#### **European Union Public Policy**

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Lecture 8 Policy decision-making 2: decision-making in the European Parliament

- 1. Decision-making in the European Parliament;
- 2. The relationship between the European Parliament and the national Member state parliaments

- The change in the inter-institutional dimension of the E.U.
- 3 organisational and behavioural aspects of policy decision-making in the European Parliament:
  a) committee work;
  b) the division of labour within political party groups;
  c) the building of majorities

#### a) Committee work in the European Parliament

- 1999 to 2004 European Parliament had 17 permanent committees
- 1996 temporary committee of enquiry to examine the transit system
- 1996 temporary committee of enquiry to deal with BSE crisis

b) The division of labour within the political party groups

 political party groups control the agenda of European Parliament AND its internal organisation

through Conference of Presidents
(President of E. P. and chairmen/women of political party groups)

 <u>c) The building of policy and policy</u> <u>decision-making majorities</u>
 - necessity to build majority support between national Member state MEP party groups

- main political party groups in European Parliament:
  - social democrats
  - conservatives/Christian Democrats
  - liberals
  - greens

- strong incentives for cohesive political party groups and for coalition policy decision-making formations - growing inter-institutional ambitions and influence - committee influence - policy decision-making influence

- 2. The relationship between the European Parliament and the national Member state parliaments
  - Maastricht (1993) and Amsterdam (1997) Treaties considerably increased status of European Parliament, especially as a policy decision-making body
    - particularly in relation to national Member state parliaments

**CONTRADICTION:** - growth in legislative importance of E.U. (and European Parliament) contradicts with low public perception of importance of E.U. (and European Parliament)