European Union Public Policy

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Lecture 2a

Agenda-Setting 2: fragmentation and the absence of effective policy co-ordination

Four areas of the agenda-setting process in EU Public Policy influenced by the features of E.U. institutions:

- 1. Fragmentation
- 2. Absence of effective policy co-ordination;
- 3. Proto-Federalism;
- 4. 'Winners and losers'

1. Fragmentation

a) the 'barrier' (the EU Commission)
b) opportunities – many 'avenues' and 'ways in' to the agenda-setting process

- 1. <u>Fragmentation of EU Public Policy agenda-setting</u> due to:
- a) the role, ambitions and interests of EU Commissioners;
- b) the role, ambitions and interests of Director-Generals;
- c) the blurred boundaries and responsibilities of Director-Generals;
- d) the interests of the Member States in the Council of Ministers;
- e) The European Parliament 'shadow committees'f) The E.U. court system.

2. The absence of effective Public Policy <u>co-ordination</u>

a) lack of political party cohesion;
b) the influence of national policy styles and 'policy' cultures

an 'institutionalisation' problem

- 2. <u>The absence of effective Public Policy</u> <u>co-ordination</u>
- a) A lack of cohesive political party units at EU level;
- b) The variety of national styles and cultures found in E.U. Commissioners;
- c) The variety of national styles and cultures found in the Director-Generals;
- d) The lack of institutionalisation of the EU policy bureaucracy

- 3. Proto-Federalism
 - a divided territorial structure influences pattern of agenda-setting
 - regional government structure developed

= more territorial institutional EU bodies for individuals and groups to push and argue own public policy agenda

3. Proto-Federalism

 agenda-setting as also about definition of issue (i.e. how issue defined once it makes it on to the agenda)

 public policy issues shaped through complex social and political processes and influences
 (different national policy styles and cultures)

3. Proto-Federalism

- a) Divided territorial structure of E.U. (including Regional govt.) provides multi-access to public policy agenda – fragmentation or diversity?
- b) Variety of 'national' public policy styles provide an agenda of range of public policy alternatives

4. 'Winners and losers'

- EU institutions create 'winners and losers' in EU public policy agenda-setting.
- 'distributive' policies more easily accepted on to public policy agenda = 'winners'
- policies that advantage groups, regions or states at expense of others in E.U. are more difficult to get accepted on to public policy agenda = 'losers'

Summary:

1.The fragmentation of E.U. institutions and diverse territorial representation offers many different points of access to the public policy agenda – provides a range of public policy alternatives and issues competing to get on agenda

2. Variation and range of points of access (fragmentation) in E.U. public policy agendasetting is totally opposite to E.U. public policy implementation process