

## **Electoral Change and Prospects for Northern Ireland**

**One Day Conference**

**Queen's University Belfast**

**Thursday 7 October 2010**

### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

During the twelve years since the Good Friday Agreement there has been dramatic electoral change in Northern Ireland. The DUP and Sinn Fein have become the dominant forces within their respective communities, the UUP has aligned with the Conservative Party and there have been discussions of Unionist electoral alliances or even mergers. This one day conference is sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council, whose data on the 2010 Westminster election in Northern Ireland will be presented, and by the Irish Politics Group of the Political Studies Association of the UK. It is being hosted by the School of Politics, International Studies and Philosophy at Queen's University Belfast. It aims to bring together academics, journalists, politicians and other interested organisations, with papers invited on the following themes:

- Why has electoral realignment taken place within Northern Ireland's two main communities – and amongst which sections of the population?
- Is the rise of the DUP and of Sinn Fein irreversible? Can the UUP revive? What prospects are there for the SDLP?
- What are the implications for future elections, including the 2011 Assembly contest, of electoral change?
- Do recent electoral successes for Alliance and the Green Party indicate a rise in 'non-aligned' politics?
- Why is turnout declining for all types of Northern Ireland elections?
- What are the potential policy implications arising from Northern Ireland's electoral landscape?

It is intended that the conference combines formal academic papers with roundtable discussions. Individuals wishing to present papers should submit a 200 word abstract of their proposal to Dr Aaron Edwards ([aaron.edwards@qub.ac.uk](mailto:aaron.edwards@qub.ac.uk)) and Professor Jon Tonge ([j.tonge@liv.ac.uk](mailto:j.tonge@liv.ac.uk)) by 20 August 2010 at the very latest. Modest assistance with travel expenses may be payable to selected participants.

*It is hoped that many participants will proceed to the Political Studies Association of Ireland annual conference in Dublin, which commences on the following day.*