European Union Public Policy

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Lecture 2

Agenda-Setting 1: Role and purpose, EU political process, and the nature of agendas

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Additional Sources:

Princen, S. (2007) 'Agenda-setting in the E.U.: a theoretical exploration and agenda for research', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 14:1, pp.21-38.

Princen, S. (2011) "Agenda-setting strategies in E.U. policy processes', in the Journal of European Public Policy, Vol.18, no.7, pp.927-943.

Warleigh-Lack, A. and Drachenberg, R. (2011) 'Spillover in a soft policy era? Evidence from the Open Method of Co-ordination in education and training', in the Journal of European Public Policy, Vol.18, no.7, pp.999-1015

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1. The place of agenda-setting in the policy process – its role and purpose

2. Agenda-setting as a political process – its distinctive aspect in the EU policy process

3. The nature of agendas – the social construction of policy issues

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1. <u>The place of agenda-setting in the policy process</u>

   - key difference between EU and individual states

   - link between agenda-setting and the EU integration process

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2. <u>Agenda-setting as a political process</u>

a) the identification, determination and clarification of the issue

b) the social and political construction of the issue

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3. The nature of agendas

- differing interpretations of issues, agendas and policies

- danger of different forms of policy outcomes

- negative agenda-setting

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3. <u>The nature of agendas</u>

- The pre-agenda process

- contending ideas

- advocacy

- learning, and knowledge of - information

- political debate

- political difference and/or agreement

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3. The nature of agendas

- first stage of agenda-setting –
  social construction of the issue

- additional agenda 'spillover'

- avoiding conflict between
  national interests and EU
  interests in agenda-setting

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Summary:

1. <u>The place of agenda-setting in the policy process</u>

a) No policy outcomes can be reached without firstly the issue being placed on the EU policy agenda

b) Issues reach the policy agenda usually as a result of substantial political mobilisation

c) Specific to EU is link between agenda-setting and integration process

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Summary:

2. <u>Agenda-setting as a political process</u>

a)   Identification, clarification, definition of an issue is open to political self-interest

b)   Definition of issue will determine which institution and organisation deals with it

c)   Issues reach EU policy agenda from long-term processes and short-term crisis processes

d)   EU Commission has initiated large 'bundles' of issues for EU policy agenda

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Summary:

3. <u>The nature of agendas</u>

a) Issues are open to differing interpretations among 27 Member states

b) Negative as well as positive agenda-setting

c) Complex pre-agenda process

d) Control of 'social construction' of issue is key to satisfactory outcome

e) Avoiding national interest/EU interest conflict assists speedy issue acceptance on to policy agenda