

EU studies and International relations. Comparative regionalism and varieties of multilateral cooperation

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The European Union is not a state in the making but a very institutionalized, multidimensional and expanding kind of regional cooperation among neighbouring states and societies.

The lecture will present the distinctive features of the EU regional institutional settlement after the Treaty of Lisbon (TEU and TFEU, 2007 and 2009). Secondly, the differences and similarities will be presented with regional organizations abroad, notably with MERCOSUR, SADC, NAFTA, ASEAN, by making reference to the concepts of 'regionalization', 'regioness' and 'regionalism'.

Regional cooperation is growing up in every continent as a tool of development, a framework for developing trade and conflict prevention, a context underpinning domestic democratic transition or consolidation.

Endogenous and exogenous (systemic) factors characterize the third kind of regionalism in the history of the 20th century and make the difference with previous kinds of regional groupings.

This more recent regionalism, which we define "new regionalism" may include not only the economic dimension but also common policies, a polity in the making and, to some extent, politics and a normative dimension.

The second part of the lecture will deal with the relationship between new regionalism and global multilateralism. Multilateralism needs to be firstly defined. Then, three points of view are presented: regionalism versus multilateralism; regionalism as a by-product of multilateralism; regionalism (and, its consequence, inter-regional relations) as a dynamic component of a changing multilateral multi-layered multi-actors, global governance.