

“New Multilateralism in External Relations between the European Union and Latin America: Opportunities and Challenges for Transregionalisation”*

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"En algún tiempo, más allá del tiempo, el mundo era gris. Gracias a los indios Ishir, que robaron los colores a los dioses, ahora el mundo resplandece y los colores del mundo arden en los ojos que los miran.

Hace algún tiempo, Ticio Escobar acompañó a un equipo de televisión europeo que quería filmar escenas de la vida cotidiana de estos nativos. Una niña indígena seguía al director del equipo; sombra silenciosa pegada a su cuerpo, lo miraba fijo al rostro, muy de cerca, como si quisiera entrar en sus extraños ojos azules.

El director se valió de la intercesión de Ticio, que conocía a la niña y entendía su lengua, y ella le confesó:

"Quiero saber de qué color ve él las cosas".

Y el director sonrió: "Del mismo color que vos".

"¿Y cómo sabe usted de qué color veo yo las cosas?".

"At some time, beyond time, the world was grey. Thanks to the Ishir Indians, who stole the colours from the gods, now the world is resplendent and the colours of the world burn in the eyes that look at them.

Some time ago, Ticio Escobar accompanied a European television team that wanted to film scenes of the daily life of these natives. An indigenous girl followed the director of the team; silent shadow pressed to his body, she stared at his face, very closely, as if she wanted to enter his strange blue eyes.

The director used the intercession of Ticio, who knew the girl and her language, and she confessed:

"I want to know in what colour he sees things".

The director smiled: "The same colour as you".

"And how do you know in which colour I see things?".

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Table 2: EU-Centered Inter- and Transregionalism.

List of Abbreviations

AMLAC	EU Council Working Group on Latin America
BREXIT	United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union
CALC	Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean on Development and Cooperation
CAN	Andean Community
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CFSP	Common Foreign Security Policy
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy
EEAS	European External Action Service
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
EU-LAC	European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean Foundation
EPC	European Political Cooperation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FPA	Foreign Policy Analysis
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IR	International Relations
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MERCOSUR	Common Market of the South
PA	Pacific Alliance
TPP	Transpacific Trade Partnership
UN	United Nations

Introduction

In light of the growing presence of political, economic and social integration endeavours within the international and interregional contexts, the diversification of external relations for states - and the significance that it entails - has increased and significantly contributed to a more constructive participation of actors that were traditionally not active in multilateral dynamics. Thus, through infra and interregional multilateralism fostered by integration platforms, a growing number of states pursue their national interests and reflect political commitment to joint institutional visions and actions at the regional level. Either determined by land-connection, identity, trade zones or common values (amongst further considerations, which will be revised throughout this inquiry), this regionalist institutionalisation has also thrived in a multi-polarised and multi-sectorial practice of International Relations (IR), which shows that no longer states exclusively but also regions play a significant role - more significantly so when their advancements become institutionalised. Furthermore, ever since the end of the late 20th century bipolarisation, this practice is characterised by a widely adopted discussion upon which regions are connected and under which considerations. The conceptualisation of the borders of regions, traditionally geography-based, now also relies upon the level of interdependence, identity, level of institutionalisation, commercial interests, amongst others.

Albeit regions are defined as socially constructed spaces between the global and the national level¹, the evolving classification of the criterion that defines them has been accompanied by states' consistently evolving interest and search for platforms upon which they become institutionalised. For this reason, multilateralism has been adopted in the agendas of not only countries but also regional and international organisations. Integration, nonetheless, does not come out of the blue nor does it exist with no particular purpose.

¹ Ribeiro-Hoffmann, A. (2016). Inter- and Transregionalism, In: Börzel and Risse, *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism*, pp. 2-24.

Just as in the case of European integration, numerous Latin American countries (as will be revised throughout), often following the institutional example of the former, have established platforms for dialogue that aim to strengthen cohesion and foster integration dynamics. Despite the various institutional attempts that both regions have historically developed, both at the intra and interregional levels, the current international political scenario seems to more significantly pave the way for a reassessment of such multilateral endeavours. For they could be a means to overcome common challenges and find more effective, sustainable and long-lasting joint solutions through a reconstructed and updated association.

Contrastingly, the emergence and development of protectionist political, economic and social agendas – and further inward-oriented policies – within traditionally associative and multilaterally active states, has also thrived. As a result, given the increasing level of regionalism in the exercise of external relations and the level of interdependence that this creates, this development impacts further states as well as regions.

Embedded in the multilateral and transregional practice of international relations, this inquiry considers the influence that post-2016 international political outcomes have had in the transatlantic dynamics between the European Union and Latin America, namely the election of Donald Trump in the United States of America along with the protectionist politics his administration has pushed forward; the sociopolitical crisis in Venezuela along with its repercussions in Mercosur, and the institutionalisation of regional integration between the Pacific Alliance (PA) and Mercosur.

Ultimately, these political events will be analytically juxtaposed to the multilateral developments in the two adjacent regions – Latin America and the European Union – in which the impacts of these outcomes were correlated to direct political, economical and social outputs and influences that all the actors involved exert on one another. This will allow to find points of encounter that aim to explain the

evolving framework of multilateralism between the European Union and Latin America that could thrive in transregionalisation. Essentially, this work aims to shed light on the convenience and, more significantly, the salient necessity of a joint EU-Latin American action to strengthen the transregional framework through a renewed approach to multilateralism. This in order to effectively, efficiently, sustainably and based on common institutional values and visions, tackle the effects and consequences of the aforementioned events.

1.1.1. Multilateralism

Albeit usually competed, the various concepts of multilateralism find common ground under the assumptions of what it is not. At a first stage towards an elucidation on the concept, multilateralism does not relate to unilateral or bilateral endeavours. Likewise, multilateralism is not such when it is coerced or not conducted through a series of pre-agreed rules, which are meant to endure and be respected throughout, as Bouchard & Peterson² argue. Furthermore, they state, multilateralism is not unilateralism, bilateralism or interregionalism and it contrasts with imperialism, or cooperation based on coercion. Multilateral cooperation is therefore voluntary and it is not entirely ad hoc: it is based on rules that are durable and (at least potentially) affect the behaviour of actors that agree to multilateral cooperation.

Ultimately, they further, all interpretations stress three main dimensions:

1. The importance of rules
2. Inclusiveness in terms of the parties involved or affected; and
3. Voluntary cooperation that is at least minimally institutionalised.

From a historical perspective, multilateralism has had different interpretations, which have been influenced by the predominant theoretical models utilised to

² Bouchard, C. & Peterson, J. (2011). Conceptualising Multilateralism: Can We All Just Get Along? In: Mercury: Multilateralism and the EU in the Contemporary Global Order 1 (1), pp. 3-39.

interpret the series of phenomena that international relations entail (see Table 1: Theoretical Models of Multilateralism).

Table 1: Theoretical Models of Multilateralism (Bouchard & Peterson, 2011)³

Theoretical Perspective	Neorealist	Liberal Institutional	Constructivist	Neo-functional	Radical/critical/ ^{3rd} World
Model of Multilateralism	Weak (Hegemony)	Cooperative / Functional	Normative	Integrative	Dependent

In this sense, by the end of the Cold War, Keohane⁴ argued that multilateralism had developed a momentum of its own for it had increasingly become both an objective and ordering device in international relations. Multilateral institutions, by implication, take the form of international regimes or bureaucratic organisations and thus can be distinguished from other forms of multilateralism, such as ad hoc meetings and short-term arrangements to solve particular problems.⁵ His definition of multilateralism therefore is the practice of coordinating national policies in groups of three or more states, through ad hoc arrangements or by means of institutions. It thus involves (exclusively) states and often (not exclusively) institutions, interacting through persistent and connected sets of rules, formal and informal, that prescribe behavioural roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations.⁶

Keohane's definition of multilateralism was however dismissed as nominal by John Gerard Ruggie⁷ based on the fact that it neglected the qualitative dimension of the phenomenon. What makes it distinctive, and matters more than the number of parties or degree of institutionalisation, he argues, is the type of relations it spawns. For Ruggie, multilateralism means coordinating relations among three or

³ Ibid., p. 17.

⁴ Keohane, R. (1990). *Multilateralism: an Agenda for Research*, International Journal, 45: pp. 731-764.

⁵ Ibid., p. 733.

⁶ *Idem*

⁷ Ruggie, J.G. (1992). *Multilateralism Matters: the Anatomy of an Institution*, International Organization, 46 (3), pp. 561-598.

more states in accordance with certain principles that order relations between them. Multilateralism represented a generic institutional form and implied institutional arrangements that define and stabilise property rights of states, manage coordination problems and resolve collaboration problems. But it often took place in the absence of international organisations, which are a relatively recent arrival and still of only modest importance.⁸

Crucially, Ruggie argued, multilateralism is built on principles that distinguish it from other forms of IR such as bilateralism and imperialism:

1. Generalised principles of conduct. Three or more states engage in multilateral cooperation when relations between them are based on principles that identify 'appropriate conduct for a class of actions, without regard to particularistic interests of the parties.'⁹ Cooperation is governed by norms exhorting general if not universal modes of relations to other states, rather than differentiating relations case-by-case.¹⁰
2. Indivisibility. Multilateralism is based on a specific social construction: indivisibility. It can take various forms, but in all cases it constitutes 'the scope (both geographic and functional) over which costs and benefits are spread' when actions are taken that affect the collective.¹¹ For instance, peace is usually deemed indivisible in a collective security system.
3. Diffuse reciprocity. Members of a collective expect a rough equivalence of benefits in the aggregate and over time.¹² Diffuse reciprocity underpins the hypothesis that multilateralism helps solve problems of coordination on which transaction costs are high and states are mostly indifferent to outcomes.

⁸ Ibid., p. 567.

⁹ Ibid., p. 571.

¹⁰ Caporaso, J. (1992). International Relations Theory and Multilateralism: the Search for Foundations, *International Organization*, 46 (3), pp. 599-632.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 602

¹² Ruggie, Op. cit., p. 571.

Multilateralism may therefore be defined as three or more actors engaging in voluntary and essentially institutionalised international cooperation governed by norms and principles, with rules that apply by and large equally to all states.¹³

1.1.2. Transregionalism and Transregionalisation

Similarly to multilateralism, the conceptualisation of transregionalism finds common ground when elucidating what it is not. Ribeiro-Hoffmann¹⁴ puts forward a series of characterisations that distinguish these phenomena. Firstly, it is differentiated from other forms of interaction beyond domestic societies, such as bilateralism, multilateralism, and transnationalism as they explicitly refer to regions. Since regions can be defined in broader or narrower terms depending on moving criterion, their borders are much more volatile than those of states.¹⁵ According to the criteria adopted and the time period analysed, they include and exclude different actors and processes. Geography, interdependence, degree of formality, and legalisation of institutions, as well as identity are alternative criterion, which can be used to define and classify regions. In hand, regions are defined as socially constructed spaces between the global and the national level, which have some geographical reference point and which are often, but not always, defined by geographic proximity and shared institutions.

Ribeiro-Hoffmann therefore further differentiates from inter and transregionalism.¹⁶ The difference between them refers to the level of formality of the regions. While interregionalism denotes relations between two formal regional organisations, which are established by constituent treaties and which have a permanent seat, transregionalism, in turn, is used as a residual category of relations between regions including less formalised relations as well as non-state actors (see Table 2: EU-Centered Inter- and Transregionalism).

