training programmes will also be introduced at the University of Newcastle, including a Master's level course on international aid and development. The future potential for developing global chains of budget private schools, microfinance schemes, private school associations will all feature in the Centres future research programme. The Centre also aims to change the way people think within the United Nations, international agencies and NGOs.



PROFILE: The Centre for European Reform



www.cer.org.uk

The Centre for European Reform is an independent think tank that works on EU issues, economics and foreign policy. We are based in London but have an international team and outlook. In the ten years since its establishment, the CER has built a reputation for innovative thinking, rigorous analysis and high-quality publications.

We consider ourselves pro-European but not uncritical. We regard European integration as largely beneficial but recognise that in many respects the Union does not work well. The CER therefore aims to promote new ideas for reforming the European Union. We believe that the EU needs to be open, efficient and outward looking. We spend a lot of time thinking about how to make the EU a more effective international actor.

The CER is a forum for people with ideas from Britain and across the continent to discuss the many political, economic and social challenges facing Europe. It seeks to work with similar bodies in other European countries, North America, Russia, China, Turkey and elsewhere in the world. Half of the conferences and seminars

we organise each year take place outside the UK. At our meetings, we seek to bring together the best thinkers from politics, business, academia and the media. Most of these meetings are invitation only and many are off the record, to guarantee a high level of debate.

The conclusions of our research and seminars are reflected in our publications, as well as in the private papers and briefings that senior officials, ministers and commissioners ask us to provide. All our publications are written in accessible English and edited to the highest standards. The CER is not affiliated with any government or political party. Its work is funded by donations from the private sector; it has never received core funding from governments or EU institutions.

We have a full-time staff of ten, mostly senior researchers and administrators. This set-up keeps us flexible, free of bureaucracy and allows us to react swiftly to political developments. Former CER members are now advising European Commissioners in Brussels, running international think tanks of their own, writing for the best international newspapers, and two are ministers in the current British government.

We have influenced EU policy in many areas, ranging from EU defence procurement to relations with a resurgent Russia. We have been gradually broadening our focus from intra-EU issues (the Lisbon reform process, the EU budget, EU treaties and institutions) and EU foreign policy / enlargement to global issues. We are now also working on subjects such as the Middle East peace process, climate change and the rise of China. Among the many things we do are bi-annual seminars on transatlantic relations (with the Brookings Institution); the annual 'Bosphorus' conference in Istanbul (where Turkish politicians discuss accession with their EU counterparts); regular updates on the EU's financial services agenda; one the most widely noted research programmes on justice and home affairs (JHA); regular breakfasts and dinners with Commissioners, ministers from EU countries and high-profile business leaders; and the publication of the annual 'Lisbon scorecard' (Europe's most widely read overview of reform efforts in the member-states).

"We believe that the EU needs to be open, efficient and outward looking"

In coming months, we will be an integral part of the UK's debate about the implications of the EU's new Reform Treaty. We will comment on pressing international issues such as Kosovo independence, Iran's nuclear weapons programme, EU policy towards Africa, and the

Russian presidential changeover. We will publish a path-breaking pamphlet on the reform of the European emissions rights trading scheme; a European defence scorecard; an update on the EU's emerging energy policy; recommendations on EU immigration policy; an outlook for Ukraine's place in Europe; and much much more.

Policy in Motion



A think tank's aim is to mould the culture of ideas that drives social and political change, but so far there has been a tendency to limit the propagation of these ideas to written media: books, blogs and press releases. This is undoubtedly important, but our target audience are politicians, journalists, policy makers: time is short and concentration fragmented. A short film can capture the imagination; flickering images linger in the mind so much longer than words on a page.

If, as Napoleon said, a picture is worth a thousand words, what better way to show policy challenges than through film? Drawing on research done by Stockholm Network member think tanks, we are producing short documentary films in three areas of public policy: education, health and roads. In Britain, these areas are dominated by state monopolies that have delivered consistently poor results for more than 50 years.

SCHOOL CHOICE

In 1999, the Moser Report assessed the literacy levels of adults in the UK and found that one in five were "functionally illiterate". Despite over a century of universal state education, literacy rates are still shockingly low. What can be done to improve Britain's schools?

School choice betters schools by creating competition between them. In 1992 Sweden created a voucher scheme, allowing parents to choose either a public school or participating private school for their children. Through

competition from private school companies, educational outcomes have improved across the board. With support for school choice strong across the entire political spectrum in Sweden, it is entirely feasible that such a scheme could be successful in Britain.

