

A Study on Tony Blair's Policies towards European Union with Reference to 1998 UK'S EU Presidency

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Abstract: This paper mainly explains about Tony Blair's policies towards European Union with reference to 1998 UK's EU Presidency. The Labour party under the leadership of Tony Blair came to power in UK after the 1997 UK General election. Before the election, the Labour Party introduced the pro-European policy strategy goals in its 1997 UK general election manifesto. This was whole heartedly supported by the UK people in the 1997 general election and the Labour Party won the election by a huge majority of votes in its Labour party history. This election gave new direction to the UK's EU policy. In this scenario, in 1998, the UK government occupied the EU presidency. Under Tony Blair's premiership, the Labour government's 1998 EU presidency was considered as an important step in the EU-UK relations. The agenda of the 1998 UK presidency of EU was different from the agenda of 1992 UK presidency. During John Major government's 1992 EU presidency, the major challenges before them was with regard to financial issues, the negotiation of the Danish opt-outs and other issues. But Major's government somehow succeeded in settling all these issues. But, its achievements during 1992 EU presidency were insignificant when compared to Tony Blair's New Labour government's 1998 EU presidency. The study of the 1998 UK's EU presidency plays an important role to better understand the EU-UK relations during Tony Blair's period.

Keywords: European Union, United Kingdom, Tony Blair, Labour party, 1998 EU Presidency, Euro, Enlargement policy

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