¹³ Bouchard & Peterson, Op. cit., p. 10.

¹⁴ Ribeiro-Hoffmann, Op. cit. p. 4.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

Tabla 2: EU-Centered Inter- and Transregionalism (Ribeiro-Hoffmann, 2016)¹⁷

EU-Centered Inter- and Transregionalism (selected list)		
	Inter-regionalism	Transregionalism
Cross-region		
Asia	EU-Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) (1972) EU-South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) (1994)	EU-China (1985) EU-Japan (1991) EU-Russia (1994) EU-India (2004) EU-South Korea (2010) Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) (1996)
Africa	EU-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (1989) EU-Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) (1994) EU-Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) (2000) EU-African Union (AU) (2000) EU-Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) (2003) EU-Economic Partnerships Agreements (EPAs) (in neg.)	EU-South Africa (2007) EU-Africa (2000) EU-African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) (1975)
Americas	EU-Andean Community (CAN) (1996) EU-Caribbean Community (CARICOM) (1975)/EU-Caribbean Forum (Cariforum) (1992) EU-Mercosur (1992) EU-Central American Common Market (CACM)/Central American Integration System (SICA) (1993)	EU-ÚS (1990) EU-Chile (2005) EU-Brazil (2007) EU-Mexico (2008) EU-Colombia (2013) EU-Peru (2013) EU-Canada (2014) EU-Latin American and Caribbean Countries (LAC) (1999-2013)

Following these conceptualisations, Ribeiro-Hoffmann argues that transregionalism can be defined as state and non-state actor-driven processes of bridging regions both institutionally and socially. This definition includes the idea

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 16.

behind the ‘trans’- in the international relations literature, and the suffix –‘sation’ in the international political economy literature. Hence, for the purposes of this inquiry, the term that will be utilised is transregionalisation as it is the concept that reflects the state actor-driven process of bridging regions both institutionally and socially - making emphasis on the word process, therefore not a reality yet.

1.2. The European Union as a Regionalism Model

Unlike the model of economic regionalism promoted by the United States¹⁸, the European Union has been, ever since its origins and especially throughout its adaptations, a major reference in the region-building practice and institutionalisation of regional integration. Differently to the USA, the EU does not exclusively pursue market goals, albeit cooperation does pursue economic associations in the form of interregional free trade areas.¹⁹ More significantly, however, as Börzel and Risse²⁰ assert, ever since the end of the Cold War when it subsequently expanded its foreign policy, the European Union has perceived and promoted itself as a model for effective and legitimate governance. Moreover, it has intended to be emulated by other countries and regions as much as it has sought to actively develop and export to these regions a *tool box* for diffusing the idea of regional integration in hand with ideas such as democracy, human rights, good governance and sustainability. Moreover, Hardacre and Smith²¹ argue that the Commission has been the main sponsor of regional integration and interregionalism in the world, having specifically commissioned strategic papers and having employed instruments from trade and development policy to this end.

¹⁸ Grugel, Jean B. (2004). New Regionalism and Modes of Governance – Comparing US and EU Strategies in Latin America, in: *European Journal of International Relations* 10:4, 603-626.

¹⁹ Börzel, T. A. & Risse, T. (2009). Diffusing (Inter-) Regionalism: The EU as a Model of Regional Integration, in: KFG Working Papers, No. 7, *The Transformative Power of Europe*, Freie Universität Berlin.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Hardacre and Smith (2014). The European Union and the Contradictions of Complex Interregionalism in F. Baert, T. Scaramagli and F. Söderbaum (eds), *Intersecting Interregionalism: Regions, Global Governance and the EU*. Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 91-106.

Indeed, from the perspective of the Union, through cooperating with further regional endeavours, transregionalism could *de facto* contribute to the consolidation of regionalism. Whilst providing its support, essentially since the origins of the aforementioned institutional endeavours, the EU has become a major player in the promotion of transregionalism as the corollary of regionalism through multilateralism. Furthermore, through encouraging economic multilateralism, interregional arrangements have improved and are so-called to foster the governance of globalisation through a vision based on cooperation, as former EU's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana stated:

*In the years ahead these interregional dialogues will steadily shape the nature of international politics and forge new mechanisms to global interdependence and tackle cross-border problems.*²²

Describing the EU's instrumentation of the aforementioned 'corollary', in the hitherto practice the Union has signed six interregional cooperation agreements and conducts around 20 political dialogues with regional groupings, amongst which four are found in Latin America: the Common Market of the South (Mercosur)²³, the Andean Community (CAN)²⁴, the San José Group²⁵, the Rio Group and most recently, the Pacific Alliance (PA).²⁶

²² Farrel, M. (2007). From EU Model to External Policy? Promoting Regional Integration in the Rest of the World, in: Meunier, Sophie/McNamara, Kathleen (Eds.) 2007: Making History. European Integration and Institutional Change at Fifty, Oxford.

²³ Comprised by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela, though this last one is suspended indefinitely due to its political crisis since 2017. Associated Countries: Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

²⁴ Comprised by Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru and Venezuela.

²⁵ Formed by Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

²⁶ Comprised by Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

1.3. Latin American Regionalisation

The Influence of the EU's Regionalism Model

Post-Cold War regionalism in Latin America is a complex and non-linear process, shaped by a mix of internal and external variables.²⁷ Historically, external actors have played a relevant role in shaping regionalism in the region. However, as of recent, two models have most significantly influenced this process. On the one hand, the European Union offers Latin America a model for development and consolidation through cooperation and trade but also urges Latin American countries to homogenise their frame of action and speak under one voice.²⁸ Unlike this vision, the US operates under a “divide and rule” strategy, which ultimately determined the regional political landscape of the last quarter of the 20th century. Thus, US and EU’ strategies have led to competing regional governance patterns²⁹, differently impacting the way actors define their preferences and collective action strategies at domestic and regional levels. Nevertheless, the common ground is found in two elements that both actors have promoted: increasing procedural and governance demands taken as the standardisation and harmonisation of norms and rules.³⁰ Challenging these visions that give primacy to the rule of law and minimum governance standards, a third major influence to Latin American regionalism process is found in the case of China. The expansion of the Asian country’s relationship with Latin America, first and foremost trade-based, increasingly challenged the influence of both the US and the EU and opens the door for new markets. Albeit China is far from promoting EU-type regionalism³¹, as it pursues trade relations and political dialogue on a bilateral basis and with a

²⁷ Bianculli, A. (2016). Latin America, in: Börzel, Tanja & Risse, Thomas: The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism, 2016.

²⁸ De Lombaerde, P. and Schulz, M. (2009), the EU and World Regionalism: The Makability of Regions in the 21st Century. Farnham: Ashgate.

²⁹ Grugel, J. (2006). Regionalist Governance and Transnational Collective Action in Latin America. *Economy and Society*, 35(2), pp. 209-231.

³⁰ Botto, M. & Bianculli, A. (2011). Comparative Asymmetric Trade Negotiations in the Southern Cone: FTAA and EU-MERCOSUR. In: S. Bilal, P. de Lombaerde and D. Tussie (eds.), *Asymmetric Trade Negotiations*. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, pp. 83-120.

³¹ Fawcett, L. (2013). The History and Concept of Regionalism. UNU-CRIS Working Paper W-2013/5. Bruges: United Nations University Institute.

specific set of countries, various enterprises with China – and the region its direct market gives access to–, have thrived through the establishment of closer economic and political ties.

Granted, however, that regionalism is not exclusively about trade but also about promoting political objectives, Latin American countries have ultimately found more consistency and coherence in the European case. If regionalism is a way of building and retaining power at the regional level, but also in multilateral and global arenas³², the multilateral enterprises carried out by Latin American countries have been more significantly institutionalised in the case of its relationship with Europe, both in bilateral and especially in multilateral platforms. This has given the former a model of regionalism to follow and reinforced the latter's regional – and interregional – power, thus paving the way for a transregionalisation, which would reinforce both regions' institutional endeavours.

1.4. Theoretical and Methodological Framework

The nature of this inquiry urges the need for a documental and correlational study based on analyses of foreign policy, external relations, multilateralism platforms and integration theories that provide both quantitative and qualitative information. This will determine the importance and necessity of institutionalising the transregionalisation endeavours of the European Union and Latin American countries through a reassessed multilateralism. This as a means to overcome the challenges that both regions face, on a common institutional vision, and based on the regionalisation model that the European Union provides to Latin American countries. The systematic description and evaluation of what is needed in terms of the political, economic and social agenda settings as well as its operationalisation serves this purpose. Its characteristic of a research procedure is intended to explore the processes and the criterion whereby initial conditions are translated into agenda elements. Thus, this process will elucidate the multifactors that could

³² Tussie, D. (2009a). Latin America: Contrasting Motivations for Regional Projects. *Review of International Studies*, 35(1), pp. 169-188.

make the new multilateralism between the European Union and Latin America pave the way for transregionalisation. Moreover, how it could assist the tackling of the political, economic and social challenges posed by various explanatory factors. This methodology will finally also assist in uncovering their interaction and turn them into indicators. As for the theoretical considerations of this inquiry, modern theories of integration and international cooperation will be revised during the first and general part of this inquiry whilst being adapted to the quantitative and qualitative information provided by the pertinent sources. As for the developmental and analytical part, the inquiry will be conducted framed under transregionalisation and transregionalism theories.

Research question

What are the preconditions and series of steps for transregionalisation based on a new approach to multilateralism between the EU & Latin America to be defined and translated into pertinent, effective and efficient political, economic, and social results?

Preliminary hypothesis

The current *sui generis* international political landscape is characterised by the salient multi-polarisation result of dynamic multilateralism and regionalisation endeavours. Along with the challenges posed by protectionist and conservative political outcomes, this landscape paves the way for the enhancement of transregionalisation initiatives between the European Union and Latin America. Should these regions adopt transregional institutional agendas, the development of such initiatives and grounding of such platforms could be translated in efficient and effective political, economical, and social results that would first help overcome and surpass the challenges posed by protectionism. Moreover, it could thrive in the institutionalisation of a new multilateralism that would complement their missions and visions for a sustainable inclusive future in political, economic and social fields.

State of the Art

Granted that this inquiry will analyse multilateral and transregional dynamics from the institutional point of view, individual case countries will not be utilised other than for the analysis on how their external relations have been adapted to a salient and renewed multilateral dynamic expressed in institutions and integration projects such as the European Union, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean Countries (CELAC), the European Union – Latin America and Caribbean Foundation (EULAC), the Organisation of American States (OAS), and to a newer extent, Mercosur & the Pacific Alliance, through which transatlantic relations thrive.

Moreover, the aim of this inquiry is to present a necessity of transregionalisation as a means to further regional integration and cooperation but also as a means to more effectively succeed in dealing with the post-2016 political, economic and social outcomes and relating challenges that both regions are facing.