"flickering images linger in the mind so much longer than words on a page"

Civitas, our partner on this documentary, isn't waiting on politicians. They have started The New Model School, a private school that undercuts the cost of state education by around £800 per pupil per year. The school is only two years old, but already wildly popular with students and parents, and showing strong results, with reading ages 18 months ahead of state school averages.

HEALTHCARE REFORM

Even with spending levels now at the EU average, the NHS still presents its patients with inadequate service, high risk of infection and long waiting times. New Labour has continued some of the supply-side reforms instigated by previous Conservative administrations, and is increasing the role of the private sector in providing services and investment. But there has been little real demand-side reform.

In this documentary, we sought to explore healthcare systems that put the emphasis on individual responsibility, rather than state reliance. In order to encourage a high quality debate around the subject of healthcare reform, several experts in the field voice their opinions on what could and should be done to increase competitiveness and improve

service delivery. In a UK context, it is only when competition is brought to healthcare provision that people will take a more informed approach to their lifestyles and healthcare, all the while leaving the political cornerstones of the NHS – universality, comprehensiveness, accessibility and comprehensiveness – untouched.

ROAD PRICING

With congestion costing Britain an estimated £8bn a year (predicted to rise to £22bn in 2025) the government have proposed a national road-pricing scheme. According to Stephen Glaister, professor of transport at Imperial College London, this would reduce road use by 9% and arrest the significant increases in traffic speeds. Such a move, however, would be deeply unpopular in Britain, as many motorists think road pricing will come in addition to the more than £31bn of motoring taxes and at the expense of civil liberties. However, the scheme would scrap these taxes in favour of charging per mile, with the busiest parts of the network charging more than the quiet. Introducing rational pricing to the roads would result in a fairer allocation of road space, with those who benefit the most, paying the most.

"The further our ideas spread, the greater the hope for change"

With pricing, revenue becomes attributable to roads. And with revenue comes the possibility of roads being placed in private ownership, where investment and innovation are rewarded with higher profits. Many people are uneasy about roads being priced, let alone privatised. But as Professor Glaister pointed out to me, roads can be thought of as utility, just like telephones, electricity and gas. Here, prices have fallen and investment increased since privatisation. We could see the same with roads.

These films are unlikely to be a YouTube phenomenon; for that you need a film about a puppy trapped in a tissue box. But hopefully they will spread the ideas our think tanks are proposing to audiences both old and new. And the further our ideas spread, the greater the hope for change.

You can find out more about these films at www.stockholm-network.org/thestateofbritain

Greg Carter is the Stockholm Network's filmmaker

UPCOMING NEWS & EVENTS



The Amigo Society

The Amigo Society was founded in 2004 by the Stockholm Network.

Its mission is to bring together public policy experts, media representatives and members of civil society around policy issues of importance to tomorrow's enlarged Europe, with special focus on social policy in Belgium (health care,

retirement, social security and labour market reform). The Society convenes monthly at the Amigo Hotel in Brussels. Its meetings usually comprise of a presentation by a guest speaker followed by a debate and a cocktail. The events are free of charge and we welcome contributions to the discussion. Please visit www.stockholm-network.org for information on upcoming debates.

The Golden Umbrellas

As part of the celebrations of our 10 year anniversary, the Stockholm Network is delighted to announce the launch of the Golden Umbrella Think Tank Awards for 2007. This will be an annual event, taking place at the end of each year, and is the first pan European think tank awards ceremony.

The event will bring together the Stockholm Network's 130+ member think tanks from 40 countries ranging from Iceland to Azerbaijan, in addition to European politicians, journalists, policy makers and industry representatives. We are delighted that our keynote speaker

for the evening will be Amb. C. Boyden Gray, the US Ambassador to the European Union.

There will be 9 awards and all Golden Umbrellas will be awarded by luminaries from across the European political landscape.

If you would like to know more about this event, or would like to make a nomination, please email: awards@stockholm-network.org



ABOUT THE NETWORK

The Stockholm Network is the leading pan-European think tank and market-oriented network. It is a one-stop shop for organisations seeking to work with Europe's brightest policymakers and thinkers. Today, the Stockholm Network brings together over 120 market-oriented think tanks from across Europe, giving us the capacity to deliver local reform messages and locally-tailored global messages across the EU and beyond.

