

EU DEVELOPMENTS 2009

ECASBA-FONASBA

OCTOBER 2009, CAPETOWN, SOUTH-AFRICA

European Parliament

- ▶ European Parliament elections June 2009
- ▶ 3rd & 4th week of July 2009 election of European Parliament President, Vice-Presidents, Committees Chairs & Vice-Chairs, members of committees.
- ▶ President = Jerzy Buzek (Poland-EPP)
- ▶ Chairman TRAN Committee = Brian Simpson (S&D)

European Parliament

Analysis

- centre-right won, centre-left lost
- success of smaller parties undermining power of the main blocs
- none of the larger blocs large enough to dominate the assembly
- larger groups will be 'obliged' to join in a cross-party coalition to build the needed majority to be able to pass legislation

European Parliament

Analysis

- ALDE are natural allies for the EPP though a coalition by them only has 47.4% of the seats.
- Therefore, most likely is a 'grand coalition' between Socialist & Christian Democrats, together with Liberals
- It can however be expected that in their voting pattern Liberals will continuously switch between centre-right (economic reform) and centre-left (environmental & justice issues) ideologies

European Parliament

- Parliament votes more and more along party lines, while voting along national lines has decreased. According to the political group of an MEP, in 85% of the cases it can be predicted how he/she will vote (socalled cohesive voting).
- The German parties still have strong positions in the main parties. The German federal elections will therefore have a significant effect on politics inside the EP still to develop.

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- ▶ The Christian–Democrats gave away a lot of important, highly desirable, Committee Chairs (5 out of 10: Environment, Transport & Tourism, Justice and Home Affairs, Agriculture and Employment & Social Affairs) to the Socialists, probably to smoothen the ‘deal’ on Parliament & Commission President?
- ▶ The Christian–Democrats have 3 Chairs (industry/research/energy, legal affairs & foreign affairs)
- ▶ ALDE 1 chair (economic and monetary affairs), and Greens/EFA also 1 chair (development).

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- ▶ 14/09/2009: Mr. Buzek presented the way forward for the European Parliament over the next two and a half years.

5 challenges:

1. Economic crisis

emphasis on the reduction of unemployment (Swedish Presidency), resist protectionism & consolidation of the internal market for remaining competitive

European Parliament

2. Energy & ecology
emphasis on a common energy policy,
investment in renewable and fossil fuels,
reduction of CO²-emissions (maritime transport
included)
3. Foreign policy
4. Human rights
5. Reform of the European Parliament:
 - question hour during each Plenary in which
Barroso will answer to questions by MEPs
 - new Committee for fisheries

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