Thus, the state of the art is first and foremost found in the constitutive acts of the aforementioned organisations, their mandates, their missions and their outputs for they serve as the grounding of any new multilateralism endeavour between the aforementioned regions. From a systematic research-based analytical point of view, however, numerous specialists, authors, policy-makers, think-tanks and further organisations have provided inputs upon which the area of study on multilateralism, integration, regionalisation, and cooperation has been built, namely:

The European Commission, the European Journal on Latin American Studies, Inter-American Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, experts both from CELAC and EULAC, and academia (Ruggie, 1992; Trueb, 2012; Börzel & Risse, 2016; Ribeiro, 2016; Amadei, 2017; Grugel, 2002; del Arenal, 2006; Briceño, 2001; Briceño and Ribeiro, 2015; Lehmann, 2013; Mina, 2014; Roy, 2013; Jacquet, 2013).

A major contribution to the transregionalisation and integration arenas, and therefore to this inquiry, is made by Börzel (2014) through comparative regionalism and Börzel & Risse (2012) & Börzel & Risse (2016) in which they analyse the influence and impact of Europeanisation in these dynamics and present a handbook of comparative regionalism, in which they theorise and conceptualise the elements that are deeply engrained within this inquiry.

As for the relationship between Europe and Latin America, as well as the operationalisation of foreign policies from both regions, investigations such as Woolcock, 2005; Börzel, 2005; Wong and Hill, 2011; Manners and Whitman, 2000; Trueb, 2014) are revised.

1.5. Course of investigation

This inquiry will be carried out based on the following structure:

In the first section, I situate the investigation within the fields of multilateralism and transregionalism. Therefore, this chapter aims to answer the following question: What is multilateralism and transregionalism and how does it translate to the practice of foreign policy pursuant of integration between the European Union and Latin America? Although a subsection of it describes these concepts, the most significant part of this chapter operationalises multilateralism through the initiatives, endeavours, platforms and organisations in charge of managing them between the European Union and Latin America.

In the first part of section 2 'New Multilateralism in External Relations Between the European Union and Latin America', I describe the existent multilateralism platforms and dynamics between these regions making an emphasis on the dependent variable, which is comprised by political, economic and social dimensions. Hence, the second part of this chapter evaluates the scenario in which this variable could thrive in a new multilateralism scheme that would pave the way

for transregionalisation, for which policy, political, economic and social considerations play a significant role.

Moreover, this section aims to answer the following question:

Which are the political, economic and social preconditions for the new multilateralism to translate into transregionalisation between the European Union and Latin America?

Chapter 3 'Opportunities and Challenges for Transregionalisation', canalises the findings of chapter 3 into the opportunities and challenges for transregionalisation utilising the same indicators. Moreover, in this section, I evaluate the salient necessity for transregionalisation based on the institutional initiatives and capabilities to do so. It assesses the opportunities and challenges based on the premise that there is a necessity but that this is not necessarily translated into possibility or capability and even political commitment to do so.

Hence, this section aims to answer the following question:

What are the opportunities and challenges for transregionalisation between the European Union and Latin America under the systematic description of the criterion posed by political, economic and social considerations?

The final chapter therefore presents the findings of the previous two sections and assesses the implications for further research within this field as well as its contributions to the theoretical ground. It further answers the question that will be covered throughout the investigation: how can new multilateralism between the European Union and Latin America be translated into transregionalism and which is the series of criterion under which this could become systematised and institutionalised?

After presenting further considerations or inputs to the general public, academia, researchers, and policy-makers, it then concludes the investigation.

Multilateralism in External Relations Between the European Union and Latin America

2.1. European Union Foreign Policy towards Latin America

Throughout the early history of European integration, the concept of European Foreign Policy was omitted by states due to its potential implications for national sovereignty. For this reason, the first endeavours to articulate a common response to external affairs started only in the 1970s, through the European Economic Community (EEC).³³ Nonetheless, at this stage, the practice of a 'European foreign policy' was not characterised by an institutionalised adaptation of EEC Member States' external priorities. It rather entailed a series of coordinated efforts known as European Political Cooperation (EPC). The Maastricht Treaty of 1992 and the Lisbon Treaty of 2007 represented the linchpin of European Foreign Policy as one, or, *de facto* institutionally homogenised. These adaptations, however, did not entail an imposition of commonly agreed foreign policy guidelines at the national levels. Therefore, the analysis of European Foreign Policy first and foremost needs to occur at three subsystems:

1. Relations emanating from the Common Foreign Security Policy (CFSP) and, since 1997, also the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP);
2. The external aspects of Community policies, namely: trade, external relations, and development cooperation, and;
3. National foreign policies.³⁴

One of the areas that has had a major impact throughout the different transformations and adaptations of European foreign policy has been the role that Europe plays in the world, through its relations with the regions that comprise it. For this reason, ever since Maastricht, the EU has been increasingly focused on

³³ Ruano, L. (2013). "The Europeanization of National Foreign Policies towards Latin America", Routledge, New York, p.15.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 16.

region-to-region relations as a foundation for its external relations. This foreign policy doctrine is “deeply rooted in the European Commission and has been expressed many times by a number of leading politicians and policy-makers during the last decade”.³⁵ Hardacre and Smith³⁶ argue that the European Union has systematically promoted regional integration and interregionalism as key elements of its foreign policy strategy, and that this has significantly determined the instrumentation of its interregional relations. They further argue that the EU has, indeed, been recognised as having developed the concept itself³⁷, and that it has thrived in a complex system for dealing with other world regions — which they define as “complex interregionalism”.

Despite of not being included during the first developments of regionalist foreign European policies, Latin America became a focus of attention as Portugal and Spain became members of the European Union in the 80's. It thus became a ‘true laboratory’ of regional and interregional construction promoted by the Union.³⁸ As was introduced in the first section of this inquiry, the European Union offers Latin America a model for development and consolidation through cooperation and trade but also urges this region's countries to homogenise their frame of action and speak under one voice.³⁹ Accordingly, the EU's overall objective for its policies towards the south-western hemisphere is to strengthen the political dialogue to better address global challenges, for which regionalism plays a significant role. This relationship is based on three pillars: economic cooperation, institutionalised political dialogue, and trade relations. For this reason, the analysis of European Foreign Policy in the case of Latin America mostly falls under the classification of the external aspects of Community policies: trade, external relations, and development cooperation. Moreover, through supporting regional integration, the

³⁵ Söderbaum & Van Langenhove (2005). Introduction: The EU as a Global Actor and the Role of Interregionalism, *Journal of European Integration*, 27:3, 249-262.

³⁶ Hardacre and Smith (2014), p. 91-106.

³⁷ Ibid. p. 91.

³⁸ Roy, J. (2013), *Después de Santiago: Integración Regional y Relaciones Unión Europea-América Latina*. European Union Center, Miami, pp. 9-59.

³⁹ De Lombaerde, P. and Schulz, M. (2009), *the EU and World Regionalism: The Makability of Regions in the 21st Century*. Farnham: Ashgate.

EU further seeks to increase the competitiveness of Latin American enterprises in international markets, and to facilitate the transfer of European knowledge.⁴⁰

In practice, EU relations with Latin American countries traditionally thrived through a number of specialised systematic dialogues with specific sub-regions and two individual countries (Mexico and Chile). Accordingly, the Union has organised its framework of activities with individual trading blocs and sub-regional integration schemes, including the Andean community, Mercosur, Central America, the Caribbean and, recently, the Pacific Alliance. The fact that Mexico and Chile did not belong to any of the former three Latin American schemes, until 2011, led the EU to make bilateral agreements with those countries. In fact, those agreements thrived in the most successful economic results.⁴¹⁴²

The EU has consistently replicated this strategy and utilised it in Asia and Africa, even if the reception of it and its deployment occurred differently in these regions. Indeed, within these regions, the EU has felt the need to move to more bilateral forms of relationship while retaining the rhetorical commitment to interregionalism.⁴³ Unlike the aforementioned regions, the difference in the case of Latin America is the level of regionalisation and the recent endeavours for institutionalisation in this region. For indeed, in recent times, the development and consolidation of intergovernmental regionalist platforms in the Americas has driven both regions to explore further multilateral platforms that are in accordance to the agendas that they have agreed upon to pursue. These include cooperation to development and trade but also democratisation, rule of law, human rights, amongst others. Stepping out of a context that was primarily bilateral and

⁴⁰ Roy, J. (2012). Relations between the EU and Latin America and the Caribbean: Competition or Cooperation with the United States? *The Foreign Policy of the European Union: Assessing Europe's Role in the World*. Washington, D.C. p. 237-246.

⁴¹ Mexico. European Commission [Online]. Available at:

<<http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/mexico/>>.

⁴² Indeed, in the case of Mexico, the EU subscribed in 2000 an Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement (Global Agreement) with this country, which essentially included a Free Trade Agreement that has been readapted in 2018.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 94

traditionally multilateral in the shape of summits and political dialogues, these recent developments now entail a triangular dynamic between integrationist multilaterally active platforms, namely the European Union, the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur, whose interactions will be analysed through this section.

2.2. Latin American Foreign Policies towards the European Union

Similarly to the case of Europe, the concept of Latin American Foreign Policy was only developed during the last quarter of the 20th century. However, its earliest traces make allusion to a significantly different process to the European case, although it was interconnected. Indeed, on an introductory stage, Latin American foreign policy was the result of “all the conflicts and rivalries of the European nations in their centuries-long fight with each other for the possession of America.”⁴⁴ In this dynamic, since the development in Latin American was conditioned by its northern neighbours’ and Europe’s, the region found itself embedded in the practice of financial assistance. As a result, there is a long history of Latin American states instrumenting their foreign policies around the asking or the reception of foreign aid, mostly from the United States and, ever since the end of the bipolarisation, from different actors, amongst which the European Union has been the main contributor alongside the USA.

As was mentioned in the first section, post-Cold War regionalism in Latin America is a complex and non-linear process, shaped by a mix of internal and external variables.⁴⁵ Historically, external actors have exerted significant influence on the ways in which regionalism is carried out in the region. More recently, the divergent models promoted by the United States and the European Union have most significantly influenced this process. Within this framework of action, there were contradictory trends related to the scope or model that Latin American

⁴⁴ Davis, H.E., Finan, J.J., and Peck, F.T. (1977) *Latin American Diplomatic History: An Introduction*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

⁴⁵ Bianculli, A. (2016). Latin America, in: Börzel, Tanja & Risse, Thomas: *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism*, 2016.

countries opted for: the United States' or Europe's. This created several different integration or fragmentation scenarios in the region and significantly determined the Latin American foreign policy instrumentation.

These early theoretical and practical developments were, nonetheless, shaped parallel to the multi-polarisation of global politics and the opening of new platforms for cooperation and development. Therefore, as happened in further regions in the world, in Latin America we must take into consideration the evolution of the regionalist strategies and platforms. Indeed, matters such as the evolution of the regional dialogue and integration processes thrived in an institutional shape, namely CELAC, Mercosur, the Central American and Andean integration, the Rio Group, and the more recent Pacific Alliance.⁴⁶

Whilst, on the one hand, the EU presents Latin America a model for development and consolidation based on cooperation and trade that in the practice also convenes Latin American countries to speak under one voice⁴⁷, on the other hand, Latin American regionalism is determined by the different approaches used by some leading countries: Mexico as a developer of bilateral agreements for free trade; Argentina regarding foreign debt issues; the “aggressive” foreign policy developed by Brazil as the leader of Mercosur, and, among larger developing countries --those known as BRICs (Brazil, Russia India, and China)—, in the G-20, and with regards to its possible entry in the United Nations Security Council.⁴⁸ Therefore, Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico could be regarded as “anchor countries” in their corresponding sub-regions, which are, indeed, the ones that have hitherto achieved the more significant advancements in institutionalising their regionalist enterprises. For this reason, these countries – and on a later stage, the sub-regions they comprise –, increasingly demand a more comprehensive strategic

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ De Lombaerde, P. and Schulz, M. (2009), *the EU and World Regionalism: The Makability of Regions in the 21st Century*. Farnham: Ashgate.