Combined, the think tanks in our network publish thousands of op-eds in the high quality European press, produce many hundreds of publications, and hold a wide range of conferences, seminars and meetings. As such, the Stockholm Network and its member organisations influence many millions of Europeans every year.

Policy Issues

The Network is a forum for sharing, exchanging and developing pan-European research and best practice. Interested in ideas which stimulate economic growth and help people to help themselves, we promote and raise awareness of policies which create the social and economic conditions for a free society. These include:

- Reforming European welfare states and creating a more flexible labour market.
- Updating European pension systems to empower individuals.
- Ensuring more consumer-driven healthcare, through reform of European health systems and markets.
- Encouraging an informed debate on intellectual property rights as an incentive to innovate and develop new knowledge in the future, whilst ensuring wide public access to such products in the present.
- Reforming European energy markets to ensure the most beneficial balance between economic growth and environmental quality.
- Emphasising the benefits of globalisation, trade and competition and creating an understanding of free market ideas and institutions

What do we do

We conduct pan-European research on, and create a wider audience for, market-oriented policy ideas in Europe. Our website contains a comprehensive directory of European free market think tanks and thinkers. We advertise forthcoming events (our own and those of partner organisations) and facilitate publication exchange and translation between think tanks. We also post regular news flashes and updates on European think tanks and their activities.

Would you like to join the Stockholm Network?

Please contact us on +44 20 7354 8888 or email info@stockholm-network.org

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS



The Stockholm Network is the leading pan-European think tank and market-oriented network. Spanning almost 40 countries and over 130+ think tanks, our unique organisation has the capacity to deliver local messages and locally-tailored global messages across the EU and beyond.

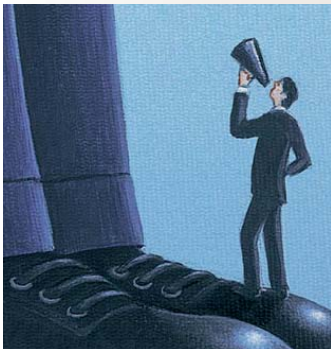
Through our publications, weekly newsletter, and special events, members are able to exchange ideas and make an impact on a wide range of public policy topics and ideas.

If you know of a new organisation you think would benefit from Stockholm Network membership, please contact our office at info@stockholm-network.org and let us know.

“Too many of Western Europe’s economies are sclerotic and in desperate need of reform. The Stockholm Network plays a crucial role in linking Europe’s market-orientated think tanks, promoting the ideas that are essential if Europe is to have a brighter future”. Nick Herbert MP

- 1 Adam Smith Institute
www.adamsmith.org
United Kingdom
- 2 Adam Smith Society
www.adamsmith.it
Italy
- 3 Adriatic Institute for Public Policy
www.adriaticinstitute.org
Croatia
- 4 Albanian Liberal Institute
www.liberalb.org
Albania
- 5 Anders Chydenius Foundation
www.chydenius.net
Finland
- 6 Association for Liberal Thinking
www.liberal-dt.org.tr
Turkey
- 7 Association for Modern Economy
www.ame.org.mk
Macedonia
- 8 Avenir Suisse
www.avenir-suisse.ch
Switzerland
- 9 Bulgarian Society for Individual Liberty
www.libertarium.net
Bulgaria
- 10 Captus
www.captus.ru
Sweden
- 11 Causa Liberal
www.causaliberal.net
Portugal
- 12 Centre for Economic Development
www.ced.bg
Bulgaria
- 13 Centre for Economic Development
www.cphrsk
Slovakia
- 14 Centre for Economics and Politics
cep.in.cz
Czech Republic
- 15 Centre for Entrepreneurship
and Economic Development
www.visit-ceed.org
Montenegro
- 16 Centre for European Policy
www.cep.eu
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- 17 Centre for European Reform
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www.case.com.pl
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www.cepos.dk
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www.cerclesliberaux.com
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www.cfact.eu
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www.obcinst.cz
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www.civita.no
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- 34 Civitas
www.civitas.org.uk
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- 35 Club 2015
www.club2015.org
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- 36 Conservative Institute of M. R. Stefanik
www.institute.sk
Slovakia
- 37 Council on Public Policy
www.council.uni-bayreuth.de
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- 39 ECIPE
www.ecipe.org
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- 40 Economic Policy Research Institute
www.epri-macedonia.org
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- 41 Ekome (Society for Social and Economic
Studies)
www.ekome.gr
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www.eudoxa.se
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- 43 Euro 92
www.euro92.com
France
- 44 European Ideas Network
www.epp-ed.org/europeanideasnetwork
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- 45 EVA
www.eva.fi
Finland
- 46 F.A. Hayek Institute
www.hayek-institut.at
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- 47 FAES
www.fundacionfaes.org
Spain
- 48 Fondation pour l'innovation politique
www.fondapol.org
France
- 49 Foundation for Market Economy
www.fme.hu
Hungary
- 50 Friedrich August von Hayek Stiftung
www.hayek-stiftung.de
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- 51 Frédéric Bastiat Stichting
www.bastiatstichting.nl
The Netherlands
- 52 FREE (Forum Rozwoju Edukacji
Ekonomicznej)
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- 53 Free Market Centre
www.fmc.org.yu
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- 54 Free Minds Association
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- 59 Global Vision
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www.hwwi.org
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www.healthpowerhouse.com
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- 63 Health Policy Institute
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- 64 Health Reform.cz
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- 65 Hellenic Leadership Institute
www.hli.gr
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- 66 iFRAP (French Institute for Research
into Public Administration)
www.ifrap.org
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- 67 INEKO
www.ineko.sk/english
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- 117 Romania Think Tank
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- 119 Sauvegarde Retraites
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- 131 Veritas
www.veritas-iceland.com
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- 132 Valter Eucken Institut
www.eucken.de
Germany
- 133 Work For All
www.workforall.org
Leuven