⁴⁸ Below, A. (2010). *Latin American Foreign Policy*. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies, pp. 2-25.

relationship. In the practice, this could pose several important dilemmas for both the regional and sub-regional EU strategies, especially given the relatively low level of institutionalisation of these regional endeavours in comparison to the Union.

Embedded in the latest transregional political context, there is one case that signified a reassessment in the transatlantic dynamics. For indeed, albeit not greeted in Latin America - nor in Europe – due to the racial components of his public statements against Latin American and Arab Muslim communities, the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States of America challenged the institutional values both regions pursue. Indeed, the anti-immigration policies that President Trump’s agenda encompasses, urged several countries within Latin America to analyse the necessity of diversifying their relationships and strengthening their trade partnerships with associates elsewhere; more precisely within the region, and across the Atlantic and the Pacific. Thus, although President Trump’s policies juxtaposed Latin American states’ since the beginning of his mandate, posing further political, economic, and social challenges for all the actors involved, this context encouraged the process of integration in the south and represented a common position for these states to strengthen their cooperation dynamics with the EU. Indeed, as will be revised, in the case of several countries in the western hemisphere, the Union is their main transregional partner and associate.

2.3. Institutional Multilateralism Platforms between the EU and Latin America

The structure of EU – Latin American overarching multilateral enterprises is first and foremost based on periodic summits at the highest level of government on both continents. Every two years, the heads of state and government of the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean meet, alternating between Europe and Latin America. The first Summit occurred in Rio de Janeiro (1999),

then in Madrid (2002), Guadalajara (2004), Vienna (2006), Lima (2008), Madrid (2010), Santiago (2013), Brussels (2015), and two ministerial meetings in Santo Domingo (2016), and Brussels (2018).⁴⁹

2.3.1. The Political Dimension

EU – CELAC

In 2010, at the summit held in Mexico, 33 LAC countries decided to merge the Rio Group⁵⁰ and the CALC (Summit of Latin America and the Caribbean on Development and Cooperation) into one forum: the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Albeit the biennial multilateral platform was inaugurated in 1999 as a means to develop a strategic partnership focused on strengthening democracy, the rule of law, international peace and political stability, CELAC replaced the former aggrupation and, ever since 2011, it represents the American region in the summits with the European Union heads of state and government.

The relevance of CELAC lies in its regional scope for it is an entity that brings together a group of regions despite the diversity of visions and public, as well as economic and social strategies co-existing at its core.⁵¹ In relation to its external projection, of significant importance is the attempt to harmonise foreign

49 Roy, Op. cit. (2012), p. 94.

⁵⁰ On December 16 – 17, 1986, the foreign ministers of the eight countries, namely the Contadora Group, consisting of Colombia, Mexico, Venezuela and Panama, and the Lima Group, composed of Brazil, Argentina and Peru, held a meeting in Brazil, In which they decided to set up a "permanent body for political consultation and coordination" so as to give an input to the process of Latin America Integration. This group is called the "Group of Eight Countries", also known as the "Rio Group", and the name of the Group was officially changed to the "Rio Group" at the meeting of the foreign ministers of seven countries held in March 1990. At present there are 18 countries, which are Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Uruguay, Venezuela, Chile, Ecuador, Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru, Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Dominica

⁵¹ Sanahuja, J. (2015). The EU and CELAC: Reinvigorating a Strategic Partnership, EU-LAC Foundation, Hamburg, pp. 60-69.

policies, with a view towards strengthening the region's presence, voice and influence in international organisations and multilateral forums. Despite the institutional attempts, which have been aligned to the EU's frame that champions interregionalism and regional dialogues, there have been, in practice, a few cases of reaching consensus given the diversity of strategies for international integration of the countries and regional subgroups in Latin America and the Caribbean.⁵²

Notwithstanding, one of the most significant advancements of these Summits was the creation, in 2010, of the European Union, Latin America and Caribbean Foundation (EU-LAC Foundation). It is comprised by 62 member states, which deposit in the Foundation the mission of strengthening and promoting the strategic bi-regional relationship, enhancing its visibility and fostering active participation of the respective civil societies. The Foundation is therefore a tool of the EU-LAC partnership and its activities feed into the intergovernmental dialogue, in line with the bi-regional Action Plan.⁵³ In practice, its multi-sectorial mandate allows it to promote the bi-regional relations at the governmental, economic, and societal levels through the pursuance of enhanced inclusive sustainable cooperation and innovation. Furthermore, it promotes platforms for discussion and networks amongst civil society organisations from different sectors and thematic areas, such as higher education, youth, and gender, for which it develops tools that facilitate mutual knowledge exchange and synergies between stakeholders, such as key institutions of EU-LAC countries.⁵⁴

2.3.2. The Economic Dimension

Next to the nearly three-decade political dialogue and institutional advancements between both regions, the multilateral endeavours of the EU and Latin America have, too, relied on cooperation for development funding and trade. Indeed, they are, altogether, the pillars of this association.

⁵² Ibid. p. 33.

⁵³ EU-LAC Foundation [Online]. Available at: <<https://eulacfoundation.org/en>>.

⁵⁴ *Idem*

In relation to cooperation, the European Commission executes this modality of assistance as per its mandate adopted by the Council and the Parliament, which deposit in it the mission of economically cooperating as well as financially and technically assisting developing countries.⁵⁵

Thus, ever since the establishment of this cooperation mechanism, the European Union has contributed to the reduction of poverty and social inequality in Latin America through the concession of development support for this region for over 2.7 billion euros, and over 900 million euros through the European Development Fund.⁵⁶ Indeed, these two topics have not been the sole destiny of this Fund, for it has overall dedicated over 40% to social cohesion (which includes the fight against poverty, inequality and exclusion) but also to the support of regional integration, trade, investment and environment protection.⁵⁷

In the case of the multilateralism platforms oriented to trade and investment, it is necessary to mention that these considerations have accompanied the biennial Summits, whereby countries and sub-regions subscribe socio-political agreements and also trade partnerships and associations. On the one hand, the EU has consistently attested its interest in negotiating investment, trade and cooperation opportunities. For this reason, the EU is the main foreign investor in Latin America. In 2010, for instance, the foreign direct investment (FDI) accounted for 385.000 million euros, which represented the 43% of the overall FDI in the region. To illustrate the significance this investment entails for both regions, it is superior to the one that the EU gives to Russia, China and India combined.⁵⁸ Besides encompassing the trade sector, this investment also includes tourism, infrastructure building, and finances. More significantly, this is a double-track

⁵⁵ This instrumentation of cooperation is regulated by the Regulation N° 1905/2006 of the European Parliament and Council whereby an Instrument for Financing Cooperation for Development was established in 2006.

⁵⁶ Roy, J. (2013), *Después de Santiago: Integración Regional y Relaciones Unión Europea-América Latina*. European Union Center, Miami, p. 202.

⁵⁷ *Idem*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* p. 205.

dynamic for Latin American enterprises have also incremented their investments for the same ends in the EU.⁵⁹

Notwithstanding, the most transcendental economic endeavours between both regions have been instrumented in the trade dynamics between regional blocs and a couple of individual cases. Namely, during the Madrid Summit in 2010, trade platforms were reformed between the European Union and the Andean countries as well as Central America. Moreover, the compromises subscribed by the Commission and the insistence of Spain, on the one side, and of Argentina and Brazil, in the other, thrived in the reformation of the platforms for negotiation in the frame of the EU-Mercosur trade partnership.⁶⁰ As mentioned above, only two anchor countries negotiated their trade association with the Union in bilateral dynamics in light of their non-regional association partnerships, such as Mercosur and the Andean Community.⁶¹ For this reason, Mexico and Chile led the EU to make bilateral agreements with those countries. In fact, those agreements thrived in the most successful economic results until they became associated.⁶² In the case of Mexico, the EU subscribed in 2000 an Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement (Global Agreement) with this country, which essentially included a Free Trade Agreement that has been readapted in 2018, thus making it the sole Strategic Partner of the EU in Latin America.

2.3.3. The Social Dimension

Embedded in the context of the EU – CELAC Summit in Santiago (2013), titled “Alliance for sustainable development: promoting investments of social and environmental quality”, EEAS Secretary-General Christian Leffler, stated that although economic growth and the creation of jobs in Latin America have been

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 206.

⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 204

⁶¹ Until 2011, through the Pacific Alliance, which platform will be revised in the following section.

⁶² Mexico. European Commission [Online]. Available at: <<http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/mexico/>>.

positive, this region is still the most socially unequal in the world.⁶³ For this reason, he further expanded, social inclusion must be as important as political inclusion, and its deployment needs to include sustainable and long-term endeavours in key areas such as governance, social policy, education, taxation, housing, and beyond. Thus, “we see how both concepts – social inclusion and political inclusion – are closely interrelated.”⁶⁴

Cognisant of this correlation, the European Commission, in cooperation with Latin American authorities, funded the programme EUROsociAL in 2005. It is a multilateral cooperation programme between these two regions that seeks to contribute to improving social cohesion in Latin America. It also pursues institutional strengthening through support to their processes for the design, reform and implementation of public policies. It first and foremost concentrates its action on the areas of gender, governance and social policy.⁶⁵ The social cohesion platform of EUROsociAL further pursues welfare based on equal opportunities, with a sense of belonging and solidarity. Significantly, it puts forward the need for understanding that even if the degree of social cohesion is a result of historic and geographic factors, in the present it is also influenced by public policies: “ones that work to improve access to rights and services without discrimination; to reduce the gaps between individuals, groups and territories; to provide equal opportunity; and to protect vulnerable populations”.⁶⁶

In the hitherto practice, EUROsociAL has evolved throughout three phases: EUROsociAL I (2005-2010) and EUROsociAL II (2011-2015), in which it has contributed to the formulation and enhancement of public policies, institutional capacity building, and the establishment of international commitments.

In its third on-going phase, EUROsociAL+ intends to provide continuity to its policy mandate through follow-up of the processes started and the results obtained

⁶³ Roy, Op. Cit. (2013), p. 4.

⁶⁴ *Idem*

⁶⁵ EuroSociAL+[Online]. Available at: <<http://eurosociAL.eu/en/pagina/el-programa>>.

⁶⁶ *Idem*

in previous years. It further intends to identify and support new demands in the beneficiary countries and, especially, promote the integration of the gender perspective in all its actions. Moreover, this last stage focuses on the implications and effects that the design, formulation and implementation of public policies have on men and women. In order to do so, it emphasises the need for policies and programmes in all areas to address this focus in order to gradually contribute to reducing inequality and generate a positive impact on social cohesion.⁶⁷

For the past 13 years, EUROsociAL has delivered a space for peer-to-peer learning and experience exchange between counterpart institutions of the two regions, favouring the use of a broad catalogue of tools relevant to each process, which significantly contribute to inserting the practice of social cohesion into the discussion and into the Latin American public agendas. This is essential, as building social cohesion also depends on the conditions of the institutional framework in which it thrives. Therein lies the importance of having “strong, quality, legitimate institutions that respond to these challenges facing citizens, who, as a result, feel part of this common project”.⁶⁸

2.3.4. Further platforms

Complementarily to the platforms that have been mentioned in the previous sections, the EU and Latin America include in their multilateral dynamics and subscribed compromises, a parallel series of dialogues and programmes, which also make part of the EU – LAC interregional framework. For instance, the Structured and Comprehensive bi-regional Dialogue on Migration was launched on June 30, 2009 as a follow up to the commitments of the 5th EU-LAC Summit of Heads of States and Governments of May 2008. As an outcome of this meeting, the aforementioned representatives adopted the joint document “Basis for Structuring the EU-LAC Dialogue on Migration”, whose objectives include: (i)

⁶⁷ *Idem*

⁶⁸ *Idem*

identification of common challenges and areas for mutual cooperation, (ii) building a stronger evidence base for EU-LAC migration in order to better understand its realities, based on the principle of shared responsibility, (iii) strengthening the commitment and willingness of both sides to discuss migration issues.⁶⁹

Further thematic focuses rely on:

- Border management and combatting document fraud
- Combatting discrimination, racism and xenophobia
- Combatting human trafficking
- Combatting migrant smuggling
- Irregular migration
- Labour migration
- Migrant's rights
- Migration and development
- Migration data
- Remittances
- Voluntary return and reintegration⁷⁰

Further endeavours focus on affairs of investment, namely AL-INVEST (to help small and medium-size enterprises); on promoting cooperation in higher education, through the ALFA platform; URB-AL assists in fostering the links between European and Latin American cities, and; @Lis supports information technologies exchange.

⁶⁹ European Union, Latin America and Caribbean Structured and Comprehensive Bi-regional Dialogue [Online]. Available at: <<https://www.iom.int/es/european-union-latin-america-and-caribbean-structured-and-comprehensive-bi-regional-dialogue>>.

⁷⁰ *Idem*

2.4. Paving the Way for Transregionalisation through New Multilateralism

A triangular dynamic: The European Union, the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur

In the previous sections, light has been shed upon the structure and instrumentation of foreign policies at the service of multilateralism between Latin America and the European Union. These elements speak of the institutional significance that these regions entail for each other in the pursuance of their collective and also national interests manifested in integration endeavours, trade associations, sustainable and inclusive socio-political advancements, amongst others. Overall, they reflect consistent political enterprises, which have thrived in the institutionalisation of multilateralism.

Contrastingly, however, the current global context also attests institutional incapacity or individual/group reluctance to reform traditional multilateral organisations as well as to making significant advancements towards successful inclusion endeavours and effective policy outcomes. As a result, this has created disparity between multilateralism and regionalism, which is displayed in the fragmentation of the traditional multilateral systems.⁷¹ Albeit not exempt from this point of breakage, the European Union - Latin America multilateralism continues to thrive and incorporate new elements in the regional agendas and strengthening their already subscribed compromises through the aforementioned institutional platforms since the early new millennium. For this reason, CELAC continues to be the platform upon which multilateralism fructifies in coaction with the EU.

Parallel to this, a growing number of advancements, negotiations and agreements that include a regional scope that aims to pave the way towards a regionalised globalisation are becoming consistently present in the foreign relations landscape of Latin America. There are two major cases whereby this updated regional scope is being canalised in a renewed multilateral practice in the region,

⁷¹ Sanahuja, J. (2015). The EU and CELAC: Reinvigorating a Strategic Partnership, EU-LAC Foundation, Hamburg, pp. 60-69.

which also attests the developments in the field of regionalism, which the European Union has strived to influence. Thus, following the institutionalisation of regionalism example of the EU, two platforms have emerged and developed to a point in which multilateralism forums are being created between them and Brussels: Mercosur and the Pacific Alliance, chronologically. This section, therefore, introduces how these platforms have been paving the way to a new multilateralism that leads to transregionalisation between both territories. An introducing enquiry to this section would be: What has been the approach to multilateralism between the EU and a convergent initiative that is taking shape of a EU-influenced institutionalised regional platform in Latin America? This will thrive in the question that will be addressed in section 3: What new spaces for transregionalisation could this open?

Mercosur

From the point of view of regionalism, with over two decades of existence, the Common Market of the South is the most inclusive initiative of regional integration implemented in Latin America since the institutionalisation of EU – LAC relations. It is composed of 5 members: Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay - founding members, and Venezuela, which completed its accession process in the middle of 2012 but was suspended in 2016 due to its political context. Combined, these countries encompass ca. 72% of the territory of South America (12.8 million km², equivalent to three times the area of the EU); 70% of the South American population (275 million inhabitants) and 77% of South America's GDP in 2012 (US\$ 3.18 trillion from a total of US\$ 4.13 trillion. If taken as a whole, Mercosur would be the fifth largest economy in the world, with a GDP of US\$ 3.32 trillion.⁷²⁷³

⁷² Mercosur (2018) [Online]. Available at:

<<http://www.mercosur.int/innovaportal/v/3862/2/innova.front/en-pocas-palabras>>.

⁷³ Mercosur has also proved to achieve significant advancements in economic-commercial terms. Intra-bloc trade was multiplied by more than ten times, jumping from US\$ 5.1 billion (1991) to US\$ 58.2 billion in recent times. In the same period, world trade grew only five times. Moreover, tariffs were almost completely reduced for trade among the bloc members.

Albeit significant, Mercosur is not limited to its economic and commercial dimension, for it also encompasses common initiatives that converge from infrastructure to telecommunications; from science and technology to education; from family farming to the environment; from border cooperation to the fight against transnational crimes; from gender policies to the full promotion of human rights.⁷⁴ Chronologically, in the practice, this platform is one of the broadest integration projects in the world for it has consistently institutionalised its infraregional patterns and, most recently, made further advancements towards inter and transregional dynamics. Indeed, since its origins, Mercosur has been based on a political and strategic integration project in which the trade aspect is added to other spheres of equal or higher importance.⁷⁵ Moreover, its political leaders have translated their concerns of making a common project of social and economic development from the integration into having a direct impact on people's lives. Similarly to the European Union, this bloc can be characterised as a customs union in the process of consolidation, with common market features, with the elimination of obstacles to the circulation of factors of production, as well as the adoption of a common tariff policy regarding third countries.⁷⁶

The Pacific Alliance

The Pacific Alliance is a regional integration platform comprised by Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, officially established on April 28th, 2011. It pursues to build, in a participatory and consensual way, an area of deep integration to move progressively towards the free movement of goods, services, resources and people⁷⁷, which could be regarded as EU-influenced institutional advancement. Moreover, the PA seeks to drive further growth, development and competitiveness of the economies of its members, focused on achieving greater well-being,

⁷⁴ *Idem*

⁷⁵ *Idem*

⁷⁶ Mercosur and Regional Integration [Online]. Available at: <<http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/en/politica-externa/integracao-regional/6347-mercosur-en>>.

⁷⁷ The Pacific Alliance (2017), What is the Pacific Alliance? [Online]. Available at: <<https://alianzapacifico.net/en/what-is-the-pacific-alliance/>>.

overcoming socioeconomic inequality and promote the social inclusion of its inhabitants. It further strives to become a platform of political articulation, economic and commercial integration and projection to the world, with emphasis on the Asia-Pacific, and, more recently, on the Atlantic region.⁷⁸ For this reason, the Pacific Alliance does not only represent a trade platform strategy for Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru in their aims to get inserted in the Pacific trade dynamics but also a platform to strengthen the ties with Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela to foster Latin American integration and become, altogether, a relevant actor in international trade and the institutionalisation of regionalism.

In contrast with Mercosur, the Pacific Alliance has had a more active interregional contribution to multilateralism for it includes both the integration within the sub-region and also across the Pacific and the Atlantic. Hence, the latter introduced the first advancements towards a potential association as a means to consolidate the position of Latin America within the Americas, the Pacific, and the wider world. The Pacific Alliance accounts for 39% of Latin American and Caribbean GDP, thus making of it the 8th economy in the world.⁷⁹ Moreover, the PA is regarded as the 4th most dynamic world economy, (after India's, China's and the United States') and the fifth largest market (after China, India, U.S. and Singapore).⁸⁰

A triangular dynamic: The European Union, the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur

Albeit the PA & Mercosur have coexisted accompanying the reformation of the traditional multilateral platforms between Latin America and the European Union, their integration dynamics differ from those that were significantly reformed in Madrid in 2010 in the shape of EU – CELAC relations. Unlike CELAC's mandate,

⁷⁸ *Idem*

⁷⁹ *Idem*

⁸⁰ International Monetary Fund (2017), World Economic Outlook: A Shifting Global Economic Landscape [Online]. Available at:

<<https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2017/update/01/>>.

recent Latin American regionalism and multilateralism through the role of both the PA and Mercosur includes an enquiry on whether the linchpin for regional integration is enhanced or limited by their institutional capacities. In this context, pro tempore President of the Pacific Alliance Sebastián Piñera and his homologue from Mercosur noted, during the most recent PA – Mercosur Summit:

The integrationist ideal is a long overdue linchpin of the international relations of Latin America. It is a sinuous line, as are all historical [integration] trajectories. In this integrationist path, we have missed opportunities to achieve it on a more effective way. But the present is our hour of truth. And as for what refers to a regionalism, it imposes adaptations, updates and changes because renouncing to the possibility, more than an error, it would be an act of irresponsibility against the future that convenes us.⁸¹

Pro tempore President of Mercosur and the Republic of Uruguay Tabaré Vázquez furthered that although Mercosur and the Pacific Alliance are not identical systems, neither in their format, scope, nor functioning, neither are they incompatible or exclusive and it is mistaken for to believe that they are. AP and Mercosur can coexist and interact on the basis of diversity and convergence. The question is for what and how:

The integration, the Pacific Alliance and the Mercosur, are not objectives in themselves. But they are ideal instruments to achieve the strategic objectives that we all share above the identity of each one. And this expression of political willingness of the countries of the PA and the countries of Mercosur is the best expression to move towards a region in better living conditions for all its citizens.⁸²

What this approach entails for the instrumentation of multilateralism between both regions is paramount and it could further respond to the ‘for what’ question

⁸¹ Final statement during the Summit of Puerto Vallarta (2018)

⁸² *Idem*

that President Vázquez posed. For indeed, both the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur have individually strengthened their political, economic and social ties with the EU. In this dynamic, the political international political context plays a significant role whilst aligning the scenarios that urge such action. Furthermore, it also paves the way for transregionalisation, which opportunities and challenges will be revised in the following section.

Opportunities and Challenges for Transregionalisation

As was introduced in the first section of this inquiry, the conceptualisation of transregionalism is differentiated from other forms of interaction beyond bilateral and multilateral dynamics, which inherently entails the practice of external relations that has supported the traditional platforms between the European Union and Latin America. For indeed transregionalism includes and excludes different actors and processes but also geographical considerations accompanied by interdependence, degree of formality, legalisation of institutions, and identity. In combination, these elements play a significant role in determining, on the closer scope, the level of regionalisation in both regions and, in the wider scope, they determine the level of transregionalisation between them.