PUBLICATIONS



Books

Over the last ten years the Stockholm Network has produced a large number of books, research reports, and compendia of its own and in collaboration with member think tanks and others. These publications have sought to address and clarify many of the big public and social policy issues facing European policymakers and political leaders. If you wish to order a publication please email paulh@stockholm-network.org

- [A Sick Business £10](#)
- [Apology for Capitalism £10](#)
- [Beyond the Borders £10](#)
- [Coincidence or Crisis? £10](#)
- [Does the West Know Best? £8](#)
- [European Dawn £10](#)
- [Europe needs Saving £10](#)
- [Flat Tax £10](#)
- [Intellectual Property Frontiers £5](#)
- [Impatient for Change £12](#)

EYE ON EUROPE

Stockholm Network Newsletter

Want to keep updated with all the Stockholm Network's latest news, views and events? Sign up for one of our newsletters and receive regular, informed updates in our three programme areas.

Stockholm Network Weekly Update

This weekly e update keeps subscribers up to date on all Stockholm Network member think tank activities including events, announcements and publications as well as featuring insights into news stories from our 3 programme areas. To subscribe, email susie@stockholm-network.org



Climate of Opinion

To register for the Stockholm Network Energy and Environment programme's newsletter, entitled Climate of Opinion, please email helend@stockholm-network.org. Each month, we will focus on a different aspect of energy and environment policy, featuring expert opinion and comment.



European Health Matters

Please send news, publications, information on upcoming events, and updates on the work you are doing in the fields of health and welfare to kristian@stockholm-network.org for inclusion.



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BOOK FEATURE

Policy Exchange: 'Living Apart Together – British Muslims and the paradox of multiculturalism'

Munira Mirza, Abi Senthilkumaran and Zein Ja'far

'Living Apart Together' explores the attitudes of Muslims in Britain today and the reasons why there has been a significant rise in Islamic fundamentalism amongst the younger generation.

It argues that the growth of Islamism in the UK is not solely a foreign problem, but something that must be

understood in relation to political and social trends that have emerged in British society over the past two decades. It also examines the impact of public policy on the Muslim population and suggests that the way the Government is responding to Islamism is making things worse not better. Policy Exchange's research into the attitudes of Muslims in Britain showed that there is a growing religiosity amongst the younger generation of Muslims. They feel that they have less in common with non-Muslims than do their parents and they show a stronger preference for Islamic schools and sharia law. Religiosity amongst younger Muslims is not about following their parents' cultural traditions, but rather, their interest in religion is more politicised.

<http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/libimages/246.pdf>



ONLINE LIBRARY

We have recently launched the Stockholm Network's online think-tank publications library, our unique one-stop catalogue of European think tank publications.

After surveying our members, this initiative was given overwhelming support. We are now seeking all our members' permission to upload into the library as many of their publications as they would like to see reaching a larger audience, across Europe and the world. Our aim is to include all languages in the library, so if

publications exist in more than one version, we would like to host it in all available languages. For more information about the library, or if you wish to submit publications, please contact Susie Squire: susie@stockholm-network.org

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