In hand, regions are defined as socially constructed spaces between the global and the national level, which have some geographical reference point and which are often, but not always, defined by geographic proximity and shared institutions. For this reason, there are two different regional dynamics: inter and transregional. Ribeiro-Hoffmann therefore differentiates from both.⁸³ The difference between them refers to the level of formality of the regions: interregionalism defines relations between two formal regional organisations, as happens between the EU & CELAC, which are established by constituent treaties and which have a permanent seat. On the other hand, transregionalism is used as a category of

⁸³ Ribeiro-Hoffmann, Op. cit. p. 4.

relations between regions including less formalised relations, such as the Pacific Alliance & Mercosur with the Union. Following this practice, transregionalism can be further translated in this case into the Alliance's, the Market's and the Union's state and non-state actor-driven processes of bridging these regions, both institutionally and socially.⁸⁴ Notwithstanding, for the purposes of this inquiry, the term that is utilised is transregionalisation as it is the concept that stresses the word 'process' – therefore not a reality yet –, but whose opportunities and challenges will be revised throughout this section, introduced by an overlook on the institutional initiatives that gave them foundation.

3.1. Opportunities for Transregionalisation

On April 5th, 2017, the 13th edition of the World Economic Forum on Latin America took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Under the motto 'Fostering Development and Entrepreneurship in the Fourth Economic Revolution', this Forum that brings together governments, civil society representatives, and regional as well as world leaders in entrepreneurship, hosted, too, the First Official Summit of Ministers of Foreign Affairs from the member states of the Alliance and Mercosur. Beyond addressing the importance that this initial Summit entailed, representative of the pro tempore presidency of the Alliance, Chilean Minister Heraldo Muñoz, stated that it was "an important milestone in Latin American integration for they had committed to step forward together amidst an uncertain international political context in which nationalist and even xenophobic tensions were being observed".⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 5

⁸⁵ Giorgi, J (2017), 'El nuevo contexto regional facilita el acercamiento Mercosur – Alianza del Pacífico', El Observador, April 13, 2017 [Online]. Available at: <<http://www.elobservador.com.uy/el-nuevo-contexto-regional-facilita-el-acercamiento-mercotur-alianza-del-pacifico-n1057357>>.

Indeed, the earlier victory of Mauricio Macri in Argentina and the dismissal of Dilma Rousseff in Brazil – and the subsequent succession of Michel Temer as President – was translated into an open vision of the two main powers of the Atlantic bloc. During the leftist governments they had maintained a protectionist vision of their foreign trade strategies. In this context, Argentinian Minister Susana Malcorra stated, on behalf of Mercosur, that for this bloc “the clear objective is to reinforce the compromise with free trade and multilateralism”.⁸⁶ Accordingly, former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and Argentinian President Mauricio Macri, agreed to foster the convergence between the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur. They also analysed a potential inclusion of Argentina to the bloc as main associate, which represented the continuation of the commitments subscribed in Buenos Aires.⁸⁷

The First Summit of Ministers did not only signify a discussion forum but also the acknowledgement that the objectives of the countries involved were aligned, for a diversified set of arguments, which resulted in the Ministers defining a roadmap. The six main points that this roadmap entailed, in pursue of facilitation of intraregional trade, were: a creation of regional value chains, the facilitation of trade through a single foreign trade window, customs cooperation between the member states, the fostering of production and SMEs, the removal of non-tariff barriers and the facilitation of trade of services. Furthermore, from a political angle, this agreement reached in Buenos Aires entailed a shift in the way these actors negotiated with each other but also in the way that they regard each other’s affairs and engage to step forward together. Traditionally, the Pacific Alliance regarded Mercosur as a highly politicised and low-efficient economic bloc. Likewise, the Atlantic bloc regarded the PA as too economically focused and strategically aligned with the United States. Notwithstanding, in this context, during the PA – Mercosur

⁸⁶ *Idem*

⁸⁷ Raña, H. (2017), ‘La incorporación argentina a la Alianza del Pacífico abre posibilidades en el mercado asiático’, *Telenoticiosa Americana*, June 8, 2018 [Online]. Available at: <<http://www.telam.com.ar/notas/201704/185046-la-incorporacion-argentina-a-la-alianza-del-pacifico-abre-posibilidades.html>>.

Summit, the Secretary of Economy of Mexico stated: “only a few times in history have the scenarios aligned as they do today”.⁸⁸

For indeed, from the regional perspective, the election of Donald Trump as president of the United States – and the subsequent protectionist policies his agenda entailed – started to impact the trade strategies within the Pacific Alliance. More significantly so for Mexico, whose 80% of exports go to this country.⁸⁹ Moreover, US’ withdrawal from the Transpacific Trade Partnership (TPP) – which was a linchpin of the PA’s trade strategy – represented a replantation of this region’s economic and political priorities in the pursuance of fairer and more inclusive exchange deals, as well as deeper integration. For this reason, the multilateral dynamics of the Alliance have first and foremost analysed the necessity of furthering integration within the America’s and, inherently, look to the EU as the common regionalist partner for both the PA and Mercosur countries. Outside of the relationship that Latin America has had with the United States, the Union has systematically pursued deeper integration and formalisation of institutional platforms within this region to carry its external relations.

Overall, as described in the previous section, Latin American integration is limited to the extent that key anchor actors such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico agendas’ priorities are aligned with each other’s national interests, which is why their initiatives are paramount for the transregionalisation endeavours that could enhance these relations between both regions.

3.1.1. Institutional Initiatives

Following the compromises subscribed in Buenos Aires and with the intention of expanding the already existing roadmap and initiatives, the heads of state of Chile, Colombia, Peru and Mexico (representing the Pacific Alliance), and

⁸⁸ Giorgi, Op. Cit. (2017)

⁸⁹ Expansión-CNN (2017), Estas son las cifras del comercio entre México y Estados Unidos, [Online]. Available at: <<http://expansion.mx/economia/2017/01/31/estas-son-las-cifras-del-comercio-entre-mexico-y-estados-unidos>>.

the heads of state of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay (representing Mercosur), convened at the highest level in the city of Puerto Vallarta, Mexico in July 2018. As was introduced in the previous section, President Vázquez stressed the possibilities of convergence between both. As for the 'For what' enquiry, he furthered, the answer can be found in the declaration of Puerto Vallarta, which they subscribed after this Summit.

The declaration of Puerto Vallarta

As a result of 28 months of negotiations, the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur approved a Joint Declaration on July 24, 2018, whereby they endorse their commitment to further regional integration through a vision that respects democracy, human rights, the rule of law and free trade to promote social inclusion.⁹⁰ In this context, the pro tempore President of the Pacific Alliance and President of Mexico, Enrique Peña Nieto stated:

In 2017, our nations initiated at the ministerial level the search for cooperation actions between the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur. Today, the Presidents send the world a clear signal that together we promote regional integration and free trade.

The affinity of visions among our integration mechanisms encourages us to advance in the reduction of poverty and inequality, as well as to promote the social development of the region.

This Declaration, henceforth called the Declaration of Puerto Vallarta, thus represents the first institutional advancement of two regional integration platforms that includes elements from promoting knowledge and generate more benefits for people in terms of gender, academic mobility, tourism, culture and mobility of people to increasing economic and commercial relationship through the

⁹⁰Declaración Alianza del Pacífico – Mercosur (2018) [Online]. Available at: <https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/349593/DECLARACION_AP_MERCOSUR.pdf>.

establishment of concrete measures to facilitate the trade of goods and promote the internationalisation of small and medium-sized companies. Moreover, broadening the roadmap signed at the April 2017 Ministerial meeting, the countries agreed to also include to their integration platforms issues such as regional value chains, regulatory cooperation and digital agendas.

The wider scope objective, President Peña Nieto further stated, was to strengthen the link between the two most important trade blocs in Latin America, which have a market of approximately 480 million people, which accounts for 87% of the region's population and 6% of the world. The two blocs also account for 90% of Latin America's GDP and 90% of its total exports to the world:⁹¹

On this day, the nations of the Pacific Alliance and of Mercosur have taken a first step of rapprochement between our two mechanisms. Beyond geographical limits or natural barriers, historical bonds of friendship and cooperation, which we have endorsed in our meeting, unite us. Together, we will do more and better things for our societies. The sum of our stories, visions, talents and energies will be the key to continue building a better future for the entire Latin American and Caribbean region.

The first Summit between the two blocs, which was held on the sidelines of the 13th Summit of the Pacific Alliance, concluded not only with the signing of the Pacific Alliance - Mercosur Presidential Declaration. In addition, a Plan of Action was adopted along with the initiative for periodically evaluating its progress and new ways to continue deepening the relationship. Altogether, the two mechanisms reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening their integration and agreed to follow up on the process on a half-yearly basis with a view to reaching a Framework Free Trade Agreement.

⁹¹ Mercosur and Pacific Alliance Strengthen their integration [Online]. Available at: <<https://cancilleria.gob.ar/en/news/releases/mercosur-and-pacific-alliance-strengthen-their-integration>>.

The Declaration of Brussels

Following the first Summit held in Santo Domingo in 2016, in which Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini met the foreign ministers of the Pacific Alliance⁹², in July 17th, 2018 the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy hosted, for the first time, a meeting in Brussels with the high level representatives of the four countries of the PA as well as with the Foreign Ministers of the 28 EU Member States. The participants of both the EU and the Alliance attested their compromise to strengthen relations on the basis of common values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and on a shared vision for open trade and investment and sustainable development.

Since the origins of the Alliance, EU institutions have provided political support to the PA, highlighting the connections between its objectives of economic integration and the EU experience in this area that can be shared with partners. Similarly, the two regional platforms have agreed that cooperation shall be developed on the basis of specific concrete issues at technical level and that periodic political contacts should be held.⁹³ For this reason, during the reunion in Brussels, the parties involved stressed the importance to promote multilateralism and a rules-based global order as well as of open, transparent, inclusive free trade agreements for improving competitiveness and fostering sustainable socio-economic development and social inclusion.

⁹² High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini, met in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, the representatives of the Pacific Alliance: the incumbent Presidency, Chile's Foreign Minister Heraldo Muñoz, the Colombian Foreign Minister, Maria Angela Holguín and the Deputy Foreign Ministers of Mexico, Maria del Socorro Flores and of Peru, Nestor Popolizio. The meeting was held in the margins of the EU-CELAC Foreign Ministers' meeting. The participants discussed the state of progress of the Pacific Alliance and its next steps in integration, as well as the areas in which EU-Pacific Alliance cooperation could be further developed.

⁹³ Mogherini and the Pacific Alliance Representatives Confirm the Reciprocal Interest in Enhancing Cooperation [Online]. Available at: <https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/angola/13182/mogherini-and-the-pacific-alliance-representatives-confirm-the-reciprocal-interest-in-enhancing-cooperation_ko>.

Significantly for this inquiry, they highlighted the convergence between the Union and the Alliance's objectives of creating an area of integration achieving the free movement of people, goods, services and capitals and the EU's own experience that can be shared with partners. Accordingly, the representatives agreed to establish a roadmap of specific areas of dialogue, cooperation and mutually beneficial activities under the form of exchange of experience and information, so as to draw the relevant lessons from each other's integration processes and promote the constituting objectives of the Pacific Alliance in the following areas:

- a. Trade and investment;
- b. Financial integration and regional development funds;
- c. Free movement of persons;
- d. Education and student mobility;
- e. SMEs;
- f. Digital economy and connectivity;
- g. Environment and Green Growth;
- h. Innovation, science and technology;
- i. Any other area of cooperation that the participants decide by mutual agreement.⁹⁴

Similarly to the practice of external relations of the Union with the Alliance, the multilateral practice of the former used to be held alike with Mercosur since the origins of the Market. Nonetheless, unlike the case of the PA, it has not transited from interregionalism into transregionalism nor in the consolidation of institutional multilateral platforms as significantly as in the case of the Alliance. Albeit the first endeavour remounts to 1995 during the Summit of Madrid – with the signature of the first interregional Framework Agreement for integration, calling for, amongst other forms of cooperation such as economic, political, cultural etc. a free trade agreement between the two entities –, the ever since negotiations have been

⁹⁴*Idem*

characterised by a stop-and-go rhythm. For this reason, Onuki argues⁹⁵, it has become evident that after 20 years at this pace, the agreement and the intentions behind it are not high up on the list of priorities of either party. For indeed, since the signing of the Framework Agreement, relations between the two blocs have suffered periodic setbacks, either because of difficulties in finding points of agreement between the parties or because of internal crises that the blocs have faced over nearly 20 years.⁹⁶⁹⁷

For this reason, a first conclusion on the context of transregionalism based on a new approach to multilateralism would be that the recent institutional multilateral advancements implemented by the Alliance combined with the Market are more significant for transregionalisation than those resulting of their unilateral endeavours with the Union.

The next sections will accordingly elucidate the considerations that need to be taken under account for these institutional advancements to be translated into transregionalisation before introducing the challenges that this process entails.

3.1.2. Policy Considerations

As was highlighted in the previous sections, Latin American integration is limited to the extent that key anchor states such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico agendas' priorities are aligned with each other's national interests. Albeit there have been advancements to institutionalise regionalism following the model of the Union, the degree of institutionalism is low in proportion to the interest of the aforementioned anchor actors. For this reason, comparatively to the EU, Latin American integrationist institutionalism is not developed as efficiently to respond to

⁹⁵ Onuki, J. (2013). Political Aspects of the EU-Mercosur Agreement, EU-LAC Foundation. [Online]. Available at:

<<https://eulacfoundation.org/en/system/files/MERCOSUR%20EU%20DIALOGUE.pdf>>.

⁹⁶ *Idem*

⁹⁷ Indeed, the overarching theme over all these years has been the lack of consensus between the blocs on various agenda items, in particular issues related to agriculture (particularly the high agricultural subsidies that European producers receive) that still remain a "sticking point" for any possible agreement.

regional political, economic and social processes as the Union does. Moreover, the impacts of these are inherently further translated into the regional foreign policy practice of both regions, which have been divergent in the practice of integration in the case of the western hemisphere. For instance, albeit it is not in the nature of this investigation to describe the systematic approach to it, the outcome of the *Brexit*⁹⁸ referendum did not shape EU's foreign policy towards Latin America due to its developed institutionalisation. Contrarily, the election of Donald Trump, the protectionist agenda that his administration has put forward and the withdrawal from the TPP do affect Latin American countries' foreign policy towards the European Union due to the lack of institutionalised regionalism and the vulnerabilities this creates.

Nonetheless, unlike previous political, economic and social experiences in the region (namely the crisis in Venezuela, whose nature does not concern this investigation but whose effects in Mercosur's integration endeavours were significant), President Trump's actions do pave the way for a replantation of the practice of external relations within the region and inherently across the Atlantic for it affects all anchor actors. In this context, since Europe promotes itself as a regionalism model and counterweight to the influence of the United States in Latin America, and also subscribed itself to further cooperate to institutionalise the interregional platforms, President Trump's policies represent therefore the linchpin for both processes alike.

More significantly, the degree to which Latin American countries govern and strengthen regionalisation through multilateralism as a measure to counteract against the aforementioned protectionist policies, will transregional dynamics be significantly improved. Nonetheless, the United States' regionalism model or late protectionist dynamics are not ultimately the sole challenges that transregionalisation between these regions faces throughout the process. Stemming from the low

⁹⁸ Aphorism that relates to both the process and the outcome of the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union.

degree of institutionalisation and passing by the incapacity to bring interregional conflicts to an end as well as the economic obstacles that both regions have to face, it is pertinent to further revise the different categories of challenges that this transregionalisation encounters.

3.2. Challenges for Transregionalisation

Since transregionalisation, is used as a residual category of relations between regions including less formalised relations, this encompasses challenges as every process does, especially when it is multisectorial: political, economic and social, amongst others. For this reason, the challenges for transregionalisation between Latin America and the European Union will be revised throughout this section.

3.2.1. Political Challenges

From the perspective of the eastern side of the Atlantic, albeit the existent systematised dynamics of interregionalism within the practice of the external relations of the European Union, the reality attests various discrepancies within its institutions. Whilst Hardacre and Smith argue that the European Parliament has not had a major influence over EU strategy vis-à-vis other regions, other authors have shown that its role in interregional parliamentary dialogues is not to be dismissed.⁹⁹ Simultaneously, the Council of the EU has had divergent approaches in relation to the Commission in its support for interregionalism.

Significantly, since the crisis of 2008, the Council has favoured an economic policy, which promotes the conclusion of bilateral free trade agreements with key partners as a growth strategy. The influence of the Council has therefore seemingly moved the EU away from interregionalism and closer to transregionalism to the extent that special partnerships with individual countries

⁹⁹ Börzel, T. & Risse, T. (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Regionalism*, Oxford University Press.

have been promoted, as well as other types of regional groupings which are instrumental to increasing exports.¹⁰⁰ Notwithstanding, these dynamics, mostly economically-oriented, do not include political dialogues nor are they aimed at furthering regional integration.

From the other side of the Atlantic, despite the recent multilateral initiatives canalised in the Declaration of Puerto Vallarta and the Declaration of Brussels, the reality reveals that continuous infraregional cooperation within the subcontinent, the consolidation of platforms for cooperation and regional institutionalisation in Latin America has remained weak.¹⁰¹ This has further attested a large gap between an oversupply of laws and a low degree of compliance as well as a divergence between scope and level of integration.¹⁰² Indeed, regional cooperative projects have not thrived in the creation of supranational institutions precisely due to countries' reluctance to adapt traditional international organisations and regionalist models, such as the European Union's¹⁰³, timorous of thus falling in the institutional and bureaucratic structures.

This paradoxical scenario, in which the EU's political and economic efforts to promote its own institutional model of integration within Latin America¹⁰⁴ are juxtaposed to its institutional incapacity to find convergence, is therefore accompanied by the reluctance of Latin American countries to strengthen their infraregional institutionalism in order to avoid the bureaucratic quagmire that the EU has displayed. Albeit the complexity of these challenges, the current political scenario may nonetheless oblige both regions to overcompensate these gaps

¹⁰⁰ *Idem*

¹⁰¹ Dabène, O. (2009). *The Politics of Regional Integration in Latin America: Theoretical and Comparative Exploration*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Fawcett, L. & Hurrell, A. (1995). Introduction. In: L. Fawcett and A. Hurrell (eds.), *Regionalism in World Politics: Regional Organization and International Order*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1-6.

¹⁰⁴ Briceño-Ruiz, J. & Puntigliano Rivarola, A. (2009). The European Union and the "Making" of South American Regionalism. In: *The EU and World Regionalism: The Makability of Regions in the 21st Century*. Farnham: Ashgate, pp. 101-114.

through further transregionalisation, for which best practices and reflection fora in interregional and transregional multilateralism would have the opportunity to emerge to bring about a change to the effects that political processes generate.

In this sense, granted that the model of European integration that is promoted by the Union was founded over the development of institutional capacities to overcome both political and economic conflicts, this feature inherently attests Latin American lack of institutionalisation of its regionalism. For indeed, the on-going conflicts in Venezuela, Nicaragua and Colombia, amongst others, have evidenced the lack of the common voice the Union urged Latin American countries to speak with and hindered the contributions of the anchor countries for integration. Therefore, the development of institutionally homogenised responses to these processes will significantly determine the political commitment to both a new multilateralism between the regions that paves the way for transregionalisation in an applicable sustainable way for both.

3.2.2. Economic Challenges

The description of the international trade of Latin America is threefold: within the two blocs; within the region, and; across the Pacific, the Atlantic and the wider world. Within the region and, especially between PA & Mercosur states, the amount of exports grows at an 11% rate since 2001, reaching its peak in 2013, year in which these two blocs traded between them US\$ 42.352 millions.¹⁰⁵ With a market of around 217 million people, the PA states traded amongst themselves US\$12.708 millions in 2015, thus reaching its highest level. Moreover, the entry into force of a Trade Protocol on May 1st, 2016, liberalised 92% of trade in the Alliance. This protocol on trade, however, foresees the formation of a free-trade zone among the member countries and fosters opportunities to participate in an

¹⁰⁵ DIRECON (2018) [Online]. Available at: <<https://www.direcon.gob.cl/>>.

expanded market and spur productive links toward third markets.¹⁰⁶ Across the Pacific and the wider world, the Pacific Alliance traded US\$573.870 millions in 2016, roughly \$150.000 millions more than Mercosur¹⁰⁷, which gives the PA the linchpin in the trading sector. Nonetheless, President Trump's administration paramount action on trade was the withdrawal of the US from the Transpacific Partnership, which was subsequently considered the major setback in the context of integration between the Pacific states. Chile, Peru and Mexico are part of this endeavour. The pact aimed to deepen economic ties between 12 Pacific nations, slashing tariffs and fostering trade to boost growth. Members had also hoped to foster a closer relationship on economic policies and regulation. The agreement was designed so that it could eventually create a new single market, similar to the European Union model.¹⁰⁸ Although US participation was the major linchpin for the Partnership, it may be possible for the other countries to forge a smaller scale pact in its place, but it cannot go ahead in its current form since all 12 countries needed to ratify it for it to come into effect.

Contrary to the TTP's setback, the EU has an interest in strengthening relations with the members of the PA because of the commonalities and shared objectives of the two blocs as well as the expanding and dynamic nature of the Alliance. All PA members have bilateral free trade agreements with the EU, and two of them (Mexico and Chile) are at different stages of the modernisation of those agreements. In fact, in the case of Mexico, it has already thrived in a renewed version and it awaits the official release. In light with its priority to support regional integration, the EU has offered to share its experience with the PA from the outset, as was agreed during the Summit that led to the Declaration of Brussels. Informal dialogues were initiated in the following areas: i) Trade and investment, ii) Student exchanges and cooperation within Erasmus+, iii) Free movement of persons, iv)

¹⁰⁶ The Pacific Alliance (2018) [Online]. Available at: <<https://alianzapacifico.net/en/what-is-the-pacific-alliance/>>.

¹⁰⁷ Giorgi, Op. Cit. (2017)

¹⁰⁸ BBC (2017), 'TPP: What is it and why does it matter?', BBC News, January 23, 2017 [Online]. Available at: <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-32498715>>.

Science/Innovation within the EU-LAC Common Research Area, v) SMEs. The specific cooperation activities carried out to date have shown the potential for more joint work.¹⁰⁹ The countries that comprise the PA account for ca. 60% of foreign direct investment that gets into Latin America, which is another field of opportunity for the EU member states.¹¹⁰

Simultaneously, the EU is negotiating a trade deal with the four founding Mercosur states as part of a broader Association Agreement between the two regions. EU firms already export €42bn in goods in 2016 and €22bn in services in 2015 to Mercosur. The Market is also a major investor in the EU, with stocks of €115 billion in 2014.¹¹¹ EU companies are major investors in Mercosur and Mercosur companies are increasingly investing in the EU. Nonetheless, both exporters and investors face barriers in Mercosur markets. Accordingly, the aim of the modernised EU-Mercosur trade deal is to remove these barriers and assist EU firms in their exporting endeavours to the Market. Moreover, this negotiation further contemplates the strengthening of people's rights at work and environmental protection as well as encouragement of companies to act responsibly and uphold high food safety standards, which, as was mentioned in the previous section, has been one of the main obstacles in the over 20 years of negotiations alongside the protection of quality EU food and drink products from imitations.¹¹² Overall, the future agreement is expected to represent a win-win for the Union and the Market, creating opportunities for growth and jobs for both sides. The inherent challenge to it is to find the appropriate platforms that will not repeat the mistakes made in the past, thus ensuring not only the interest but also the utmost applicability of both parties.

¹⁰⁹ Joint statement by High Representative/Vice President Federica Mogherini and the Pacific Alliance Foreign Ministers, Brussels (2018)

¹¹⁰ Giorgio, Op. Cit (2017).

¹¹¹ *Idem*

¹¹² *Idem*

Albeit the aforementioned indicators, both in the case of the Alliance with the Union and the Market with Europe, reflect a positive development, reality attests that, whilst intraregional trade within the European Union reaches 70% and in Asia 55%, in Latin America it roughly reaches the 20%.¹¹³ The EU has a long history of intraregional trade that thrived in the institutionalisation of its interregional exercise. For this reason, despite the renewed regional approach, the elimination of tariffs and duties, as the Alliance and the Market have committed to, is not enough to further integration. It is also necessary to foster regulatory convergence, improve infrastructure quality, logistics, and energetic schemes and digitalise the systems.¹¹⁴ Accordingly, the challenge related to trade is the consistent follow-up of the related compromises that were subscribed during the Summit in Puerto Vallarta, in Brussels, to ensure their applicability, their effectiveness and their sustainability. But also, the challenge lies also upon the need for convergence with EU regulation, for which the Union could provide capacity-building and technical assistance that match European standards applied to the case of Latin America.

In this context, just as the case of the linchpin in Latin American trade, namely the Pacific Alliance's endeavours with its regional partner Mercosur, represents an opportunity for the Union, the regional focus of the Alliance in Asia-Pacific should be an opportunity for the EU to provide the elements that the actors across the Atlantic are not. Therein lies a challenge for the Union to institutionalise the practice of providing the assistance that eventually thrives in transregionalisation.

3.3. Further Considerations

As was mentioned in previous sections, challenging the European Union's promotion of regionalism, which gives primacy to the rule of law and minimum governance standards, but also its economic and political endeavours, a third major influence in Latin America is found in the case of China. The expansion of

¹¹³ *Idem*

¹¹⁴ *Idem*

this country's relationship with Latin America, albeit first and foremost trade-based, increasingly challenges the EU's multilateral dynamics in Latin America and opens the door for new markets and renewed approaches to bilateralism. Albeit China conducts this practice far away from promoting a model for regionalism¹¹⁵, as it seeks for trade relations and political dialogue on a bilateral basis and with a specific set of countries, various economic and political advancements have been made and have thrived through the establishment of closer ties across the Pacific.

Herein lies the challenge for the European Union: to keep promoting – and renewing – its approach to multilateralism with Latin America. By doing so, it would not only be consistent with its compromise based on the inherent promotion of rule of law and the respect for human rights, amongst others, but would also advance solidly and significantly in the promotion of its model for regionalism, unlike further major actors in international relations, like the US and China. Should this approach succeed, it would lay the foundations for a transregional association that could thrive in a sustainable, democratic, human rights-based platform for global governance and beyond in political, economic and social processes.

¹¹⁵ Fawcett, L. (2013). *The History and Concept of Regionalism*. UNU-CRIS Working Paper W-2013/5. Bruges: United Nations University Institute.

Conclusion

4.1. Summary of findings

As for what has concerned this investigation, a significant part of the conclusion can state that multilateralism is, in modern times, inherent to the practice of international relations of the European Union and Latin America. This practice has been utilised by the European Union to promote itself as a regionalist model whereby it can foster its participation in global governance. Through regionalist endeavours, these multilateral platforms represent an opportunity for further states – and not only states – than the ones that have presence in the traditional multilateral systems. In this context, a new form of the practice of multilateralism is being held between the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur and especially between these two regional actors and the European Union, following its model for regionalism.

Thus, just as multilateralism has accompanied the institutionalisation of regionalism in Latin America under the influence of the European Union integration model, a renewed approach to multilateralism between the Alliance and the Market with the EU could pave the way for the transregionalisation of their relations. The instrumentation of this transregionalisation would not only enhance the institutional values both regional platforms have championed but also more effectively, efficiently and sustainably tackle long-term challenges in economical, political and social atmospheres. Accordingly, the utmost recent institutional multilateral advancements implemented by the Alliance combined with the Market are more significant for transregional processes than those resulting of their unilateral endeavours with the Union, namely through the institutional advancements canalised in the Declaration of Puerto Vallarta and the Declaration of Brussels.

These indicators have not only thrived in the description of opportunities and challenges to pursue transregionalisation but have also introduced the degree to which Latin American countries could govern and strengthen regionalisation through multilateralism, following the model of the EU. Moreover, this could also establish a measure to counteract against protectionist policies of the United States and the influence of China, which both promote a regionalism model that diverges from the institutional endeavours that regionalist platforms in both the EU and Latin America pursue.

For instance, albeit it was not in the nature of this investigation to systematically describe it, an explanation for why the outcome of the *Brexit* referendum did not shape EU's foreign policy towards Latin America can be attributed to its developed institutionalisation. Contrarily, the election of Donald Trump, the protectionist agenda that his administration has put forward and the withdrawal from the TPP do affect Latin American countries' foreign policy towards the European Union due to the lack of institutionalised regionalism and the systematic vulnerabilities this creates for all anchor actors. In this context, since Europe promotes itself as a regionalism model and counterweight to the influence of the United States in Latin America, and also subscribed itself to further cooperate to institutionalise the interregional platforms, President Trump's policies represent therefore the linchpin for both processes alike.

Moreover, granted that the model of European integration that is promoted by the Union was founded over the development of institutional capacities to overcome both political and economic conflicts, this feature inherently attests Latin American lack of institutionalisation of its regionalism. For indeed, the on-going conflict in Venezuela, to mention one, have evidenced the lack of the common voice the Union urged Latin American countries to speak with. Therefore, the development of institutionally homogenised responses to these processes will significantly determine the political commitment to both a new multilateralism

between the regions that paves the way for transregionalisation in an applicable sustainable way for both.

Since this practice of multilateralism between similar regional actors is conducted also through interregional platforms – as occurs through the most active interregional platform: EU – CELAC –, these processes between the Alliance, the Market and the Union are paving the way for transregionalisation through several of the same CELAC actors but through different platforms upon which the EU – CELAC countries' relations relies.

What this approach entails for the instrumentation of multilateralism between both regions is paramount and it could further respond to the 'for what' question that President Vázquez posed. For indeed, both the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur have individually strengthened their political, economic and social ties with the EU but also amongst themselves. In this dynamic, the political international political context plays a significant role whilst aligning the scenarios that urge such action. Furthermore, it also paves the way for transregionalisation, whose opportunities should be further analysed, from the point of view of academia, but also further explored from the fields of policy-making for it would thrive in an unprecedented platform to practice multilateralism and strengthen global governance thereby.

4.2. Opportunities for Further Research

The opportunities for further research in both the field of transregionalisation and the renewed approach to multilateralism between Latin America and the European Union are threefold:

Firstly, a space for future analysis stems up from the systematic follow up of the compromises subscribed in Puerto Vallarta and Brussels, both from the fields of multilateralism and transregionalism. Indeed, albeit the actors involved agreed to

find points of convergence, the inner political, economic and social dynamics may carry these compromises away from its original mandate.

In this context, another field for future analysis is the institutionalisation of regionalism and transregionalism through the renewed practice of multilateralism by the regional actors hereby presented and the countries they comprise. Granted that the practice of international relations by regional actors is much more volatile than the one from the states that comprise them, a systematic analysis on the sustainable institutionalisation of these endeavours is needed.

Finally, it is pertinent to further revise the different categories of challenges that this transregionalisation will encounter henceforth. As was analysed, the paradoxical scenario, in which the EU's political and economic efforts to promote its own institutional model of integration within Latin America are juxtaposed to its institutional incapacity to find convergence, is accompanied by the reluctance of Latin American countries to strengthen their infraregional institutionalism in order to avoid the bureaucratic quagmire that the EU has displayed, action-oriented research is in place. Furthermore, since this low degree of institutionalisation and compliance evidences the incapacity to bring interregional conflicts to an end in the case of Latin America, future approaches to transregionalisation will not only more effectively overcome these processes with the technical assistance of the EU but also re-dimension the latter model to regionalism's sustainability.

Overall, despite the complexity of these challenges, the current political scenario, which obliges both regions to overcompensate the gaps that challenges present, the overruling consideration to transregionalisation is that it is an on-going process, which inherently provides more opportunities than challenges, especially granted the disposition and the degree of compromise and compliance to strengthen this process, thus paving the way to further shaping it, fostering it and enhancing it.

4.3. Final Considerations

Due to the inputs that have negatively affected the regions, today the objectives of the Alliance, the Market and the Union are aligned. Not only have they committed to strengthening their political, economic and social dynamics but they are also in route to fostering the integration dynamics, in which the political international context plays a significant role. The platform is open for further construction. Operationalisation and normativisation of the structures is essential for transregionalisation between the European Union and Latin America, two regions that do not only have a common past and a challenging present but also a bright future; brighter to the extent that the convergence between the Alliance, the Market and the Union may constitute a decisive catalyst of this process towards global governance.

As a final remark, Latin American countries should be ideal candidates to receive the greatest attention from Europe and its institutions, resulting in solid integration systems mirroring the European Union from both the point of view of integration and also the multilateral practice of international relations based on visions that the EU promotes, which are practiced by the Pacific Alliance and Mercosur: respect for diversity, democracy, human rights, and inclusion. The combined bloc composed of the European member states and the Latin American countries includes more than 45 sovereign states with a population of over 1 billion people that create over a quarter of the world's GDP. Therein lies the challenge; therein lies the opportunity since transregionalism is not an end by itself but a means.

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